

Detailed Account of the Wreck of Two Schooners
and the Rescue
the Crew.

Taken from Records kept by Mr. Wm. Berry and loaned by his daughter
Mrs. Nettie Hunter.

THE SCHOONER E.G. BENEDICT

49
Shortly before daylight on the A.M. of November 19th A.D. 1891, I discovered a fore and aft schooner ashore here, east of the harbour. I immediately notified the life saving crew and prepared the boat for service. At dawn we could see the crew of the schooner in the rigging and a violent gale was blowing from the south west and high and dangerous seas breaking over the said schooner which was lying head to wind. A short time was lost in my exertion to get the lifeboat into the channel from her station as the water in the harbour is so low the boat had to be dragged by tackle for several feet before it floated. Three of my crew were absent from home viz. John Beasley, Albert Grant, and Horatio Thorne. I had great difficulty in obtaining substitutes for these men as the gale was steadily increasing and made it appear useless to attempt the rescue. The schooner H.P. Murray was preparing for winter quarters and three of her crew volunteered viz. Capt. Mark Berry, John Landers, mate and Arthur Mc Kenzie, seaman.

I succeeded in passing out of the harbour and rounded the east pier without any serious mishap and passing through the breakers and rounded to, under the stern of the wreck. The crew of the wreck then got on top of the cabin and hove me a line with which we hauled our lifeboat up to the wreck as close as possible. I detailed two men to keep her from boarding the wreck by the use of pike-poles and had two men to assist in catching each member of the stranded crew as they jumped into our boat from the taff-rail of the wreck. The first one rescued was the woman cook named "Jessie Franklin", niece of the captain who was nearly perished and unable to help herself. Two of the crew lifted to the taff side of the wreck and at the time our boat would be in proper position. They lowered her into the arms of my two men detailed for that purpose. Each one of the remaining crew jumped into the lifeboat from said taff-rail and were caught by the two men as stated. After all of the crew had been safely taken from the wreck, I headed our boat (after having backed her up clear of the wreck) toward the pier.

The sea broke over all of the occupants until they were completely saturated and the spray was constantly flying over them from stem to stern. It was with great difficulty and caution we were able to keep our boat from filling as the sea at the end of the pier was so heavy. It was necessary to watch a moment's lull to keep her away FOR the harbour. With the noble crew I had and the magnificent seaworthiness of our boat we landed safely in the harbour. The rescued crew was taken to an hotel, and their wants kindly cared for. We housed our boat and followed the regulations as laid down therein and I immediately telegraphed the Department the following of which this is a copy,-

"
To W. Smith
Deputy Minister of Marine and Fisheries,
Ottawa, Ont.

Port Stanley, Nov. 19th, 1891.

Rescued five men and women, crew 'Schooner E.G. Benedict -ashore
here at eight O' clock A.M.-heavy gale from northwest

signed
Wm. Berry

The next day after the storm abated, I took the crew and lifeboat to the wreck and secured all the clothing and other cabin utensils available.

The REPORT of CAPT.LUCAS-
OWNER and MASTER of the
stranded
E.G. BENEDICT

I bought the schooner E.G.Benedict in the year A.D.1886 from Hiram Walker Esq'r, of Walkerville, Ont. and she hails from Montreal. I loaded this cargo of 145 cords ,elm, bolts, at Smith's dock, 30 miles west of Rondeau, Smith & Moore of Chatham being the consignors J.C.Anthony of Erie Basin, Buffalo, the consignees. I left the said dock on Tues.the 17th.of Nov. and came to anchor under the Rondeau Point as the sea was too heavy to proceed on my voyage to Buffalo, N.Y. I hove up anchor at 5p.m.Wed. with the wind changed to the southwest, and made a heavy sea. The schooner was leaking, having been damaged while lying at the said dock, during a heavy sea from the southwest, the previous Sunday. Her stantions and rail had been broken off. Her covering board started the damage, being on the weather side and it was difficult to keep her free although her pumps were going constantly all the time.

