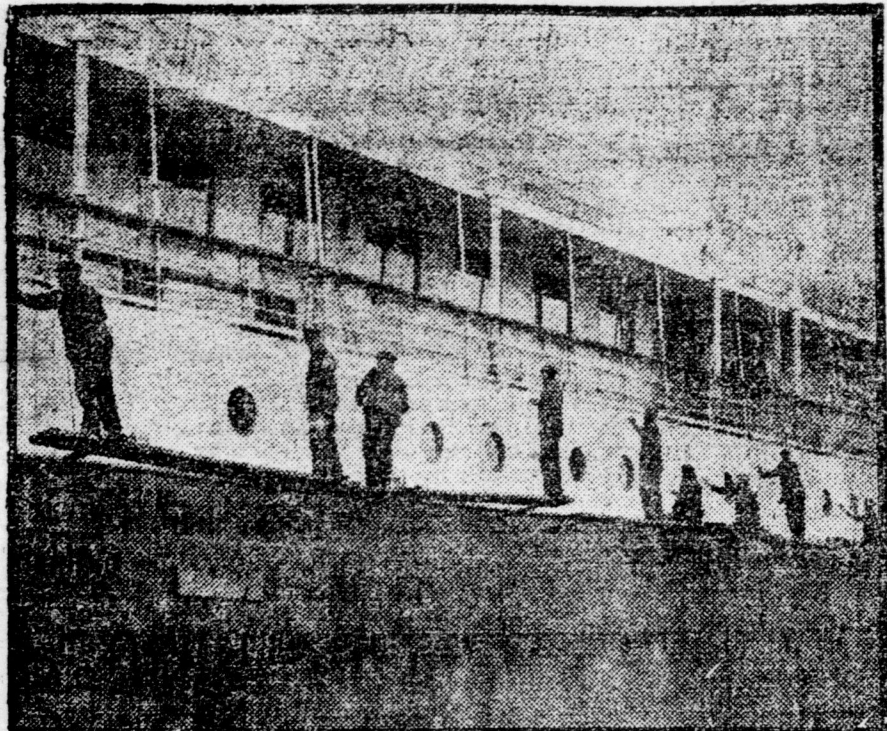


Along the Sarnia Waterfront When the Sailors Are Preparing Big Lake Liners and "Wind Jammers" For Another Season



Painting a Big Lake Liner.

Ten Tons of White Lead Used By One Company to Garb the Big Hulls For Summer. Thousands Spent Refitting Vessels Every Season.

[By C. G. Grellin.]

Blue waters sparkling in the sunlight, the song of a robin, the clear bugle note of northward flying geese, the thud of the caulker's maul, the shriek of the carpenter's saw, and the sharp tattoo of the riveter's hammer, all proclaim that Spring has arrived along the Sarnia waterfront. Of course, there may be a snow storm or two yet, but the Goddess of Flowers and Showers is here, the sun has crossed the line, and in circles marine great preparations are being made to entertain the smiling, whimsical season most royally, with much effusion of sentiment in the shape of scrubbing brushes to cleanse dirt-begrimed decks, paint and varnish for cabins and bulwarks, oiled and spotless engines, and the hundred and one things necessary to the fitting out of a ship for the opening of navigation.

The Sailor Rouses Himself.
All winter long the various craft, modern steel leviathans, powerful little tugs, stately passenger steamers, sturdy snub-nosed barges, and bare-poled, wind-jammer schooners, have lain at anchor and wharf in lonely desolation, their decks swept by snow and sleet, and apparently forgotten by the world. But now the waterfront has blossomed forth into a bustling, bustling community of human activity, and the sailormen who have been whiling away the two or three idle months at their disposal are returning daily, suitcase and turkey in hand to man the fleet, that for another nine months will ply up and down, and in and out of all the Highways and Byways of the Great Lakes.

Now a ship, just like a house or a railroad engine, or any other comparison one cares to make, because, before it is put into commission for the season's work it must be repaired, cleaned, painted, and fixed up with as much care as a milady gives her toilet.

Scrubbing Whitework Not Romantic.
Sailing is a romantic profession so novelties without number have told us, and of course there is no small measure of truth in the statement, but there isn't what borders on the romantic in the work of fitting out a big ship. In fact, it is what most of us would call a disagreeable, dirty job. One does not experience thrills of joy when scrubbing whitework, especially when the whitework happens to be overhead, and little streams of soapy water pour their way down one's neck and arms, trickle under one's shirt, and finally accumulate in little puddles in one's shoes; there is nothing blissful about overhauling machinery, and becoming saturated with oil and grime, nor is it at all pleasant to have one's side on a swinging staging and daub paint on an immense area of steel. And yet there are compensations.

