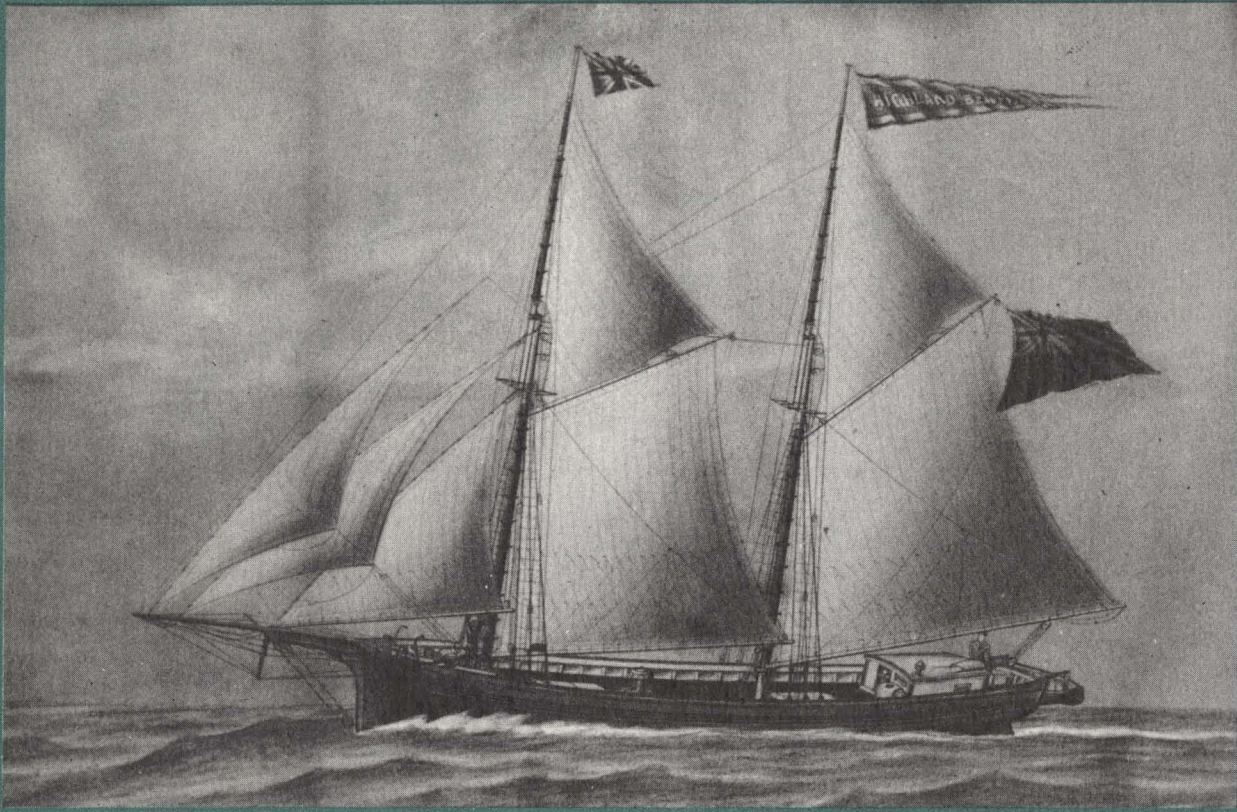


SONGS OF THE GREAT LAKES Collected by Edith Fowke



Ethnic Folkways Library FE 4018

SONGS OF THE GREAT LAKES

Ethnic Folkways Library FE 4018

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES ARE INSIDE POCKET

COVER DESIGN BY RONALD CLYNE

Library of Congress Catalogue Card No. R 64-1091

WARNING: UNAUTHORIZED REPRODUCTION OF THIS
RECORDING IS PROHIBITED BY FEDERAL LAW AND SUBJECT TO
CRIMINAL PROSECUTION.

THE E. C. ROBERTS: Stanley Baby
THE MAGGIE HUNTER: C. H. J. Snider
THE DREADNAUGHT: Stanley Baby
JAMES BIRD: O. J. Abbott
THE FAYETTE BROWN: Stanley Baby
THE LOSS OF THE ANTELOPE: C. H. J. Snider
HOMEWARD BOUND: Stanley Baby

THE CUMBERLAND'S CREW: Stanley Baby
THE CUMBERLAND'S CREW: Orlo Brandon
THE MERRIMAC: Orlo Brandon
THE SCHOONER PERSIAN'S CREW: Stanley Baby
THE WRECK OF THE ASIA: C. H. J. Snider
THE TRIP OF THE BIGLER: Stanley Baby

©1964 FOLKWAYS RECORDS AND SERVICE CORP.
43 W. 61st ST., N.Y.C., U.S.A.

632 BROADWAY, N.Y.C. 10012

SONGS OF THE GREAT LAKES Collected by Edith Fowke

- SIDE I--Band 1. THE E.C. ROBERTS: Stanley Bâby
Band 2. THE MAGGIE HUNTER: C. H. J. Snider
Band 3. THE DREADNAUGHT: Stanley Bâby
Band 4. JAMES BIRD: O. J. Abbott
Band 5. THE FAYETTE BROWN: Stanley Bâby
Band 6. THE LOSS OF THE ANTELOPE: C. H. J. Snider
Band 7. HOMeward BOUND: Stanley Bâby

- SIDE II--Band 1. THE CUMBERLAND'S CREW: Stanley Bâby
Band 2. THE CUMBERLAND'S CREW: Orlo Brandon
Band 3. THE MERRIMAC: Orlo Brandon
Band 4. THE SCHOONER PERSIAN'S CREW: Stanley Bâby
Band 5. THE WRECK OF THE ASIA: C. H. J. Snider
Band 6. THE TRIP OF THE BIGLER: Stanley Bâby

Introduction

I owe this collection of Great Lakes songs largely to two Toronto friends: Mr. C. H. J. Snider and Mr. Stanley Bâby, who for many years have been in the habit of meeting occasionally with other ex-sailors and their wives to enjoy an evening of singing. Since 1956 when I first met Mr. Snider, I've sat in on a number of these sessions, and from them have come most of the songs on this record.

Mr. Bâby learned his songs from his father, Captain James William Bâby (1855-1946). Their family name is French: it was originally Bâbie de Ranville, and their ancestors were among the earliest Europeans to settle on the shores of Lake Ontario back in the seventeenth century.

Mr. Bâby's father started sailing in 1871 when he was sixteen. He sailed first in the Albatross and then in the Carlingford. When he was twenty he joined the crew of the E.C. Roberts, going in before the mast with his friend Dan McLeod. When the captain took sick toward the end of the season, McLeod moved up to skipper and Bâby became the mate.

Mr. Snider, a renowned authority and writer on nautical matters, has made every effort to discover and preserve the Great Lakes songs, and I am indebted to him not only for singing them for me but also for providing background information and for supplying the pictures of sailing vessels used to illustrate this booklet.

Unfortunately, the Great Lakes songs that have survived seem to be far fewer than those that tell of life in the lumber camps. In preparing "Lumbering Songs from the Ontario Shanties" (Folkways FM 4052), I selected those used in the album from a much larger number that are still in circulation. However, for this album I've used practically all the Great Lakes songs that are still remembered in Ontario, with the exception of two other shipwreck songs, "The Loss of the Belle Sheridan" (which Mr. Snider sings to the tune he uses for "The Maggie Hunter") and "Lost on the Lady Elgin".

Thus, while I should have preferred to present here only songs dealing specifically with sailing adventures on the Great Lakes, it has been necessary to include also a few songs originating on other bodies of water which were popular with the Great Lakes seamen: for example, "The Dreadnaught", "The Cumberland's Crew", and "The Merrimac".

During the great days of sail, the Lakes sailors sang many shanties then common on deep-sea vessels, and some of these acquired a local flavor. However, by the late 1880s when the donkey engine was introduced to do the heaving formerly done by men, shantying became less common, and it died completely when the schooners were converted into barges to be towed by steamboats. As shanties were not normally sung for entertainment, they have not been preserved in the memories of any singers I have met, and except for the fragment of "Homeward Bound", they are not represented in this album.

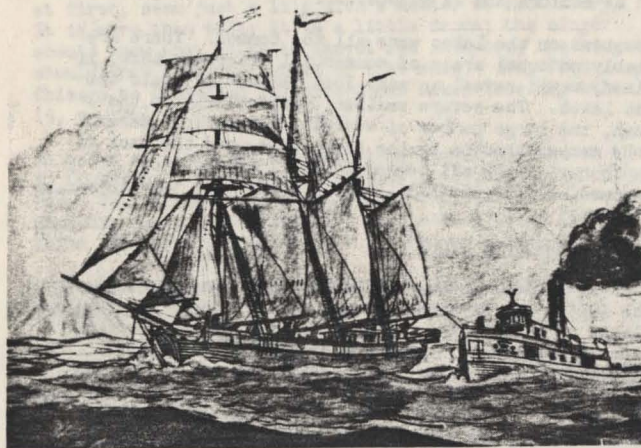
The fo'c's'le songs or forebitters, which were used to while away leisure hours aboard ship and in the waterfront saloons, proved much more durable. Unlike the lumberjacks, who sang both land and sea songs with equal pleasure, the sailors seemed to prefer songs with a nautical flavor, like "The Flying Cloud", "The Bold Princess Royal", "Manan the Pirate", "The Sailor's Return", "William Taylor", and the songs included here: "The Dreadnaught", "The Cumberland's Crew", and "The Merrimac".

