STEAMBOATING ON CHAUTAUQUA LAKE

Paper by John F. Jones

for annual meeting of the

Chautauqua County Historical Society
Mayville, October 4, 1941
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An Englishman in 1802 is credited with making the first practical steamboat, but it was an American - Robert Fulton - who fitted a steamship on the Hudson River in 1807 with engines made by Boulton & Watt, after his designs, and brought steam navigation for the first time to commercial success.

Three years later, Fulton designed a boat for service on the lower Mississippi - built it at Pittsburgh and named it the New Orleans. Late in 1811, the vessel left Pittsburgh under her own power, and later in 1812 made three profitable round trips between Natchez, Miss., and New Orleans. Her top speed upstream was supposed to be three miles an hour; usually she averaged less than two miles, but even that was so much better than any keelboat powered by human muscle could do, that it was considered little short of miraculous.

At Robert Fulton's death in 1815, the greatest speed attained by steamboats on the Hudson was under seven miles an hour. About this time Robert Livingston Stevens produced the Philadelphia with a rate of eight miles. From then until 1832, Stevens kept accelerating the speed till the North American attained fifteen miles per hour, which was real speed for those days, but slow as that now appears. When compared with today's speed from the powerful diesel engine, the miracle of the steam engine, revolutionized transportation and travel by land and water. After mankind had depended on wind, current, or muscle through all the earlier eras of travel on this earth.

Western New York, with the opening of the Erie canal in 1825, took on new life and became attractive to settlers from the east. In Dr. Hazeltine's book, "The Early History of the Town of Ellliott" - from which most visitors on early historical events in Jamestown are quoting - we find related on page 75: "There was so much merchandise and so many household goods coming to and passing through Jamestown that in 1824 Blish Allen concluded to build what was then called a 'horse boat'."

It was, one might say, a large sloop with a cabin and one side for passengers and stables for eight horses on the other side. There were small padle wheels on either side like a steamboat. A large wheel in the center of the boat connected with the shaft of the paddle wheels by gearing. This center wheel was put in motion by four horses. At the stern was an oar like those used on rafts. Place an oar in the boat to steer, and Gust Allen on the roof to command, and two or three stout boys with oars to keep the horses going, and you have the affair complete. The wheel to which the horses were hitched was painted red - w'y, I do not know,
for that was the only paint wasted on the boat.

The horse boat ran semi-occasionally a year; it may have made a few trips the second year. It then gave way to the schooner Link and scows with sails. The horse boat was a complete failure. No four horses could stand it at that wheel over an hour at a time; then they were removed and the other four hitched on, continuing in this way to the end of the trip.

The distance from Jamestown to Mayville was never made in less than ten hours, with the wind favorable, and it frequently took a week to make a round trip. The wind and the scows — the Link under the command of Capt. Carpenter, the Palmer scow under Capt. Jacobs, another under Capt. Shaw — competed as the steamboats do now, for the freight from Mayville to Jamestown and had plenty to do up to 1828.

In 1827, Alvin Plumb formed a company and built a steamboat for Chautauqua lake and, although the first, was one of the steamboats ever on the lake. It was built of the best white oak, by a ship carpenter from Buffalo named Richards. The timber of the boat was selected and cut by Eliakim Garfield. The planks were sawed by the boatbuilders from logs which were rolled up on a string so that one of the sawyers could stand under it. Richards worked slowly at this boat during the winter and had it ready for launching in the following May.

The launching of this boat was a great day for the residents of Jamestown and vicinity. The whole surrounding country assembled. It had been built on land now occupied by the Erie R.R. tracks, south of the present Furniture Manufacturers' Building on West 2nd Street, Jamestown, and when all was ready, a gun was fired and the huge boat began to move, cabin end foremost, toward the outlet. As she touched the water, a lady of Jamestown broke a bottle of current wine over her bow and said, "I name thee Chautauqua."