By this time I made for Port Stanley's light but the sea had increased so much I was obliged to shorten sail as the schooner was laboring in the sea and the water gaining. I found it would be impossible to round Long Point with her, as she no doubt, would have water-logged ere I reached Long Point. I knew there was barely ten feet of water at the mouth of the harbour at Port Stanley, but my schooner was not drawing over 9 feet I was in hopes she would go in and even if she did strike, it would not be hard enough to stop her way. Accordingly, I decided to run to Port Stanley as the only chance of saving the schooner and my crew. As I had lost my yawl while lying at the above mentioned dock, I took in my mainsail and squared away for Port Stanley light.

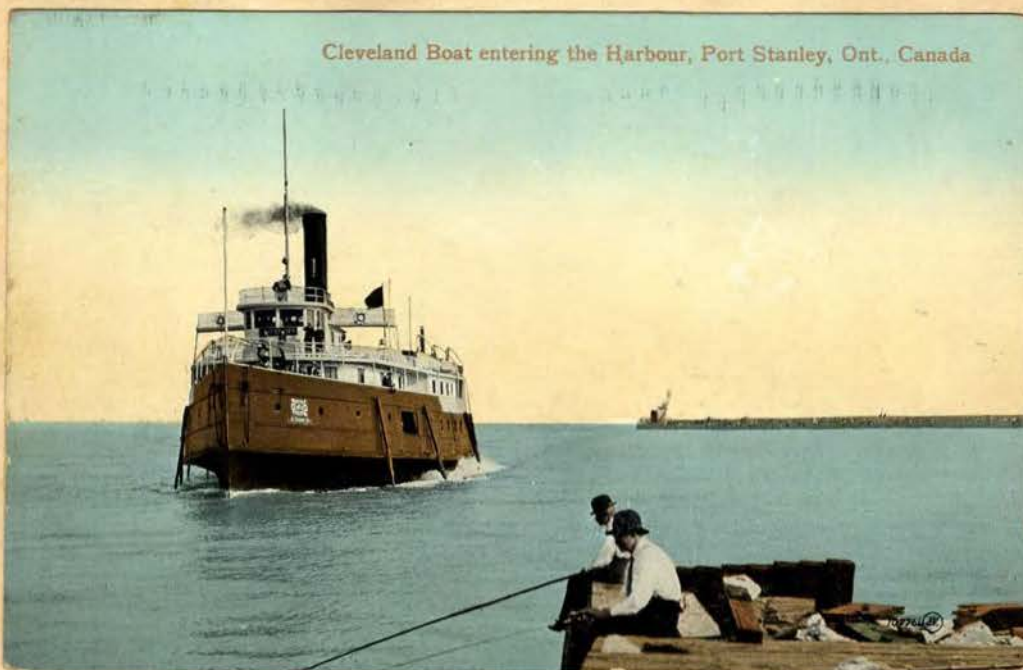
When within twice the length of the schooner, with the light of the harbour well opened and the west pier rather aboard, the schooner struck heavily on the sand bar. The sea lifted her ahead and she struck again with great force so that she appeared to be held by the bow. The sea caught her on the Port Quarter and she struck again with great force so that she broached to and went to leeward of the east pier. I did not let go the anchor as I knew it was sandy bottom and would not hold. The schooner soon struck the beach and filled with water about 2 A.M. of the 19th Nov. A.D.1891. When she went ashore the cabin soon filled and after we had taken refuge on the tables and chairs, we found it necessary to leave them and take to the rigging. The sea and the wind had become terrific and my niece, who was cooking for us was nearly perished.

When the Life Saving Crew rescued us (and I here wish to state publicly, that I did not think any Life Saving Crew, would attempt to face the sea as it was then), we were overjoyed, when we saw the boat coming. We continued in great suspench for fear of accident until we were safely landed.

I have no insurance on the schooner which is twenty-three years old and considering her age and damaged condition I know she cannot hold together very long, with such a heavy sea as is now breaking over her. I therefore believe she will be a total wreck. The following are the names of the crew,-

Thomas Lucas-----Owner and Master--- Windsor, Ont.
Lewis Larose-----Mate-----Port Dover, Ont.
Thomas Morrow-----Seaman-----Sombra, Ont.
Lewis Mercer-----Seaman-----Detroit, Mich.
George Franklin---Seaman-----Puce R. Ont.
Jessie Franklin---Cook-----Puce R. Ont.