Most popular of all were the songs of the Lakesmen themselves which, as Mr. Bâby points out, fall into two main groups: songs about fast passages like "The E. C. Roberts" and "The Trip of the Bigler", and songs of marine disasters like "The Persian's Crew", "The Maggie Hunter", "The Wreck of the Asia", and "The Loss of the Antelope".

The remaining ballad, "James Bird", originated on land and was probably more popular in the lumbercamps than aboard ship, but it has been included here because it deals with events that took place on Lake Erie during the War of 1812.

REFERENCES

1. COLCORD, Joanna: Songs of American Sailormen. W. W. Norton, New York, 1938.
2. DOERFLINGER, William Main: Shantymen and Shantyboys. Macmillan, New York, 1951.
3. LAWS, J. Malcolm: Native American Balladry. American Folklore Society, Philadelphia, 1950.
4. RICKABY, Franz: Ballads and Songs of the Shanty-Boy. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1926.
5. SANDBURG, Carl: The American Songbag. Macmillan, New York, 1927.
6. SILBER, Irwin: Songs of the Civil War. Columbia University Press, New York, 1960.
7. Thompson, Harold: Body, Boots, and Britches. Lippincott, Philadelphia, 1939.
8. WALTON, Ivan H.: "Marine Lore", a chapter in Michigan, A Guide to the Wolverine State. Oxford University Press, New York, 1941.
9. WHALL, W. B.: Sea Songs and Shanties. Brown, Son & Ferguson, Glasgow, 1910.



Three-masted topsail schooner casting off her tug after making all sail, c. 1890.

THE DAYS OF SAIL ON THE GREAT LAKES

The following account of the great days of sail is condensed from an article by Professor Ivan H. Walton:

"The golden era of sailing vessels upon the Great Lakes, the era from which came the most characteristic marine lore, was the period from the close of the Civil War through the 1880's. The industrial boom the Lakes region experienced at that time enormously increased water-borne commerce, particularly bulk freight, a type which the sailing vessels could carry much more economically than could the side-wheel steamers. In the year following the close of the war, more than a million and a half tons of grain were sent by way of the Lakes to Buffalo alone, and about 400,000 tons of lumber were shipped to Chicago, and 300,000 tons of ore, mostly to Cleveland. Fifteen years later, lumber shipments had greatly increased, grain traffic had doubled, and ore shipments had increased seven-fold.

"The sailing vessels that carried this produce were built in large numbers all about the Lakes, notably along the Detroit, St. Clair and Saginaw Rivers of Michigan and also along the western shore. Barques, barguennines, fore-and-afters, three and four-masted schooners and various combination rigs, built by the hundreds attained almost a monopoly of this bulk freight traffic and held it for several decades until near the end of the century they were driven off the Lakes by the competition of the large steam freighters....Most of them were individually owned. The large ship-owning corporations had not yet appeared on the Lakes. The masters chartered their vessels for individual trips with any cargoes that were at hand, and in the late 1870's there was sufficient commerce to support about 1,000 of these vessels. The crews of the larger vessels usually consisted of one master, one or two mates, from eight to twelve sailors, a cook, and a 'boy'. The masters, who frequently owned their own vessels or at least a share in them, were invariably local men. They had complete charge of chartering their vessels. The 'men before the mast' however were, at least in the early part of the period, for the most part from 'down below'--that is, from the Atlantic....

"The trips varied in length from a few days to several weeks. The grain traffic at this time was chiefly from Chicago and Milwaukee to Buffalo, and, depending upon the build of the vessel and weather conditions, trips required from one to three weeks. The ore trade, the most of which was from Escanaba, Marquette and Houghton to Detroit and Cleveland, required about the same length of time for individual trips. Most of the lumber was taken in short trips from upper Michigan and Wisconsin to Chicago. Some, however, was taken the length of the Lakes to the St. Lawrence and from there sent on to the Atlantic and to Europe.

"Sailing on the Lakes was at that time and still is quite different from sailing on the ocean. Lake navigation has always been largely a matter of dead reckoning which is checked when possible by landmarks. The large size of the Lakes, particularly the three upper ones, the irregularity of their shores, the large number of islands and shoals and the wide diversity of weather conditions required that the officers who sailed the 'wind ships' have unusual skill both as sailors and as pilots.....

"Disasters on the Lakes were all too common. There are probably no equal areas of commercial waterways that, if drained, would reveal as many lost vessels as would the Great Lakes. The severe weather, particularly in the autumn, the large number of vessels, the natural daring of the men spurred on by the high wages, and the lack of aids to navigation all tended to swell the list of disasters.... (8, pp. 113, 114, 115, 126)."

"SKIPPER" SNIDER'S STORY

"C. H. J. Snider, Author-Publisher" his passport has read since 1915. Off Baystreet he has been "Jerry" and "Skipper" in large circles longer; ever since, indeed, at seventeen he became the breadwinner for a family of six. (More precisely, he is Charles Henry Jerry Snider, and he was born in 1879.)

From his fifth year paradise to him has meant sailing anything that would float. Toy boats in a puddle--his first--was schooner-rigged, painted bright blue with yellow deck--

to the fat silver cigar-shaped airship R-100 in which 57 hours, August 13-15, 1930, he sped to Cardington, England from Montreal, all craft filled him with delight. A wise mother sent him sailing in a timber drogher, Albucaire of St. Catharines, Capt. Jno. Beart of Cobourg, master, when he was eleven.



"Skipper" Snider at wheel of the schooner Eluensee.

That voyage to Fairhaven, N.Y. for 729 tons of anthracite for Toronto welded his, heart and soul, to schoonerdom, life of the Great Lakes under sail. By the time he had left school, five years later, he had contrived to make three more voyages in large vessels, plus a dozen day trips in stoneboaters. These were blunt little scoons and schooners then building 19th century Toronto's piers, wharves, house and factory foundations, street pavements, gravel roofs, cribwork and concrete construction, with limestone and granite, sand, gravel and boulders, which they wrung laboriously from the lake beaches, in defiance of riparian rights and farmers' shoguns.

One of these--stonehookers, not shoguns--a pioneer sandscow with bilges or chines made by quartering a magnificent white pine trunk, bore the intriguing blazon "BARON SHALLOW OF FORT CREDIT" on her stern. She was destined to mould the future of the schoolboy. Knowing the inscription to be unconventional and unique, he had inquired into her history, and made a line drawing of her. Greatly daring, he submitted a little article about her, and the illustration, to John Ross Robertson, founder of the Toronto Telegram. He made his "submission" on the way to school one morning. It found favour.

After months of despairing search for gainful employment, when honour-matriculared from Jarvis Street Collegiate, with five months to fill in addition to his own, and no bread in prospect until navigation should open next year, the sail-loving matriculant considered the half-dollar Mr. Robertson offered for this primal affusion magna from Heaven. Four months later a Telegram job as cub reporter at \$10 a week seemed positively apocalyptic. From that day, Feb. 17, 1897, to this, he has often said, he has never known want, though before he had never known anything else.

In spite of all temptations, to the growing Telegram he stuck for the next 52 years. Ultimately, as associate editor, one of its publishers, and a trustee of Mr. Robertson's estate he participated in the sale of the paper to its present management at three or four times the probed valuation of the whole estate at the time of the founder's death. All went to charity, the Hospital for Sick Children, as Mr. Robertson had willed.

It was a happiness to share in giving to great a man so great a monument. Our hero had found in the one newspaper a wonderful life, of travel and adventure abroad as correspondent in two great wars and some smaller ones, in coronations, world conferences, and so on, and at home in triumphs of public service and social betterment. Though he worried till he broke down and took three years to get up again, his nose was not kept to the grindstone so closely by his increasing responsibilities that his passion for ships and sails abated.

In fifty years of newspaperdom he studied nautical life from within, both on the Great Lakes and other waters, salt and fresh. He pulled an oar and joined in Arab chumies on the Sea of Galilee, sailed Irish hookers in Galway, was Capt. Angus Walters' tiler in twelve winning races in the Atlantic champion fisherman Eluensee, and helmed the champion in a 40-mile trial brush from Lunenburg to Halifax against the new Haligonian, which was built to beat her but couldn't. In his 60 foot ketch Kinsarvic, about the same dimensions as La Salle's Griffon, pioneer of the Seaway in 1679, he went everywhere La Salle had gone, sailing his own

in a continuous Great Lakes voyage of 2,240 miles. His company was five. La Salle had thirty-one. He bought Kingarvie and company home safely in four weeks. She is now in the West Indies.

He was able to specialize on last trips of the season in sail and steam on the Great Lakes, and learned by experience the darkest, lightest, coldest, warmest, hardest, happiest forecastles, cabins, fireholds, and bridge wings in the lake trade. He bought, rebuilt and operated the sloop White Wings and schooner Wood Duck in stonehooking. He listed 1,500 sailing vessels in his acquaintance, and sailed in turn in the schooners Albacore, Vienna, Loretta, Rooney, Oliver Mowat, Jessie Drummond, Antelope, and Stuart H. Dunn, the largest Canadian on the Lakes. His steam experience was limited to the A. A. Hudson, Robert P. Durham and Assiniboia in December trips on Lake Superior.

His verdict? "No money--but a goldmine of personal satisfaction, profitable experience, and priceless friendships."