The steamboat was poled up to where the landing now is and there speedily finished and painted. Phineas Palmer soon arrived from Pittsburgh with the machinery, accompanied by an engineer named Starring who put it in place and was the engineer of the steamboat the first and, I think, the second year. After Starring, Palmer and charge of the engine. The last of June she was in readiness for work. Capt. John T. Wilson, an old Lake Erie captain who was to command her, came over from Sugar Grove where he resided, and she made a trip up into the lake and back. Everything was pronounced perfect. The first trip to Mayville was on the following Fourth of July. It was a great day for Alvin Plumb and his friends.

In 1835, a larger and faster boat was built under the superintendence of Capt. George W. Kellogg. This boat was called the Robert Falconer, and Kellogg commanded her during the season of 1836. Capt. Hill ran the Chautauqua as an opposition boat. The name of this second boat was afterwards changed to William H. Seward, and still later was called the Empire.
There were a few years when steamboating did not pay on Chautauqua Lake. The first boat was dismantled, bought by Jason Palmer and others, loaded - I think - with tanbark and run down the river. In 1848, Capt. Stoneman built the Twins, which was propelled the first year by horse power and afterwards by steam.

A boat called the Holman Vail was built in 1851. She ran one season and burned at her dock in the fall of 1852. Either before or after the H. Vail a boat which, after building, was found almost unseaworthy because she careened so badly, was built by Mat P. Bemus and others. She was called the Water Witch and afterward, I think, the Lady of the Lake. She either sank or was burned at Mayville.

In 1856, Capt. James M. Gardner built a large steamboat at Mayville, and put in the best machinery that has ever been in any boat on the lake. This boat was called the C. C. Dennis, after the superintendent of the Buffalo & State Line Ry. She was 125 feet long with a width or beam of 26 feet - a side-wheeler, equipped with a condensing marine engine. This was a very expensive engine, which put Gardner deeply in debt, but he continued to run her with some intermission up to the close of the season of 1862. He then removed the boiler and engine to Warren, Pa., and placed them in another boat. The hull of the boat was floated to the west side of the outlet, just below the Fairmount Avenue bridge, and there allowed to rot down. It is now buried under the front building of the Jamestown Table Co.

Continuing Dr. Hazeltine's narrative: "Since the abandonment of the C. C. Dennis, something over forty steamboats, large and small, have been built on Chautauqua Lake. We now have flowing the waves of our beautiful Chautauqua, nine or ten large, staunch, first-class steamboats, and of smaller ones a host, and business for them all. Chautauqua with its lectures, its schools and its colleges, is one of the institutions that has come to stay. It now casts the shadow of a giant, but it will never be less.

"Chautauqua Lake with its shores lined with magnificent hotels has become a noted watering place, and now a railroad is being built along the shores. Notwithstanding this, the steamboats will increase in number, size, and beauty, until Chautauqua Lake will bear upon her bosom a navy larger then any body of water of its size in the world."

Let us not forget, this rosy summary was written in 1856 - fifty-five years ago - during the golden days of steamboating and tourist travel on our beautiful lake. It was written by a prophet who could not foresee the coming of the automobile and the airplane, which again revolutionized our mode of transportation and travel, and retired the older and slower vehicles to the scrap heap.

The years have taken telling toll of that once proud fleet of lake steamers, as it has the large and beautiful summer hotels at
Lakewood, Greenhurst, Griffiths Point, Belleview, Bemus Point, Maple Springs, Point Chautauqua, and Mayville. No more shall we see the sturdy Cleveland Greys parading at Lakewood between the Kent House and the Sterlingworth Inn, in their huge bearskins, on a Sunday afternoon before admiring crowds. No more can we crowd the steamers for a "moonlight ride" on summer evenings, listening to the music and watching the dancing on the broad decks. No, these pleasures are gone forever.

