

Editorial

It is always a pleasure to welcome back authors whose work has caused comment and discussion among *FreshWater* readers.

Bruce Rudolph continues his interest in the activities of the Polson Shipyard in Owen Sound. His article, "Senator W.E. Sanford and his Yacht Naiad" is a continuation of work, "The Polson Iron Works of Owen Sound" that appeared in Vol. 10, No 1, 1995 of *FreshWater*.

Captain Beaupre is a retired Lakes captain of many years experience who has set about the task of "letting us know what it was like" for a sailor aboard canallers in the period before the opening of the St. Lawrence Seaway. Many of our readers are professional sailors - the captain always strikes a chord with them while enlightening our shore bound members, many of whom who write on shipping topics (Up and Down the St. Lawrence Canals, Vol. 9 No. 4, 1994).

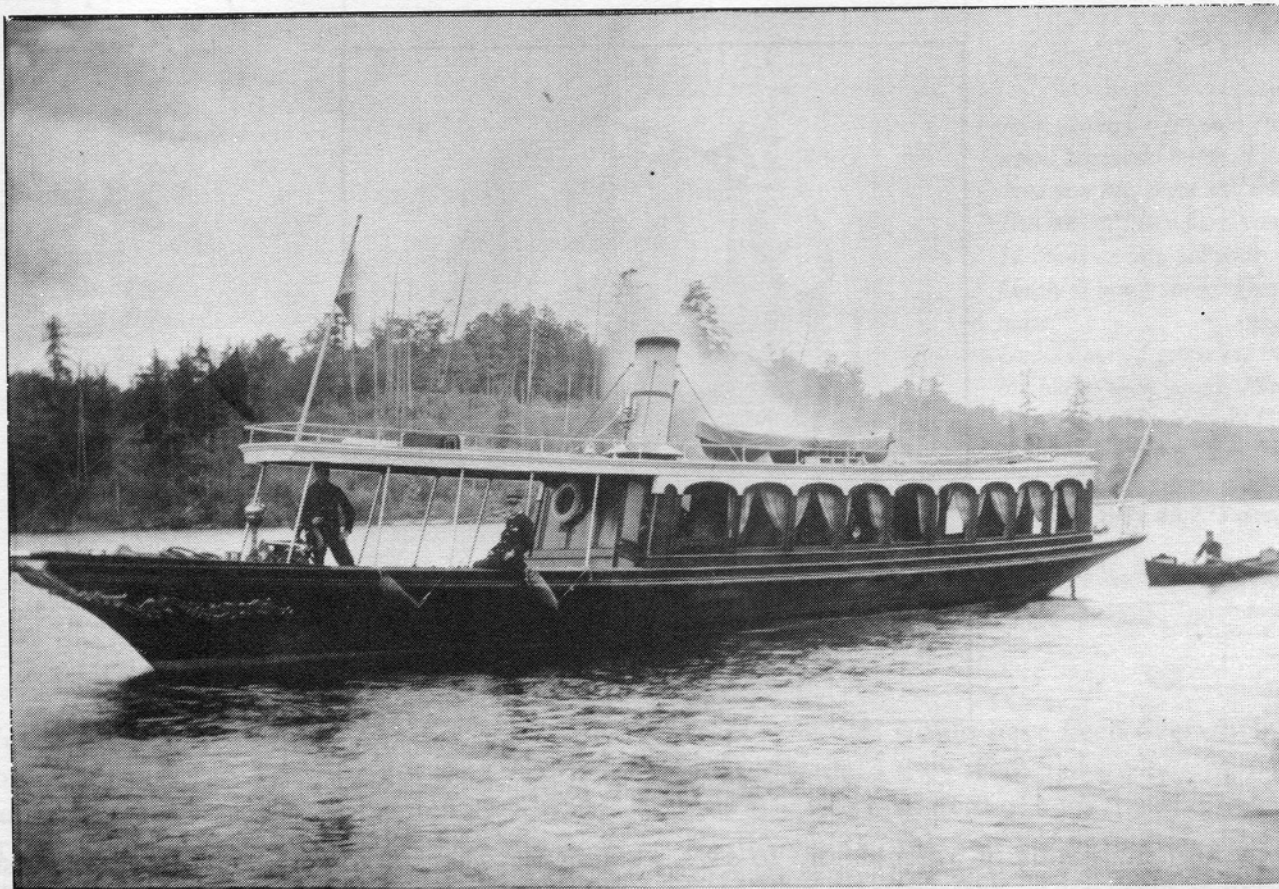
The pictorial is from an album of photographs donated to the museum in 1982 and not seen for many years. The Boys Naval Brigade was a popular organization during World War I, growing as a result of the patriotic fervour of the times. Those who sponsored it, the Navy League of Canada did so out of a sense of duty to the British Empire. Were the boys aware of their brush with maritime history while training aboard the *Commodore Jarvis* or the schooner *Pinta* in Toronto Harbour?