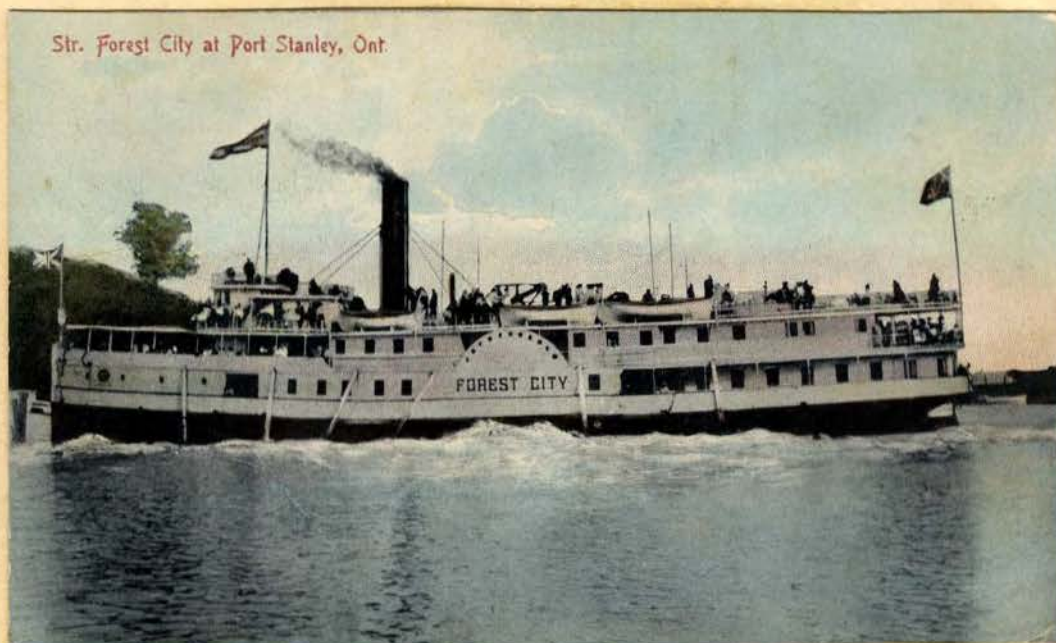
Cleveland Boats-
Between Port and Cleveland.



Cleveland Boat entering the Harbour, Port Stanley, Ont., Canada

Forest City

Western Reserve Navigation Co.--Pere Marquette, No. 8-



Str. Forest City at Port Stanley, Ont.



The Flora-is shown elsewhere in these pages.
Capt. Dale-master.
Some other Boats to and from Cleveland have
been, -City of Buffalo; Teddy Roosevelt; St.
Ignace; State of Ohio;
Urania (old Flora)

C. & B. Line officials announced that the City of Erie will continue trips across Lake Erie to Port Stanley after the summer season on two dates, September 11 and 18. August 25th 1932



Goodtime



S. S. City of Erie leaving for Cleveland, Ohio, at 2.30 p.m., Friday and Saturday during July and August.

Cleveland Boats-

Between Cleveland and Pt. Stanley.



Steamer Theodore Roosevelt Port Stanley - Cleveland



City of St. Ignace Running from Cleveland Ohio to Port Stanley.



City of Montreal Unloading at Port Stanley, Freight Shed.

Ran between Montreal and Port
passengers and freight.

June 30th/36.

S. S. City of Erie Starts Week-end Sailing Between Port Stanley and Cleveland

Londoners will have a week-end cruise available at their back door this season according to plans completed by the Cleveland and Buffalo Transit Company in conference with the Public Utilities Commission and the London Chamber of Commerce. The S. S. City of Erie made her first trip into this port Friday afternoon,



This year's service is looked upon to be particularly attractive to Canadians. Leaving Pt. Stanley at 2.30 p.m. on Friday afternoon, they will be able to spend a day and a night in Cleveland before returning on the Sunday boat, which arrives here at 1.30 p.m. Should they desire a longer cruise, they will be able to catch the night boat from Cleveland to Buffalo and get back in time to make connections for the return Port Stanley trip on Sunday. Cleveland is featuring the Great Lakes Exposition, starting June 27, and running for one hundred days. On the boat itself, there will be music and dancing in the social hall to the strains of Mickey Katz and his all American band.

