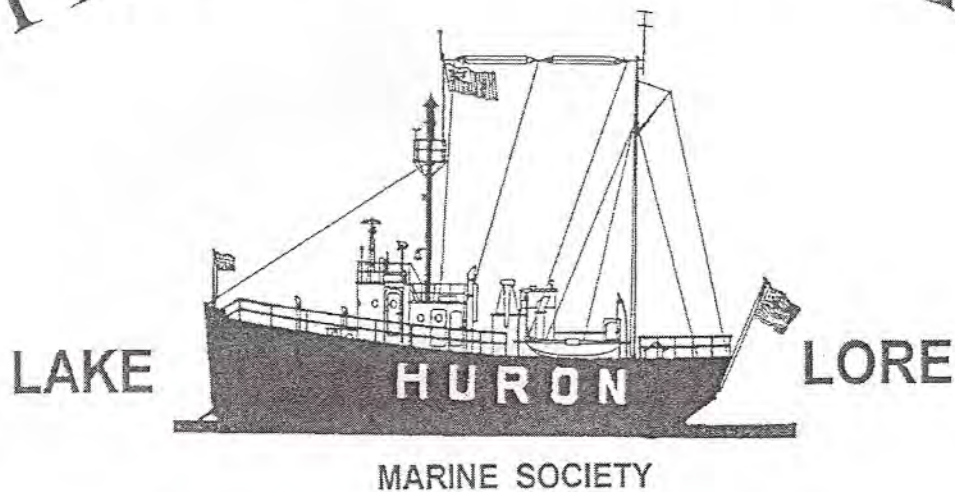


THE LIGHTSHIP



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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mark Your Calendar – Our third of four 2006 Dinner / Entertainment Meetings, which is a joint meeting with our friends of the Marine Historical Society of Detroit, will be held at the Port Huron Museum on Saturday, September 23. The Museum doors will open at 6:00 pm, and the dinner, prepared and offered by The Museum Guild, will be served at 6:30. Following the dinner our Guest Speaker, Keith Steffke, will present the evening's program, entitled *On The Ways In Wyandotte*. All L.H.L. members will receive a flyer in the mail with further details. Please join us for an enjoyable and entertaining evening.

New Members – L.H.L. wishes to welcome aboard Dr. James Copping of Port Huron, Bradley W. Tooman of Port Huron, Sandy Dehem of Lexington, MI, and Bill Spaulding (Life Member) of Lexington, MI.

Lake Huron Lore Summer 2006 Maritime Speaker Series – The following guest speakers are scheduled to present maritime entertainment evenings at the Great Lakes Maritime Center (Vantage Point), located at Desmond Landing on the St. Clair River at the mouth of the Black River:

1) Saturday, September 16 at 7:00 pm – Skip Kadar presents *Great Lakes Passenger Ships*.

