

**Toronto Telegram, March 7, 1936**  
**Schooner Days CCXXX (230)**  
**By C.H.J. Snider**

## **SHIPS OF THE HURON SHORE**

“PRACTICALLY all the lumber, cordwood, railroad ties and paving cedar cut off the whole Saugeen Indian Peninsula in Bruce County was carried to the growing cities down the lakes by schooners – all gone now,” says Mr. George E. Currie, lake sailor out of Saugeen sixty years ago. He is now in the realty and insurance business in Highland Park, Mich.

Vessels of that time and earlier recalled by him and his old shipmate, Mr. Albert Leeder, of Toronto, in an exchange of recollections, include these of the Lake Huron fleet and some occasional visitors from the lower lakes, many of them well known in Toronto:

*AZOV*, sailed by Capt. John Monro, of Tiverton, and later by Capt. John Macdonald, of Goderich. She was a Lake Ontario schooner, built in 1856 at Wellington Square, near the head of the lake, a port which has since vanished in the town of Burlington. She was one of the vessels which came through the great gale of Nov. 7th, 1880, having nothing left but her flying jib when day broke. She was lost in Lake Huron, twenty miles off Pointe aux Barques, on Oct. 25th, 1911 – the last fore-and-after on Lake Huron.

*ARCTIC*, which appears to be another schooner of the same name as the one the Muir brothers built at Port Dalhousie and lost on Long Point, Lake Erie.

*ARGO*, of Goderich, sailed by Capt. Pringle, of Southampton. There was a schooner *Argo* built at Sacketts Harbor in 1847 and owned by A. Whitman, of Chicago, in 1864. She was getting old by: this time, and valued at only \$1,500, a low sum for a vessel of her size, 247 tons.

*ADMIRAL*, a little schooner of 48 tons, sixty feet long, built at Sarnia in 1870 and owned by A. Farquharson Moore. There were several vessels of this name on the lakes, including a Port Hope schooner ; wrecked on Toronto Point sixty years ago.

*CALEDONIA*, of Goderich, a little Lake Huron schooner of the same name as the Lake Ontario one whose anchors were recovered by Mr. Gordon Conant at Oshawa last fall. The Goderich *Caledonia* was built in Saugeen and sold to Racine, Wisc. At some time during the American civil war she is said to have taken two cargoes of salted fish across the Atlantic. The size of this small schooner is against the probability of this, but it is a fact that Capt. John Spence was then developing the fishing resources of the Saugeen peninsula, and he is known to have got as far as St. Catherines with one cargo of fish which spoiled there owing to the mild weather of the open fall.

*DAUNTLESS* – Possibly the Oakville one, which came from Kingston Toronto, 160 miles, in thirteen hours in 1878, or the Dauntless of Port Dover, lost in Lake Ontario off the Thirty, in 1895. Capt. Nick Stark at one time owned and sailed the *Dauntless* and she was used in a production of *H.M.S. Pinafore* on the shore off Sandwich fifty or sixty years ago. He lost her

on the Canadian beach about fifteen miles above Point Edward in the fall of 1889. Whole crew was saved. There was a third *Dauntless*, a scow, hailing from Owen Sound, at one time.

Capt. Stark, a typically witty North of Ireland “mon,” hailed from Port Stanley, Ont., and moved to Detroit in 1882. Here a son was born to him on the 22nd of February. “George Washington Stark” was promptly applied to the helpless infant with such a birthday.

“Capt. Stark was always getting out of one trouble and into another and was liked by everybody,” says Mr. Currie “On one occasion, when he had the *Dauntless*, he loaded cedar posts at Golden Valley (now Howdenvale). When the hold was full he had to shift her into deeper water, and in doing so ran her up on her own anchor and stove a hole in the vessel’s bottom, In this condition, with the hold and cabin both full of water almost up to the deck beams, he made sail for Detroit, whither he was bound on a block-paving contract. He would not let a tug put a line on the *Dauntless* even in the St. Clair river, but sailed or drifted with the current the whole way down, the *Dauntless* kept afloat by the buoyancy of the cedar posts, in the hold.”

*EVENING STAR* of Goderich, possibly the Sheboygan-built vessel of that name which foundered near Chicago in 1894.

