

The ship was sponsored by Mrs. Augustus B. Wolvin, who splattered the champagne, and the signal for the launch of the ship was given by Mrs. James C. Wallace, wife of the vice-president and general manager of the shipbuilding company. The vessel started down the ways a bit crooked by the stern, but she was even when she hit the water. A 25-gun salute signalled the ship's entry into the waters of the Black River, and many ship and factory whistles also sounded in salute. Observers watched from every available vantage point, including the decks of the steamer HENRY STEINBRENNER (i), which was moored opposite the drydock. Following the launch, a luncheon was given for 400 honoured guests, and a civic ball that evening raised funds for the Lorain Public Library to purchase books.

The new ship, christened AUGUSTUS B. WOLVIN, was enrolled at Duluth and was given U.S. official number 200883. The evolution of the steel-hulled bulk carrier had taken place very quickly around the turn of the century, and vessels of 500 feet in length had begun to be seen. But the WOLVIN was the largest ship ever constructed for lake service up to that time and she was 560 feet in overall length. Her registered length was 540.0 feet between perpendiculars, her beam was 56.0 feet, and her depth was 32.0 feet. Her tonnage was calculated as 6585 Gross and 5311 Net. Her cargo hold was built in the form of a hopper, 490 feet long without intervening bulkheads, and with sidetanks fitted, it was 43 feet wide at the top and 24 feet at the bottom. There were no supporting (and obstructing) stanchions inside the hold, the deck above being supported by a series of girder arches. There were 33 hatches, spaced on 12-foot centres, which undoubtedly facilitated loading but made unloading by shore rigs a major chore (with the narrow hatches). She was fitted with telescoping steel hatch covers operated by means of cables and steam winches.

The steamer was powered by a powerful quadruple expansion engine which was built for the ship in 1904 by the American Ship Building Company, Cleveland, and which had cylinders of 18½, 28½, 43½ and 66 inches diameter, and a stroke of 42 inches. This plant gave 2,000 Indicated Horsepower at 85 revolutions per minute. Steam at 250 p.s.i. was produced by two coal-fired watertube boilers, 10'0" long, manufactured for the WOLVIN by the Babcock and Wilcox Company, New York. With four furnaces and induced draft, there were 156 square feet of grate surface and 6,800 square feet of heating surface.

The ship was quite remarkable in her exterior appearance. She had, unusually, a totally flush forecastle and poop, and her forecastle head was protected only by a closed steel bulwark. There was a winged texas cabin on the forward deck, containing the master's quarters and office, and forward of it sat a turret-style pilothouse which had five windows in its curved front. Below decks, in the "forecastle", were located five luxuriously-appointed guest staterooms, with a private galley, dining saloon and social parlour, along with two private bathrooms. There was an open navigation bridge on the monkey's island, protected by a closed bulwark as well as a canvas dodger, and an awning could be hoisted over the bridge for protection from the summer sun. The bridge deck was fitted with flying bridgewings and a heavily raked pole foremast was stepped abaft the bridge.

The steamer had a graceful sheer to her spar deck, and open post-and-wire rails down each side. Aft, she was of the "submarine" design, with very little superstructure abovedecks. There was a beautifully shaped counter stern, and a heavily raked pole mainmast was stepped well abaft a tall and fairly heavy smokestack, which was raked to match the masts. Some rather large ventilator cowls rose close to the funnel, and a lifeboat was fitted on either side of the aft deck, each worked with radial steel davits.

AUGUSTUS B. WOLVIN was built at a cost of \$480,000 (a princely sum in those years), and some 750,000 rivets were used in her construction, as were 4,500 tons of steel, exclusive of machinery and fittings.