

Great Lakes Waters Lyric Sheet

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The Park at the Corner

It looks like a park, just grass and dirt
And a chain link fence to keep people out,
Just a vacant lot in Detroit City
On the old Chicago Road.
But not long ago it was a different park,
Where men played a game made for boys.
And every summer for a century
The crowd filled the park with noise.
The bluegrass still grows on the infield
The basepaths still the same,
And like the old flagpole out in centerfield,
Our memories remain.
It's a place that's woven in the history
Of millions like you and me.
The haymarket gave way to a place men played
A game with a bat and ball.
We heard the calls of the vendors,
Smelled the scent only old ballparks had.
We heard the sounds of balls hitting bats and gloves
As we cheered for the team we love.
Time moved on. The team did, too,
To the ballpark in downtown.
It's only a building, some people said,
And the walls came tumbling down.
From the dust it rose, to the dust returned,
Now a field in the open air.
But the grass on the infield is still cut to play
By people who still care.
The greatest of baseball players
Once played there with our team.
As once it was, it will always be
Our field of hopes and dreams.

Mail By The Pail

It was midnight on a schooner bound for Buffalo
The deckwatch thought of the woman he loved as he watched the stars
above
But soon they'd reach Detroit. He'd get her letter in the mail.
John Westcott would deliver it. It's Mail by the Pail.
As the sun rose over Windsor, a rowboat ventured out.
John Westcott pulled the oars. He pulled up alongside the boat.
He threw a towline to the moving ship. The Watch tied it to the rail.
As his boat was towed, he filled a pail with supplies and mail.
Chorus: Delivering Mail By The Pail since 1874
Along the Detroit River from the foot of 24th.
A boat with her own Zip Code, 48222
And her own place in history - JW Westcott II
In a dangerous river dance with a giant in the lead,
Each dance a different partner and each of them in need
Of coffee, snacks, and news and a friendly note from home,
Braving weather and the waves, the Westcott crews alone.
The Rowing Man retired, a motor launch took o'er
And from the shadow of the Ambassador Bridge
You can hear her engines roar.
Delivering pilots to the Salties and mail and supplies to all
The Westcott crews are always there waiting for the call
The Marine Reporter always ready to brave storm and wind and wave
From a rowboat or the Westcott Two, anytime of night or day
There's no other service like it. Her mission never fails
JW Westcott's company bringing Mail By The Pail.

The Keeper of the Light

A Lightkeeper lives on rocks and shoals
Far away from our neighbors' homes and farms.
We listen to the sound of the seagull's cries
And the beat of restless waters under star-lit skies.
But the passing ships are like old friends of ours.
We know their shapes and their whistles' calls.
And we know their hearts are cheered when they see our light
When the seas are angry on a stormy night.
Chorus:
The Keeper loves his lighthouse like a sailor loves his boat.
It is grand and noble work, filling sailors' hearts with hope.
He guards the Light with his life, to guide Lake sailors through the night
And prays that the boats that pass this way will pass this way again.

As you lie in your bed all snug and warm,
There are sailors on the Lake battling a storm.
They tremble on the deck in the midnight hour
As we trim the lamp in the lighthouse tower.
We stand in the glow and watch the waves roar
As they rise, chase and tumble upon the shore.
We hear canvas slapping in the winds of the gale
And pray those sailors will live to tell the tale.

The Keeper's life is hard. With work the time we pass.
We keep lens and windows clean. We paint. We polish brass.
We light the lamp and sunset, That life-saving light,
And trim the wick evenly to keep it shining bright.

Pet Rocks to the Rescue

I'll tell you a story of a red-letter day
On Superior's shore, in Grand Marais.
'Twas a day when the citizens of that small U.P. Town
Stood up to Uncle Whiskers and stared the old boy down.

There's a harbor of refuge on Superior's shore at the village of Grand
Marais
But the breakwater wall was breaking and the sand was filling the bay
And they needed some help in a very big way.
But in Washington Town, the government men
Wrung their hands, you could hear them say,
"We'll spend money on a study and do it today,
And the problems they have will just go away!"

chorus: So Way Hey Grand Marais, It's Pet Rocks to the rescue!
If the Army Corps won't help us, we'll do it our own way.
We'll load a boat with Pet Rocks and bury them at sea,
It's a Tea Party demonstration throwing rocks instead of tea.

So the call went out to America, "Send your Pet Rocks up our way.
We'll use them to build up the breakwater at the harbor in Grand
Marais.
In civil disobedience, we'll bury all these stones."
Then by hearse and then by boat to the breakwater they rode.
But the Army Corps was angry. "You can't go throwing stones!
It's against the law! We'll arrest you! It's a thing we can't condone!"
But the burial went on as planned to stop the sand invasion.
If the government won't help us, we'll take them out of the equation.

