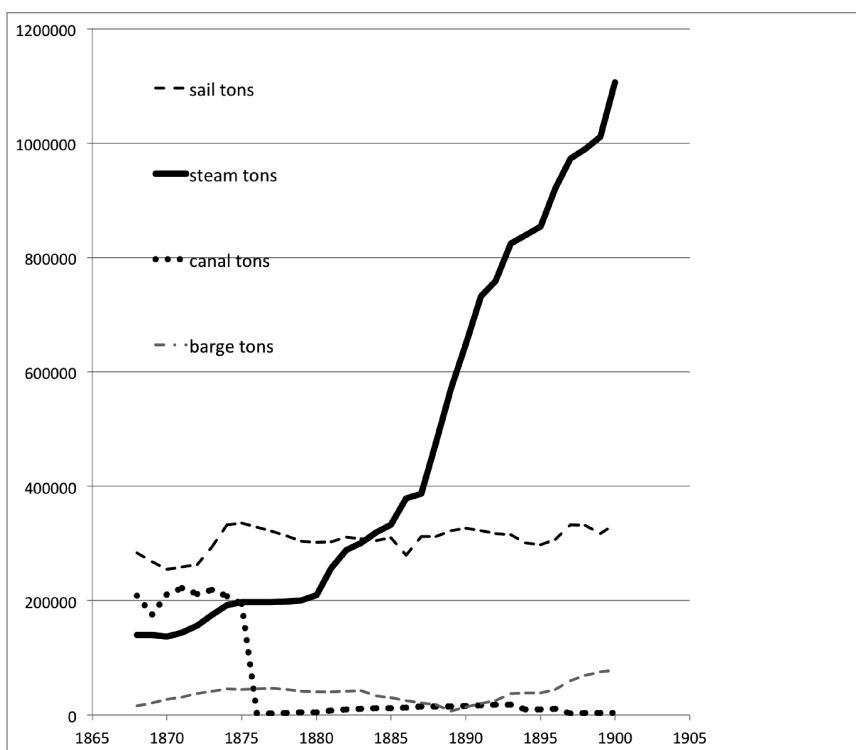


Figure 1 charts the aggregated tonnage from the customs districts on the Great Lakes up to 1867. One of the routine tables in the annual “Report on Foreign Commerce and Navigation” reported total tonnage by customs district and then in a separate column supplied a sub-total for tonnage employed in “steam navigation.” In this figure the “other tonnage” is the result of aggregating the results for the Great Lakes districts, and then subtracting the steam tonnage from the total. The returns consistently show a ratio of non-steam to steam tonnage between 3:1 and 3:2.¹⁶ At first glance, what appears to be of significance is a sharp decline in both absolute and relative size of the steam fleet in the period of the Civil War. The anomalies between 1864 and 1866 appear to be a combination of partial returns as the fleet was being re-measured and, more importantly, the decommissioning of a number of very large hulls and their conversion into barges intended for towing.

Figure 2 US Tonnage, 1868-1900



Source: “Number and Gross Tonnage of Sailing Vessels, Steam Vessels, Canal Boats, and Barges on the Northern Lakes, from 1868 to 1900”, United States, Bureau of Navigation, *Annual Report*, 1900, 388. In 1874, the Bureau of Statistics stopped reporting the tonnage

¹⁶ The raw numbers for 1845 are problematic because 100 percent of the reported tonnage for Buffalo, and all the customs districts in Ohio and Michigan were repeated in the steam column. The numbers for 1865 and 1866 are partial from some customs districts.