With corporate support from Canadian Shipbuilding and Engineering Ltd and the Page Foundation we are now assured of publication for a few years. Our circulation is increasing and the readership is responsive. This then is a call to authors looking for a place to get published. The *FreshWater* editors are an easygoing bunch always willing to discuss ideas early on or at an advanced stage of development.

Maurice D. Smith

Senator W.E. Sanford and his yacht NAIAD

BY BRUCE RUDOLPH



The Naiad in Muskoka, William Forge at helm with senator W.E. Sanford seated, circa 1895.

photo credit: Nancy Hart Wilkes

Polson Ironworks & W.E. Sanford

In the year of 1889, the eyes of our great Dominion turned to the small town of Owen Sound.

It was here that history was being made. In the sweltering heat of July the first sod was turned in a field of hay and from that fertile soil grew

Canada's first steel shipbuilding yard. In a furious struggle with time over 300 men would labour to complete a great ship under an unforgiving time contract with the Canadian Pacific Railway. Like ants they swarmed over her hull in the freezing cold and darkness of a harsh Canadian winter. Surrounded by thousands of tons of steel they

crawled through the belly of the ship, their flesh freezing to the massive steel plates while the riveters defended them with their relentless pounding of the hull. But in the end victory was theirs and with the renewal of spring the *Manitoba* was born and launched, Canada's first steel ship, the largest and the best ship on the great lakes. The Polson Iron Works was riding on a wave of success when the Canadian Pacific Railway granted them a second contract, this time to build Canada's first steel rail car ferry, the *Ontario*. But, just weeks before her launch a court order arrived forcing the

Born in 1838 he was orphaned by the age of seven. Raised in Hamilton, Ontario, by his aunt and uncle, he was educated at the Central school there. Sanford was a young man when he joined the ranks of Canadian supermen destined to become merchant princes. Success came early at the age of twenty when he formed an association with a group of American wool importers. Sanford established a network of wool agents throughout Canada. So large was his influence he became one of the largest wool buyers in the country and controlled the entire wool output in the province



"The Wool King of Canada"
Senator William E. Sanford

Polsons into the hands of a liquidator. To save themselves from bankruptcy new capital had to be raised, investors had to be found. Men not only with capital but with business and political connections. One of these men was Senator William Eli Sanford.¹

A Vision of a Great Dominion

Canada was born in 1867, and with it came a new breed of Canadians with a vision of a great Dominion so vast and rich with resources it would make a Maharaja weep. Sanford was one of these Canadians.

of Ontario. The Americans were taken by surprise at the size of his exports as well as the speed with which he had organized himself and so they coined the phrase "The Wool King of Canada", a name that stayed with him for some time.² Being a successful exporter was not enough, swept up in the excitement of the new Canadian Confederation, Sanford wanted to be a manufacturer.

At a time when family clothing was made at home, Sanford was among the first to realize the potential of ready made clothing. Recent advances in technology allowed for increased productivity and lowered costs, consequently a new industry