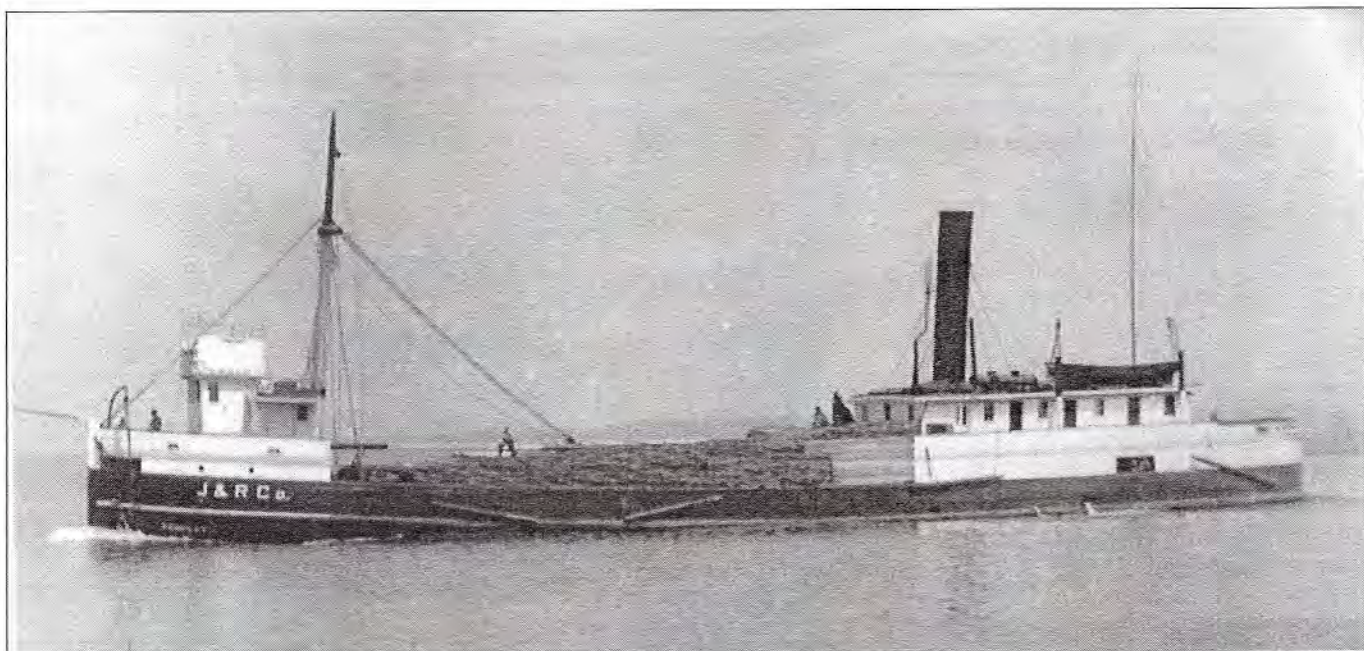
2) Saturday, October 28 at 7:00 pm – Chris Roth presents *Lost Ferries of Lake Huron*

Admission is free and is open to the public. Further details can be obtained by e-mailing Dick Wicklund at hmrwicklund@comcast.net or calling Acheson Ventures at (810) 966-0900.

October Flea Market – The 2nd Annual Port Huron Transportation Memorabilia Show will be held from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm on October 21, 2006 at the Port Huron Seaway Terminal, located at 2336 Military St. Available at the show will be rail, marine and automobile artifacts, as well as photos, books, postcards and artwork. Sponsored by the Port Huron Museum, Acheson Ventures and Lake Huron Lore Marine Society. Admission to the show is free. Also on display will be the ex-USCG Buoy Tender *BRAMBLE*, and the Tall Ship *HIGHLANDER SEAS*. For additional information contact T. J. Gaffney at 810-982-0891, ext. 16 or tjgaffney@phmuseum.org.

Correction – In the last issue of *The Lightship*, your Editor mistakenly adjusted Dick Wicklund's article, *Mr. Ford & The FARRELL*, to read, *When Mr. Ford sailed on his namesake, Henry Ford II, I wonder....* The Author was quick to point out that Henry Ford never had a ship named for him. The ship, *HENRY FORD II*, was named for his grandson, who was born in 1917 and was only seven years old in 1924 when this ship was built. Henry Ford had only one son, Edsel Ford. Henry Ford II was the son of Edsel. Henry Ford II would later head Ford from the late 1940's to 1979. Also, Benson Ford was another grandson, and was born in 1919, so he was younger yet when the ship bore his name. Also, William Clay Ford was the third grandson of Henry Ford, born in 1925 to Edsel Ford. Of the three grandsons, William Clay is still living, and is the long time owner of the Detroit Lions. William Clay Ford's son, William Clay Ford, Jr., (known simply as Bill Ford) is the current CEO of Ford. Thanks for the correction Dick.