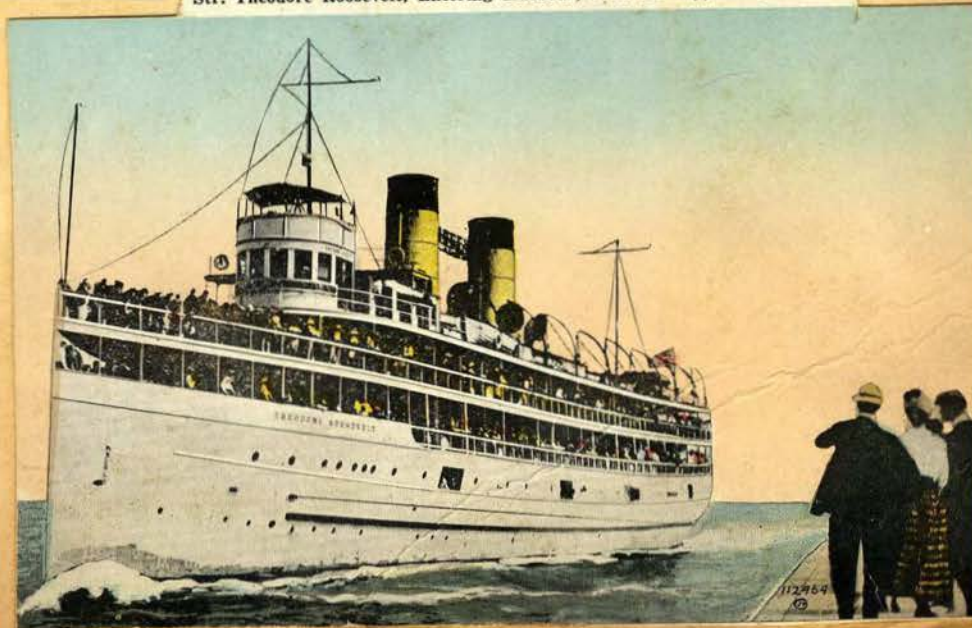
Many of the same old faces were to be seen, however, including Captain Jack Eaton, a veteran of thirty-five years standing with the Cleveland Company, and Jerry Wynne purser. The five-hour trip across the lake was uneventful and all in the day's work according to Captain Eaton, who has sailed on this run since 1931 with the City of Erie. Almost, Port Stanley can be looked upon as Captain Eaton's home port since he was born not many miles away in Dutton and can recall going to school with many prominent residents of this vicinity, including James H. McLandress, of St. Thomas.

Urania-(The old Flora)



"State of Ohio"-docked at the Wharf, on East side of harbour, just south of the bridge. This wharf is shown on the page, "About Town."

Str. Theodore Roosevelt, Entering Harbour, Port Stanley, Ont., Canada.



Marine Items, 1874

From Our Own Correspondent.

Port Stanley, Nov. 23.

The schooner *Mary* arrived this morning from Cleveland, with a general cargo of merchandize, and is followed immediately by the schooner *Lime Rock*, with a cargo of coal. These will probably be the last cargoes for the season.

Other recent arrivals have been—Schr. *Elgin*, of this Port, from Georgian Bay, with 270,000 feet of lumber for disposal here. Steam barge *Mary Mills*, for wood. Schr. *Lydia Mac*, from Buffalo, coal and sundries.

The tugs *Orient* and *Rescue* have been making this place their rendezvous for the past week. The *Orient* was in charge of the schr. *Fosteria*, in a leaking condition, with a cargo of corn for Buffalo. After riding out the recent gale at anchor, the tug and schooner passed down yesterday. The *Rescue* is engaged in examining the condition of a fine new schooner which was sunk by a collision some time ago, about thirty miles south-east of this Port. Marine divers are employed to ascertain her position, with a view to raising her next summer.

No ice has formed as yet in the harbor, but as insurance on vessels now ceases, a few more days and the navigation season of 1874 will be at a close.

1937 TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO

(From The Times-Journal Files)

The *Midland Prince*, which was prevented from entering the harbor at Port Stanley yesterday due to the amount of flood debris floating in the water, was able to enter this morning, reaching dock safely.

FIFTY YEARS AGO

(From the files of The Times and The Journal)

Oscar Smith, Port Stanley, builder and contractor, has just completed a large scow to be used by the Pound Net Fish Co.

The St. Thomas Dental Association met at the office of Dr. G. T. Kennedy last night. An interesting clinic was given by Dr. G. T. Kennedy and Dr. F. E. Bennett.

