

CADILLAC was delivered to her owner on April 19, 1928, and she joined the company's other ferries LA SALLE (built in 1922 and a near-sistership to CADILLAC), BRITANNIA (1906), PLEASURE (1894) and PROMISE (1892), as well as the Bob-Lo steamers COLUMBIA (1902) and STE. CLAIRE (1910). CADILLAC (U.S. 227292) was registered at Detroit, and her commissioning made it possible for the company to inaugurate a six-minute service across the river.

CADILLAC, along with LA SALLE, had the honour of being designed by one of North America's most renowned naval architects of all time, Frank E. Kirby. CADILLAC was 170'6" in overall length and 155'8" in length between perpendiculars; her overall beam was 68'1" while her registered beam of hull was 56'0". Her molded depth was 17'11", while her draft was 13'3". Her tonnage was calculated as 636 Gross and 404 Net, while her displacement was 1380 tons. Her steel hull was divided into five watertight compartments.

CADILLAC's main engine was of the vertical, three-cylinder compound variety, with the two low-pressure cylinders having the same bore. The cylinder diameters were 22, 32 and 32 inches, while the stroke of the pistons was 36 inches. This engine, No. 590 of the Great Lakes Engineering Works, developed normal indicated horsepower of 1300, with the maximum horsepower being 1800. The engine turned a solid four-bladed propeller which was 11 feet in diameter and had a pitch of 13 feet. Great Lakes Engineering Works cast and machined this propeller.

Steam was provided by two coal-fired, single-ended Scotch marine boilers, each of which was 14'0" in diameter and 10'6" in length. The boilers were manufactured by the Toledo Shipbuilding Company Inc., and there were four furnaces with cold forced draft. The boilers produced steam at a working pressure of 185 pounds per square inch.

Various pumps for the steamer were provided by the Worthington Pump & Machinery Corp., while the steering engine, directly connected to the rudder quadrant, as well as the windlass were supplied by the Hyde Windlass Company. The automobile gangplanks, placed forward on each side of the main deck, were raised and lowered by winches manufactured by the Dake Engine Company, of Grand Haven, Michigan. The passenger gangplanks, one located forward of midships on the starboard side of the promenade deck, and the other well aft on the port side of the same deck, were operated by Jacques hand winches. Hand winches by Jacques also were used to handle the four lifeboats, two of which were placed on either side of the hurricane deck and worked with radial steel davits.

Electrical power was provided by two 15-kilowatt Engberg generators worked by reciprocating steam engines, and there was an auxiliary 5-kilowatt Westinghouse turbine-driven generating set. Valves from three firms, the Leslie, Powell, and Crane Companies, were used in the steamer. The Worthington Pump & Machinery Corp. provided the jet condenser, while there was a Reilly feed water heater. The big searchlight, placed atop the pilothouse, was manufactured by the Sperry Corp.

The main deck was of steel construction and was designed to be almost totally unobstructed to provide for a free and circular movement of autos around the deck to facilitate loading and unloading. There was only a small midships house to enclose the stack casing and companionways up to the promenade deck and down to the engineroom. Whereas LA SALLE had part of her main deck enclosed, CADILLAC's main deck was completely open to the elements, with only a closed steel bulwark to provide any protection whatsoever. The forward end of the main deck had a raised deckhead to allow for vehicles of greater height, such as trucks, to be carried there.

Because of the higher main deck clearance forward, the promenade deck consisted of two separate levels. On the raised forward section, there was an open observation deck and a rather unusual, round-fronted house with large windows which served as a smoking cabin for men. This prominent smoking room was a feature of all Detroit River ferries built in the 1920s, and also of