He has also produced a dozen books of nautical history on the Great Lakes, including In the Wake of the Eighteen-Twelvers, The Story of the Nancy and other Eighteen-Twelvers, Under the Red Jack, War Log of the Nancy, Annals of the Royal Canadian Yacht Club, Faded Flags of Fadeless Fame, One Hundred Years Royal, H.M.S. St. Lawrence, The Griffon, and Tarry Brecks and Velvet Garters, the first of a three-part series about the days of sail on the Great Lakes. He is now working on the "Second Book of Schooner Days": Topgallants and Tomahawks. For twenty-five years, from 1931 to 1956, he wrote for the Telegram a regular weekly column under the heading, "Schooner Days".

STANLEY BABY'S STORY

The ballads or fo'c'sle songs of the Great Lakes, sometimes nicknamed come-all-ye's, were composed and sung by sailormen. They spoke the language of the sailors, each song telling the story of some nautical happening; however, the majority of them seemed to have been inspired by two main themes, namely, the tragedy of wrecks and drownings and by the much happier subject of fast passages. The former were strange old dirges but the latter theme produced lively songs with a good swing to them.

I learned the words and music of "The E. C. Roberts" and "The Trip of the Bigler" at an early age for my father, Captain James W. Baby, sang them often when he was home during the winter months. These were his favorites and were probably the most popular songs of the Lakes. He had been mate of the Roberts in his early twenties and everything he did was wonderful and heroic in my eyes.

These were fast passage songs. In the case of the Roberts the term is justified for she was indeed a flier. "The Trip of the Bigler" was something quite different. The composer of this song was a bit of a wag, for the Bigler was a bluff-bowed, slab-sided timber schooner which under the best of conditions could not be driven very fast. However, with the strong fair wind prevailing she would make a fine pother in the water and throw a big bow wave:

"And far before her foaming bows the fiery waves did fling
With every stitch of canvas set and her courses wing and wing."

and again, with his tongue in his cheek, as she approached the Strait of Mackinac:

"Skilligalee and Wobble Shank, the entrance to the Strait,
She might have passed the fleet ahead if they'd hove to
and wait."

Her passage was just a fast one for a timber vessel.

My father belonged to the generation of ship masters who began their careers in sail. His started in 1871 as horse boy in the Canadian timber schooner Albatross and ended the sailing vessel part of it as mate in the fast American schooner E. C. Roberts. Sail on the Lakes reached its peak and started its decline in the 1870s. In the spring of 1879 he went into steam ships, reaching command in 1892. A good number of Lake Captains and their families lived in Port Huron at the foot of Lake Huron, and when their steam commands were safely laid up, mostly in Lake Erie ports, these jovial, hearty men would arrive home amid great rejoicing, in time for Christmas. During the winter months our house seemed



Stanley D. Baby

to be a sort of gathering place and many a wonderful evening was spent singing the old songs and reliving the great days of their youth, the days of sail.

During his eight years in sail, my father served in the following vessels: the timber schooner Albatross, the fine three-masted grain-carrier Carlingford, the three-masted scow Moses Gage, barkentines Kingfisher and Oneonta, schooners John G. Colfage, Otonabee, Sarah Jane, Ganges, Nettie Woodward, and the fast-sailing E. C. Roberts.

I was born and raised in Port Huron in a real nautical atmosphere. Shortly before the first world war we moved to Hamilton, Ontario, where father went into business. When the United States entered the war, I went to sea in the U.S. Merchant Marine and for a time felt this would be my career. In 1919 it was not hard to foresee a slump in shipping and I obtained work in the big Standard Oil refinery at Bayway, New Jersey. From there I returned to Canada where I was employed by Imperial Oil Limited at Hamilton, London, and Toronto until my retirement. My love of the water has never faltered and sailing will probably be my main hobby for as long as I am able.

SIDE I, Band 1: THE "E. C. ROBERTS"

Sung by Stanley Baby, Toronto.

This ballad of "The E. C. Roberts", which is commonly known as "Red Iron Ore", was one of the most popular Great Lakes songs on both United States and Canadian vessels. Carl Sandburg, one of the first to print it, gives this characteristic note:

"Three of the Great Lakes (see any atlas) are traversed in this odyssey of red iron ore. It is a log, the diary of a ship and its men on one cruise. The facts are specific. The E. C. Roberts was a boat. So was the Minch. Riding up Lake Michigan they passed through death's door; the lake storms were ugly. At Escanaba loading red ore they 'looked like red devils'. The crew of the Minch thumbed their noses and taunted 'We'll see you in Cleveland next fourth of July'. But the E. C. Roberts got there ahead of the fleet. A crew of bold boys they were even if they say so themselves. The singer is humble, 'Now my song is ended, I hope you won't laugh'. The tune is old Irish; the repeated line with each verse, 'derry down, down, down derry down', is in old ballads. It is a virile song, a tale of grappling with harsh elements and riding through, a rattling tune and a devil-may-care time beat. It may, at first, seem just a lilt with a matter of fact story. It is more than that; it is a little drama; the singer should know what it is to shovel red iron ore; the singer should know the wide curves of that ship path from Chicago to Cleveland on three Great Lakes (see any atlas)." (5, p. 176)

As noted earlier, Mr. Baby's father served as mate on the E. C. Roberts, so this is naturally a favorite song with him. The version he sings is quite similar to the one Sandburg gives. "Skilligalee" in stanza 8 was a folk idiom for "Isle aux Galets".

For comparative versions see Laws: Native American Balladry, D 9.

THE "E. C. ROBERTS"

1. Come all ye young fellows who follow the lakes
In iron-ore vessels your livings to make:
I shipped in Chicago, goodbye to the shore,
Bound for Escanaba and red iron ore,
Derry down, down, it's high derry down.

Sung by C. H. J. Snider

The Toronto Evening Telegram for October 14, 1876, carried this story under the heading, "SUPPOSED LOSS OF TORONTO SCHOONER":

"Mr. Samuel Hunter, coal and wood merchant of this city on Queen Street West and proprietor of the schooner Maggie Hunter, has received the following copy of a telegram from S. N. Stone, commission merchant, Oswego: 'Oswego, Oct. 13-- Cabin work came ashore. Sailors here say it is the cabin work of the Maggie Hunter. All hands gone. Schooner left here Monday night laden with coal.' Mr. Hunter, although not having any confirmation of the report, believes it correct. The boat laden with grain left Toronto a week ago yesterday, and leaving Oswego for her return trip on Monday night should have arrived here on Wednesday at the latest. The weather having been rough and the schooner, although fitted up in a remarkably fine manner and style of finish, was not well prepared for a stormy sea, and no word having been heard of her, Mr. Hunter is inclined to believe the report. The Maggie Hunter was commanded by Frances Nixon of Toronto, with Mr. Sharpe of either Oakville or Port Credit as mate. The crew of five were engaged by the captain. The vessel was only built last winter, by Rathbun of Mill Point, and was valued at \$10,000, but unfortunately was not insured. Her capacity was 12,500 bushels."

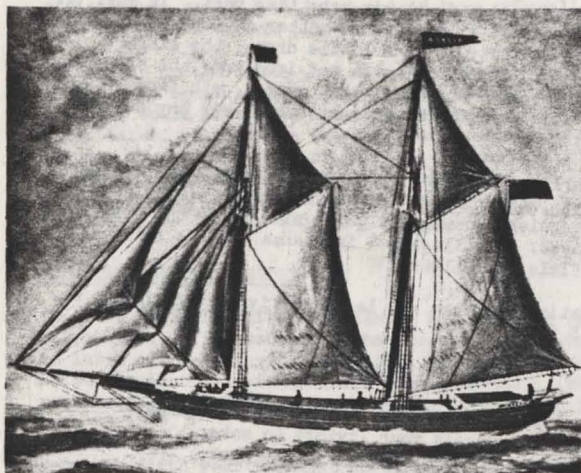
As the ballad says, the cook's body was the only one that was ever found: it came ashore on the False Ducks and was buried at Point Traverse in Prince Edward County. The ballad was popular in that area during the 1880's but has not been reported from any other locality. It shows obvious similarities to "The Schooner Persian's Crew" and is sung to the same tune.

Mr. Snider learned the ballad as he sings it here in July, 1947, from Mrs. Sarah Eliza Rorke of Picton, whose husband, Edward Rorke, was mate and mariner in many Prince Edward County schooners and some larger American ones, as was also her brother, Marshall Spafford. George Bongard of Picton also recalled some of the verses, and John Charlton of Hillier sang all the stanzas except 8 and 9, adding stanzas 7 and 10 to Mrs. Rorke's version. These have been included in the text but are marked with brackets to indicate they are not sung on the record.

Mr. Snider points out that the Telegram account was inaccurate in saying that the Maggie Hunter "was only built last winter". She was an older ship built in 1859 as the J. S. Clark, later called Helen. She had been remodelled the previous year at Mill Point, Deseronto, and renamed the Maggie Hunter.

1. Oh, sad and dismal is the tale to you I will relate.
'Tis of the Maggie Hunter, her crew and their sad fate,
How they sank beneath the deep, in life to rise no more,
In one of the fearful gales that sweep Ontario's dreary shore.
2. They left Oswego on their lee, the whitecaps high did roll,
Bound for the fair Queen City with three hundred tons of coal.
There never was a jollier crew sailed on the lakes or seas
As they their canvas all did make and spread it to the breeze.
3. They sang their songs so merrily as she dashed the silvery spray,
And little did this gallant crew think soon they'd pass away.
It's little thought this gallant crew that they were doomed to die
And by the dawn of the next day on the bottom cold would lie.
4. When they got well outside the piers it blew a lively gale.
By orders of the captain 'tis supposed they shortened sail.
Of all the captains on the lake Frank Nixon reigned as chief,
So they sailed on for Toronto with their canvas closely reefed.