*** NAME THIS SHIP ***



* Photo from Inches Collection *

* See Answer on Page 6 *

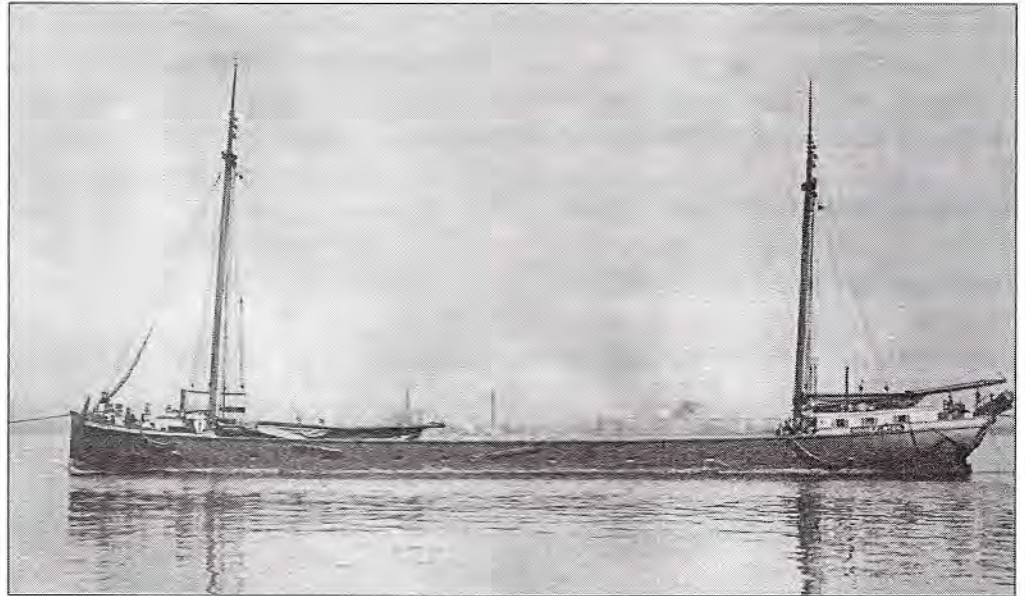
MINNIE E. ORTON: The Not Forgotten Schooner Barge!

By Dick Wicklund

In early 2004, the remains of a wood-hulled vessel were uncovered at Port Huron while a new seawall was being constructed. The vessel was located just yards south of the mouth of the Black River where it empties into the St. Clair River. This area is now called Vantage Point. The boat's remains lay partly exposed underwater in front of Acheson Ventures' new Maritime Center.

Work stopped, and an investigation began. Three vessels were possibilities, with the wood-hulled schooner barge *MINNIE E. ORTON* being one of them. Abandoned in Port Huron around 1926, it would be forgotten to face an unknown fate. Around the Great Lakes, many wood-hulled schooners and steamers met such a demise after years of useful service – buried along the shore, burned, scrapped or scuttled. However, this simple, staunch schooner would not be forgotten.

Her history draws us back in time to give us a brief picture of what Great Lakes commerce was like over 120 years ago. The *MINNIE E. ORTON* was built on the St. Clair River at Marine City in 1883 / 84 in the shipyard of David Lester, a major shipbuilder of wood-hulled sailing ships and steamers. The *ORTON* was a 431 gross ton vessel measuring 178 feet, 6 inches in length, almost 31 feet wide, with a depth of approximately 11 feet.



* The *MINNIE E. ORTON* at the Soo – Dowling Collection *

The *MINNIE E. ORTON* was built for the Toledo & Saginaw Transportation Company. As was the practice, groups of investors came together to have vessels like this built. The *ORTON* would transport mainly lumber in the early years of its service. This schooner barge was named for the much beloved granddaughter-in-law of Amos Orton, one of the investors. He was a businessman involved in lumbering and grain milling. He founded the town of Ortonville in Oakland County, Michigan in 1848. In Ortonville, about 65 miles west of Marine City, where the schooner was constructed, he built a grist mill in 1856. This charming old mill is still standing as a museum, and is the home of the Ortonville Historical Society.

Fortunately, a considerable amount of history has been uncovered on the early years of the *MINNIE E. ORTON*. Her owner, the Toledo & Saginaw Transportation Company, had her towed behind one of their steamers. Her loading port was the lumber town of Bay City on Saginaw Bay. According to the Bay City Tribune, when this schooner was very new, it loaded 621,000 board feet of lumber, and departed there on May 4, 1884. Her destination was Buffalo, NY. During its first five years, many such trips were recorded from Bay City to Buffalo, or nearby Tonawanda, NY. Laden with a cargo of lumber, and towed behind lumber hookers, she would be seen many times passing up and down the St. Clair River.

During the winter lay-up of 1884 – 85, the Detroit Post listed the vessels laid-up at Marine City. It recorded some 20 steam propellers, one tug, and 33 schooner barges. The Lester shipyard was indeed a busy place! The *MINNIE E. ORTON* was there, along with three other Toledo & Saginaw vessels. Two of the 20 wood-hulled steamers most likely towed the *ORTON* at times in the lumber trade. One of them was the package freighter *P.H. BIRCKHEAD*, built by the Lester yard at Marine City in 1870 for the Toledo & Saginaw Trans. Company.

