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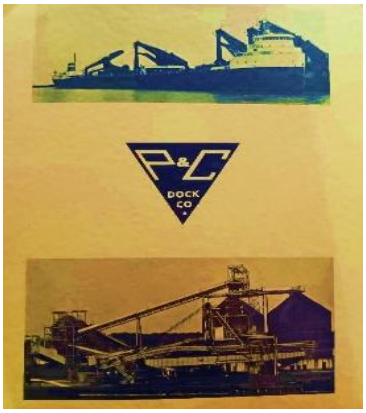
Volume 3
Issue 15

Ports and Portholes

Lake Shore Park Ashtabula in Model T Times

In This Issue: Captain Orlo James Mason, Lighthouse Keeper, Soldier, and Entrepreneur



Pittsburgh & Conneaut Dock Portraits, Conneaut's Waterfront Wonderland

Captain Orlo James Mason: Lighthouse Keeper, Soldier, and Entrepreneur

Captain Orlo James Mason: Appomattox to Ashtabula, Fredericksburg to Fort Niagara and Railroad Cars in Between

Music, lighthouses, rivers including the St. Lawrence, Detroit, and Ashtabula Rivers and lakes like Lake Ontario and Lake Erie played important roles in the life of Civil War veteran and veteran lighthouse keeper Orlo James Mason. Despite the lure and challenges of the open waters of rivers and lakes, Captain Orlo James Mason valued his wife Isabelle (Belle), his daughter Maebelle, and his grandson Orlo James Connell above anything else.

Orlo Mason learned to appreciate family early in his life, because he lost both parents before he reached his teenage years. Born on July 26, 1835, in LaFargeville, New York, where the Chaumont River flowing southwest from Lake Ontario flows through the center of the community, he was the son of Johnson and Mary Mason. His mother Mary died in June 1843, and his father died in February 1847 and both of them are buried in Grove Cemetery in LaFargeville. Twelve-

year-old Orlo went to live with a farm family, and in 1850 at age 15, he worked on the farm of the Henry Martin family and attended school in the winter months.

War, Rivers, and Railroad Cars

By 1853, his ambition to get ahead in the world led Orlo Mason to leave the farm and move to LaFargeville to learn the carpenter's trade. After three years of learning and practicing carpentry, in 1856 he moved on to learn the ropes of organ and piano manufacturing at a company in Clayton, New York, which is nestled along the St. Lawrence River.

In 1861, swept into the currents of patriotism and the bugle calls to adventure of the Civil War, Orlo James Mason enlisted in Company B, 94th New York Volunteer Infantry Regiment on October 21, 1861. His regiment was assigned duty with the Army of the Potomac, where he battled with his ex-countrymen, now the enemy, at the second version of the Battle of Bull Run, a tributary of the Occoquan River in Virginia. He became slightly acquainted with the Potomac River and its watersheds at South Mountain, and met Antietam Creek, a tributary of the Potomac at the Battle of Antietam.

On December 13, 1862, Orlo James Mason again confronted the Potomac River, which marked the border between Virginia and Maryland and the Rappahannock River as well as the Confederate enemy while his regiment fought at Fredericksburg. Orlo suffered a serious wound in this battle which caused him to spend seven months in the hospital. After he recovered, Orlo rejoined his regiment which was stationed before Petersburg which acquainted him with the Appomattox River. His 94th New York Regiment played an important role in the battle the Fifth Corps under General Gouverneur Kemble Warren. On June 12, 1864, Orlo was commissioned a second lieutenant.

In 1864, Orlo reenlisted as a veteran near Fredericksburg, Virginia, and in December 1864, he took part in the fighting around Petersburg, Richmond where he met the James River, and Five Forks. He marched in support of General William Tecumseh Sherman's cavalry which headed off the Confederates at Appomattox and the Appomattox River, after Richmond fell. He was honorably discharged as a captain in Albany, New York, backdropped by the Hudson River, on July 31, 1865.

Pianos, Organs, Marine Engines, and Railroad Cars

After his discharge, Orlo James returned to Clayton, New York and resumed his old job manufacturing pianos and organs. Soon his adventurous spirit led him to live and work beside yet another river, this time the Detroit River. Flowing west and south from Lake St. Clair to Lake Erie for 24, nautical miles, the Detroit River is a strait in the Great lakes system. In the spring of 1866, he went to Detroit to work as a carpenter at the newly established Dry Dock Engine Works, located a stone's throw from the River. For three years, Orlo helped this new company build marine engines and between 1867 and 1894, Dry Dock Engine Works produced 129 of them.

