

ment, has taken back the boat. She left for Bay City last week." So OSSIFRAGE once more did her yo-yo act, bouncing back to Wheeler, under whose ownership she was re-enrolled on July 3, 1891.

On July 9, 1891, "The Marine Review", Cleveland, reported: "West Bay City, Mich., July 9 - F. W. Wheeler returned Monday (July 6) from Cleveland where he went to see what could be done with the financial tangle into which the recent purchasers of the OSSIFRAGE had got the vessel. Mr. Wheeler brought the boat away with him, having taken her back as the purchasers were unable to fulfill their contract. The OSSIFRAGE has proven something of an elephant in the hands of half a dozen, more or less, of would be purchasers. Mr. Wheeler built her for himself in the first place, and ran her for a time in the Delta Transportation Company's Line (??? -Ed.). Afterwards the SOO CITY went on in her place (again, ??? -Ed.) and the OSSIFRAGE was sold. But this purchaser did not keep her and Mr. Wheeler once again had the boat on his hands. This performance was gone through with two or three times before this last time, when the Cleveland parties took hold of her. The OSSIFRAGE will be laid up here (West Bay City) for the season." Too much information here, it appears, for us to reconcile with what we know...

But despite the suggestion of lay-up, it was only a week later, on July 16, 1891, that "The Marine Review" reported: "West Bay City, July 16 - It is reported that Capt. Armstrong (Byron again? -Ed.) will take the steamer OSSIFRAGE to Chicago and run her on the excursion route with his two steamers now there, the POST BOY and the NEWSBOY. The boat will remain the property of Wheeler & Co., however, until a purchaser can be found, as Capt. Armstrong doesn't care to invest any money in the vessel. Unless she is taken to Chicago, the OSSIFRAGE will probably remain idle at this port until sold, as Mr. Wheeler says he will not devote his time to keeping her on any route."

That OSSIFRAGE might (but did not) make an appearance on the Crystal Beach route far earlier than her actual 1909 service there, is mentioned in a July 20, 1891, item from the "Buffalo Enquirer". "The new (sic) excursion stm. OSSIFRAGE will not come to Buffalo after all. Last evening its owner, F. W. Wheeler, sent a dispatch to the Crystal Beach Steamboat Co. stating that the steamer was under contract to run elsewhere. It is understood that the boat will be used by Gilman & Barnes of Detroit. The Crystal Beach Steamboat Co. supposed that they were sure of the boat, as the owner accepted an offer by wire last Friday. They will now have to arrange for a boat from some other quarter, as the PEARL (U.S.150032, 177 ft. and 551.66 Gross Tons, built 1875 at Detroit -Ed.) is not large enough to accommodate the traffic."

"The Marine Review", July 23, 1891: "The steamer OSSIFRAGE has probably found a profitable trade for the season. She has been chartered by Mr. Wheeler to the Gilman Brothers of Detroit, who have built up a pleasure resort on Fighting Island, Detroit River, and will run the boat between Detroit and the island."

The Gilman Brothers (or Gilman & Barnes) venture must not have proved as profitable as hoped, for Wheeler formed a partnership with Williams and Langley to operate her on Lake Michigan in 1892. "The Marine Review", November 19, 1891: "Wheeler & Co. of West Bay City are putting new compound engines into the LORA and OSSIFRAGE, and both are receiving additional boiler capacity. The OSSIFRAGE will be lengthened thirty feet during the winter (apparently the 1892 rebuilding and re-engining by Abram Smith at Algonac -Ed.) and it is said that next season both boats will be put on a route between Benton Harbor and Chicago, in competition with the CITY OF CHICAGO."

"The Marine Review", December 31, 1891: "St. Joseph & Lake Michigan Transportation Company is the name of the concern that will operate the steamers LORA and OSSIFRAGE the coming season. The incorporators are the Hon. F. W. Wheeler of Bay City, John S. Williams of Terra Haute, Indiana, and Capt. J. Langley of St. Joseph. The steamers will run from St. Joseph to Chicago, and if the business will warrant, a line will also be run from St. Joseph to