Thomas Campbell of St. Thomas was found lying prostrate across the street car tracks on Sandwich street, in Chatham yesterday. He was removed before the passing of a street car.

The London & Lake Erie Transportation Company, has purchased the steamer *King Edward*, formerly of the Clergue fleet, and will operate a service connecting Port Stanley and Erieau with Cleveland. The steamer will be re-named "The Forest City."

THE coal docks at Port Stanley, when loaded to capacity, will accommodate over 100,000 tons, and in consequence, the village has become an important distributing centre for a large part of Southern Ontario. The above panorama, taken by Reeve W. C. Wheaton, was taken from the brow of Hillcrest Hill just above the lake, shows three of the Canada Steamship Lines freighters alongside the docks, small mountains of coal piles behind them. In the right foreground are several of the fish company shanties at the south end of Colborne street, while at the left are the piers of the outer harbor basin.

The steamship *Lethbridge* arrived Friday at Port Stanley from Fort William with a cargo of flour which was unloaded, and left later with a cargo of signs from the Metal Signs Ltd, of St Thomas, bound for Montreal, while the *City of Windsor* unloaded a shipment of package freight. 1937

The collier *Midland Prince* has been making record runs across the lake between Port Stanley and Ashtabula, Ohio, having crossed three times within the past week. 1937

25 years ago
Nov 30/62

PATROL OF CANADIAN WATERS.

The poaching of American tugs in Canadian fishing grounds, was taken care of, by the Canadian Government. The first boat to patrol the north shore of L. Erie, was the "Petrel".

Port Stanley people were quite interested in this revenue cutter, as young men from the village sailed on her, and how could our young women, escape the charm of those like the one you notice in the photo.

(From an old clipping) (Mr. Thos. Morgan)

A Saucy Little Craft.

"The Petrel is the only revenue cutter on the lakes. In build and equipment she is a miniature war vessel, being equipped with cannon, rifles, cutlasses and revolvers. During the summer she is a terror to transgressing fishermen on Lake Erie, where she plies chiefly, there being few depredations of the kind on the upper lakes.

The poaching, Capt. Dunn says is done mostly east of Pelee Island and off Long Point, abreast Erie. The little ship has chased many Yankee fish tugs out of Canadian waters. Once in awhile a tug and crew are captured and brought to Port Stanley, but more often the offending fishermen see the Petrel coming a long distance off and make haste to get away. Capt. Dunn contents himself with capturing the nets and their finny contents, which are confiscated.

About 400 nets were captured the past summer. This was considerably more than during the preceding summer. In 1894, the first year of the Petrel's service, 1,000-odd nets were captured. The pursuit of the law-breaking fishermen is always attended with more or less excitement, says Capt. Dunn, but there is never any serious trouble. The Petrel is too vicious an appearing craft for that. She is speedy too, when it becomes necessary to put her to the test. Her summer headquarters are at PORT STANLEY; late in the fall she passes her unoccupied time at Amherstburg, and she lays up at Wakerville.

The regulations aboard ship are about the same as upon an ordinary lake-going craft, though the men are drilled an hour each day. Mr. Dunn is not a stickler for pomp and detail. He has had command of the Petrel ever since she came out in 1893. He started in the revenue service in 1890 and was for several years a sailor and in command of lake boats before that period. If appearances count for anything, Capt. Dunn has the affection and esteem of his merry crew.



(Mr. Geo. Wilson)



At Port Stanley Harbour
(Mr. A. J. Nicholas' collection)

The Petrel is 125 feet over all, 22 feet beam, and 8 feet 6 inches depth of hold. Besides the captain's room, she is provided with officers' quarters, a chart room, the galley and the crews' mess. The officers include Capt. Dunn; First Officer J. S. Ingster, Second Officer Jno. McPherson, Chief Engineer A. J. Brown, Assistant Engineer W. H. Winter, and Drill Instructor E. V. Heston. Then there are the boatswain and carpenter, and quite a compliment of seamen and stokers.

The men from Port aboard were, Capt. Tom. Morgan, who sailed nine yrs as quartermaster; Victor Wilson; Joe. Hough; Geo. Wilson and Arthur Leighton."

In the fall of 1904, the Petrel was taken out of service on L. Erie and sent to the Atlantic coast, where she did service for another thirty odd years, but she was wreck-

(over)

THE PETREL.