The year 1867 marked a major milestone in Captain Orlo Mason's life. He married Miss Belle M. Mills, daughter of Captain Andrew H. Mills, a well-known vessel and tug owner of Detroit, on February 14, 1867. Belle was community spirited, charitable, and a talented musician. She and Orlo had music in common, because Orlo had worked for a piano and organ manufacturer back in his home state of New York. Her father Captain Andrew H. Mills, a well-known vessel and tug owner of Detroit, had a profitable year in 1867 as well. The Detroit Free Press of Saturday, December 21, 1867, recorded one of his vessel transactions: Tug Jennie Bell, Wm. Mitchell to Johnson & Mills, $5,000.

Ever restless and eager for new challenges, in 1868, Orlo turned his talents to working in the car shops on Crogan Street, a bit further from the Detroit River, but still close enough to continue his nautical sensibilities. He used his talents as a joiner to help build the first Pullman Palace Car. Following his inquisitive nature, Captain Mason quickly learned that in 1869, George Pullman had purchased the Detroit Car and Manufacturing Company to consolidate all of his manufacturing concerns into one factory. George Pullman built hotel cars, parlor cars, reclining room cars, sleepers, and diners. Captain Mason contributed.

Charles F. Clark and Company's Annual City Directory for Detroit for 1868-1869 lists Orlo J. Mason as a joiner.

St. Louis Car Shops

In May 1868, the Masons migrated to St. Louis, Missouri, where Orlo worked in the car shops of the Iron Mountain Railroad Company for two years. Incorporated in 1851, the founders of the St. Louis and Iron Mountain Railroad built it to haul iron ore from deposits around Ironton and Pilot Knob south of St. Louis to the foundries in St. Louis. The new railroad could transport the iron ore faster and cheaper than the existing roads and rivers.

In 1870, Orlo took a job at the Broadway Streetcar Company and stayed there for ten years. The Broadway Streetcar Company survived for more than half a century, weathering mergers and economic fluctuations, before it finally succumbed to buses and automobiles.

Few Mourners on Hand as Broadway Streetcar Completes its Final Run

Motorman Maurice Fortner turned streetcar Number 1768 into the car barn at Broadway and Montana Street shortly before 2 a.m. yesterday and thus ended the era of the Broadway streetcar.

With the exception of a few sentimentalists who wanted the opportunity to ride on the last streetcar to trundle along Broadway, the ride was an average one.

The car left its starting point, Broadway and Grape Avenue, at 12:34 a.m. on schedule. Just 62 minutes later it came to the line's end at Broadway and Catalan, slightly more than 14 miles away.

Although they recognized that progress must come and that busses will replace streetcars, they weren't happy about the change. They said that streetcars would be safer when Broadway turns icy in winter and there is more jostling and shoving on a bus.
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But beneath their complaints there seems to run a feeling of reluctance to part with a way of life they had been dependent upon for years.

At 1:15 a.m. the southbound streetcar passed the northbound Broadway bus number 40 at Broadway and Marine Avenue. This bus was the first one to operate on the Broadway Line.

There was not even a silent salute as the streetcar which has held sway on Broadway since 1859 was passed by its successor.

Source: *St. Louis Globe Democrat* August 21,1956

In 1880. Orla Mason took a job at the Franklin Avenue Car shops and worked there for two years.

Intersection of 9th and Franklin Streets, Missouri State Archives. Franklin Avenue trolley tracks.

During the ten years Orlo worked for the Broadway Streetcar Company, he and his wife Belle had a daughter, Maebelle, born in July 1876. Maebelle inherited her mother's musical talent and her father's ability to take quick action and efficiently complete tasks. She would put these talents to use early in her life.

Coming Home to Detroit

In 1882, when their daughter Maebelle turned six years old, the Masons returned to Detroit, and Orlo Mason again went to work in the Pullman car shops. It is quite probable that the Masons returned to Detroit because his wife, Isabelle's family came from the area, and the industrial advantages of Detroit continued to fascinate and lure Orlo back. He had a long history of working as a carpenter and joiner and a passion for making railroad cars.

The Detroit City Directory for 1884 lists Orlo J. Mason, car builder; Mrs. Orlo J. Mason, music teacher, and the J.W. Weeks & Company's Detroit City Directory for 1885, shows Orlo J. Mason, Pattern Cutter, Pen Car Company and Mrs. Orlo J. Mason, music teacher. Charles L. Freer and Frank J. Hecker founded the Peninsular Car Company, a railroad rolling stock manufacturer, in 1885. In 1892, the company merged with Michigan Car Company, the Russel Wheel and Foundry

Company, the Detroit Car Wheel Company, and several smaller manufacturers to from the Michigan Peninsular Car Company.