*EMMA* or *EMILY*, a small schooner hailing from the Saugeen, which was used as a lighter in attempting to salvage the Toronto schooner *Son and Heir*, wrecked on the Bruce Peninsula. This may have been the schooner *Emily* which Capt. Duncan Rowan once commanded.

*FAITH* of Wallaceburg, an interesting name of which we would like to hear more.

*ANNIE FALCONER* of Kingston, well known on Lake Ontario, where she ended her days in 1904.

*E. FEE*, a short name unknown hitherto.

*FAIRY*, *FAIHY*, a small schooner sailed by Capt. Ed. Marlton, of Goderich, engaged in supplying the early settlers of Bruce County in the years 1853 and 1854.

*FOREST*, built by Wm. Rastall, at Kincardine in the winter of 1851-52, and sailed by Capt. John Murray for two seasons. Capt. John Spence bought her in 1854.

*FLY*, a small schooner sailed by Capt. Murray MacGregor in the opening trade to Bruce Mines. He also carried many settlers and their belongings to Penetangore and the site of Southampton and the Saugeen Peninsula in 1851 and 1852. Allan Cameron and Wm. Withers, first two settlers in Kincardine and Huron Townships, were brought to the mouth of the Penetangore River by the Fly apparently in 1849. Capt. Murray MacGregor was a son of the great Alexander MacGregor, of Goderich, who is credited with building the first of the stone houses on the Main Station, one of the Gaheto or Fishing Islands. He went there as early as 1831 and in 1834 had a contract to supply three thousand barrels of fish to Detroit at \$1 per barrel. Whitefish and herring were then so plentiful they could be seined and barreled at the rate of 500 barrels a day, if the salt and the barrels held out.

*GLADSTONE*, a fine fore-and-after in which the late Magistrate O'Connor, of Thunder Bay district, did his early sailing.

*GREYHOUND*, name also borne by a Bay of Quinte sloop and a steamer out of Toronto on the old Lorne Park [ route forty years ago.

*GRACE AMELIA*, brigantine scow which was converted into a Steambarge and ended her days in Toronto as the well-known *Gordon Jerry*, burned at the Eastern Gap, Sept. 20th, 1906.

*HEATHER BELLE*, built in Picton and owned by the Mathews firm of Toronto. She traded all the way from Halifax to Lake Superior.

*HIGHLANDER*, one of the pioneer craft of Bruce County. She was built by Capt. Murdoch McLeod and sailed by him in 1850 and 1851. Capt. McLeod's succeeding vessel was the *Water Witch*, and his third, true to Highland tradition, the *Mountaineer*, built 1854-55.

*JOHN G. KOLFAGE*, another of Capt. John Macdonald's commands.

*LOUISE*, of which more might be known.

*MOUNTAINEER*, of Owen Sound, built at Kincardine or Penetangore in 1854 by Capt. Murdoch McLeod, and owned by Van Every and Rumball, Goderich, and later by Wm. Foster, of Owen Sound, when she was rebuilt and renamed the *Anna Foster*, in the 1870's. She was a little thing, of 55 tons and came to grief on Manitoulin Island in 1882.

*ANNIE MULVEY*, another Lake Ontario schooner, built at St. Catharines and "fatally burned" in the great Esplanade fire in Toronto in 1885. That is to say, she never sailed again, although her staunch hull served as a boathouse for Harry Hodson's establishment at the foot of Brock street until the bay was filled in over and around her fifteen years ago.

*LADY MACDONALD*, built at Port Burwell and lost at Fair Haven, 1893; a black and red three-master which used to carry coal to the Toronto waterworks.

*OLIVER MOWAT*, another three master, well known in Toronto and Port Hope, where Capt. Peacock owned her. She achieved fame not so much by getting run down by a steamer off the Ducks in 1917, but by the steamer's captain and mate being very properly sent to jail for it.

*MARY ANN*, small schooner sailed by Capt. Duncan Rowan and his wife in 1850, bringing early settlers to Bruce County. Capt. Rowan got the *Emily* in 1852, and in 1855 went into the pioneer steamer *Ploughboy*.

*MARY AND LUCY*, of Goderich, scow schooner wrecked at Southampton, Sept. 4th, 1879.

*NEMESIS* of Goderich, Capt. John Spence's vessel, of which we have, already told.