Continuing our list of steamboats, the next built was the unfortunate Chautauqua No. 2 - built in 1866 by James and Wm. T. Howell and Alired Wilcox at Mayville. She was a side-wheeler with pilot house on the second deck, 120 feet long and a 17 foot beam, a wood-burner like all her predecessors. She ran successfully for several years and was sold to Captain James F. Murray. About 1870 she was improved with a飓ricane deck, an upper cabin and trim-looking ached hog-irons. On Monday, August 14, 1871, the Chautauqua left Bemus Point bound for Mayville with thirty persons on board. After passing Long Point, she turned and headed for a wood landing in Whitney's Bay not far from the lower mouth of Prendergast Creek. Shortly after mooring at the dock, her boiler blew up and caused the death of eight persons - two men and six women - and the serious injury of fifteen others, besides completely wrecking the boat. This occurred at twenty minutes past six o'clock in the evening. Many versions have been given as to the cause of this accident, the worst boat accident in the history of our lake. The exact reason, if known, has never been published. Captain Murray later became Chief of Police in Jamestown, and his rapid recite plainly showed the effect of scalding steam from the accident.

In 1866, Capt. Alired Wilcox of Mayville brought out "the steam yawl dancer," which proved a very popular little boat for eight to twelve persons, and did service for about a dozen years.

In 1867, the old Buffalo & Oil Creek, or "Cross Cut" R.R. from Corry to Brocton, was completed, which opened an important all-rail route to Chautauqua from both directions. This fact prompted Peter Colby to build a steamboat in that year called the Post Boy which left Mayville every morning on the arrival of trains on the Cross Cut R.R. and returning, left Jamestown at four p.m. After a brief career of only two years - in the fall of 1869 - the Post Boy sent up in flames at her dock in Jamestown, under the name of "A. R. Trew."

In May, 1869, the steamer Jamestown of Ellery made her first appearance at a Jamestown dock. She had a screw propeller, was 100 feet long with a beam of 20 feet. She was built near Bay View by one Abe Rosen for Charles Brown and Ray Scofield of Bemus Point. For a time she operated in connection with the Chautauqua as a "Union Line," but after the wrecking of that boat, she became the only large steamer on the lake until the Col. Phillips was launched in 1873. During that period she changed ownership several times, after Capt. T. E. Grandin acquired her, in October, 1874, she was.
drawn out on land, cut in two amidships, and a 56 foot section inserted to increase her carrying capacity. This, however, did not prove satisfactory as the boat was inclined to roll. In the Monday, May 24, 1875, Daily Journal is this item: "Rather a small crowd 'excursed' on the Jamestown yesterday afternoon, but those who did enjoy in extremely pleasant trio. As soon as possible the boat is to have a new wheel and a new rudder - two changes that are expected to work a vast change in her speed and management. They will probably arrive the latter part of this week." On October 2, 1875, this boat burned to the water's edge at her dock in Jamestown.

In 1875, the growing popularity of the lake as a summer resort induced Wm. H. Whitney of Mayville to build a steamboat. She was constructed at Arnold's Bay by Chas. C. Beck, a Jamestown boat builder, who designed and built many of the boats of his day. She was a side-wheeler, similar to the Chautauqua in size and appearance - 125 feet long, and equipped with a 90 h.p. boiler. She was called the Colonel Phillips. During the first season, she operated with a single engine, but as this proved inadequate, two cylinders of 40 h.p. each were added. A cabin 50 x 14 feet was built on her upper deck and the pilot house was elevated to the hurricane deck. This boat achieved unusual distinction by running a Centennial excursion over the lake on New Year's day, Saturday, January 1, 1876, leaving Mayville at 10:30 a.m. with fully one hundred passengers. Her first stop was at Fair Point, then Semus Point, and finally Jamestown where a large crowd had gathered. She left Jamestown at 4:30 and reached Mayville without mishap. Fare for the round trip was one dollar. After four seasons of active service, the Col. Phillips burned at her dock in Mayville on November 19, 1876.

1874 was the opening year of the Sunday School Assembly at Fair Point, now called Chautauqua, and during that season the following new vessels appeared, according to the records of the Commissioners of Navigation:

- Steamer C. J. Henburn - built at Mayville - 56 ft. long
- Z. I. Hacket - a single decker - 75 ft. long
- Nettie Hooker - built by Fox & Lytle at Mayville - 32½ ft. long
- J. M. Burdick - built by J. M. Burdick - 32 ft. long (This boat was called the Woodlin at one time.)
- Olivia - built by Henburn, Whiteside & Phillips at Mayville - length 50 ft. - later called Dolphin
- Nereus - built by Warner & Hammond, Mayville - length 36 ft.
- Lotus - built by W. P. Whiteside, Mayville - length 30 ft.
- Jennie Miller - built in New York City - brought to Chautauqua by Dr. J. H. Vincent - length 30 ft.