Tending Lighthouses for 33 Years

Captain Orlo Mason's death certificate cites one of his causes of death as chronic bronchitis which could have been aggravated by his working in the car shops. His father-in-law Captain Andrew H. Mills was a maritime man and he and his wife had reared Isabelle, Orlo's wife, along the Detroit River. Orlo himself had always lived in close proximity with rivers and lakes. These reasons and others lost to history may have convinced Captain Orlo Mason that light keeping would be the next logical step on his career ladder.

Captain Orlo James Mason applied for the position, and in June 1885, the government appointed Captain Mason keeper of the Mamajuda Lighthouse in the Detroit River. The island is named for Mamajuda, an American Indian woman who regularly camped on the island during fishing season. In 1849, the United States government built the Mamajuda Lighthouse on the island with the lighthouse keeper and his family the island's only residents. The lighthouse had to be rebuilt in 1866, but eventually erosion washed away the lighthouse in 1950. The unstable composition of the island caused slow erosion to wash it entirely away by 1960, with only a few boulders occasionally breaking the surface.

In Orlo Mason's time, Mamajuda Island and Mamajuda Lighthouse were solidly present and he served there for nine years, performing his duties so conscientiously that no one entered a single complaint against him. During Captain Mason's time at Mamajuda light, his daughter Maebelle, then 14, performed an act of heroism worthy of her father's service in the Civil War. On May 11, 1890, a man in a rowboat threw a line for a tow to the steamer C.W. Elphicke. The steamer's Captain Charles Z. Montague was passing on the Detroit River halfway between Mamajuda Light and Grassy Isle. The line missed the steamer, but it caught just right to capsize the boat and the man spilled into the river.

Mamajuda Island Lighthouse from a 1910 Postcard

Captain Montague couldn't rescue the man, but as he passed Mamajuda Light, he signaled the lightkeeper that there was a man in the river in danger of drowning. Captain Mason had

taken the government boat across to Detroit to do some shopping. The only one available to help was Isabelle Mason and her daughter Maebelle. The only boat left for Mrs. Mason and Maebelle was a small flat-bottomed punt which they hauled out of the dock at the lighthouse. They launched the punt and after some discussion decided that Maebelle should row to the aid of the drowning man. After about a mile of hard rowing, Maebelle came upon the man near his upturned boat. She pulled him aboard her punt in a very exhausted condition. Then she rowed back to the lighthouse, towing the man's rowboat behind her. The stranger thanked her profusely.

The United States Government thanked Maebelle for her bravery by presenting her with a lifesaving medal of the second class. It was obtained through the efforts of Captain Charles V. Gridley who in 1890 was government inspector of the Tenth Lighthouse District. His term expired before the medal was finished, so Commander E.W. Woodward of the United States Navy, presented the medal to Maebelle. She received it at the Cadillac Hotel in Detroit during the National Convention of the Grand Army of the Republic in 1890.

Maebelle accepted the medal modestly and said that she had simply performed an act of humanity. The Ship Masters Association also presented her with a gold lifesaving medal with a Maltese cross and gold chain attached. The medal was inscribed: "Presented to Miss Maebelle L. Mason for heroism in saving life, May 11, 1890, by the E.M.B.A. of Cleveland." From that date until it disappeared in 1960, all steamers flying the Ship Master's Association pennant saluted while passing the Mamajuda lighthouse.

On June 21, 1892, Maebelle Lewis Mason married James Leverett Connell and they lived in various places in Michigan, including Fenton, Marlette, Little Traverse, and Harbor Springs. The Connells had a daughter Corrine, and a son whom they named Orlo James in honor of Captain Orlo James Mason. Born April 19, 1896, Orlo James Connell was a World War I veteran, serving in the 124th Transportation Corps from June 13, 1918, to July 19, 1919. Orlo James married Hilda and they had three children. He died on February 16, 1956, and he is buried in St. Joseph's Catholic Cemetery in Lansing, Michigan. Maebelle and James Connell are buried in Lakeview Cemetery in Harbor Springs, Michigan.

Captain Mason is Transferred to Ashtabula Harbor Outer Pier Light

In June 1893, Captain Mason was transferred to Ashtabula, Ohio, where the Ashtabula River flows into Lake Erie after it begins in Monroe County, flows 40 miles, and drains 137 square miles. He was put in charge of the outer pier light

which had a rear range and fog signal. He and Belle lived in a house on the hill at 10 Walnut Street, overlooking the lake and harbor. Captain Mason and Belle would have found some familiar sights in this 1880 picture of the harbor.