2. 'Twas the month of September, the seventeenth day,
Two dollars and a quarter was all they would pay,
And on Sunday morning from the North Branch did take
The schooner E. C. Roberts out into the lake,
Derry down, down, it's high derry down.
3. The wind from the sou'west it blew a fresh breeze
And down through Lake Michigan the Roberts did sneeze,
And down through Lake Michigan the Roberts did roar
And on Wednesday morning she sailed through Death's Door,
Derry down, down, it's high derry down.
4. The Roberts she sailed 'cross the mouth of Green Bay
And from her cutwater she dashed the white spray,
We rounded Sand Point and our anchor let go,
We furled our canvas and then went below,
Derry down, down, it's high derry down.
5. Next morning we hauled alongside the Exile
And we were made fast to an iron-ore pile.
They let down their spouts and like thunder it roared
And they emptied their pockets of red iron ore,
Derry down, down, it's high derry down.
6. Some fellows got shovels and others got spades,
And some with wheelbarrows, each man to his trade.
We looked like red devils, our hands they were sore,
And we cursed Escanaba and red iron ore,
Derry down, down, it's high derry down.
7. The tug Escanaba she towed out the Minch,
The Roberts they thought they had left in a pinch.
They gave us three cheers as they passed us by
"We'll meet you in Cleveland next Fourth of July."
Derry down, down, it's high derry down.
8. Through Louse Island Passage it blew a fresh breeze,
Past the Foxes, the Beavers and Skillagalee.
We flew by the Minch just to show her the way
And she ne'er hove in sight until off Thunder Bay,
Derry down, down, it's high derry down.
9. 'Cross Saginaw Bay the Roberts did ride,
The green rolling billows passed by her smooth side,
But straight for the river the Roberts must go
And the tug Kate Williams she took us in tow,
Derry down, down, it's high derry down.
10. We went the North Passage, O Lord, how it blew!
And all 'round the Dummy a large fleet hove to.
The night it was dark, Old Nick it would scare,
But we hove up next morning, and for Cleveland did steer,
Derry down, down, it's high derry down.
11. And now we're in Cleveland, made fast stem and stern,
And over the bottle we'll spin a good yarn,
And Captain Harve Rummage should oughta stand treat
For getting in Cleveland ahead of the fleet,
Derry down, down, it's high derry down.
12. And now my song's ended and I hope you won't laugh,
Our bags are packed up and all hands are paid off.
Let's drink to the Roberts, she's stout, staunch and true,
Not forgetting the brave lads comprising her crew,
Derry down, down, it's high derry down.



Medium-to-large fore-and-aft schooner coasting
Medium-to-large fore-and-aft schooner Acacia of Kingston, built 1873.

the whitecaps dashed before the bow, like thunder they did roar,
 As if singing a sad requiem she would plough the waves no more.
 Two Newman brothers before the mast their duty they did do,
 Together with three other men composed the Hunter's crew.

6. George Sharpe, who was their mate, from Port Credit too did hail,
 He was as good a mariner as ever hoisted sail.
 In vain they'll look for his return, he has bid this world adieu,
 He was one of the ill-fated six of the Maggie Hunter's crew.
7. So dusk came down and darkness next, it was a fearful night,
 The ill-fated Maggie Hunter, she's now far out of sight.
 She's now far out of sight, my boys, now will be seen no more,
 Down in the deep now all do sleep far from their friends on shore.)
8. Six months afterwards the cook was found floating near the shore,
 The many friends that loved her will never greet her more.
 A hatch, a boom, a broken spar, the drowned woman's pale dead face,
 Of that stout craft and gallant crew remained the only trace.
9. Between Oswego town and Fairhaven it was supposed she lay,
 But that is all to be revealed upon the Judgment Day
 When the angels they shall take their stand in all the heavens bright,
 And tell of the Maggie Hunter lost on that dreadful night.
10. So come all of ye that follow the land and a living there do make,
 It's little do you know, my boys, of the dangers of these lakes.
 Whenever there a storm arise, think of the night it blew,
 And the Maggie Hunter she went down with all her gallant crew.



C. H. J. Snider (center) with friends at Pengetanguishene, Ontario, on an expedition to try to find the Scorpion.

SIDE I, Band 3: THE "DREADNAUGHT"

Sung by Stanley Bâby, Toronto.

In Songs of American Sailormen Joanna Colcord notes: "It was singular that with all the vast pride and delight of the sailor in his ship, so few songs were sung in celebration of the qualities of individual vessels...Only one such ballad has survived in its entirety: the grand old song of the Dreadnaught."

"Although not the fastest of the Western Ocean packets, the Dreadnaught was probably the best known of them all."

She was built at Newburyport, Mass., in 1853, and was 1,413 tons register; a very large ship for those days. During her first eight trips, her average eastern passage was 21 days 15 hours and for the western passage, 24 days 12 hours. She once ran from (Bishop) Rock Light to Sandy Hook in 19 days. Captain Samuel Samuels, her commander for ten years, has published an account of his interesting career in a book entitled From the Forecastle to the Cabin. He died in Brooklyn in 1908.

"Captain Clark, in The Clipper Ship Era says: 'The Dreadnaught was strikingly handsome and well designed, though by no means a sharp ship. Her masts, yards, sails, ironwork, blocks, and standing and running rigging were of the best material, and were always carefully looked after. She was a ship that would stand almost any amount of driving in heavy weather and her fast passages were in a measure due to this excellent quality, though mainly to the unceasing vigilance and splendid seamanship of her commander. She was wrecked in 1869, while under the command of Captain P. N. Mayhew; her crew were rescued after being adrift fourteen days in the boats, but the noble old packet ship went to pieces among the rugged cliffs and crags and roaring breakers of Cape Horn.'" (1, p. 170)

The ballad was popular not only aboard ship but also in the lumberwoods of both Canada and the United States. Mr. Bâby's version was sung on the Great Lakes but I have recorded another from a 90-year-old man near Peterborough who learned it in the lumbercamps.

Mr. Bâby's version is very similar to the one Miss Colcord quotes. Most notable variations are in the second line of the fifth stanza where hers reads:

"Where the high roaring seas roll along her black side";

in the substitution of "Liverpool liner" for "packet" in the final lines of the fifth and seventh stanzas, and in the substitution of "White Star and Black Ball" for "Swallowtail and Black Ball" in the second last line.

For comparative versions see Laws: Native American Balladry, D 13.

1. There is a flash packet, a packet of fame,
 She hails from New York and the Dreadnaught's her name.
 She sails to the westward where stormy winds blow,
 Bound away in the Dreadnaught to the westward we'll go.
2. Now the Dreadnaught is hauling down the Waterloo Dock
 Where the boys and the girls to the pierhead do flock.
 They gave us three cheers as the tears down do flow,
 Bound away in the Dreadnaught to the westward we'll go.
3. Now the Dreadnaught she lies in the river Mersey,
 Awaiting the tugboat to take us to sea,
 Out round the rock light where the salt tides do flow,
 Bound away to the westward in the Dreadnaught we'll go.
4. Now the Dreadnaught's a-howling down the wild Irish sea,
 Her passengers are merry with hearts full of glee.
 Her sailors like lions walked the decks to and fro,
 She's the Liverpool packet, O Lord, let her go!
5. Now the Dreadnaught is sailing the Atlantic so wide
 Where the green rolling billows sweep by her smooth side,
 With her sails partly set for the red cross to show,
 She's the Liverpool liner, O Lord, let her go!
6. Now the Dreadnaught is crossing the banks of Newfoundland
 Where the water's so green and the bottom's all sand,
 Where the fish of the ocean they swim to and fro,
 She's the Liverpool packet, O Lord, let her go!
7. And now she is sailing down the Long Island shore
 Where the pilot will board us as he's oft done before.
 Fill away her main tops'ls, fill your main tack also,
 She's the Liverpool liner, O Lord, let her go!
8. Now the Dreadnaught's arrived in New York once more,
 Let's go ashore, shipmates, on the land we adore,
 With wives and with sweethearts so happy we'll be,
 And drink to the Dreadnaught wherever we be.
9. Now a health to the Dreadnaught and all her brave crew,
 To bold Captain Samuels and his officers, too.
 Talk about your flash packets, White Star and Black Ball,
 The Dreadnaught's the flyer that outsails them all!

Sung by O. J. Abbott, Hull, Quebec.

"James Bird", which dates from the War of 1812-14, is one of the most widely known of the native American ballads. Its author, Mr. Charles Miner (1780-1865) printed it in his own paper, The Gleaner, Wilkesbarre, Penn., late in 1814. It shortly passed into oral tradition and has been collected in Ohio, Missouri, New York, California, Utah, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia as well as in Canada.

The Battle of Lake Erie which the ballad describes took place on Sept. 10, 1813. Captain Oliver Hazard Perry commanding a small American fleet headed by the Lawrence engaged the British fleet under Captain Barclay. After fierce fighting the Lawrence was forced to strike her flag, but Perry managed to withdraw to the Niagara and continued the battle until the British ships were captured. He then sent the famous message, "We have met the enemy and they are ours."