*NEW DOMINION* of Picton, of which a good story is coming.

*NEW HAMPSHIRE*.

*ONTARIO*, a clipper-bowed green-and-white schooner from this lake, formerly sailed by

Capt. Frank Granville. She was wrecked trying to make Southampton in a gale. The schooner Erie Stewart, which she was following, knocked over the red light off Chantry Island with her jibboom, and the Ontario missed the range and piled up on the beach.

*PHOEBE CATHARINE* of Picton, and Owen Sound, with her the “woman in white.”

*PLOW BOY* of Wallaceburg, of Mr. Leeder saith Ha! Ha! signifying there is more to come. She may have been the predecessor of the steamer *Plough Boy* Captain Rowan commanded. John Tait built a schooner of this name at South Bay Point in 1863 for Sol and John Collier, of Milford. Perhaps she got to Wallaceburg. We shall hear from Mr. Leeder when he is done laughing.

*PRINCE EDWARD*, Picton-built schooner aboard which Capt. McNabb died when she was frozen in one winter at Little Current. She was afterwards sailed by Capt. McLaughlin and Capt. Tim Crowley, of Owen Sound, and was lost on Cockburn Island.

*PRINCE ALFRED*.

*JENNY RUMBALL* of Goderich, schooner of 110 tons register.

*REGINA* of Goderich, sailed Capt. Smith, of Southampton, and later by Capt. Tripp, of Collingwood. He was drowned in her as he was casting off the yawlboat painter when she was foundering off Tobermory in 1881. She was then owned by William Foster, of Owen Sound, who had the further misfortune to lose the *Anna Foster* next year. In the *Regina* when she sank was a young sailor who was drowned a month later in the wreck of the Jane Miller.

*SAUCY JACK*, sailed by Capt. Jack McDonald, lost with all hands on her way to the Saugeen with flour and provisions from Goderich, late in the fall of 1851. The wreck of this small schooner meant severe suffering for the early settlers on the site of Southampton, like Capt. Spence and his family, for they were dependent upon her cargo for their winter maintenance.

*SEA GULL*, Capt. John Spence's first schooner, possibly built by him and his partner, Capt. Kennedy. Capt. Spence sailed her in 1852 and 1853.

*VICTOR*, about which more information is desired.

*NETT WOODWARD*, of which the same may be said.

*WANDERER* of Toronto, sailed by Capt. Jack Spence, of Southampton. She was built at Oakville in 1866, and was owned by George Wright, of port Hope, in 1873, and also by Capt. Sherwood, of Brighton. Capt. Dolph Corson, Sr., sailed her in 1880. She foundered in 1883 near Goderich or Kincardine, drowning three of her crew. One man lost was a brother of Mrs. Armstrong, of Port McNicoll.

*WHITE OAK* of Oakville, brought from Lake Ontario in 1900 and sailed by Capt. Jack Spence.

*WATER WITCH*, built by Capt. Murdoch McLeod, or at any rate sailed by him in 1852 and 1853.

*WING AND WING*, possibly the first pioneer of Bruce County navigation, sharing, with a large dug-out canoe commanded by Abraham Hollands, the honor of bringing several of the first families who made settlements on the Lake Huron shore in or before 1850. The *Wing and Wing*, bearing the same name as Fenimore Cooper's smuggling lugger, was simply an open boat, with two masts, perhaps the ancestor of the "mackinaw-rigged" fishing fleets. Her two sails could be swung out on either side for running before the wind, butterfly fashion. Hence the name. She was sailed by Capt. Soper, a member of a family long connected with lake navigation and sailmaking.

*(Caption) ABOARD THE AZOV – at Sandwich, in 1901. The schooner was then under the command of Captain John Munroe, of Tiverton. The late Captain Munroe sailed for 45 years on the Great Lakes, until his death in 1915. He was born in Scotland. The picture is in the possession of Mrs. Angus McLeod, his daughter, who is now living in Southampton, Ont. Standing at the extreme left is Captain John Munroe. The second man over is Edward Beatty, deck hand; the man in the foreground is the first mate, Alex. McKinnon, the man sitting on the edge of the boat is Angus Munroe, who for years has been captain of the D. P. Thompson, running out of Cleveland.*