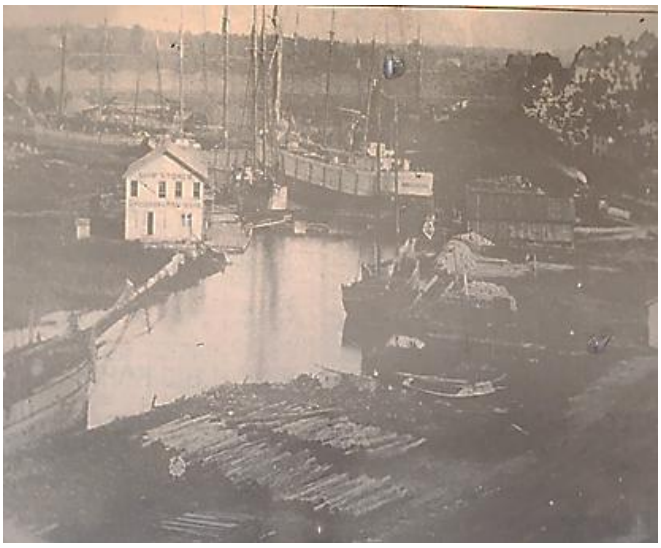
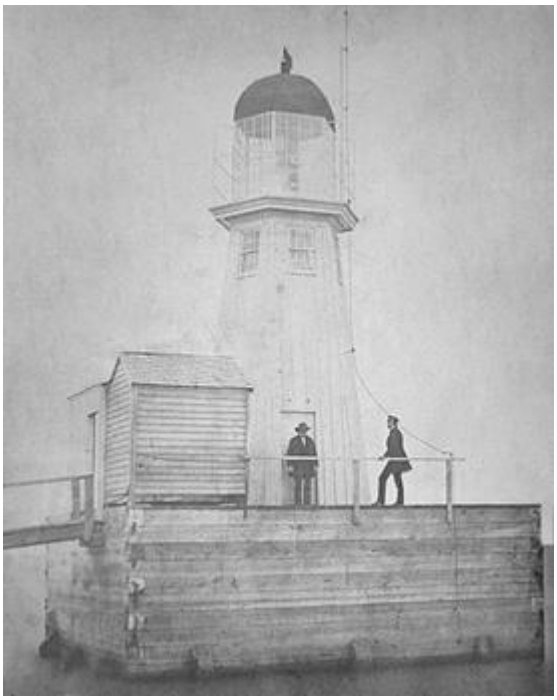


Photo Courtesy of Gordon Duff Brace

This vintage photograph shows Ashtabula Harbor in 1880. It was taken at the present day (1994) site of the Ashtabula Maritime Museum. Spanning the water is a pontoon bridge which was replaced by the present day (1994) lift bridge in 1925. A wooden package freighter can be seen at center, and a steam engine can be glimpsed at right. Part of a lumberyard occupies the foreground.

Ashtabula Light House Family Tree



This 1836 hexagonal tower was the first Ashtabula Harbor lighthouse. The tower sat on top of a forty-foot-square wooden crib that a ramp connected to the east pier of the Ashtabula River. Samuel Miniger, the first recorded light keeper, had the responsibility of keeping the beacon's eight lamps burning using sperm whale oil.

In 1855, the government installed a fifth-order Fresnel lens in the lantern room. This changed the light's character to a fixed white, interrupted every ninety seconds by a flash.

The second lighthouse, made of wood, had a fourth order Fresnel light. It was used until 1905, and the lighthouse keepers lived on shore at the lightkeepers house at 10 Walnut Boulevard and were ferried out to

the lighthouse by boat. In later decades, the Walnut Boulevard lightkeepers house would become the Ashtabula Maritime and Surface Transportation Museum.

Ashtabula Light House before relocation and expansion.

Photo courtesy of Michael Forand.

In 1916, a few years after Captain Mason died in New York, the Ashtabula River was widened, and new docks were built along with a new lighthouse that would later be moved to the end of the newly built break wall. At this point, the lighthouse was placed atop a 59-foot concrete crib and doubled in size. It was constructed with steel and concrete plates to ensure safety and stability against storms. Since the lighthouse had been increased in size, the keepers were now able to live in the lighthouse instead of the lightkeepers house on the hill on Walnut Boulevard.

Next Lighthouse Stop: South Bass Island Light House

On September 1, 1900, veteran lighthouse keeper Captain Orlo J. Mason was transferred from Ashtabula Lighthouse where he had served since 1893 to South Bass Island lighthouse. When Captain Mason and Belle had arrived in Ashtabula in 1893, many people already knew about the water rescues that he and their daughter Maebelle had performed. When he and Belle arrived at the South Bass Island lighthouse, first lit in 1897, the stories circulating there about former lighthouse keeper Harry H. Riley were not so positive. Captain Mason and Belle arrived in the middle of an epidemic and the resulting turmoil.