James Bird fought with Perry on the Lawrence and was subsequently listed among the wounded. In the Journal of American Folklore (XXXV, p. 380) Albert H. Tolman refers to two articles by C. B. Galbreath in the Ohio Archeological and Historical Publications: "The Battle of Lake Erie in Ballad and History" (No. 20, 1911) and "The Ballad of James Bird" (No. 26, 1917), and concludes "The ballad gives the facts of Bird's career accurately and with considerable fullness."

The ballad is indeed accurate as far as it goes, but it gives a more sympathetic picture of Bird than the actual record seems to justify. Legend has it that Bird was charged with desertion simply because he was delayed in returning to his ship after visiting his family. The facts were somewhat different as Captain W. W. Dobbins reports in his History of the Battle of Lake Erie and Reminiscences of the Flagships Lawrence and Niagara (Ashley Printing Co., Erie, 1876). This was the source of the facts as cited in Galbreath's article, and as the book may not be generally available it seems worthwhile to quote the account in full:

"Much has been said and sung in regard to the execution of Sergeant James Bird. The truth is something like this: The writer having heard frequent conversations between the officers in regard to this affair, as also has heard his father, who was an officer attached to the squadron, relate the same.

"Bird came to Erie with a brigade of volunteers from the interior of the State, was detailed with a squad of men to guard stores in a small blockhouse at the Cascades, where the large vessels were built. Though in command he sanctioned the pilfering of the stores he was sent to protect; and when information was given to the military commander he, with his party, made mutinous demonstrations, but soon was conquered. Lieut. Brooks of the marines was recruiting for the squadron, and Bird being a man of pluck Brooks wished to secure him. Bird, with others was told that 'the offence would be overlooked providing they would enlist as marines', which they did. Bird served gallantly on board the Lawrence during the action and was wounded. At the time the squadron was preparing for the Mackinaw expedition Bird was placed with a file of marines to guard the government stores, and from where he deserted, taking John Rankin, one of the guard, with him. A youngster belonging to Erie was on his way to school at Washington, Penn., on horseback, having spent his vacation at home, and passed the two men at a tavern near Butler. Having seen the men while on duty at the store, he knew them. He pushed on his journey, and soon met Sailing Master Colwell with a draft of seamen in wagons, destined for Erie to join the squadron, and to whom the youngster gave the information. Colwell sent a party in advance in disguise, captured and brought them to Erie. They, with a sailor named John Davis who had deserted a number of times and had committed other offenses, were tried by court martial on board the Niagara while on the passage of the squadron to Detroit. They were all three condemned to death. Efforts were made to have Bird's sentence commuted to imprisonment in consequence of his gallantry in the action of the 10th of September, but without success. The President claimed that 'he had deserted from off his post while in charge of a guard, in time of war, therefore must suffer as an example for others.' They were all

three executed on board the Niagara while at anchor in the roadstead at Erie in October, 1814."

The version Mr. Tolman gave in JAFL (see above) contained 22 short stanzas, and he noted that "it reproduced the original poem of Mr. Miner with substantial accuracy, stanza for stanza". Mr. Abbott's version, which he learned in the lumberwoods of northern Ontario some sixty-five years ago, has dropped seven of the original 22 couplets, but has added a final couplet which does not appear in other versions

For comparative versions see Laws: Native American Balladry, A 5.

1. You sons of freedom listen to me, and you daughters
too give ear,
You a sad and mournful story as was ever told shall
hear.
Hull you know his troops surrendered and defenceless
left the West,
Our forces quick assembled the invaders to resist.
2. There was one amongst the number tall, graceful and
serene,
Firm his step, his look undaunted, ne'er a nobler
youth was seen.
One fond kiss he snatched from Mary, craved his mother's
prayer once more,
Pressed his father's hand and left them for Lake Erie's
distant shore.
3. Soon he came where noble Perry had assembled all his
fleet.
Here this noble Bird enlisted expecting soon the foe
to meet.
Where is Bird when battle rages? Is he in the strife
or no?
Hark, the cannon's roar tremendous, here we meet our
furious foe.
4. But behold a ball has struck him, see the crimson
current flow.
"Leave the deck!" exclaimed brave Perry. "No", cried Bird,
"I will not go.
Here on deck I took my station, Bird will ne'er his
colors fly.
I will stand by you, brave Perry, till we conquer or
we die."
5. And did Bird receive a pension or was he to his friends
restored?
No, nor ever to his bosom clasped the maid his heart
adored.
But there came most dismal tidings from Lake Erie's
distant shore.
Better there that brave Bird had perished after the
battle's awful roar.
6. "Dearest father, tell my mother when this letter
reaches you
Not to mourn, her first beloved oh dearly bids his
last adieu.
I'm a sufferer for deserting from the brig Niagery.
Dearest mother, read this letter, 'tis the last you'll
hear from me."
7. Dark and dismal was the morning Bird was ordered out
to die.
Where's the heart that would not pity or for him would
heave a sigh?
See him kneel upon his coffin, sure his death can do no good.
Spare him! Hark! O God, they've shot him, see his bosom
stream with blood!
8. Farewell, Bird, farewell forever! Home nor friends you'll
see no more.
Now his mangled corpse lies buried on Lake Erie's distant
shore.
Bird will ever be remembered, aye unto this present day.
Oh what can beset or wrong them who engage in war or
fray?

SIDE I, Band 5: THE "FAYETTE BROWN"

Recited by Stanley B&by, Toronto

The Fayette Brown, a large three-masted topsail schooner of

ster and about 1,200 carrying capacity, was
Ireland in 1868 and sunk in collision in 1891.
ate 1870's a sailors' strike occurred as a result
refusal of the ship's owners to accept the scale of
approved by Union Hall. The schooner was tied up in
ago until her master signed up a non-union crew of
agrees, an act that led the sailors to compose a fore-
castle diatribe of which this forms a part.

Mr. B&by learned these lines from his father who had heard
them on shipboard. He understood that they had been part
of a song, but he did not know the tune. Mr. Snider picked
up another stanza of the same piece from Captain John Williams:

They'll wish themselves in Dixie Land
Or that they had ne'er left town
When the snowflakes are a-flying
Aboard the schooner Fayette Brown."

1. The dirty sucker of the fleet, what does he do for fame
But ship a crew of Africans to immortalise his name!
Whitewashers, ays, and barbers too he picked up 'round
the town,
He stuffed their heads and they loused the beds of the
schooner Fayette Brown.
2. Here's a health to all ship-owners and all good captains too,
And every lofty schooner that carries a union crew.
May favoring gales fill full their sails and success their
efforts crown
But bad luck attend the dirty scut that sails the Fayette
Brown



H. M. Schooner Nancy, originally a fur trader, built
in 1789. Sunk in battle in Nottawasaga Bay, 1814; un-
covered by C.H.J. Snider, 1911; raised and enshrined,
1927, at Wasaga Beach, Ontario, by the government of
the Province of Ontario. Portrait from her model in
the Marine Museum of Upper Canada, designed and com-
pleted by C.H.J. Snider (above), 1935.

SIDE I, Band 6: THE LOSS OF THE "ANTELOPE"

Sung by C. H. J. Snider, Toronto

This is another of the many ballads about shipwrecks on the
Great Lakes. Mr. Snider learned it from Henry McConnell,
an old sailor widely known in Prince Edward County as "Uncle
Henry". He sang it in 1946 when he was about 78. He had
learned it in his youth and thought the wreck a recent
occurrence in his time, therefore probably about 1870. It
is believed that the ship went aground on the east shore
of Lake Michigan near Point Betsey. Professor Walton who
prints a version, notes: "Ground down Lake Michigan from
Chicago with a late autumn cargo of grain, she was caught
in a storm and wrecked on the Michigan shore." (8, p. 126)

Mr. Snider sings this ballad to the same tune he uses for
"The Wreck of the Asia"--a typical Irish come-all-ye
melody that has also been used in the lumbercamps for
"The Jam on Gerry's Rocks".

1. You all may bless your happy hearts that dwell safe
on the shore
Free from the billows and the blasts that 'round
poor sailors roar,
Little do you think of the hardships nor do you
understand
The stormy nights we did endure on the Lake of
Michigan.
2. On the seventeenth of November from Chicago we
did sail.
The sun shone bright, the breeze was light with no
signs of a gale.
With our canvas set unto the wind and our hearts as
light as air
We left Chicago far behind, our colors flying fair.
3. On the eighteenth in the evening a storm there did
arise,
The billows raged around us and dimmal were the
skies.
We reefed her down, made all things fast, and then
contrived a plan
To try and save the Antelope from the shores of
Michigan.
4. On the very same evening as we all on deck did stand,
Each man he stood beside his post and he done his
duty grand,
Little did we think in twelve short hours or twelve more
hours to come
That some of us would be froze to death and more of us
be drowned.

5. On that very next morning, and what I say is true,
Our sock in the fore-rigging froze by the fiercest wind
that blew.
Our ship had sprung a leak, my boys, to the pumps went
every man,
To try and save the Antelope from the shores of Michigan.
6. On the very next evening between the hours of four and
five
Our ship just like a sea-bird on those angry waves did
ride.
The water had its muddy look caused by the clay and sand
That lines the shores for many's a mile on the Lake of
Michigan.

7. On the very next morning as we on deck did stand,
The captain says to his brother John, "I think I see
the land!"
"Oh yes," said John, "I see the land, I see the
people stand,
But there's only One can save us now from the shores
of Michigan."