In October, 1874, John K. Derby of Jamestown launched the Nettie Derby, which he had built and named after his wife. It was a small flat-bottomed stern-wheeler. He also built the second lakeshore cottage at Lakewood, and this steamer was his mode of travel up through the outlet and lake in the summer time. He had
a boathouse for this steamer on the south side of the outlet near the Sprague Street bridge, facing the few remaining piles of the first dam built at the Rapids in 1811 by James Prendergast. This site is now occupied by the Municipal Electric Light plant. The Nettie Derby was sold in 1891 and transported to Cassadaga Lake, where she was used for two seasons and then destroyed by fire.

In 1875, following the burning of the P. J. Hanour, Fred Griffith - one of her owners - launched in Jamestown another steamer, the M. A. Griffith. She was 96 feet long and equipped with the boiler and machinery of the P. J. Hanour. In October of the same year her upper works were burned off by the fire which destroyed the steamer Jamestown, near which she was moored. She was rebuilt during the following winter and sometime afterward became a part of the "Red Stack" fleet, operated by the Chautauqua Lake Transit Company and its successors. For a time she sailed under the name Winona, all of the vessels of the "Red Stack" fleet having been rechristened with Indian names.

In October, 1892, her cabins were again turned off in the fire which destroyed the second Jamestown. Again she was rebuilt and renamed City of Erie. Thereafter, she was sold and remodeled for a vehicle ferry to carry teams between Lake-Ond and Greenhurst. This venture proving unprofitable, she again changed hands and, under the name John Rainer, was operated as a floating liquor saloon and restaurant. This venture was also a failure, and shortly afterward she was dismantled and consigned to the steamboat graveyard in the mud flats below Celoron.

The Josie Belle was built in 1875 by Goodrich & Campbell of Ticonderga, N.Y. She was 50 feet long and had a cabin 12 x 20 feet in size.

As a youngster, the speaker mingled with the crowd at the old railroad depot on West First Street, Jamestown, which awaited and welcomed Genl. U. S. Grant - then President of the United States - on his memorable visit to Chautauqua on August 14, 1875. The President and his party arrived late - about midnight - and were taken by carriage to the landing where the little Josie Belle gaily decorated with flags, evergreens and flowers, acted as the Presidential yacht. Escorting the Nereus and Olivia carrying the press representatives and prominent officials, the trip was made up the outlet and late to the Assembly grounds.

The Chautauqua management had expected a speech from the President when he was exhibited the next day to the crowds that had gathered, but he merely bowed in acknowledgment of the great applause and said nothing. That afternoon the Nereus carried the Presidential Party to the special train at Bayville.

After doing ferry service for many years, the Josie Belle was sold to the Eastern Freight Line, which had the state contract for clearing the outlet in 1888-1890, and they renamed her the Annie Shaw. She was used to tow the scows loaded with rock and rubbish to the dumping ground in the bay above Celoron.
After this contract was finished, the boat was sold to "Bob" Slatton, who used it for towing barges loaded with sand from Dewittville Bay down to Jamestown. After running it awhile, the boat was hauled up on the west bank of the outlet, east of the Art Metal plant #1; the engine and other parts were removed and the frame destroyed by fire. Thus ended the career of a boat that had been honored more than any other on the lake.

In winter - as long as the original timber existed on the hills around the lake - vine and hardwood logs were cut and hauled out on the ice and built into large rafts, surrounded by long boom timbers chained together. These rafts, when spring came and the ice melted, were towed by small steamers from the upper end of the lake down to its mouth, where they were cut loose and allowed to float along the outlet with the current. The large steamers, coming through about that time, often struck these floating logs in spite of all precautions, with results frequently detrimental to the dignity of those standing on deck. The logs were owned and bound for the sawmills of L. B. Warner and John T. Wilson in Jamestown.