She was a 378 gross ton vessel, measuring 168 feet in length. In 1887, she was converted to a bulk carrier, and was sold to another company in 1888. On September 30, 1905, the *BIRCKHEAD* was destroyed by fire at Alpena.

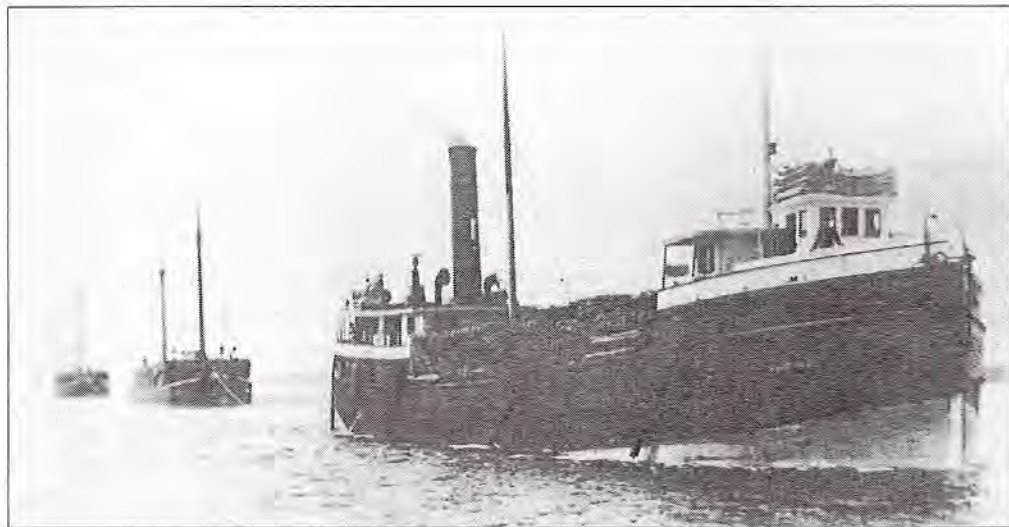
The *TEMPEST*, also built by the Lester yard for Toledo & Saginaw Trans. Company in 1872, was 412 gross tons and 159 feet in length. This veteran lumber hooker was sold from the fleet in 1889. Years later, on August 27, 1918, the *TEMPEST* developed a leak 20 miles off Erie, PA with a barge in tow. She made it back to Erie but sank at the harbor entrance with the loss of one life.

In 1882, the Toledo & Saginaw fleet took delivery of the new Lester-built *C.F. CURTIS*. This steam propeller was built 175 feet in length but was lengthened 30 feet in 1887 by Dunford & Alverson Dry Dock in Port Huron. At 205 feet, her gross tonnage increased to 691 tons. She was sold from the fleet in 1889, and by 1910, joined the Edward Hines Lumber fleet. Sadly though, the old steamer foundered in a storm on Lake Superior off Grand Marais, Michigan on November 19, 1914. The *CURTIS* was towing two schooner barges, the *SELDEN E. MARVIN* and the *ANNIE M. PETERSON*, each heavily laden with lumber from Barga, Michigan. Fourteen lives were lost on the *CURTIS*, and 14 more from the schooners.

The *MINNIE E. ORTON* would not meet such a fate. During her time with Toledo & Saginaw Trans. Company, one notable individual was her Captain for three seasons beginning in 1886. He was Captain Julius A. Ward, not related to the family of Samuel and Eber Ward. In 1873, this Civil War veteran came to Marine City, and was employed as a steamboat painter for the Toledo & Saginaw Trans. Company. He was also an investor in the fleet, and employed by the Lester yard as well. Julius Ward's sailing career began in 1874, advancing to Captain in 1879. During his career as Captain, he would sail many steamboats and sailing ships, including the *MINNIE E. ORTON*. He would also become a prominent citizen of Marine City by 1900, investing in ships, property, and banking.

By 1890, the *ORTON* was still sailing the Lakes, often behind a towing steamer. One such tow was captured by a photographer. In the photo, the *MINNIE E. ORTON* was the first of two schooner barges being towed by the lumber laden steamer *PAWNEE*. The *PAWNEE* was owned by the Pawnee Boat Company of Port Huron, having been built for them by the Lester yard at Marine City in 1888 – 89. She measured 180 feet in length with

a gross tonnage of 639.



