

Toronto Telegram, September 12, 1942
Schooner Days DLIV (554)
By C.H.J. Snider

CATCHING UP WITH THE MAIL

ONE hundred and fifty-five thousand five hundred and eighty-four customers read Schooner Days, and some of them write back letters better than they get in reply.

FAST SHIP'S FINALE

James Morrison, of Wendell, Minn., was asking about the *Ariel*, a black fore-and-after once owned in Port Hope, which went to Georgian Bay. More about her when we can, but this is what Mr. Morrison says:

“I have been reading Schooner Days for years and I may say they are fine. I wonder if you or some of your readers know of a schooner named *Ariel*? When I was 16 years of age, myself and chum went to Owen Sound to look for a job. This vessel lay behind a drug store, on the corner of River street and Division street. They were going to take her away as people were afraid her rigging might fall and hurt somebody, as there was a bridge across the river where she lay. We got a job pumping her out under a man named John Smith. I don't think he owned her. We got three or four days, but did not sail on her. I heard say she was very fast. This was in the summer of 1894. I have never been in Owen Sound since. Never heard of the *Ariel*. I would like to know what became of her.”

Can anyone further oblige?

OLIVE BRANCH

“Sir, – In your section of Schooner Days I have been wondering if you have any record of the *Olive Branch*, which sailed the Great Lakes during the 1870-1880's I believe this boat was under Andrew Martin, from Brighton, and it called at Boston, Sandusky, Detroit, Chicago, Toledo.

“Should you have any back issues of The Telegram containing this history or have any information concerning the Olive Branch, I would be grateful to hear about it.

W. R. FREEMAN, “Brighton, Ont.

The *Olive Branch* lies off the Pennicons, outside the False Ducks. She was lost in the summer of 1880 with all hands, and her story will be given in detail some of these Saturdays.

HATTIE ANN HEARD FROM

H. St. G. Lee, manager of the Bank of Montreal, Stratford, writes:

Dear Sirs:

“As a constant and interested reader of your “Schooner Days” I was particularly attracted by the reference in the issue of September 5th to an old wreck on the Bay shore not far from the

main wharves in Belleville. From the description I feel reasonably sure that the wreck is what remains of the old "*Hattie Ann*" of which I believe Thomas Mullens was owner and captain. A good many years ago while I was still quite a young lad some chums and I were playing on the Bay shore to the east of the old Grand Junction dock one day late in the autumn when we noticed the old "*Hattie Ann*" with her mainsail well out heading straight in on a following breeze and to our amazement she was run high and dry on the shore the obsequies of the old craft. She was sloop-rigged and in her later days spent most of her time hauling bunch wood from Deseronto to Belleville and by the look of her and the fact that she was badly hogged she must have had a good many years to her credit. Her hulk, which was painted a dull red, lay around the beach for a good many years but I suppose all that portion above water was eventually hauled away for firewood.

"I was also interested in the reference to the remains of a hulk near the embankment leading to the Bay bridge, more particularly as my father, W. Walter Lee, C.E., designed and built the bridge and his name may still be seen on the stone which was set up on its completion and is now at the Prince Edward approach. It is possible that the wreck referred to is what remains of a scow, which was used to transport the spans which were erected on land and floated to their positions on the piers. I am inclined to the opinion, however, that the wreck is that of a rather good looking schooner which was anchored at about the spot you mention and which burned at her moorings many years ago. I do not remember the ship's name but I seem to recall that it was owned and sailed by a man named Craig and following his death was being looked after by his brother who was, I think, employed in Mr. D. V. Sinclair's dry goods store."

(This may have been the *Mary Fox* of Bath, rebuilt in 1878 and renamed *Edward Hanlan*, after the great oarsman. Capt. Byron Bongard sailed her for some time. She was burned in 1894 or 1895, after being laid up for some years).

"It is possible that my cousin, Mr. A. R. Walbridge, Queen street, Belleville, could confirm at least a portion of what I have written.

"As a lad I had a sailing punt and spent many happy days on the good old Bay of Quinte and several of the schooners and other craft which have appeared in "*Schooner Days*" I knew and their history brings back pleasant recollections."

SHOT IN THE DARK

Dear sir, – Recently I have bought a model of the *K. D. Echoes*, a sailing ship which used to sail the Great Lakes. I would like to get the history of this ship. I believe this appeared in The Evening Telegram some time ago, but I have not been able to find it.

If it would be possible for you to give us this history I would be willing to pay for same. This model was built by a sailor that used to sail on this ship.

– H. C. SLEETH,
Grandview, Brantford.

Would your ship be the schooner Katie Eccles, of Lakeport? Last seen in 1922, decrepit then, and lost soon afterwards between Point Traverse and Timber Island.

NOW WE'RE STEAM BOATING

Sir, – I want to get the exact date on which the S.S. *City of Owen Sound* was wrecked on Robertson Rock. She struck the rock and stove in the port bilge, but was beached on the shore of Clapperton, about a mile and a half east of the light, about 4 a.m., in a snow storm.