The Jamestown Daily Journal of Monday, May 24, 1875, had this in its news: "Late Saturday night the Nettie Fox was cut into the water and moored along side her wharf. The work did not prove as hard as has been anticipated, and by the end of the windless day she was sent floating on the water with comparatively little difficulty. The remainder of the work will be finished as speedily as possible, and then we shall see what we call sea."

The Nettie Fox was built on West Eighth Street at the foot of Monroe Street for Capt. Robert Jones and C. J. Fox, and it was named after the latter's daughter. It was the largest boat ever built for our lake. She was modelled after the Ohio River boats - 170 feet long, with a width or beam of 32 feet, having three decks, a flat bottom, wide stern paddle wheel, and three rudders, propelled by two engines with cylinders 15½ x 60 inches. Her main deck and 150 x 32 feet with a cabin 60 x 21 feet. At the rear of the upper deck was the ladies' cabin 50 x 21 feet, and at the bow were four staterooms, leaving an open deck space 60 x 30 feet in between. For eighteen seasons she was Chautauqua's largest and most famous steamer. The Nettie Fox ran only one season under that name. In 1876, it was purchased by O. E. ("Sine") Jones and renamed the Jamestown, the first steamer of that name having burned the year before.

Mr. Jones added a second boiler and stack, moving both to the forward part of the boat, and also added a fourth deck which greatly increased her carrying capacity. After operating the Jamestown for a few seasons, Mr. Jones sold her to the Chautauqua Lake Transit Company, and she joined the "Red Stack" fleet. With her great length and stern wheel, it was a difficult task to steer her through the short turns in the outlet, especially around the third bend, and but two pilots - Bob Griffith and Steve Ferrin - were capable of doing it. In October, 1892, this boat was destroyed by fire.
Although the high point in demand for steamboat facilities would seem to have been covered for a long time by the appearance of the Nettie Fox, nevertheless the building of new boats continued for several years - many of which proved to be failures.

The May Martin was originally built with a stern wheel in 1875 by Dr. W. D. Martin and Frank Steele. She was 65 feet long. After the first season she was rebuilt with side-wheels by Capt. Charles S. Payne, the new owner. This boat was notoriously slow. Capt. Payne had a pet dog and on one of the trips, it is related, a lady passenger asked, "How old is your dog, Captain?" "I don't know now," was the reply, "when we started, he was two years old." The May Martin was destroyed by fire on November 2, 1876.

The side-wheel steamer Mayville was built at Mayville by Alfred Wilcox in 1876 - length 149 2/3 feet, licensed to carry 500 passengers. This was dismantled after about ten years' service.

Waukegan, a small iron speed launch, was brought from Pittsburgh in 1877 by A. M. Kent. It was sold and taken elsewhere after a few seasons.

W. B. Shattuc was built at Mayville by Alfred Wilcox in 1879 - length 100 feet - and was purchased by the "Red Stack" line and remodelled. At one time it was known as the Minnehaha - 1884 to 1887 - and later as the City of Pittsburgh. It was dismantled in 1919 after forty years' service.

Mystery was built at Mayville in 1879 by W. P. Whiteside - length 40 feet.

In 1880, four boats were added to the Chautauqua fleet as follows:

| Alaska | built at Lakewood by Burroughs Bros.; length 105 1/2 ft.; beam 22 ft.; at one time known as City of Buffalo (the first); burned September 14, 1885. |
| J. A. Burch | built at Phillips Mills by Burroughs Bros.; length 150 ft.; beam 24 ft.; at one time known as the Hiawatha; later remodelled by the "Red Stack" line and called the City of Chicago; burned while on the stocks at Cilfston November 9, 1903. |
| J. F. Moulton | originally a twin screw propeller built at Mayville by Wegeforth Bros.; length 132 ft.; beam 26 ft.; rebuilt in 1885 with a single screw and renamed Nightingale; later in 1889 called Mohawk; afterwards the City of New York; dismantled in 1925 and burned at Celeron for spectacular purposes on August, 1926. |
| Columbia | built at Mayville by George J. Cornell; length 75 ft.; at one time known as Harley or Henry Harley, named after the builder of Chautauqua Lake R.R.; later called the Vincent when remodelled; licensed for 150 passengers; burned at Mayville dock after about a dozen years of service. |
In 1861, a small steamer known as the Dispatch was built by Johnson & Moore - length 50 feet. It was later called Traviste and sold to E. B. Warner who used it as a tug boat.