South Bass Island Lighthouse, a large, two-and-a-half-story, red brick dwelling featured an attached, twelve-foot-square tower. The tower stood forty-five-feet tall, reaching far enough over the roiling waters of Lake Erie to guide boats and ships to safe harbors.

Lighthouse Keeper Harry H. Riley lit the South Bass Island Lighthouse lantern for the first time on July 10, 1897, as its first lightkeeper. A native of New York and a past resident of Detroit, Michigan, Riley, and his wife were transferred to the lighthouse on July 10, 1897. He earned a yearly salary of $560. With Keeper Riley's help, the lighthouse would guide mariners from early March until late December, the standard shipping season for that part of Lake Erie.

Keeper Riley had formerly served as mate on the United States supply steamer Haze. He had recently married, and the young couple settled into the South Bass Island Lighthouse as their first home together. They also brought along Bill, a spirited little fox terrier. Bill enjoyed the life of a sailor and spent several years cruising with his friends and his master on board the Haze.

Keeper Riley needed an assistant to help him with his lighthouse chores, and on August 9, 1898, he hired Samuel Anderson, an African American, as a caretaker, with an offer of living quarters in the lighthouse basement as one of his employee benefits. Most people called Sam "Black Sam," and he acquired a reputation for being somewhat eccentric. Rumors soon began to circulate around the island that Samuel kept snakes that he had caught on the island in his basement rooms in the lighthouse.

Another fateful event happened on South Bass Island in 1898. In 1898, two years before the Masons arrived at the South Bass Island lighthouse, a smallpox scare that would last through 1904, gripped the community. Someone theorized that a person living near Parker's Point near the lighthouse had contracted smallpox. The government placed the entire area under quarantine and assigned troops to enforce the quarantine. To add more controversy, other people theorized that the wealthy owners of the nearby Hotel Victory insisted on the quarantine because they didn't want smallpox to affect their employees, guests, and most of all, their profits.

According to the Sandusky Daily Register, Samuel also worked part-time at the Hotel Victory. At the hotel, black employees were settled in rooms far from the guests. It seems that Samuel so worried about contracting smallpox that he left his rooms in the lighthouse basement for the Hotel Victory because he believed he would be safer at the hotel. Once he left the lighthouse buildings, the guards stopped him and ordered him back to the lighthouse. Reluctantly, Samuel returned to the lighthouse, but he didn't go inside because of his fear of catching smallpox.

Instead, he wandered the beach all night, and people reported that he howled like a wild beast through most of the night. Then everything was still.

On August 31, 1898, less than a month after he moved to South Bass Island, a search party found Sam's body on the rocks below the lighthouse. No one knew if he had fallen, deliberately or accidently jumped, or someone had pushed him. Perhaps he threw himself over the cliff edge in a frenzy of smallpox fear. In a 1907 Ohio Magazine article, writer Lydia J. Ryall speculates that Samuel's death was not an accident, but history has not provided a definite answer to her speculations. Eventually, the Lighthouse Board ruled Samuel Anderson's death a suicide. The Lighthouse Board reported that Put-In-Bay Justice of the Peace and Coroner William H. King claimed Samuel Anderson's earnings of $17.25 for his brief employment for his burial expenses. Samuel Anderson's name is not included in local cemetery records and his burial place is unknown.

Samuel's death devasted lighthouse keeper Harry Riley. Some people even speculated that he had tried to calm Samuel down that night and caused him to jump to his death. On September 2, 1898, two days after Samuel died, the Sandusky Daily Register reported that Harry H. Riley had been arrested for drunk and disorderly conduct in Sandusky, Ohio. Onlookers said that Keeper Riley swore that he owned a fast racehorse and he invited everyone to the fairgrounds to see the horse achieve a record-breaking win.

At his trial, the court declared Harry Riley hopelessly insane and committed him to an insane asylum in Toledo where he died in March 1899. The Lighthouse Board relieved Lightkeeper Riley of his duties on February 23,1899 and appointed his wife to serve until a new permanent keeper could be named. Apparently, Mrs. Riley didn't serve as her husband's replacement for very long, because Enoch W. Scribner is listed as an interim keeper in 1899-1900.

Harry Riley died in March 1899 and Captain Orlo James Mason arrived in September 1900, which left about a year and a half for Mrs. Riley and temporary Keeper Scribner to perform lighthouse keeping duties before the arrival of a permanent keeper. The permanent keeper, Captain Orlo James Mason and his wife Belle, arrived at South Bass Island Light on September 1, 1900.