The Crisp Point Lighthouse

chorus: The lighthouse stands alone on Superior's shore
The lifesavers are now part of Great Lakes lore.
Out on lonely Crisp Point, the sun sets for the day
On the light that once led ships to Whitefish Bay.

1) Lifesaving Station Number Ten, in 1876,
The appointed first Keeper was Christopher Crisp.
For six days a week, led by Crisp's iron will,
With their boats and equipment, the lifesavers drilled.
In August of '96, the Phineas S. Marsh,
A schooner with a cargo of limestone blocks,
A storm blew her to shallows, she was attacked by the waves,
But Crisp's crew went out and all lives were saved.

2) When the shipping lanes opened in 1904,
A new lighthouse shined on Superior's shore.
A fixed 360 beam, a fourth order light
Showed the way between Munising and Whitefish Point.
The freighter Neshoto, in 1908,
Downbound on Superior, Iron Ore was her freight.
Lost her way in the smoke that blew out from the land
The crew was rescued when the ship sailed up on the sand.

3) Today on Crisp Point, the Life Savers gone,
In 1965, the buildings torn down.
But on lonely Crisp Point, she stands there alone
And the Crisp Point Lighthouse points the way home.

The McGulpin Point Light

Chorus: Looking out toward Lake Michigan, at the gateway to the straits,
The darkness is gone. It's been a long wait.
She sits on a high bluff, her lamp shining bright
Through the Mackinac straits, the McGulpin Point Light.

1) In 1869, Keeper Dunn lit the light
For the very first time at McGulpin Point.
From the bluff on the point, the ships saw her beam
As they came into the straits be sail and steam.
Pap Davenport was Keeper for 27 years.
His 9 children helped with chores each day with good cheer.
When the burning Waldo Avery beached just below the light,
The kids helped save the 17 crewmen all that night.

2) For 37 years, the Keeper walked up
The winding stairs to the lantern room to care for the light.
Behind a 3 1/2 order lens, a kerosene lamp
Gave out a 3-second flash of white.
Then Mackinac Point Light took over, McGulpin Point went dark
It returned to private land after serving as a park.
Then the county finally bought her and the lighthouse folks took o'er,
And the McGulpin Point Light is shining once more.

At the dangerous Western opening to the Straits of Mackinac,
Where schooners in Spring were often stuck in ice, waiting for a thaw
A hundred feet above the straits, her tower can be seen
And Lake Boats can once again see her life-saving beam.

The Griffin

When the fall turned to winter on Cayuga Creek's shore
Trees along the Niagra River started to fall.
It was 1678 in that remote locale
The work led by French fur trader Rene LaSalle.
The ship hit the Niagra the following May
Her crew kept working through night and through day.
In August on Lake Erie, where no ship had been,
She set sail and on her prow, a hand-carved Griffin.
And high o'er her sails an Eagle flew,
And the Griffin flew high on her jib-boom.
The Seneca called her a ship with wings.
She flew on the water. You could hear her crew sing.
Chorus: She was a sight to be seen on her maiden tour,
Where canoe and bateaux had only traveled before.
A ship for all ages. Her name was The Griffin
She lies in the deep and her legend lives on.
She entered Lake Erie, her sails unfurled
And her seven brass cannon fired off a salute.
The crew sang the Te Deum and thanked God above
And prayed for a safe journey on the seas that they loved.
The Griffin set sail, under the French flag she flew
Father Hennepin, LaSalle, and a crew of thirty-two
Past the mouth of the Cuyahoga, past the Bass Islands, too
Where the only prior vessels were canoe and bateaux.

Up the Detroit River and the Lake they named St. Clair,
The winds were good. The seas were fair.
Up the St. Clair River, they still held out hope
As they pulled the Griffin through from the shore with a rope.
A Lake Huron gale near Presque Isle broke the peace.
The sailors were frightened. They fell to their knees.
They'd seen nothing like this as the Lake 'round them roared.
They prayed for deliverance and sang hymns to their Lord.

They stopped at St. Ignace, then off to Green Bay.
She was loaded with furs, but LaSalle, he would stay.
On September 18th, she sailed home to the East.
Sailing into the ages in the early morning mist.

The Old Mission Point Light

chorus: The sun sets slowly over Grand Traverse Bay,
Ships on the horizon at the end of the day.
They look to the shore and see a fixed white light
From the lighthouse up on Old Mission Point.

Once it was a place the Ottawa called home
Reverend Dougherty built a mission, the settlers moved in.
More farms meant more ships to move the produce on
And a lighthouse was needed to keep the ships from harm.
Off the peninsula that splits the Grand Traverse Bay
Were shoals that were a danger to ships on their way
From Northport and Charlevoix to the Traverse City shore
So the call went out to Congress, for a light they implored.

