

Arundell sailed Lake Ontario's waters

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OVERLOOKED ORLEANS: Steamer built in Buffalo operated in the summer months between 1880s and 1910

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BATAVIA — An old photograph shows the steamer *Arundell* approaching Oak Orchard Harbor around 1904 or 1905.

Built by the Bell Iron Works at Buffalo in 1879, the iron hull steamer operated along the southern coast of Lake Ontario during the summer months through 1910.

When the photograph was taken, the *Arundell* was owned and operated by the Cole & Holt Lines of Bay City, Mich. and was brought each spring to Lake Ontario by way of the Welland Canal. The steamer frequently carried Orleans County passengers during picnic days and pioneer events.

The company advertised "Good meals on steamer at 50 cents," and "No dust, cool breeze and a pleasant time guaranteed" for its excursion trips across the lake.

These relaxing jaunts included stops at Olcott Beach, Point Breeze, Charlotte, Sodus Point, Fairhaven, Oswego, Cape Vincent, and Clayton — the typical cost of a round trip ticket from Olcott to the Thousand Islands

was \$5 per person.

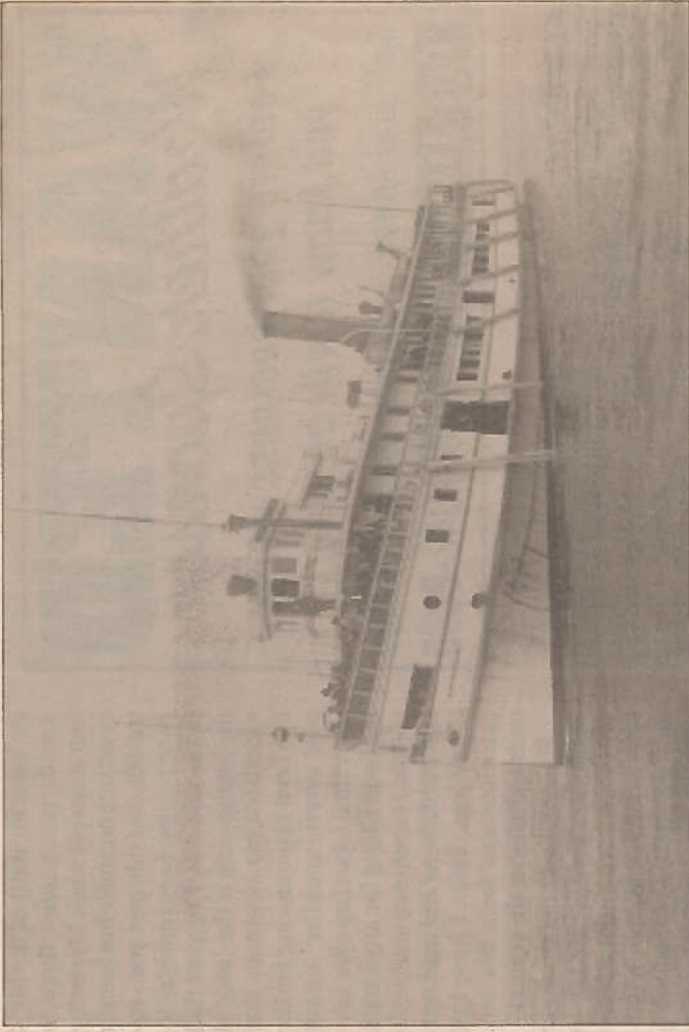
During the earliest years of operation around the Buffalo Harbor in the 1880s, a ticket would run approximately 50 cents for gentlemen and 25 cents for women and children.

In 1904, the company operating the steamer was charged in the death of George Reed of Niles, NY, a passenger who boarded the previous year for an excursion trip to the Thousand Islands.

Reed's wife claimed that the employees and agents on board the *Arundell* got her husband "beastly drunk" and stowed him away in a bunk below deck. When reaching Fairhaven, the crew allegedly carried the semi-conscious man to shore and left him there.

At some point the man regained his composure and attempted to find his way inland but stumbled into the water and drowned. The \$15,000 lawsuit did not appear to have any long-term effect on the steamer's operations.

The steamer suffered an unfortunate accident in 1908 when she travelled too close to the shores of the St. Lawrence River



SUBMITTED PHOTO

The steamer Arundell was a common visitor during the early 1900s on Lake Ontario. The vessel hosted popular excursion trips.

and ran aground on the Fineview Shoals near Wellesley Island. She was towed to Kingston and placed in drydock for several weeks for repairs — the accident set the company back several thousand dollars.

Shortly after the image was

taken, the steamer was sold to the Crawford Transportation Company of Chicago, which used her as a ferry on Lake Michigan until she suffered a tragic fire and burned in 1911. Although her time as a transportation vessel was not over, her time

as the "Queen of Lake Ontario" was complete. The *Arundell* was rebuilt, sold, and renamed Brewster in 1921. The steamer sank after a collision with the Sterling Lake on the James River in Virginia in 1922.