One of the best known of the smaller steamers was the Cornell, a single decker, built at Mayville by George J. Cornell in 1862 - length 77 feet, beam 7 feet. For a long time she did regular passenger service over the lake, being the first to appear each year after the ice went out and continuing until the lake closed again. She managed also to take the earlier runs ahead of the large boats and solicited both passenger and freight business. After many years of this service, she was bought by the "Red Stack" line, remodelled by them and renamed Hayville. In December, 1935, she was purchased by Capt. R. J. Hiuraux of Chautauqua, Pa., who dismantled her at Chautauqua on June 9, 1936, after sinking at the wharf.

In 1862, the Cincinnati - 132 feet long with a 25½ foot beam - was launched by Burroughs Bros. at Jamestown, became a part of the "People's Line" or "Black Stack" line, who renamed her City of Cincinnati. The Cincinnati had a cabin on the second deck which extended above the roof, with colored glass windows. On August 6, 1908, this boat ran into a submerged pile at Chautauqua and was nearly sunk. She was the fastest of the large steamers, continued in service until it was abandoned in 1926, then sold to a former employee of the company, who placed it in a slip on the outlet below Clifton and used it for living quarters. This was totally destroyed by fire on the night of February 13, 1939.

In 1864, the Goldie - 45 feet long - a full cabin steam yacht, was brought from Buffalo by a Mr. Phillips of Dayton, Ohio, for use at his summer home in Lakewood. After a few seasons it was sold to Major Stevens for a boat ferry. Later it was sold to Bob Norton and used as a ferry and to tow logs. It was destroyed by fire on October 25, 1895.

In 1865, the J. H. Lytle, a little steam launch 44 feet long, was launched by Horace Fox, Mayville. Later it was remodelled and named E. & F. for Bedell & Fischer. It burned at Prendergast Point in 1895.

In 1866, the Visitor was built by Sam Palmeter at Mayville and used for ferry and towing service - length 50 feet with double engine.

In 1867, the Lydia, a small steam launch 51 feet long, was built by George Monroe and licensed to carry fifteen passengers.

In 1867, another small steamer was launched in Mayville by Henry C. Fry, one of the owners of the Grand Hotel at Point Chautauqua. She was 54 feet long. After a few seasons at Point Chautauqua, she changed hands and for several years was employed in ferry service at the lower end of the lake - licensed to carry thirty people. The latter owner was Major Stevens, and the boat was called the Label.
In 1888, one of the freak vessels of her time was a flat-bottomed stern wheel steamer built at Jamestown by Robert J. Cooper for W. K. Vandergrift - 85 feet long with a beam of 15 feet, named Alacazam. According to the Commissioners of Navigation records, she was equipped with the engines of dismantled May Martin. This power plant was said to be inadequate and she was accounted a failure. Under the name Buckeye, she did service about Chautauqua for two or three seasons and then was pulled up on Irwin's Point and dismantled. In 1901 she was resurrected and used in suction dredging above Lakewood and at Beekmantown. This was the last steamboat on our lake to use the large wooden stern wheel for propulsion, and the Mayville - built in 1876 - was the last to use two enclosed side-wheels. The other boats, large and small, used stern screw propellers of metal which were invented during the Civil War period by John Ericsson of Monitor fame.

In 1888, a small launch - the Alert - was built by Benjamin Firman & George Monroe at Jamestown - length 30 feet.

In 1890, the steam yacht Ossabaw - built in 1858 by the Herreschoff Mfg. Co. at Bristol, R. I., for a New Yorker - was purchased for use of the new Greenhurst Hotel but she was out of her element on Chautauqua Lake. After three seasons, she was sold to Major Stevens who changed her power plant and otherwise remodelled her. She was first called the Greenhurst - later Chautauqua, Evelyn and Louise after Major Stevens' daughters. In 1894, she was sold to the "Red Stack" line, who renamed her Sheldon Hall. The boat was dismantled in 1915.

