

PATRICIA MOONEY-MELVIN is an associate professor of history at Loyola University, Chicago. In addition to her interests in urban history and the built

environment, she curated an exhibit on Ohio quilts and quilters, and prepared a technical leaflet, *Tracing the Quiltmaker*, for the American Quilt Study Group.



Lake Michigan Passenger Steamers

By George W. Hilton

(Stanford, Cal.: Stanford University Press, 2002. Pp. xii, 364.
Maps, notes, illustrations, tables, appendices, index. \$75.00.)

With this book George W. Hilton has created another detailed analysis of a portion of the history and technology of the Great Lakes transportation industry. One of his earliest books, *The Great Lakes Car Ferries* (1962), took a detailed look at every aspect of that service, and is today recognized as the definitive work on the subject. In the same vein, he wrote *The Night Boat* (1968), about overnight passenger steamer service. *Lake Michigan Passenger Steamers* provides a close look at the boats that for a century provided passenger and package-freight service across the lake. Hilton notes in the present work that the first letter he received after the car-ferry book appeared was from Edward N. Middleton. This is perhaps fitting, since over the two decades that Middleton worked in maritime history it was his dream to see published a book on Lake Michigan passenger steamers.

This book provides far more detail than the title might indicate. The first part treats the industry as a whole, looking at the geography, the boats themselves, the demands for service, and changing transportation technol-

ogy. The second part looks at the individual companies that provided passenger service on Lake Michigan. (It should be noted that this book is dedicated to firms that provided service primarily on Lake Michigan; lines that provided service throughout the Great Lakes are mentioned only peripherally.) The book is profusely illustrated with pictures and drawings covering the entire era of passenger service.

Captain Albert E. Goodrich established the largest and longest-lived of the Lake Michigan passenger lines, the Goodrich Transit Company, which operated from 1856 until it failed during the Great Depression. He chartered his first boat, the *Huron*, for service between Chicago and Milwaukee. As his firm expanded it provided service to virtually every port on the lake. By the turn of the century, the firm provided scheduled service to nine major ports, with a like number of vessels including the only "whaleback" passenger steamer *Christopher Columbus*. Throughout its history, the firm proudly claimed to have never employed a captain who had lost a boat. (Any who did no longer worked for the company.)

The discussion of the Indiana Transportation Company provides a detailed look at the port of Michigan City and its transportation needs throughout its first century. Since the town was located so close to Chicago and to the intersection of several railroads, there was minimal demand for waterborne freight or passenger transportation. Yet local entrepreneurs successfully developed an extensive excursion business at Washington Park on Lake Michigan, a recreational facility similar to today's Cedar Point. Hotels, restaurants, and other businesses were built nearby to provide the necessary services to excursionists making extended visits. As the twentieth century dawned, business expanded annually with finer vessels and faster service, until a quarter of a million excursionists were arriving yearly from Chicago in a season lasting only ten weeks.

A detailed chapter discusses the decline of the passenger and package freight business on Lake Michigan by 1950. The first blow came on July 24,

1915, when the excursion steamer *Eastland* (the subject of another Hilton book) rolled over on its side in the Chicago River, killing more than eight hundred people in the worst disaster ever to strike Great Lakes shipping. Other factors included the coming of the automobile, efficient highway transportation, new government regulations, and the Great Depression, all combining to bring on the demise. The *Theodore Roosevelt* was withdrawn in 1951 after failing boiler and engine inspections, and the *Milwaukee Clipper* was withdrawn in 1970, unable to justify the cost of new sanitary equipment. Today only auto ferries remain for those who would enjoy a refreshing cruise on Lake Michigan.

STEVE HAROLD has been writing books and articles on Lake Michigan's maritime history for more than twenty five years. He is president of the Association of Great Lakes Maritime History, an organization of maritime history professionals.



Thomas D. Clark of Kentucky
An Uncommon Life in the Commonwealth
 Edited by John E. Kleber

(Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2003. Pp. xiii, 256.
 Illustrations, notes, bibliographic essay, index. \$25.00.)

"Nobody grows old by merely living a number of years. People grow old only by deserting their ideals." Perhaps the words of General Douglas MacArthur help to explain why historian and centenarian Thomas D. Clark

has withstood the years so well. The former long-time chair of the history department at the University of Kentucky has not deserted his great ideal: the notion that the knowledge of history remains as practicable and useful