Captain LaFrance was in command. It was in the fall of 1886 or '87 I think, and in the month of October, around the 26th, but am not sure, and that is what I want to find out.

I wrote to Captain James Black, of Owen Sound, and received a letter from his daughter saying that her father had passed away seven years ago, and she did not have any record of the wreck, but advised me to write to you, saying that you had some old records. If you can furnish me with this information I will be very grateful, and if there is any charge just let me know and I will remit on receipt of the bill.

Captain Black was the second mate at the time of the wreck and stayed at the lighthouse for some days.

My father was the keeper at the time. I succeeded him and now my son is the keeper.

I will appreciate it very much if you can give me this information.

Yours very sincerely,
– HENRY F. BAKER

On Monday morning, Oct. 24th, 1887, the wind blowing hard from northwest with spits of snow, and all as black as the inside of a wolf's throat, the steamer *City of Owen Sound* struck on the east side of Clapperton Island, a thousand feet from shore and a mile over from the light. The bottom seemed torn out of her by the quick way she filled and sank, her bow vanishing in four fathoms of water. Her crew were just able to take to the boats. They reached the lighthouse and were taken off some hours later by the passing steamer *Campana*. There were no passengers. The *City of Owen Sound* had a cargo of grain, with some fish for Smith and Keighley, of Toronto, who had formerly owned her. She was built in 1875 and rebuilt in 1886 for the Collingwood Transit Company. She classed A IV2 and was valued at \$29,000. Her master was Capt. F. X. Lafrance.

STATE OF INDIANA?

Sir, – I have an old marine print of a sail (3 masts) and steam boat bearing the name "*State of Indiana*." This ship displays a British flag on its aft mast. Could you tell me anything of this boat's history, etc.?

FRANK S. REID.
Sturgeon Point via Fenelon Falls.

Never heard of her, but perhaps some reader has and will let us know.

ANOTHER ON "HATTIE ANN"

Sir, – I can well remember, as a boy, sitting on the side of one of these sunken ships in Belleville trying to catch small bass or sunfish. There was no railway cutting off the waterfront and the harbor was full of activity. There were several old wrecks by the entrance to the Bay Bridge, but these were mostly small craft.

In those days there were several old square-backed sailing vessels called "stone hookers," which were used to transport stone from the quarries at Point Anne, a few miles east of Belleville. Many of the substantial stone buildings in Belleville were constructed from these blocks.

The wreck, whose name is mentioned as "Hattie Anne" last week was probably one of these. They were usually named after children and were occupied by these families during the summer months. They were succeeded by a fleet of tramp steamers and it would be difficult to trace their ultimate resting place.

Belleville was an important bay and lake port fifty years ago. There was a regular service to Charlotte (Port of Rochester) by the "*North King*." The Hepburns of Picton operated a passenger and freight service by the old *Alexandra* to Montreal. The Rathburn Co. owned and operated the "*Ella Ross*" to Picton. The "*Varuna*" plied its way over the quiet waters of the Bay of Quinte to Trenton and Napanee. The "*Annie Lake*," from Belleville to Massasaga Point, where there was an attractive hotel and many cottages.

There were several yachts belonging to prominent Belleville citizens. "The *Ometia*," owned by a syndicate of business men. "The *Sky Lark*," a beautifully proportioned steam yacht owned by the late Senator Corley. "The *Carmenia*," owned by the late T. S. Carman, which was moored at her private dock below his residence, now owned by the Dominion Government. "The *Iolanthe*," "*Annie Cuthbert*" and "*Norah*," all sailing craft, the latter belonging to the late John Bell, Q.C. This yacht won many races in the Lake Yacht Racing Association regattas and also the famous Fisher Cup.

Sincerely, MACAULAY POPE.
27 Albertus avenue, Toronto.

LAKE HURON SCHOONERS

Dear Sir, – I was interested in your account of the *Sephie*, but you missed the time when she was in command of Capt. Glass of Sarnia, this would be in the late nineties. The *Sephie* was a beautiful three-and-after, and sailed like a yacht, she seldom required a tug to help handle her except at the St. Clair Rapids. This was the time when your friend Capt. "Black Hughie" had the *Katahdin*, then a new schooner owned by a lumber company at Port Edward, she was of wider beam than most others and carried a large cargo. She was equipped with a donkey engine, a novelty which became a necessity in the lake schooners as sailors became scarce.

Capt. Neil McKenzie sailed the *Sligo* at this time, and Capt. John Munro (uncle of McKenzie) and Daughter Maggie sailed the *Azov*, a large fore-and-after, there was keen rivalry

amongst these vessels as the captains and most of the crews came from around Tiverton. There were four brothers in the McKenzie family, three of whom became famous on large American boats.

Capt. Archie McInnes also of Tiverton, succeeded Capt. McKenzie on the *Sligo* and later on the *Juno* with *Sligo* as consort.

GEO. H. McARTHUR,
93 Douglas Drive, Toronto.

The *Azov* seems to have been, a family vessel most of her life. Capt. John Macdonald sailed her to the last with his sons and his daughter Libbie, who crossed Lake Huron with him when the vessel waterlogged and sank.