In 1890, the partly steel and partly wood hulled steamer Buffalo (2nd) was built in Jamestown by Burroughs Bros. and became part of the "Black Stack" fleet until absorbed by the "Red Stack" line, who renamed her City of Buffalo. She was 150 feet long with a beam of 24 feet, licensed to carry 450 passengers. She was in active service until 1926, then burned for spectacular purposes at Celeron on September 2, 1929.

In 1891 were built the last two of the larger steamboats. The steel-hulled steamer W. C. Rinearson, made in Buffalo and shipped in sections, was launched at Jamestown by Burroughs Bros. It was the only boat equipped that way. This was a part of the "Black Stack" fleet until absorbed by the "Red Stack" line, who renamed her City of Cleveland. In 1891, the name was changed to City of Jamestown. This boat is still in use. She is 110 feet long with a beam of 21 feet.

Burroughs Bros. consisted of Clarence and Ernest A. Burroughs. An eastern New York man named Pierce designed all their boats - the best on the lake.

In 1891, the Robert H. Marvin - designed and built at Mayville by Robert J. Cooper for his son Henry H. Cooper, who later became mayor of Jamestown and sheriff of Chautauqua County - was 90 feet long by 15 feet, a two-decker licensed to carry 200 passengers. After operating independently a few seasons, she was sold to the "Red Stack" line who removed the second deck cabin and pilot house, making her a single decker, and renamed her City of Rochester. It was dismantled about 1916.
Robert J. Cooper of Mayville built most of the boats produced at the upper end of the lake. Capt. Alfred Wilcox, also of Mayville, was connected with several of them. He afterward moved to Jamestown.

In 1894, the Chautauqua Steamboat Company purchased three small steamers that had been in use at the World's Fair in Chicago the year before. They were renamed Greenhurst, Celeron, and Chadakoin and used for short runs at the lower and upper ends of the lake. The Greenhurst is now in Henry Ford's collection at Dearborn, Michigan. The Celeron was dismantled, and the Chadakoin is still in active service. This and the City of Jamestown are the only two steamboats now left on the lake, winding up over one hundred years of public service.

The opening of Chautauqua, and the many summer hotels, stimulated the building of steamboats during the 1870's beyond the needs of traffic. Naturally competition was keen. Season tickets were sold at $5.00 but finally went down to $1.00 to increase patronage.

The railroads brought many excursions to the lake, and Celeron, Midway and other places of amusement were provided.

After the Chautauqua Lake Navigation Commission was created in 1876, its rules and inspections of boats did much to insure the safety of steamboat patrons.

For several years most of the boats ran independently, but about 1880 the "Lake Chautauqua Independent Line" was formed, consisting of the Alaska & J. F. Moulton. Another combination formed about then was called the "Chautauqua Lake Transit Co." - later the "Chautauqua Steamboat Co." and finally, the "Chautauqua Lake Navigation Co." In 1881, Henry Harley, who built the first Chautauqua Lake Railway, took over the boats on a mortgage foreclosure.

On completion of this railway in 1887, the steamers of this line passed into control of Boston men connected with the railway, but in 1891 the fleet was resold by them to local interests who at the same time purchased the People's Line or Black Stack fleet of three steamers. Afterward, the Marvin and Cornell were added, thereby consolidating all the larger boats on the lake under a single management headed by the late A. N. Broadhead, who loved the lake and his native city as few men have. Much praise and tribute should be given him for the excellent service always maintained on the various transportation lines, even when only financial loss was his reward.

"In the evening by the moonlight" was never written on a fast speeding automobile; neither was "I saw the boat go 'round the bend - goodbye, my lover, goodbye" - those popular songs of long ago. Is the present generation missing something? Are we passing up the pleasure and enjoyment of a quiet, comfortable and easy home-loving life, for speed and still more speed? Where does it get us? Have we traded eternal living safety for a "mess of pottage"? Think on it!

Respectfully submitted, John F. Jones.