

lights were very powerful indeed. It has been said that EMILY P. WEED was the very first lake vessel to be fitted with an electric search light.

On Thursday, August 7th, 1890, EMILY P. WEED, under the command of Captain Frank Welcome, commenced her maiden voyage, which took her from West Bay City to Toledo, Ohio, and she managed a creditable fifteen miles an hour on this trip. At Toledo, she loaded a cargo of 2,800 tons of coal for the Pioneer Fuel Company, and she arrived safely with this cargo at Duluth on the afternoon of Sunday, August 10th.

Although the WEED had a tween deck and side ports for package freight, she frequently carried bulk cargoes, and often she would haul grain. There was a spirit of rivalry amongst the big grain carriers on the Great Lakes, and on the WEED's first trip out of Chicago, she loaded 109,000 bushels of corn, beating the previous record of 108,000 bushels which had been held by the Minch steamer ONOKO. (Interestingly, ONOKO had been built in 1882, and was the first iron-hulled bulk carrier on the lakes.) On September 27, 1890, EMILY P. WEED cleared Milwaukee with a load of 130,000 bushels of barley. On another September trip that year, the WEED carried 110,950 bushels of corn to Buffalo, but her record was broken the very next day, when the 1889-built AMERICA (19), (b) GLENSTRIVEN, came in to Buffalo with 111,507 bushels.

The "Duluth Evening Herald" of February 26, 1891, reported that "... the success of the lake built steel steamer MACKINAW (another 1890 Wheeler boat -Ed.) lately taken to the Atlantic coast, has led to a project for putting other lake ships in the ocean trade. It is now proposed to cut in pieces the fine steamship WEED... and send her to New York in May. It is stated that the WEED, at the present rate of ocean coastwise freights, ought to clear \$75,000 a year, while she will do well to make \$15,000 in 1891 on the lakes..." Of course, this was only a proposal, and it turned out that nothing ever came of it.

The WEED remained on the lakes and continued to make unusual or record-breaking trips. She left Duluth on May 3rd, 1891, with 23,000 barrels of flour for Buffalo; this was the largest barrelled cargo ever taken from the port of Duluth. On a trip in July of 1891, EMILY P. WEED carried from Portage to Buffalo 2,200 tons of copper which was valued at \$611,000; this was described at the time as "the most precious cargo ever carried on the lakes".

The WEED was chartered by a number of different companies in the early 1890s. A November 11, 1890, news item from Milwaukee reported that "Hill's Northern Line (sic) steamers are unable to cope with the amount of business with their own boats, and have been compelled to charter the EMILY P. WEED". In 1891, the Lake Superior Transit Company had her on charter for its pool service.

On February 6, 1894, it was announced that "the Western Transit Co. has engaged the big steamers EMILY P. WEED, W. H. GILBERT and W. H. GRATWICK (sic) for the coming season". The latter vessel was really the WILLIAM H. GRATWICK (II)(11), (b) MINNEKAHTA (14), (c) GLENLYON; we have commented in other issues of "Scanner" on the numerous boats that carried the GRATWICK name, and another, with a different variation on that name, already has been mentioned in this very feature.

The Western Transit Company was the lake shipping affiliate of the New York Central & Hudson River Railroad, and a photo taken of EMILY P. WEED as she was upbound in the Weitzel Lock at the Soo during the summer of 1894 shows that she was fully painted up in that company's usual colours of the period. Her hull was a light grey (the company's later light brown hull had not yet been adopted), while her cabins were all white and her smokestack was buff, with a red band below a broad black smokeband.

James J. Hill's Northern Steamship Company had EMILY P. WEED back under charter again during 1895, as evidenced by a view of her upbound in the