The Aroma of the Waterfront.
Overhead, the sky is blue and soft, the breeze off the water has a peculiar fragrance all its own, a combination

of land and sea smells that suggest a mixture of fish, tar, and turpentine interspersed with a hint of growing green things, and well, the sunshine is bright, the air has a bracing nip to it, and if a man be young and full of the joy of life, it's real solid pleasure after all to stop work for a few minutes, stuff the old pipe full of tobacco, and absorb the transmuting glory of a Spring morning along the river.

And was there ever more grateful sound to mortal ears than the clangor of the dinner bell? Tumble out of your bunk bright and early in the morning, pull clothes on in a sleepy daze, swallow a cup of coffee and a bowl of porridge, get out on deck while the air is still nippy with the evening chill, wallow around washing down decks, scraping paint, shifting stagings, and a dozen other things, and along about noon you will feel as hungry as a starved bear after its winter fast.

When Dinner Comes.
Oh! never was Siren's call sweeter than the tinkle of the cook's bell; indigestion is a thing unknown. Souze your head in a bucket of water, give a hasty lick to your hair; plunge into the mess room; sit down before plate after plate of steaming good things, and learn what it is to eat with the appetite of a healthy man. I am, however, giving precedence to reminiscence, so let's get back to ships themselves, and look a little deeper into this problem of fitting out. It's a business proposition to the owners, and considering it from that angle for a space let's get down to the facts and figures.

As a usual thing the fitting out of a boat is done in the Spring, but on some of the vessels the work of fitting out is started as soon as the ship lays up in the Fall, so that she will be ready to leave as soon as the ice clears away. But the vast majority of lake craft are made ready along in March and April, and as this preparation is identical, no matter when it is done, we will choose Springtime for our journey along the wharves. It is much more comfortable when the weather is warm anyway.

The Engineers Come First.
The after-crew, that is the engineer and his helpers, are the first to arrive and promptly proceed to overhaul, repair, and place in faultless condition, the massive engines and boilers, that propel the big steel hull up and down river and lake. Under this department comes also all the plumbing, and the electrical work of the boat, and for many days the bowels of the ship are like a marine machine shop. Next come the mates and usually several members of the forward crew. It is upon the mate that the actual responsibility of getting the ship into condition devolves, that is, apart from the engine room, for he it is understood that the chief engineer is a little thingy, a wheels in the oily sanctum, it holds his beloved engines, and woe be it to the man who dare question his dominion.



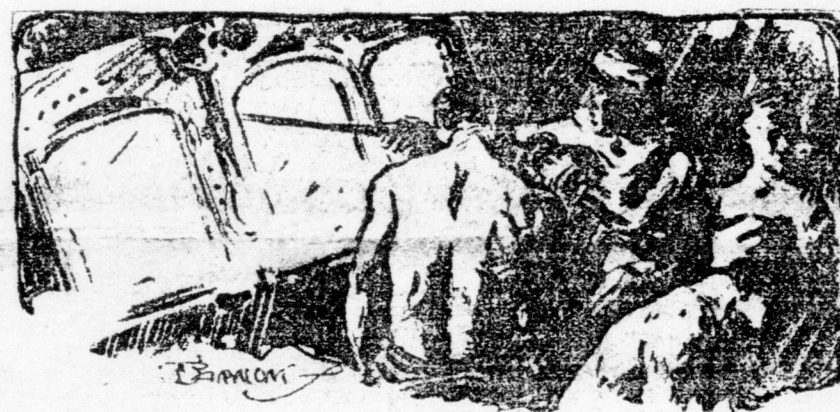
It's pleasant on the upper deck
Where ocean breezes blow,
To lazy in a steamer chair
And watch the waves that flow;
It's pleasant on the upper deck,
But mighty hot below.

There's fun upon the upper deck,
There's mirth and laughter free,
There's music on the upper deck
As gay as it can be,
But it's the boilers down below
That drives her through the sea.

It's fine upon the upper deck,
While downward, near the keel,
The blaze will make you nearly blind,
The heat will make you reel.
But we're the boys who make the steam
That drives the shaft of steel.

The people on the upper deck,
They only pays their way;
We stokers in the boiler room,
We envies such as they,
But we—we drives the bloomin' ship,
While they—they only play!

There always is an upper deck
And boilers down below,
And them that's on the upper deck,
They think they're all the show,
But it's the fellows near the keel
That makes the vessel go.



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Sarnia's Natural Waterfront.

Mr. Mate is to all practical purposes, a general foreman until such time as the boat is ready to leave the wharf, when he assumes the dignity of a navigating officer.

