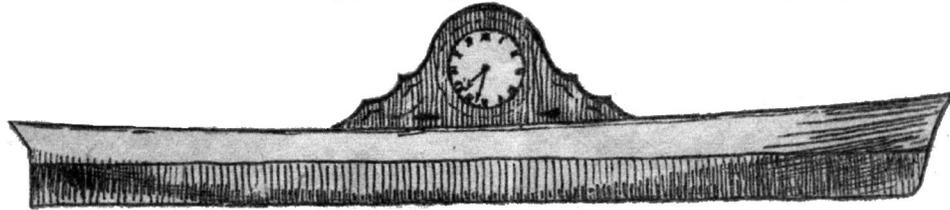


Toronto Telegram, August 4, 1951  
Schooner Days MXIII (1013)  
By C. H. J. SNIDER

## BRITISH QUEEN MAKES CLOCK SHELF



NEAR Waupoos in Prince Edward Percy Wattam has the most interesting clock shelf we have yet seen, the builder's half-model from which his grandfather, John Palen, had the schooner *British Queen* built on his farm in 1863.

John Palen and Son had a storehouse and wharf at the foot of a right-of-way on Smith's Bay half a mile west of Waupoos Wharf, and R. and W. Morgan built the schooner for them there. It was the time of the American War, and the *British Queen*, like other Canadian schooners, was prosperous while the Reciprocity Treaty lasted, but when it lapsed in 1866 she fell on evil days from a series of mishaps, and "swallowed the farm" from which she grew.

She cost about \$10,000 to build, and, as was usual, was well ballasted with mortgages as her building progressed—and if you have been a country boy you know what a strangler the mortgage is.

The *British Queen* however outlasted her owner and builders. In her last years she sank with a cargo of cut stone near the Trenton end of the Murray Canal. She was raised but was burned in 1894 or 1895 through a tar pot catching fire aboard her, at Brighton.

We remember her well when she was carrying stone from the Bay of Quinte to fill the timber cribs of the new Eastern Gap in Toronto. She was then newly painted black above and red below, with a red stripe along her covering board, and red hawsepipes and beading; looked rather like a "mooley," having lost her jibboom. She had a graceful clipper bow, with a long curved cutwater knee and a good flare. Her stern was rather short and wide. She was of what sailors call "flatiron model."

The builder's lines from Percy Wattam's clock shelf confirm this. They were taken off, with great care, by John R. Stevens, a student of marine archaeology and architecture, whose recent book, "Old Time Ships," is one of the classics on those subjects.

A builder's model was made in bread-and-butter fashion. Layers of thin boards, each shaped to the waterline curves of the hull in bird's-eye plan, at regular distances from the keel to the deck, were fastened together. The uppermost was thicker at the ends to give the sheer or curve at deck level. The half-model gave the shape of the hull "in frame." The planking had to

go on outside of this shape, and the stem, sternpost, rudder, transom, bulwarks and superstructure would all project above and beyond this shape.

The builder's half-model was, therefore, somewhat smaller than a model of the completed hull. This one of the *British Queen* is on a scale of 1/2 inch to 1 foot, and is about 45 inches long. The registered dimensions of the *British Queen* in 1874 were 90.3 feet from stem to sternpost, 23.9 feet beam, 7.9 feet depth of hold, and 117 tons register. Ten years earlier she measured 166 tons register, the method of calculation being slightly different. She could carry 300 tons of coal or stone, and 10,000 bushels of grain, as maximum cargo. Her overall length, from the tip of her cutwater knee to the taffrail davits for her yawlboat, was just under 100 feet, ten feet more than the length indicated by the 45-inch model.

Some builder's models were made in alternate layers of white pine and cherry or black walnut. When rub-bed smooth and varnished the alternate stripes of light wood and dark; gave a very pleasing impression. The *British Queen's* model was, however, made all of clear pine. Mr. Wattam has, with good taste, enameled the outer face white above and green below, which was the original paint of his grandfather's schooner. The back or flat side of the hull model has been left untouched, and shows in pencil marks still quite distinguishable after 88 years, the stations for the frames or ribs of the ship, with the angles to which they were set or canted. The cant frames rake forward at the bow and aft at the stern.