* *PAWNEE* towing the *MINNIE E. ORTON* – Inches Collection *

The *PAWNEE* served her owners for 30 years and was then sold in 1918 to Reid Wrecking Company. In 1920, Canada Steamship Lines acquired *PAWNEE*, renamed her *MAPLEGULF*, but she did not sail for them long. On Lake Ontario, on November 15, 1920, the vessel's hull developed a crack in a storm. She made it to Kingston, Ontario but was quickly abandoned as not being repairable. The ex-*PAWNEE* was eventually scrapped.

In contrast to these steamers and other schooners at the time, the *MINNIE E. ORTON* simply did the work it was designed to do. Her main cargo was lumber in the early years, but she would also haul iron ore, grain, coal, stone, and salt; which Marine City was known for. As 1900 approached, these cargos became more common to her holds. The depletion of forests in one part of the Lakes shifted her trade to Lake Michigan and Lake Superior. In a reverse of sorts, the *ORTON* brought a load of lumber to the mills of Bay City, instead of taking such a cargo. In July of 1893, she arrived in Bay City with 650,000 board feet of lumber, loaded in Duluth.

The *MINNIE E. ORTON* was not the biggest schooner barge, or the most ornate. Nor did she have a shipwreck history. The *ORTON* simply did its job, like so many other Great Lakes vessels have done successfully with little notoriety. The years following 1900 contain the yet untold story of this schooner that never changed her name. She met the big 400 to 600 foot steel steamers that dwarfed her, but she must have found a place of service to have survived for roughly 40 years of faithful use.

Sold Canadian in 1918, and abandoned at Port Huron about 1926, the *MINNIE E. ORTON* would not be forgotten! She had passed our blue waters many times in her sailing days, often behind one of those classic lumber hookers. Is this the abandoned, partly buried vessel at Vantage Point? The answer seems to be that it is not, but the *MINNIE E. ORTON* was among several abandoned boats docked along the Black River and the St. Clair River between 1920 and 1940. Some were scrapped, sunk in place, covered over, or removed and scuttled in Lake Huron. However, this research has found a schooner that would not be forgotten!

NAUTICAL NEWS

Two More Books By Skip Gillham

Final Voyage - Lakers Scrapped Far From Home is a 152-page soft cover book that provides lots of black & white photos of Lakers that were scrapped overseas, as well as scrapping details; including dates, destinations, and scrap-tow tugs. The book sells for \$30.00, postage & handling included (U.S. funds for U.S. orders – to help cover the extra P & H costs).

The Keystone Fleet is a 50-page soft cover book offering historical facts of the Canadian shipping company that began in 1909, as well many great black & white photos of the small Keystone boats. This book sells for \$18.00, postage & handling included. (U.S. funds for U.S. orders – to help cover the extra P & H costs).

Both of these books can be purchased by sending a check or money order to E.B. Gillham, Box 443, Vineland, ON, L0R 2C0.

From The Files By Cy Hudson

10 Years Ago ... (1996)

Sept. 6 – The Selvick Marine Towing tugs *MARY PAGE HANNAH* and *JIMMY L* arrived in Windsor towing the former Canada Steamship Lines *METIS* from Green Bay, WI where she had been used for cement storage since August, 1993. She will continue to be used for the same service in Windsor.

Sept. 14 – Marinette Marine Corp. of Marinette, WI, launched the second Ida Lewis class coastal bouy tender for the U.S. Coast Guard, which was christened *KATHERINE WALKER (WLM-552)*, and delivered to her home port, Bayonne, NJ, on June 27, 1997.

Sept. 30 – The Ontario Northland Transportation Commission's Manitoulin Island ferry, the 1974-built *CHI-CHEEMAUN*, ended her 1996 operation season unexpectedly when she suffered a serious failure of one of her two Ruston-Paxman diesel engines. During the first week of October, she sailed under her own power from Tobermory to the Pascol shipyard at Thunder Bay for repairs and would remain at the Lakehead over the winter months.