Cooking Up the "Sougee."
First of all the ship must be scrubbed and galleons of "sougee" must be made. A convenient place to make this is in the bath tub, as the writer knows from

experience, and the process is very simple. "Sougee" is nothing more than a combination of washing powder, lye and hot water, and is applied with old brooms, scrub brushes, etc.,

Photos by Denkelburg, Sarnia.
A Group of Scrubbers at Work.

Scrubbing Over Whole Ship With "Sougee" Is One of Crew's Dirty Jobs, But the Promise of Long Voyages Is Enticing to Them.

which is also a simple operation, but exceedingly disagreeable.

The crew start scrubbing the top work first, followed by a man with a hose who washes off the cabins and decks as fast as the gang finish scrubbing them. And as the men work downward other members of the crew attack the cleaned surfaces with paint, and so the modus operandi continues until the vessel assumes a white, clean appearance, utterly at variance with the besmirched plumage she has worn all winter.

Then, the interior of the cabin must be cleaned, painted, and varnished, the forecabin, fantail, and a score of cubby, holes must be thoroughly house-cleaned, supplies for the season must be secured and taken aboard, new lines ordered to replace old ones, inventory taken, and everything made in readiness to cast off the minute sailing orders are received.

What "Fitting Out" Means.
In the last few paragraphs I have merely given a brief outline of the essential details of fitting out aboard the average steel hulled lake carrier. There are, however, vessels and vessels differing both in construction and design, as well as in material, those of the modern regime being built of steel, while those of the past are wooden hulls; not only this but there are different classes of ships, passenger, freight, and government boats, tugs, sailing craft, and many more distinct types, but in all these fittings-out does not differ in character but in scope. Some idea of what house-cleaning a monster lake passenger steamer means can be obtained from a visit to the writer paid to the wharves where the stately passenger steamers of the Northern Navigation Company are being prepared for the coming season, and a quantity of miscellaneous but elucidative information he collected while there.

Three of the big vessels were tied up behind the other along the docks, wagon loads of supplies were being carted aboard, men hurried up and down the gangways, still others swung on stagings all along the sides with brush and paint bucket up on the captain's bridge a full fifty feet above where I stood on the dock, three young lads industriously polished the brasswork, from the empty hold came the metallic clang of a sledge, petty officers shouted orders, and at various places along the wharf contractors stood looking on, blue prints in hand flanked by occasional groups of spectators.

Ten Tons of White Lead.

By dint of much apparently aimless wandering around here and there, interviewing burly mates, smiling engineers, and courteous stewards, I learned that a good deal of the fitting out was done by contract, and pursuing my investigations farther I discovered that ten tons of white lead

had been used to paint the three vessels, exclusive of the hulls, on which one hundred gallons of black paint was used. Ten barrels or four hundred gallons of linseed oil, ten barrels of turpentine, fifty gallons of dryer, seventy gallons of varnish, one hundred gallons of white enamel and four tons of red lead had been used as well, both on the interior and exterior work. Two thousand dollars worth of new linen had been purchased for the staterooms and dining hall, to replace that worn out last year, and the cost of cleaning and relaying the carpets in the cabins was estimated at one hundred and fifty dollars. All winter women have been employed mending linen that was still serviceable, at a weekly wage of nine dollars, and for the last three months twenty men have worked on the boats scraping and painting iron, cleaning watertight compartments, etc.

\$4,500 Repairs to Machinery.
A shrewd, middle-aged Scotch engineer, a typical mariner of the inland seas, whose twinkling blue eyes took in every detail of the work around him in one sharp glance, paused with a piece of cotton waste in his hand to tell me, between rapid orders snapped to his helpers, that in his engine room alone the cost of overhauling and repairing would be at least about forty-five hundred dollars. Stopping in his labors for an instant he explained, that the general overhauling of the machinery starts as soon as the boats lay up in the Fall. The seacock which distribute water to various parts of the boat are then filled with black oil to prevent freezing and during the months of winter, machinists go over every bolt and bar of the huge engines and boilers, replacing and strengthening wherever the slightest flaw is found.

Just a Few More Days.
Rambling farther down the docks, picking my way among barrels and scattered lumber, I finally reached an elevation, that commanded an excellent view of the shipping spread out below me, and everywhere the scene was the same. Little lumber hookers were being painted various fancy colors, aboard schooners old weather beaten sails were being replaced by new durable canvas, and almost at my feet a man whistled a lively tune as he tinkered with the engine of a diminutive gasoline launch. "Just a few more days," I pondered, and over the vast reaches of the Great Lakes will sound the opening whistle of navigation. In far away Port Arthur, Fort William, Duluth, down at Buffalo, at Amherstburg, here in Sarnia, at every port on the fresh water seas, amid a medley of whistles, shouted orders, and waving of handkerchiefs, the gigantic fleet of the inland marine, will cast off cable and line, to ply for another season over the bluest, purest waters in the world.