Indeed, Captain Orlo and Belle Mason had been transferred into Samuel Anderson's lighthouse with its basement rumored to be full of snakes, but they managed to settle into their lighthouse quarters and establish themselves there. Lydia J. Ryall says in her Sketches and Stories of the Lake Erie Islands described the scenery that the Captain Orlo Mason and his wife Belle encountered in their new home. She wrote that "Put-In-Bay is located in the Lake Erie Islands in

Sandusky Bay, and the lighthouse sits on Parker's Point on the island's southwestern tip. Captain and Mrs. Mason lived in the main building with the tower looming in back. From the tower stretched a beautiful view of the lake shore. Cedar trees framed by dark green leaves, craggy bluffs, fallen rock masses and in the winter, ice mountains, provided a variety of scenery that the Masons enjoyed."

Lydia J. Ryall also states in her Sketches and Stories of the Lake Erie Islands that Captain Mason kept the Put-In-Bay Light for several years, before he transferred to the Ashtabula light, but several Lighthouse Board records state the opposite, that Captain Mason transferred from Ashtabula to Put-In-Bay.

Sandusky Daily Register stories of the time stated that Captain Mason and his wife kept a good station, and they greeted many visitors in the summer months. Winter months at an isolated lighthouse were usually quiet with few visitors besides friends and family of the keepers. Winters were quiet at the South Bass Island Lighthouse, but the friends and family of the Masons and other winter visitors found "welcome and good cheer" at the lighthouse.

The Masons left South Bass Island Lighthouse on April 18, 1908, and Captain Mason took over the position as keeper of the Fort Niagara Lighthouse on April 23, 1908. I Charles B. Duggan, 47, and his wife, Bertha, replaced the Masons at South Bass Island Light and enjoyed a good life at the lighthouse.

Captain Orlo J. Mason Finishes His Career at Fort Niagara Lighthouse

Captain Orlo J. Mason and his wife Belle left South Bass Island Lighthouse on April 18, 1908, and he took over the position as keeper of the Fort Niagara Lighthouse on April 23, 1908, serving there until October 1913.

Captain Mason and Belle's Legacy

Captain Orlo James Mason and his wife Isabelle or Belle or Bella Mason's story has documentation inconsistencies as well. Some of the lighthouse sources list conflicting dates and places of service on the lights and their tombstones list their birthplaces as unknown or in other places, incorrectly, including the date that he resigned his position at the Old Fort Niagara Light. Some

sources say he served from April 23, 1908, to his death on January 2, 1914. The Washington Post reported that Captain Mason resigned as keeper of the Old Fort Niagara Light in October 1913.

Captain Orlo James Mason died on January 23, 1914, in Youngstown, New York. His family, most likely his wife Belle and daughter Maebelle and her husband brought his body back to Detroit for burial in Woodmere Cemetery, Section A, Lot 467. On February 19, 1914, Belle filed a claim to her husband's Civil War Pension from Michigan.

The 1915 Detroit City Directory lists Belle M. Mason as the widow of Orlo James Mason, living at 443 Larned Street. She probably stayed in Michigan because her daughter Maebelle Connell and her husband and children lived near Detroit, and Michigan was where she had met Orlo, her husband of 47 years. Belle M. Mason died on June 7, 1915, and she is buried in Woodmere Cemetery, Section A, Lot 467 beside her husband.

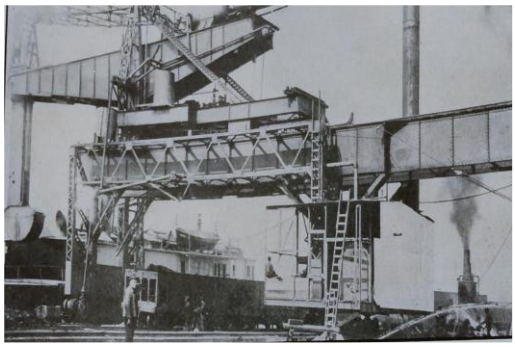
Captain Orlo James Mason served bravely in the Civil War, and steadfastly and tirelessly maintaining lights to shine over the Detroit River, Lake Erie, and Lake Ontario waters. He lived his goal of guiding mariner's safely to port, and it's not difficult to imagine fifer John Carroll playing him to heaven with one of the Captain's favorite songs "Fort Niagara Two Step," with Belle keeping step with him.

