

In the December issue, we featured as our Ship of the Month No. 252, the passenger steamer OSSIFRAGE. She was built in 1886 at West Bay City, Michigan, as Hull 26 of F. W. Wheeler & Company, and underwent many alterations and changes of ownership during her thirty-year lake career. From 1901 until 1909, she was operated by the Algoma Central Steamship Line as part of its service from Toledo and Detroit, up the east shore of Lake Huron, through the North Channel to Sault Ste. Marie, and onward to Michipicoten. She shared this route with two other wooden-hulled passenger boats owned by Algoma Central, the propellor MINNIE M. and the sidewheeler KING EDWARD.

Although we were able to tell the members a great deal about the career of OSSIFRAGE, we admitted that there was much we did not know about her, and we asked if any readers could help. The members came through in usual stalwart fashion, and so we now are able to delve further into the interesting history of this little steamboat. First of all, a photo from Vern Sweeting, of Midland, Ontario, showing MINNIE M., OSSIFRAGE and KING EDWARD together graces our photopage. Members have offered to provide various other views of the steamer, and we hope to present some of these in a future issue.

The question of who actually owned OSSIFRAGE when has proven to be a very thorny one for us, but some answers, at least when she she was under the U.S. flag, have come to us from Rodney Mills, of Bethesda, Maryland, via T.M.H.S. member Bill Schell, of Holbrook, Massachusetts. The dates shown are those on which the various enrollments were issued.

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| On Completion | - F. W. Wheeler, West Bay City, Michigan, et al. |
| April 28, 1888 | - B. B. Inman, Duluth, Minnesota |
| July 9, 1889 | - F. W. Wheeler & Co., Inc., West Bay City, Mich. |
| August 8, 1889 | - Darius Cole Transp. Co., Inc., Bangor, Maine |
| October 8, 1890 | - Frank Wheeler, West Bay City, Mich. |
| April 28, 1891 | - J. C. Dowd & George Malchus, Cleveland - ½ share each. |
| May 6, 1891 | - Cleveland & Lakeside Steam Navigation Co., Inc., Cleveland, Ohio. |
| July 3, 1891 | - Frank W. Wheeler, West Bay City, Mich. |
| April 11, 1892 | - St. Joseph & Lake Michigan Transp. Co., Inc., (F. W. Wheeler, Pres.) |
| September 22, 1892 | - Smith-Fee Co., Inc., Detroit, Mich. |
| December 9, 1895 | - George T. Arnold, Mackinac, Mich. |
| February 27, 1900 | - George T. Arnold & Arnold Transit Co., Inc., Mackinac, Mich. (no division of interest indicated) |
| May 20, 1901 | - Certificate surrendered, endorsed "sold foreign". |

Some of this meshes quite nicely with what we knew or suspected about OSSIFRAGE. It confirms that she was on Lake Superior, running for the Inman Line out of Duluth in 1888, that the Vandalia Line (St. Joseph & Lake Michigan Transportation) had her on Lake Michigan in 1892, that Arnold acquired her as early as the end of the 1895 season, and that she was sold to Algoma Central in 1901. But what did Darius Cole do with her, and who were Dowd and Malchus? Did she run on Lake Erie then? And we are still no wiser as to what the Smith-Fee Company was!

And even more puzzling is the fact that Wheeler appears to have sold her on three occasions to different buyers, but each time she came back to her builder. Were these simply bareboat charters? It begins to look to us as if OSSIFRAGE was something of a "bad penny", with Wheeler having to take her back when she couldn't make contract guarantees. If so, the problem seems to have ended with the lengthening and rebuilding of 1892.

As for the photo of OSSIFRAGE at Mackinac Island when owned by Arnold, Gordon Wendt, of Sandusky, has another print of it, and years ago, some kind soul identified all of the ships, something we could never have done! At far left can be seen part of MARY, but we don't know which ship of this name it is. Next to her and ahead of OSSIFRAGE is GOLDEN EAGLE (U.S.85213), built in