HISTORIAN OF THE TITANIC TELLS OF ITS HEROES

Colonel Gracie's Book, About To Be Published, a Vivid Narrative of the Disaster That Shocked the World Just a Year Ago

[From the New York Sun, April 13, 1913.]

Tomorrow, April 14, is the anniversary of the disaster of the Titanic. It was a disaster that shocked the world and yet evoked a thrill of pride at the heroism of the passengers, both the men and the women. Though many a graphic narrative has been printed of the sinking of the great steamship, special interest attaches to the forthcoming publication of "The Truth About the Titanic," written by Colonel Archibald C. Gracie.

Col. Gracie spent the six months following the loss of the liner in writing his book, and at the time of his death the book had been finished all but the last chapter. He may therefore be considered the historian of

this, one of the greatest calamities of modern times.

Col. Gracie, as is well known, was a member of an old New York family. He was born in Alabama. His parents returned to the north when he was 4 years old. His father served as a general in the Confederate army, and fell at the siege of Petersburg. Col. Gracie was the fifth of the name in a direct line. He was educated at St. Paul's, Concord, N. H., and was afterward graduated from West Point. For years he was an officer of the Seventh Regiment of New York.

He retired from active business, devoting practically his entire time to historical research, and one of his volumes, "The Truth About Chickamauga," which appeared a year before his death, caused widespread comment

and resulted in his appointment on the staff of the governor of Alabama.

In preparing his last work, "The Truth About the Titanic," Col. Gracie did not rely on mere hearsay and his own personal experience, but used every effort to obtain all his information from authentic sources. He wrote to every prominent survivor whom he knew, and with but few exceptions received replies adding to the sum of accurate information.

It is probable that there is no account of the catastrophe which contains so many of the intimate details that give life and vividness to a narrative and none so full of personalities as the one which Col. Gracie wrote. It is invaluable especially on account of the acquaintance which he enjoyed with many prominent passengers

whose names were on the tongue of everyone at the time of the calamity. With no attempt at fine writing, the whole narrative is simple and full of interest. Here are some extracts from the book:

"The day we left Southampton we witnessed the accident to the American liner New York lying at her pier, which happened when the displacement of water by the gigantic ship Titanic caused a suction which pulled the smaller ship from her moorings, and nearly caused a collision. By some of this incident was looked upon as an ill-omen, and I recall the comments which were made at the time.

"In speaking of this accident, Mr. Isidor Straus, who stood beside me at the time, told me that it seemed only a few years since he had taken passage on the smaller ship, the New York, then on her maiden trip. The wide-spread comments on the perfection of this great Titanic recalled to Mr. Straus's mind the fact that at the time of the launching of the New York, which now looked a mere pigmy beside the colossal vessel we were on, she had been spoken of in the same complimentary terms as were

now used in reference to the Titanic, being then referred to as 'the last word in shipbuilding.' He then turned to his wife and called her attention to the wonderful progress which had been achieved by man's inventive mind, and the difference in our ideas as to the acme of perfection today and comparatively only a few years before.

"During the days which followed, this accident was entirely eliminated from the minds of the passengers. The weather was ideal, and the days were spent by most of us in sightseeing in various parts of the vessel, in viewing the supposed safety appliances which had been added, in admiring and commenting on the new and unique contrivances for comfort, convenience and luxury. So that on this memorable Sunday morning,

April 14, this marvellous ship was conceded by all to be the perfection of shipbuilding.

"Each day the captain had improved on the speed of the preceding day, and prophesied that with continued fair weather we would reach our destination after a record-making trip.

"The fresh water seas, amid a medley of whistles, shouted orders, and waving of handkerchiefs, the gigantic fleet of the inland marine, will cast off cable and line, to ply for another season over the bluest, purest waters in the world.

without some terrible retribution. That this being the Sunday morning, the day of reckoning for most of those on board was the thought furthest from the mind of the least optimistic among us.

"During this final day I saw much of Mr. and Mrs. Straus. In fact, I had been together almost continually each day. I vividly recall how happy they were in anticipation of being able to communicate by wireless with their son and his wife, who were on their way to Europe on the passing ship Amerika. In the early evening they told me with delight of having received a reply to their greeting. Again Mr. Straus spoke of the marvellous strides toward perfection for the convenience of transatlantic travel.

Continued on Page Twenty-four.

Last Words of Colonel Astor and Mr. and Mrs. Straus Given in Extracts Made Public For the First Time—Intimate Details of Disaster.