P & C Dock Portraits: Conneaut's Waterfront Wonderland

After Andrew Carnegie organized his Pittsburgh Steamship Company in 1896, he purchased a fleet of steamships and 20 barges and arranged for two new docks to be constructed. He had his financial eye on coal and ore. The Bessemer ran its first passenger train in 1896 as well as handing about a million tons of ore. It was in 1896 that Andrew Carnegie obtained the controlling interest in the Bessemer R.R. and the P. & C. Dock Co. The new boss built a new dock, and had the channel dredged southward 1,300 feet. Twelve McMyler "fast plants" were constructed on

the west side of the slip and now Andrew Carnegie controlled the means of transporting iron ore from Minnesota's Mesabi Range to the steel mills of Pittsburgh, with Conneaut serving as the essential middle transfer port.

In 1899, the Hulett unloader was installed, an invention of George H. Hullet of the Wellman-Seaver-Morgan Co. By 1900 three of these steam-driven hydraulic Huletts were in use and the following year a fourth was added. Each had a capacity of ten tons. It was in 1899 that the first coal dumper was installed at Conneaut. Erected on the east side of the slip, it was capable of handling twenty-five cars an hour. In 1914 a new car dumper was built at the same location. The electrically operated Huletts were installed from 1911 to 1934 and the ore stocking bridge, with a bucket capacity of twelve tons, was built in 1918.



The original Hulett

Duff Brace Scrapbook

For over five decades Pittsburgh & Conneaut Dock hummed with Huletts, ore, coal, and busy workers. The dock made a significant impact on Conneaut's and Ashtabula County's economy and provided economic wellbeing for generations of Conneaut and county residents until technological advances transformed local, regional, and national economies, including those of the Great Lakes and its port cities like Conneaut. On May 10,2004, Canadian National acquired the Conneaut Pittsburgh and Conneaut Dock when they purchased Great Lakes Transportation. The deal also included the Bessemer & Lake Erie Railroad and the Duluth, Missabe & Iron Range Railroad.

As well as its long people history, the P&C Dock has a long publication history.

Dock Talk Serves for Five Years

February 1973

This is the fifth anniversary issue of Dock Talk, The Pittsburgh & Conneaut Dock Company's communications effort for the employees and pensioners and their families. Born in February 1968, as the Unnamed Monthly Magazine , it became Dock Talk from the second issue as a result of an employee contest in which Tower Clerk Bill Webster submitted the winning entry.

We have constantly tried to improve the appearance and content of our magazine. Our major effort in the past year came with the November 1972 issue when we changed the copy composition from a Tribune News Standard justified to a Bodoni Book differential space justified. The appearance took a giant leap forward.

Dock Talk has had its predecessors. Here is a brief review of the ones of which we have a record.

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Dock Talk, February 1973- Fifth Anniversary

Staff

Editor…….Allen G. Carpenter

Reporters

Office and Retirees…….Louise Tyler

Ore Dock…….Louis Weiss

Coal Dock…….Edgar Erdman

Bucket Shop…….Ray Burlingham

Machine Shop…….Sale P. Nimelli

Construction Department……Donald W. Parkemaki

Electric Shop…….Morris Mitchell

Storeroom……..Clayton Webb

Safety & Security……George McManus

Credit Union…….Howard Morton

Sports……Bill Miller

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THE CONNEAUT HARBOR HAIRPIN- IT'LL GO TO YOUR HEAD! Was published from about August 1942 to sometimes in 1944 or 1945 by editor Raymond H. "Rimmer" Welsh. It was an 8 ½ by 14 mimeographed sheet which carried some of Rimmer's prose, poetry, and lyrics. Its underlying theme was to win the war and keep up the morale of our servicemen. It poked fun at the regime in Washington and its system of rationing – for example, note this quote from the June 1943 issue:

Rimmer's Revised Table

4 gills= 1 pint; 2 pints = 1 quart; 4 quarts= 1 gallon; 4 gallons = 1 coupon.

The first eight issues (August 1942 thru March 1943) are missing from our file as well as the October and December 1943 copies and all copies published after the January 1944 issue. If anyone has any of the above missing copies would they loan them to us so we could make copies to complete our file? Please contact your editor or the storeroom office.

THE HARBOR LIGHT came into being in February 1951. Editor Bill Cornell presented five 8 ½ by 11 mimeographed pages stapled on the left edge for the first issue. He was aided in the production by the following staff: Art Editor, George Kitinoja; Chief of Publications Jean Nickels; Circulation Manager Howard Morton; Reporters Ken Burdick, Roy Cheney, Dan Hathaway, Elmer Kitinoja, Frank Langyel, Pat Nimelli, Harold Puffer, Dusty Rhodes, and Ray Wood.