Oct. 2 – The 1970 and 1971-built 99 foot pusher tugs *PHYLLIS YORKE* and *MARGARET YORKE*, used by Canadian National Railroad (CNR) to move the ferry barges *ST. CLAIR* and *SCOTIA II* respectively on the ferry crossing between Sarnia and Port Huron, were downbound in the Seaway in tow of the McKeil tugs *GLENEVIS* and *GLENBROOK*, bound for Sorel, QC. With the termination of the ferry service following the completion of the new tunnel under the St. Clair River, the two tugs had been acquired by McKeil Marine Ltd. of Hamilton in early 1996. McKeil resold the tugs for service in Nigeria, West Africa, and, following their arrival in Sorel, they were to be loaded onto a heavy-lift ocean ship for delivery to their new owners.

Oct. 5 – Earlier in the year, McKeil Marine sent the old CNR rail barge *ST. CLAIR* to Port Maitland to be stripped down to a flat deck barge. Following completion, the barge was returned to Hamilton under the tow of the tugs *OTIS WACK* and *ARGUE MARTIN* carrying the pilot house of the recently dismantled *BEECHGLEN* on her deck.

Oct. 17 – The former Ann Arbor Railroad ferry *VIKING*, (a *ANN ARBOR No. 7 (65)*), which had been brought to Port Stanley in June to begin a new ferry service across Lake Erie in 1996, was ordered out of the port by Transport Canada because she was blocking access to the harbor by other commercial vessels. Renamed *VIKING I*, and registered in Belize, she left under her own power, and a few hours later berthed in Erie, PA where it is expected she would remain over the winter months to be available for resale.

15 Years Ago ... (1991)

Sept. 17 – The *OGDENSBURG*, McKeil Marine's 290 ft. deck barge (former car ferry barge), which had been chartered by a Canadian East Coast contracting firm and used to transport heavy construction equipment, was caught in a storm and broke loose of her towing tug. The *OGDENSBURG* was soon stranded on the rock face of an island which caused the barge to capsize and sink in about 30 ft. of water in the Gulf of St. Lawrence off Baie de Blanc Sablon, later to be declared a constructive total loss.

Oct. 4 – A keel-laying ceremony was held at Port Weller Dry Docks. Hull # 76, the new 207 ft. 4 in., \$26 million, 400-passenger ferry, able to carry up to 40 automobiles, was being built for the Pelee Island service between Leamington and Kingsville to Pelee Island. The vessel was launched December 12, 1991, and christened on May 17, 1992 as *JIIMAAN*, the Objibwa name for canoe. The name was chosen in a contest by the school children in the area served by the ship. The *JIIMAAN* entered service on her maiden voyage July 3, 1992, and carries a crew of 16 and maintains a service speed of 16 knots.

Oct. 18 – There was a surprise arrival at the Marine Salvage scrapyards in Ramey's Bend, Humberstone, as the McAllister Towing & Salvage Inc. tug *SALVAGE MONARCH* towed her venerable fleetmate *JAMES BATTLE* into the scarpyard. The former City of Detroit Fire Commission, 198 grt fire tug, a product of the Detroit Shipbuilding Company of Wyandotte, was launched on October 13, 1900 as Hull # 137. In 1941, she was sold to Canadian interests, repowered and later absorbed into the McAllister Towing fleet in 1969. At Ramey's Bend, the tug's entire upper deck was to be removed for preservation, and, by mid-November, the 91 year old *JAMES BATTLE* had been completely stripped and cutting had begun.

F.Y.I.

On August 31, the *CHIOS PRIDE*, bound for Marinette, MI, passed upbound through the Port Huron / Sarnia area, making her the 29th upbound vessel requiring a pilot for the month August. As of midnight, August 31, 195 vessels, requiring a pilot, have passed upbound through the Bluewater area since the opening of the 2006 shipping season. *This number includes salt water vessels and passenger ships, as well as some Canadian-registered tankers. Many of the ships are repeat visitors.*

The Editor would like to thank contributors Cy Hudson and Lakes Pilots Association Manager, Bill Wager

Answer to Name This Ship (Pg. 2)

TEMPEST – (US 24940) Wooden hulled steamer, 159 ft. in length, 30 ft. in width, 12 ft. 6 in. in depth, with Gross Tonnage of 412 tons. Built in Marine City by David & Philander Lester in 1872 for Toledo & Saginaw Transportation Company. This lumber hooker was sold from the fleet in 1889. Years later, on August 27, 1918, the *TEMPEST* began taking on water 20 miles off Erie, PA with a barge in tow. Both vessels were carrying coal, loaded in Erie, bound for Montreal, Quebec. She made it back to Erie but sank at the harbor entrance with the loss of one life.