Capt. Dunn-Master.

ed in 1934.

From the same Clipping)

Inspection.

"The trim and warlike-looking Canadian revenue cutter Petrel, lay at her wharf in Wakerville, her sharp prow, which is said to be capable of ramming the stoutest freighter that passes through the Detroit R., turned ominously toward the American shore. A big Union Jack flew from the flagpole at the stern, the nine pound gun had been polished to mirror-like brightness, the jolly tars were all neatly arrayed in their shore-leave clothes, and Capt. Dunn, florid-faced and quietly jolly-looking, slowly paced the quarterdeck. The gay appearance of the little craft contrasted strongly with the wintry winter scene. Great boats coated with ice, passed up and down in seeming defiance of winter's warning signs, while gulls circled round them or held pink-tea receptions upon the rapidly forming cakes. The captain was arrayed in full regimentals, including his sword and a Victoria medal presented for his participation in the Fenian raid of 1866, when he was stationed at Sarnia.

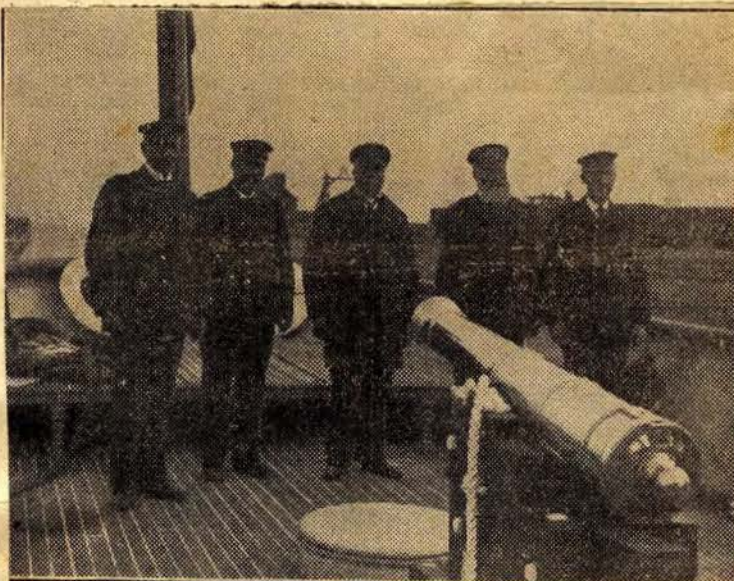
"We are waiting to be inspected," said he, in response to a query.

"Every year, at laying up time, Capt. O.G.V. Spain, commanding the fisheries protective service of Canada, visits the various revenue cutters in the service (about ten in all) and inspects them. The crews are required to go through the regular drill for his benefit, and that is why you find us on waiting orders, so to speak."

Commander Spain did arrive after awhile and the crew of the Petrel were put through the cutless drill and various other military maneuvers, the excellence of which seemed to please the Inspector, who also found everything to his satisfaction on boardship."

The Crew in 1903. From the left, -

Jas. Inkster - first mate; A.S. Brown - chief engineer; Edward Dunn - Captain; Jno. McPherson - second mate; Jas. Leonard - second engineer



THE CREW OF THE PETREL

THE VIGILANT

Follows the PETREL.

one night

The first visit of the vigilant into this harbour, was in the late autumn of 1903 and is impressed on the memory of Mr. Arthur Glover. The great search light of the vessel streamed over the harbour and at the same time, lighted up the cutter which sparkled with ice crystals, giving the boat an appearance of a ship approaching from Fairyland.

She docked on the east side of the harbour, where Officials from the Government boarded her and made a trip to Walkerville, going by way of Cleveland.

The following year, the Vigilant was put on patrol work on Lake Erie: At first, she was manned by the same crew as the Petrel, under Capt. Dunn, but after a change of Government there were changes made in the crew members.

The Vigilant was 145 ft. long and had a speed of 21 knots per hour. She carried four guns which struck fear into the South shore fishermen and kept them on their own side of the lake.