8. On the very same morning our ship she struck stem on,
Our mainmast by the deck did break, our mizen it was
gone.
The captain tried to swim ashore his brother's life
to save,
And through his bold and manful work he met a watery
grave.

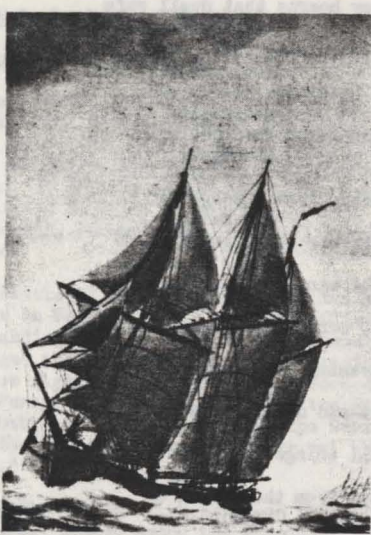
9. Besides our captain and our mate there was eight of
us on board.
Two lads we shipped in Chicago, their names were never
heard,
But they were two gay and lively lads as from Ireland
ever came,
Their friends may weep them in the deep, and they'll never
see them again.

SIDE I, Band 7: "HOREWARD BOUND"

Sung by Stanley B&by, Toronto

Mr. B&by remembers fragments of several widely known sea
shanties and forecastle songs that he heard his father sing,
and this is a sample. As Captain Whall notes, "In sailing
ship days this song was a prize favourite and was sung all
the world over."

These two stanzas correspond fairly closely to two of the
lines that shall give except that he mentions the "Dog and
Bell" instead of the "Devil and Bell" and names the landlord



Schooner Grantham painted by James F. McGinness, 1928.

The extent to which the battle between the Cumberland the Merrimac captured the imagination of the folk who preserve songs is indicated by the fact that not one but two separate ballads about it have been preserved to the present, and they were sung not only throughout the northern United States as might be expected, but also in the Canadian maritimes and Ontario.

Mr. Báby's version, which he learned from his father, is very close to the one Doerflinger quotes. Most notable variation is in the last two lines where Doerflinger's text reads:

"We'll be wept for by Columbia's brave sons and fair daughters
And never forgotten,' sarg the Cumberland's crew."

"old Grouse" (9, p. 5). Doerflinger gives practically the same lines in the form of a capstan shanty with the familiar "Goodbye, Fare You Well" refrain (2, p. 87).

1. When we come up to the "Devil and Bell"
Where good liquor they do sell,
Up comes the landlord all of a smile
Saying, "Drink my lad for it's worth your while,
For you are homeward bound, my boy,
For you are homeward bound.
2. And when at last your money's all spent
And there's none to be borrowed and none to be lent,
Up comes the landlord all of a frown,
Saying, "Get up, Jack, let John sit down,
For you are outward bound, my boy,
For you are outward bound."

SIDE II, Band 1: THE "CUMBERLAND'S CREW" (1)

Sung by Stanley Báby, Toronto

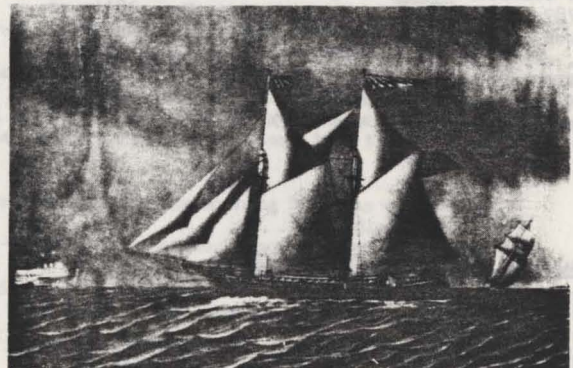
The United States frigate Cumberland commanded by Lieut. George Morris was sunk by the Confederate Merrimac off Newport News, Virginia, on March 8, 1862. This battle and its significance have been described by Doerflinger in the following passage:

"After its centuries of proud service, the wooden warship was rendered suddenly obsolete when on March 8, 1862, the ironclad Merrimac, secret weapon of the Confederacy, sank the U.S. sloop-of-war Cumberland and next day was repulsed in turn by the North's armored Monitor.

"Describing the gallant Cumberland as he watched her being towed up river from Hampton Roads one day to shall a rebel battery, George Edward Clark writes in Seven Years of a Sailor's Life: 'Neat and trim she appeared to us...the long, black, polished cannon peering from the ports, the crew lounging on the 'gallant forecastle, and the hull, and brightmetal-work gleaming in the sun...'

"On March 8, the weird, arklike Merrimac steamed boldly into Hampton Roads, taking by surprise the Union squadron lying at anchor there. She drove the frigate Congress, which had got under way, hard aground and pounded the Cumberland with gunfire at close range. The men in the big square-rigger's gun crews saw their shot and shells glancing harmlessly off the enemy's armor plate as the Merrimac forged in and rammed the Cumberland amidships with her underwater beak. The stricken vessel rapidly filled and sank, flag flying and spar-deck guns firing until the last moment. Her hull had torn away the ram of the Merrimac, starting a leak at the latter's stem head which contributed to her defeat the following day by the Monitor. Casualties on the Cumberland were heavy, especially since over one hundred sick and wounded who could not be removed went down with her. The bravery and loyalty of her crew, which will long live in the traditions of the navy, made them national heroes overnight, and inspired this song." (2, p. 133)

1. Now then shipmates, come gather and join in my ditty
Of a terrible battle that happened of late
When each Union tar shed a tear of sad pity
When he heard of the once gallant Cumberland's fate.
2. On the eighth day of March told a terrible story
And many brave tars to this world bid adieu.
Our flag it was wrapped in a mantle of glory
By the heroic deeds of the Cumberland's crew.
3. On the ill-fated day about ten in the morning
The sky it was clear and bright shone the sun,
The drums of the Cumberland sounded a warning
That told every seaman to stand by his gun.
4. Then an ironclad frigate down on us came bearing
And high in the air the Rebel flag flew,
The pennant of treason she proudly was wearing,
Determined to conquer the Cumberland's crew.
5. Then up spoke our captain with stern resolution,
Saying, "Boys of this monster now don't be dismayed.
We've sworn to maintain our beloved Constitution
And to die for our country we are not afraid."
6. Our noble ship fired, our guns dreadfully thundered,
Our shot on the Rebel like hail did we pour.
The people on shore gazed with terror and wonder
As the shots struck her sides and glanced harmlessly o'er
7. Now the pride of our Navy can never be daunted
Though the dead and the wounded our decks they did strew.
"We'll die at our quarters or conquer victorious,"
Was answered in cheers by the Cumberland's crew.
8. We've fought for the Union, our cause it is glorious,
To the Star-Spangled Banner we'll ever be true.
Wherever we are we'll make tyranny tremble
Or we'll die by our guns like the Cumberland's crew.



Schooner W. T. Greenwood, built 1867, could carry 300 tons of coal.

SIDE II, Band 2: THE "CUMBERLAND'S" CREW (2)

Sung by Orlo Brandon, Peterborough.

Orlo Brandon's version of this Civil War ballad was current in the lumbercamps rather than on the lake boats. It obviously springs from the same original as Mr. Báby's, but is a strikingly different version. His first four stanzas correspond roughly to stanzas 3, 4, 6, and 5, in Mr. Báby's

...n, while his fifth stanza parallels lines found in Boots and Briche (7, p. 358). Although it has at several of the original stanzas, it has preserved the dramatic story very well: a good example of the effect of oral tradition.

1. 'Twas on the first day of April 'bout ten in the morning,
Oh the day it was cloudless and bright shone the sun,
When a drum on the Cumberland thundered its warning
For all true-hearted seamen to stand by their guns.
2. That iron-bound monster came bearing down on us
And high in the air her Rebel flag flew,
And her pennants of treason so proudly a-waving
Determined to conquer the Cumberland's crew.
3. Our ports we threw open and our guns we made thunder
And onto those rebels the broadside did pour,
But her flag of secession still proudly a-waving
As our shots struck her sides and bounced harm-
lessly o'er.
4. Then up spoke our captain with firm resolution,
Saying, "Boys, of this monster now don't be afraid.
We are sworn to defend our beloved Constitution
And to die for our country we are not afraid."
5. Then those rebels found cannon and never could quell
us,
We were fighting them bravely with God on our side,
And the flag of secession still proudly a-waving
While the blood from our scuppers it crimsoned
the tide.

SIDE II, Band 3: THE "MERRIMAC"

Sung by Orlo Brandon, Peterborough

This second ballad about the memorable naval battle of March 8, 1862, is rarer than "The Cumberland's Crew". It was interesting to find that Mr. Brandon, a Canadian of Irish descent, has preserved both ballads to the present day. For a more complete version see Songs of the Civil War (6, p. 256).

1. Oh what's that that lies out yonder just like a
turtle's back?
It's that infernal steamer they call the Merrimac.
2. It was then that she backed off four hundred yards
or more
And with all her whistles screaming through our
wooden works she bore,
She struck us right amidships and her bows came
crushing in
And the water came a-rolling on our brave and hardy
men.
3. Our captain's eyes did glisten and his cheeks grew
pale with rage,
"Oh I'll never strike my colors while my good ship
rides the waves.
I'll go down with flags a-flying, down to a watery
grave,
But you my noble comrades may seek your lives to
save."
4. Oh they vowed they ne'er would leave him, then manned
their guns afresh
While broadside unto broadside as the waters reached
their breast,
And as they sank downward, down in the briny deep,
Oh the Stars and Stripes were flying from their maimed
highest peak.