Five years later in February 1956, the last issue, a 17-page production, rolled off the press. The Editor was J.E. Ocshier; Art Editors were Ocshier and Bill Vibbard; Chief of Publications was Cynthia A. Davis; Circulation Manager was still Howard Morton; and Reporters were Ken Burdick, Elmer Kitinoja, Frank Lengyel, Pat Nimelli, Gordon Gasch, Bill Vibbard, and Herb Hopkins, Jr.

This publication was dedicated to the safety and welfare of the employees. During its existence it became the media through which general information was passed on to and about folks of the P&C Dock. It found a warm place in the hearts of its employees , and even today some referring to Dock Talk call it the Harbor Light.

The Harbor Light has provided the basis for the information contained in Dock Talk's column headed "20 Years Ago at the Dock Company."

GLIMMER made its appearance on October 30, 1959. The first issue declared:

"Not a Harbor Light, this issue will try to be a Glimmer until someone suggests a better name." No one ever did.

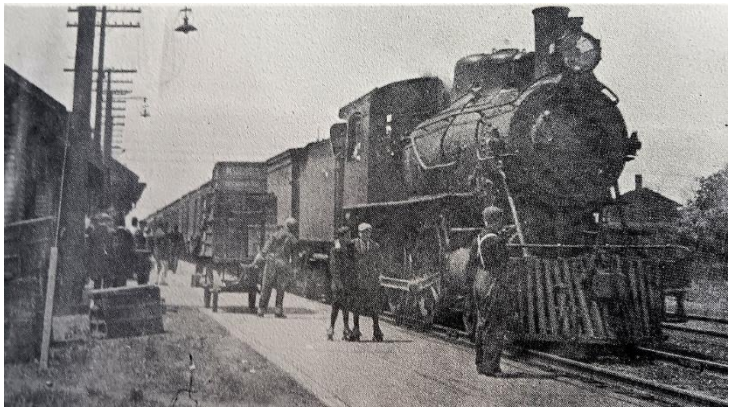
Glimmer's editor was Fabian Moeller. It was a weekly newsletter which at various times letter or legal size. It utilized the back side of the bowling sheet when the P&C Dock Bowling League was in action.

Like its predecessor Harbor Light, it reminisced in Dock Company history by uncovering and publishing many old-time pictures. Another series dating important "Happenings in Conneaut" began in June 1961.

Another note of interest from Glimmer was that the bowling teams were given names as well as numbers. There were the Clutchers, Flintstones, Bulldozers, Burdicks, Uhas, Expendables, Lucky, and Beef Trust.

The last issue of Glimmer was produced on December 26, 1961.

In conclusion, with this issue of Dock Talk we have equaled the length of publication of the Harbor Light – both having been published for five years, plus one issue. We trust that in the years to come our Dock Talk will be held in as high esteem as the Harbor Light is now.



Just One of Many Dock Talk Tales

April 1981

Nickel Plate No. 4, "The Cleveland Mail", at the Conneaut Passenger Station in 1915.

The Great Skate Scamper

Skates provided “young men” a fast way of getting around Conneaut in 1915.

The two buddies in our “Conneaut the Way It Was” picture for this month dressed in their Sunday best, decided to meet Nickel Plate Passenger Train No. 4 dubbed “The Cleveland Mail,” and powered by Nickel Plate Engine No. 123. This engine was a Class O, 4-4-0 that the Brooks Factory of the American Locomotive Works (Alco) in June 1904 as the second 179. It was re-numbered to 123, also the second time for that number, in 1910.

The unidentified pair were on hand when Alpha F. Mast, freelance photographer, and father of Howard Mast, recorded the train as it slowed to its scheduled stop at the Conneaut Passenger Depot. As the engine glided to a stop, some of the passengers and crew began to move toward where they expected the coaches to stop and the freight agent tried to judge where he would be leading the freight from his wagon to the baggage car.

The boys watched while the baggage was being stowed, the passengers vacated, and the coaches refitted. Engine 123 was uncoupled and moved east of Sandusky Street onto a side track. On the main track east of the switch was a Class R ten-wheel engine which moved west to couple with the train to replace the lighter engine to provide the motive power for the heavier pull into Buffalo. All passengers and the new crew were onboard, the baggage wagon parked, and the eastbound was on its way. Engine 123 moved out of the siding and west on the main to the yards and the roundhouse.

With the activity subsided, the boys viewed that platform as a block-long raceway. The skater with the black slouch cap nudged his partner with the light cap and challenged him, “Your legs may be longer than mine, but my skates are faster than yours! Let’s have a race from Sandusky Street to Mill Street on this platform and I’ll prove it!”

Off they went.

And that’s The Way It Was in Conneaut, about 70 years ago.

The Dock Talk story didn’t say who won the race.

Photo of Township Park in Conneaut during its Dance Hall Days.

Editor: Kathy Warnes

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