The Vigilant was later taken off the Lower lakes and put in Upper lake service



The Vigilant was sold in later years and made into a tow-barge and the owners used the tug, Ruth B. to tow her back and forth from Midland to Detroit with freight. The Ruth B. sank at Chatham and the gas boat, Pellow towed the

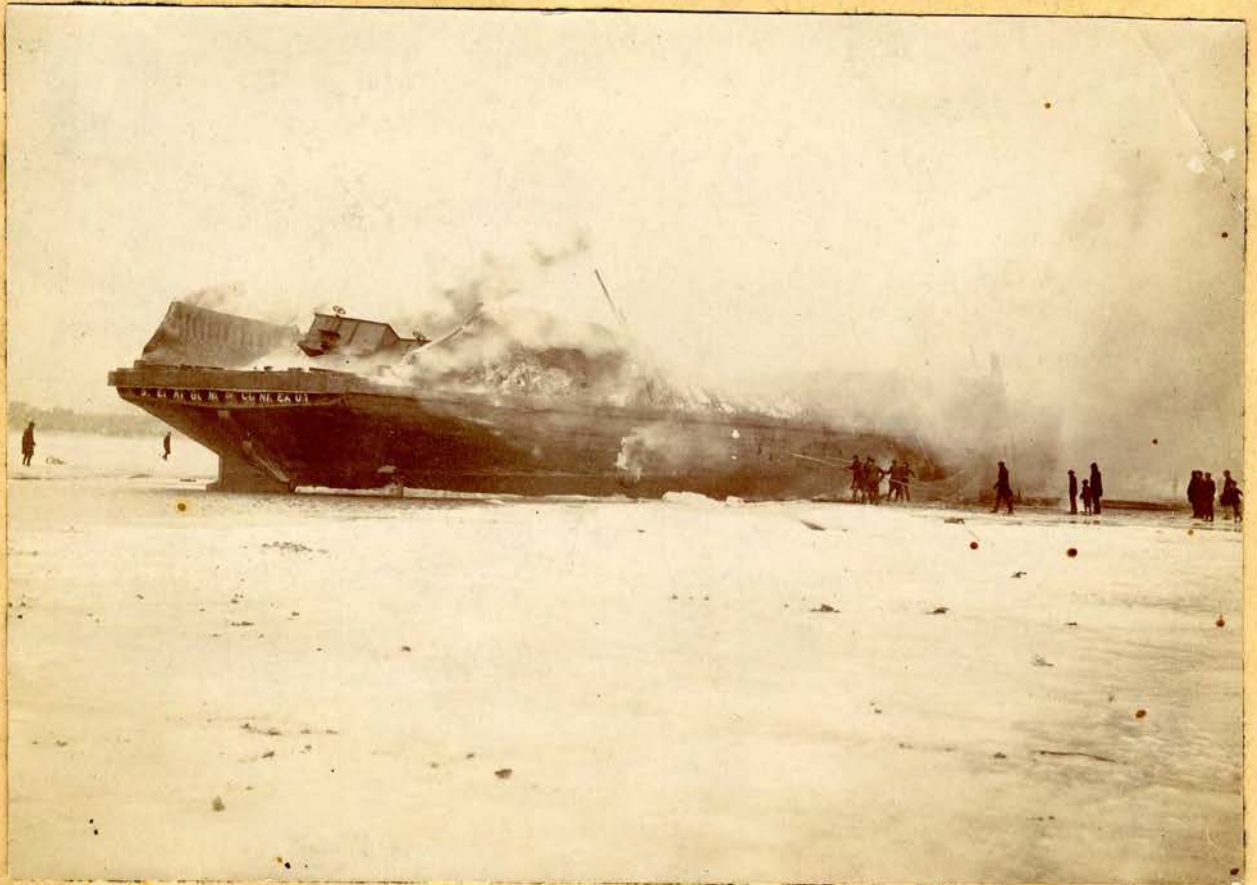
The Vigilant.
(continued)

the Vigilant and she was laid up near the Ambassador Bridge.

Mr. Ernest Glover and a partner bought the tow-barge Vigilant and the Finglo brought her to Port Stanley. Her first trip from this port was to Toledo for coal, Capt F.R. Dale acting as master of the Finglo on this trip. (to Ashtabula)

On the second trip, it was towed by the tug, Brown Bros. with Capt. Henning as master.

The Vigilant again changed ownership. Two diesel engines were installed and she left Port Stanley for Gore Bay, to be used as a freight boat.



Shenango - burned across the Lake
It carried about 26 cars