* This vessel is also mentioned on Page 4 of this newsletter, in the article,
MINNIE E. ORTON: The Not Forgotten Schooner Barge! *

BLUEWATER AREA SHIPWRECKS

By Skip Gillham

* GEORGE F. RAND *

It was fifty five years ago this fall that the American Steamship Company self-unloader *GEORGE F. RAND* had to be beached near Port Huron following a collision with the *HARVEY H. BROWN*. The accident occurred on October 17, 1951, and the *GEORGE F. RAND*, loaded with a cargo of silica sand, developed a starboard list. Running the vessel aground prevented a much more serious problem and bought time to make temporary repairs. Once the vessel was seaworthy, it was refloated and proceeded to Port Huron to discharge the cargo. Permanent repair work took place at Toledo.

This ship was originally the *WILLIAM C. AGNEW* (US 208396). It was built by the American Shipbuilding Company of Lorain, Ohio, and joined the Mitchell Fleet in 1911 under their Buffalo Steamship Company. The 557 foot long (overall) by 58 foot wide bulk carrier was registered at 6,533 gross tons and was powered by a 1,765 horsepower triple expansion engine.

WILLIAM C. AGNEW had four staterooms for passengers as well as a sitting room with a skylight. The ship carried corporate friends and customers as well as cargo and joined Boland and Cornelius in 1923. They applied the name *GEORGE F. RAND* in 1926. Ten years later the vessel was converted to a self-unloader at Lorain and the work took a reported three months and cost \$400,000.

The American SS Co. renamed the ship *BEN W. CALVIN* in 1954 and it is shown from the Bluewater Bridge in a photo by Robert Walton. Service continued through 1973 before the ship was laid up at Toledo. Following a sale to Marine Salvage, the ship came down the Welland Canal on April 12, 1974, between the tugs *SALVAGE MONARCH* and *G.W. ROGERS* on the first leg of a scrap tow to Valencia, Spain. The voyage departed Quebec City on May 8, 1974, behind the tug *KORAL* and they reached the overseas destination on June 7 along with the old steamer, *JACK WIRT*.

Seen as
BEN W. CALVIN,
upbound at Port Huron
* Robert Walton Photo *



SALTY SPOTLIGHT



By D.R. (Doug) Schilz
(saltydug@yahoo.com)

* HERCEGOVINA *

Built in 1977 by R.O. Brodogradiliste "3 Maj", Rijeka, Yugoslavia; as Hull # 574
Length – 644'11" Breadth – 75'4" Depth – 47'6"
18,426 GRT M. Bulk Carrier
Main Engine – 12,000 bhp Sulzer

HERCEGOVINA has been a long time visitor to the Great Lakes, passing through the Port Huron / Sarnia area on a regular basis. Her first trip to a Great Lakes port was in 1978. During her early years, she only made occasional trips to the Lakes but through most of the 1990's she made up to four trips per year. Cargoes of grain and steel brought her to ports such as Detroit, Windsor, Chicago, Duluth and Thunder Bay. Her voyages to the Great Lakes were uneventful but her name became one that many ship watchers became familiar with. She was originally owned by Atlanska Plovidba and registered in Yugoslavia. With the turmoil in Yugoslavia during the 1990's, her registry was changed in 1991 to Malta. In 1996 her registered owners became Hercegovina Shipping Co. Ltd, and she was registered in Hercegovina. Her final voyage to the Lakes as *HERCEGOVINA* was in September, 1997, with stops at Toledo and Chicago.

In 1998, the newly renamed *ADIMON* sailed the Lakes on three different occasions. Her new owners were Alliance Mar. Corp. and her registry now Liberia. With regular appearances from 1998 to 2003, they were usually multiple trips. She did not appear again on the Great Lakes in 2004, but was renamed and returned again in 2005. She was now called *CALYPSO*, and her new owners listed as Connection Shipping SA with her registry still in Liberia. Two visits that year took her to Marathon and Duluth arriving with pig iron and leaving with grain.

After almost 30 years of sailing, it is remarkable to see a saltwater ship still in service after that many years. I am unaware of her current status, but she has not ventured onto the Lakes so far this year. If she does make an appearance, it might be wise to photograph her while you can.



* *HERCEGOVINA* *
upbound at
Sarnia / Port Huron
on May 22, 1992
Doug Schilz Photo