

WHEN AUTOS TOOK FLIGHT

- Part Two -

In the October issue, we featured the histories of the T. J. McCarthy Steamship Company's flight-decked auto carriers GEORGE H. INGALLS, (a) WILLIAM L. BROWN (24), and T. J. McCARTHY, (a) MARY C. ELPHICKE (24), (b) MORRIS S. TREMAINE (41). Our feature was eight pages in length, but we knew that there was more story to tell if only we had the additional information available. As well, we were lacking photos of the steamers at certain stages of their careers, and we asked for the assistance of our members in trying to complete the record. As usual, the members came through and, accordingly, we now revisit these two handsome ships to complete the stories of their long and eventful lives.

The first of the "new" items come to us from Jack Messmer, of Lancaster, New York. All are newspaper reports, and all but one of them are marine column clippings taken from unidentified newspapers and presently contained in the Neff Scrapbooks held by the Milwaukee Public Library. Most of the clippings come from Milwaukee papers, but others come from papers in other cities such as Chicago, Buffalo and Detroit.

March 28, 1901: "The steel stm. WILLIAM L. BROWN, built for a Chicago syndicate headed by C. W. Elphicke, was launched at South Chicago yesterday (this verifies her launch date -Ed.). Her overall length is 450 ft., beam 50 ft. and molded depth 28½ ft.; carrying capacity 7,500 gross tons of iron ore. The BROWN will go into commission about April 15, under the command of Capt. Charles Wilson, for a number of seasons past master of the stm. UGANDA."

May 5, 1901: "Chicago, May 4 - The new steamer W. L. BROWN (sic) sailed tonight on her maiden trip, taking a big grain cargo from South Chicago to Depot Harbor for the Canada-Atlantic line, which has chartered her for the season. The cargo consisted of 57,000 bushels corn, 151,461 bushels wheat and 30,494 bushels rye."

May 8, 1901: "Joseph Brownell for two seasons past first mate of the Canada-Atlantic liner ARTHUR ORR, has been appointed to the command of that steamer. Capt. Massey who has commanded the ORR for 5 seasons, has been transferred to the large new steel steamer W. L. BROWN (sic) under charter to the same line. Capt. Brownell although still a very young man, is a capable and skillful navigator. His parents reside in Milwaukee but he makes his residence in Chicago."

May 10, 1901: "Capt. James Wilson, now in command of the stm. W. L. BROWN (sic) has been appointed master of the stm. MARY C. ELPHICKE, to be launched at South Chicago on June 1." (The launch was delayed -Ed.)

June 6, 1901: "If the weather is good a large crowd will witness the launching of the 450 foot steel stm. MARY C. ELPHICKE at South Chicago this afternoon."

June 7, 1901: "The last launch at South Chicago for the present season took place yesterday, when the steel stm. MARY C. ELPHICKE dropped into the water. A little miss of 12 years after whom the vessel is named performed the christening ceremony. The task of swinging the heavy quart bottle of wine was quite an athletic feat for the little one, but she performed the part as well as many a woman of mature years has done in the same place, and in a perfectly composed manner she thanked B. W. Wells vice president of the shipbuilding company for the huge bunch of American Beauty roses he presented to her with the compliments of the company. Fully 7,000 people witnessed the launch. The steamer is 450 ft. over all, 50 ft. beam and 28½ ft. deep, being designed to carry 7,000 tons of cargo on the present draft of water in lake channels. The boat will be entirely completed in a few weeks and enter the general lake trade."