SIDE II, Band 4: THE "PERSIAN'S" CREW

Sung by Stanley Bôy, Toronto

This is the most widely known of the many ballads about shipwrecks on the Great Lakes, but unlike some of the others, it has never been satisfactorily documented. Mr. Bôy's father, who learned the ballad during his sailing days, heard the vessel called the Persian. Mr. Snider

reports that George Bongard of Picton, sailing about the same time, recalled her as the Persia. Neither knew the vessel herself. Mr. Snider comments: "I have learned of only one Persian, built in Oswego, 1855, and three Persias, one lost on Racine reef, 1892; one lost in Lake Ontario, 1894; and one built in Chicago in 1856, of fate unknown, unless she was the one lost on Racine reef." Hickaby terms it "an elegiac ballad commemorating a tragedy shrouded in mystery". (4, p. 225) Walton speaks of "the Oswego schooner Persia which was lost with all hands off the Michigan shore of Lake Huron in the autumn of 1869". (8, p. 126)

Whatever its origin, this tragic ballad was the most popular Great Lakes song in Ontario, being sung both on the lake ships and in the lumbercamps. Mr. Bôy and Mr. Snider knew it in substantially the same form, and I've recorded two other versions from Napance and Erineville which were somewhat shorter but still well preserved, and set to different tunes.

For comparative versions see Laws: Native American Ballads, D 4.

1. Oh sad and dismal is the tale I now relate to you,
'Tis of the Schooner Persian, her officers and crew,
They sank beneath the dark blue waves to rise in life
Where winds and desolation sweep Lake Huron's rock-
no more
bound shore.
2. They left Chicago on their lee, their songs they did
resound,
Their hearts were filled with joy and glee for home-
ward they were bound,
How little they thought the sword of death would meet
them on their way!
Down in the deep they all do sleep far from their
friends away.
3. Her captain he is now no more, he lost his precious
life.
He now lies on Lake Huron's shore far from his home
and wife,
That barren coast now hides from view his manly life-
less form,
Though he with heart so brave and true had weathered
many a storm.
4. No mother's hand was there to press his cold distracted
frame,
No loving wife was there to kiss his cold lips warm
again.
No brother nor no sister nigh, no little ones to
mourn,
Down in the deep he now does sleep far from his
friends and home.
5. Oh, Daniel Sullivan was the mate's name, a man as bold
and brave
As ever was compelled by fate to fill a sailor's
grave.
O Dan, your many friends will mourn, your hard they'll
clasp no more,
For now you sleep down in the deep, lost on Lake
Huron's shore.
6. O Dan, your many friends do mourn, for fate has on
you frowned.
They look in vain for your return back to Oswego
town.
They'll miss that glad look of your eye, your hand
they'll clasp no more,
For now you sleep beneath the deep by Lake Huron's
rockbound shore.
7. The sailors' names I did not know excepting one or
two,
Down in the deep they all do sleep; they were a luck-
less crew.
Not one of them escaped to land to tell these
mysteries o'er,
But each one found a watery grave by Lake Huron's
rockbound shore.

8. The mystery of their fate is sealed. Did they collide
some way?
But this will never be revealed until the Judgment
Day.
When the angels they shall take their stand upon those
waters blue
And summon forth by Heaven's command the schooner
Persian's crew
9. Oh it's all around the Presqu'ile buoys the lake gulls
flit and skim,
They all join in the chorus of the Persian's funeral
hymn.
They skim along the water's edge and then aloft they
soar
In memory of the Persian's crew lost on Lake Huron's
shore.

SIDE II, Band 5: THE WRECK OF THE "ASIA"

Sung by C. H. J. Snider, Toronto

On Sept. 14, 1882, the paddlewheeler, Asia, sank in broad daylight less than twenty miles from the shore of Georgian Bay, with the loss of more than 200 passengers and crew. She had left Owen Sound the previous evening, heavily laden with freight and passengers, and in the morning ran into a sudden storm.

The following details of the trip are drawn from an article entitled "The Georgian Bay Tragedy" by Rosemary Pitcher which appeared in the Toronto Evening Telegram for Oct. 19, 1956.

Captain Savage was carrying more freight than on any other trip. The lower deck was filled and the overflow had been piled on the hurricane deck. Merchants in northern towns had ordered most of their winter stores in preparation for their five-month winter isolation. Even horses were carried for use in the lumbercamps. Also cheaper fall rates had encouraged more than the usual number of passengers. Cabins were overflowing and steerage passengers crammed the lower deck, some using packing boxes for beds.

Twelve hours after the Asia left Owen Sound it ran into the worst equinoctial gale ever to hit the Great Lakes. Torrents of rain fell with such force that trees on the banks of the Bay were uprooted. Mountainous waves dashed over the decks, threatening to engulf the passengers. The horses in the hold were stamping and jumping, adding to the hysteria of the ship.

"The Asia had by this time nosed into the gap, the roughest part of the crossing. No islands were in this area to afford protection and the full sweep of Lake Huron was behind the waves which battered the ship.

"Captain Savage then made a mistake which sealed the doom of the vessel. Instead of continuing to head into the gale he swerved the Asia toward French River. The full impact of the cyclonic wind was received on the ship's starboard side. Finally, caught in the trough of the sea, she sprung a leak and then as wave after wave swept over the side, the lifeboats were lowered. Before one quarter of the passengers could scramble into them one last towering wave struck and the Asia careened over, dumping passengers, cargo and horses into the water. The Asia sank within minutes. Some of the struggling passengers managed to cling to pieces of timber and other wreckage, prolonging their lives a few moments. Others crawled into lifeboats. But two of the boats overturned and sank within a stone's throw of the sinking Asia.

"This was reported by one of the two sole survivors of the Asia, Dunk Tinkiss, who was pulled into the last remaining lifeboat containing 18 persons; the captain, mate, and 15 other passengers. The little boat was tossed about like a matchstick in the storming sea. Only Tinkiss and a 19-year-old girl, a Miss Morrison, survived. Clinging to the overturned boat they eventually drifted to shore where they were found by an old Indian who escorted them to Parry Sound."

Next to "The Schooner Persian's Crew", "The Wreck of the Asia" seems to be the most widely remembered of tragic ballads of the Great Lakes. It was naturally most popular around Georgian Bay. Mr. Snider first

heard it in 1891 from Mabel and Annie McIntosh of Meaford, a Georgian Bay port, and later collected versions from people who learned it in Port MacNicoll, Owen Sound, Midland, Orillia, and Manitoulin Island. He was told that "Jack O'Brien, who went with a cane, used to peddle copies of the song on the streets of Orillia for nickels and dimes." Apparently the ballad also circulated in the lumbercamps for I recorded a somewhat shorter version from a 90-year old man living east of Peterborough.

1. Loud roared the dreadful tumult, and stormy was the
day
When the Asia left her harbor to cross the Georgian
Bay.
One hundred souls she had on board, likewise a
costly store;
And on that trip this gallant ship she sank to rise
no more.
2. With three and thirty shanty men, all hearty stout
and brave,
They were all bound for French River, but found a
watery grave.
Men tried to save the Captain as the waters round him
raged,
"Oh, no!" cried he, "ne'er think of me till all on
board are saved."
3. I'll ne'er forget MacDougall, which was his honored
name,
Immortalized by gallant deed and handed down to fame.
The cabin boy next passed away, so young, so true, so
brave,
His parents weep while his body sleeps in the Georgian's
watery grave.
4. And likewise Willie Christie, with his lately-wedded
bride,
Were bound for Manitoulin where the parents did
reside.
"If we had only left this boat last eve at Owen
Sound,
O Willie dear, why came we here to in these waters
drown?"
5. "Mamma will say, 'Why such delay?' But she must be
excused;
'Twill make her sad, likewise my dad to hear the
awful news."
Of all the souls she had on board two only are
alive.
Miss Morrison and Tinkus, who only did survive.
6. Miss Morrison and Tinkus--these names I'll ne'er
forget;
Protected by a lifeboat which five times did upset.
The boat was seen to hold eighteen, which into her
did climb,
But it upset and down they went, there were seven at
one time.
7. Now in the deep their bodies sleep, their earthly
trials are o'er.
And on the beach their bones do bleach along the
Georgian shore.
Around each family circle how sad the news to hear,
The foundering of the Asia left sounding in each
ear.

SIDE II, Band 6: THE TRIP OF THE "BIGLER"

Sung by Stanley B&by, Toronto

This popular song of the Great Lakes boatmen dates from the years when sailing barges known as timber droghers or drovers carried square timber from the lumber ports on the Upper Lakes to the St. Lawrence to be rafted down the river for transshipment to Europe, or to eastern Lakes cities to be used for construction, and returned carrying goods for the new settlements on the western plains.

Professor Walton writes: "Timber drovers had large ports in their sterns that could be opened to receive the timbers, and they also carried one or two horses or mules forward on the forecandle deck, to haul timber aboard and to tow

vessels through the Welland Canal. The schooner Bigler which was evidently carrying a cargo of grain on the trip narrated in the song was a blunt-nosed, clumsy canaler that was slow and hard to steer. These characteristics account for the humorous vein in the song. The 'juberju' mentioned in the chorus has been variously described as the jib boom, the raffee yard, and the crosstree, upon which the sailors at times climbed to ride the halyards down to the deck when hoisting sail". (8, p. 130)

Again, as in "The E. C. Roberts" we have a detailed log of a trip through three of the Great Lakes. As mentioned before, "Skillagalee" (in stanza 5) is the Isle aux Galets, and "Wabbleshanks" in the same line is Waughochance.

Mr. Snider learned the song from Aemilius Jarvis who learned it on the Lakes in 1875, and believes it dates from around 1871. Mr. Baby remembers it from his father's singing. Although this song was also current in the lumbercamps at one time, I have so far found no Ontario singers who remember it today except Mr. Snider and Mr. Baby.

Incidentally, Mr. Baby explains the twelfth stanza by the fact that the ballad was one time printed on a single sheet and distributed by Abe's and Moe's, a sailors' outfitting store in Buffalo. However, this early taint of commercialism doesn't seem to have affected the oral tradition: Mr. Snider's version of the song parallels Mr. Baby's, stanza for stanza, but hardly a line is exactly the same. His would indicate that other shops had got into the game for he sings of "Garson's" instead of the enterprising Abe's and Moe's, and of Tom Guest's saloon instead of Tim Douglas'.

For comparative versions see Laws: Native American Balladry, D 8.

1. My boys if you will listen, I will sing to you a
song,
So sit you down beside me and I won't detain you
long.
In Milwaukee last October I chanced to get a site
In the timber drogher Bigler belonging to Detroit.

CHORUS: Watch her! Catch her! Jump on a juba-ju!
Give her sheet and let her boil, the boys'll
put her through!
You oughta seen her howling as the wind was
blowing free
On her passage down to Buffalo from Milwaukee.

2. 'Twas on a Sunday morning about the hour of ten
The Robert Emmett towed us out into Lake Michigan.
We made sail where she left us in the middle of the
fleet
And the wind came from the sou'ward so we had to
give her sheet.

3. That night the wind came down, my boys, and blew both
stiff and strong,
And swiftly through Lake Michigan the Bigler she
ploughed on,
And far before her foaming bows the fiery waves did
fling,
With every stitch of canvas set and her courses wing
and wing.

4. But the wind it came ahead before we reached the
Manitou,
Two-and-a-half a day, my boys, just suited the
Bigler's crew.
From the Foxes to the Beavers we steered her full
and by
And we held her to the wind just as close as she
would lie.

5. At Skillagalee and Wabbleshanks, the entrance to
the straits,
We might have passed the fleet ahead if they'd hove
to and wait,
But we drove them all before us, the handiest ever
you saw
Right into Lake Huron through the Straits of
Mackinaw.

6. When in Lake Huron we made Presqu'ile and then we
bore away,
The wind was fair and we soon flew by the Isle of
Thunder Bay.
The wind came from the westward and we on the star-
board tack
With a good look-out ahead for the light on Point
aux Barques.
7. We made the light, we kept in sight of the Michigan
shore,
A-piking for the river like we'd oftimes done before.
Abreast of Port Huron our anchor we let go
And the Sweepstakes she came and took the Bigler
in tow.
8. The Sweepstakes she took eight in tow, barques, brigs,
and fore-and-afts,
She hauled us down to Lake St. Clair and stuck us on
the flats.
We parted the Hunter's towline in trying to get
relief
When the Bigler went slam-bang into the stern of the
Maple Leaf.
9. The Sweepstakes she has left us outside of the river
light
Lake Erie for to roam and the blustery winds to fight.
The wind was blowing fair and we paddled our own
canoe,
And our nose points for the Dummy on our way to
Buffalo.
10. We made the Eau, flew by Long Point, the wind was
blowing free,
And down along the Canada shore, Port Colbourne on
our lee.
Oh what's that looms in the distance? We all know, as
we drew near,
For like a guiding star shone the light on Buffalo
pier.
11. And now, my boys, we're landed safe in Buffalo Creek
at last,
At Reed's elevator the Bigler she's made fast,
And in Tim Doyle's saloon the bottle it will pass
For we are jolly shipmates and we'll drink a social
glass.
12. We soon received our stamps from our skipper Call
McKee
And with our bags we went ashore but not to go on
a spree.
To Abe's and Moe's we started where we arrived in
quiet repose
And the boys fixed us up with a splendid suit of
clothes.
13. And now my song is ended and I hope that I've
pleased you.
Let's drink unto the Bigler, her officers and crew,
And may she sail next fall in command of Call
McKee
Between the ports of Buffalo and Milwaukee.



Three-masted schooner Reuben David with the so-called "diamond raffee" rig.

vessels through the Welland Canal. The schooner Bigler which was evidently carrying a cargo of grain on the trip narrated in the song was a blunt-nosed, clumsy canaler that was slow and hard to steer. These characteristics account for the humorous vein in the song. The 'juberju' mentioned in the chorus has been variously described as the jib boom, the raffee yard, and the crosstree, upon which the sailors at times climbed to ride the halyards down to the deck when hoisting sail". (8, p. 130)

Again, as in "The E. C. Roberts" we have a detailed log of a trip through three of the Great Lakes. As mentioned before, "Skillagalee" (in stanza 5) is the Isle aux Galets, and "Wabbleshanks" in the same line is Waughochance.

Mr. Snider learned the song from Aemilius Jarvis who learned it on the Lakes in 1875, and believes it dates from around 1871. Mr. Baby remembers it from his father's singing. Although this song was also current in the lumbercamps at one time, I have so far found no Ontario singers who remember it today except Mr. Snider and Mr. Baby.

Incidentally, Mr. Baby explains the twelfth stanza by the fact that the ballad was one time printed on a single sheet and distributed by Abe's and Moe's, a sailors' outfitting store in Buffalo. However, this early taint of commercialism doesn't seem to have affected the oral tradition: Mr. Snider's version of the song parallels Mr. Baby's, stanza for stanza, but hardly a line is exactly the same. His would indicate that other shops had got into the game for he sings of "Garson's" instead of the enterprising Abe's and Moe's, and of Tom Guest's saloon instead of Tim Douglas'.

For comparative versions see Laws: Native American Balladry, D 8.

1. My boys if you will listen, I will sing to you a
song,
So sit you down beside me and I won't detain you
long.
In Milwaukee last October I chanced to get a site
In the timber drogher Bigler belonging to Detroit.

CHORUS: Watch her! Catch her! Jump on a juba-ju!
Give her sheet and let her boil, the boys'll
put her through!
You oughta seen her howling as the wind was
blowing free
On her passage down to Buffalo from Milwaukee.

2. 'Twas on a Sunday morning about the hour of ten
The Robert Emmett towed us out into Lake Michigan.
We made sail where she left us in the middle of the
fleet
And the wind came from the sou'ward so we had to
give her sheet.

3. That night the wind came down, my boys, and blew both
stiff and strong,
And swiftly through Lake Michigan the Bigler she
ploughed on,
And far before her foaming bows the fiery waves did
fling,
With every stitch of canvas set and her courses wing
and wing.

4. But the wind it came ahead before we reached the
Manitou,
Two-and-a-half a day, my boys, just suited the
Bigler's crew.
From the Foxes to the Beavers we steered her full
and by
And we held her to the wind just as close as she
would lie.

5. At Skillagalee and Wabbleshanks, the entrance to
the straits,
We might have passed the fleet ahead if they'd hove
to and wait,
But we drove them all before us, the handiest ever
you saw
Right into Lake Huron through the Straits of
Mackinaw.

6. When in Lake Huron we made Presqu'ile and then we
bore away,
The wind was fair and we soon flew by the Isle of
Thunder Bay.
The wind came from the westward and we on the star-
board tack
With a good look-out ahead for the light on Point
aux Barques.
7. We made the light, we kept in sight of the Michigan
shore,
A-piking for the river like we'd oftimes done before.
Abreast of Port Huron our anchor we let go
And the Sweepstakes she came and took the Bigler
in tow.
8. The Sweepstakes she took eight in tow, barques, brigs,
and fore-and-afts,
She hauled us down to Lake St. Clair and stuck us on
the flats.
We parted the Hunter's towline in trying to get
relief
When the Bigler went slam-bang into the stern of the
Maple Leaf.
9. The Sweepstakes she has left us outside of the river
light
Lake Erie for to roam and the blustery winds to fight.
The wind was blowing fair and we paddled our own
canoe,
And our nose points for the Dummy on our way to
Buffalo.
10. We made the Eau, flew by Long Point, the wind was
blowing free,
And down along the Canada shore, Port Colbourne on
our lee.
Oh what's that looms in the distance? We all know, as
we drew near,
For like a guiding star shone the light on Buffalo
pier.
11. And now, my boys, we're landed safe in Buffalo Creek
at last,
At Reed's elevator the Bigler she's made fast,
And in Tim Doyle's saloon the bottle it will pass
For we are jolly shipmates and we'll drink a social
glass.
12. We soon received our stamps from our skipper Call
McKee
And with our bags we went ashore but not to go on
a spree.
To Abe's and Moe's we started where we arrived in
quiet repose
And the boys fixed us up with a splendid suit of
clothes.
13. And now my song is ended and I hope that I've
pleased you.
Let's drink unto the Bigler, her officers and crew,
And may she sail next fall in command of Call
McKee
Between the ports of Buffalo and Milwaukee.



Three-masted schooner Reuben David with the so-called "diamond raffee" rig.