The light 14 feet above water on the sandy loam
In a tower above the white-painted Keeper's home.
On the 45th Parallel, the lighthouse could be found
Where the wind and the waves were the only sounds.
It was early September, 1870 was the year,
Jerome Pratt lit the lamp for the first time here.
In front of the lens, a fixed fifth order lens
Threw a white light 13 miles to where the beacon ends.

Only one ship was lost in all the lighthouse days,
Twas the schooner Alida Jane Rogers in 1898.
In a storm she struck a reef and foundered in the night
But the crew found their refuge at the Old Mission Point Light.
Then the lighthouse went dark. Automation won the day.
In 1933, a light buoy in the Bay
But the folks here bought the lighthouse and kept it painted bright
She still stands proudly, the Old Mission Point Light.

Captain Bundy's Gospel Prayer

Captain Bundy sailed his Gospel Ship, Glad Tidings it was called
A cross hung on the foremast, The fos'cle trimmed with gold.
That 2-masted bark was a mission that sailed upon the waves
In every port he stopped and preached. There were so many souls to
save.

In a parish up Lakes Michigan, Superior, Huron and Georgian Bay
Her cargo was the Gospel, with Bibles to give away.
When the Bethel Flag was hoisted above her foremast high,
Word traveled fast along the shore that Captain Bundy had arrived.

He'd sail into the harbor and tie up to the dock
His daughter played the organ, someone would hand out tracts.
He gave a sermon and filled the air with old time gospel fire
And he raised his eyes to heaven and offered up this prayer.
Oh Lord, lift up our feet from the rough road of life,
Up the gangplank of temptation into the ship of salvation.
Let the Good Book be our compass with guidance from above
And daily fill our sails with the Winds of Love.

May the bright ray of Hope shine forevermore
Like the lighthouses set along the Great Lakes shore.

Let the winds of Providence guide our helm with the Good Book as our
compass,
Let our bow cut clean through the fresh waters of righteousness
From the hidden rocks of adversity, please keep our boat safe
And guide us with the ringing of the bell-buoys of Faith.
And when at last we're anchored in the very port of Death
The Good Skipper of the Universe to each of us says
"Well done, good faithful Mariner, good things of you I've heard,
Come sign the log, for happiness is your eternal reward."

May the bright ray of Hope shine forevermore
From the lighthouses set along the Great Lakes shore.

Captain Bundy sailed his Gospel Ship, Glad Tidings it was called
A cross hung on the foremast, The fos'cle trimmed with gold.

Great Lakes Waters

Chorus: From Superior's deep waters through Ontario to the sea
From Chicago's docks to Cleveland on the shore of Lake
Erie
Up Michigan and down Huron, They're ours to explore.
The Great Lakes give life in her waters and on shore.

- 1) From the banks of Gitche-gumee to Ontario's fertile shore
From the grapes that make the wine to the red iron ore
On these lakes where the voyageurs rowed their fur-laden bateaux
Lake boats still travel loaded with life-giving cargo.
- 2) From when the ice breaks in Spring to the hard gales of
November
And the clear summer nights when the stars go on forever.
Folks use these lakes for fishing for boating and to swim
To earn a living or for fun, it's the way it's ever been.
- 3) From lakes where the Salmon run, the Whitefish and Lake Trout
And the Walleye and Perch, that's what it's all about.
Because these Lakes are yours. These Lakes are mine,
It's for us to be good stewards til the end of time.

The St. Helena Light

Where Lake Michigan meets the Mackinac Straits Sits the island of St. Helene.
And as Lakers pass by her, skirting her shoals, Her flashing light can be seen.

There once was a village along her North shore
Where steamers their fuel would take.

And the Newton brothers provided salt fish To the villages along the Lake.

Chorus: The beautiful island on Lake Michigan's tip
That the Ottawa called Mich-auo-o-ning
Her beautiful lighthouse shines through the night
On the island of St. Helene.

A lighthouse was built of limestone and brick
Her light three-and-a-half order bright
Her red light shone high above the sloping shore
To guide the ships through the night.
In September of 18 and 73, the lightkeeper first lit her lamp
But in 1922, the keepers were out
When it was automated with a sun lamp.

The years passed by, the village was gone,
The lighthouse, neglected, grew old.
The Coast Guard gave up on her and wanted her gone,
But in 1986, she was reborn.
The Great Lakes Lightkeepers took over
And the Ann Arbor Boy Scouts came in
They worked hard to restore her to the glory that was
And her light is now shining again.
The Boy Scouts are painting and fixing her up.
The Quilters spend time so serene.
And the light is now flashing six-seconds white
On the island of St. Helene.

Tragedy and Triumph (Dennis Hale's Story)

My name is Dennis Hale, and a story I will tell
Of adversity and triumph. It's a story I know well.
It was late November '66 when I woke that stormy morn
I had no idea then just how my life would turn.
The sound was like a cannon shot. My books flew off the shelf.
I grabbed my life vest and went on deck to see things for myself.
The lights on the bow were out. That made it hard to see.
The crew was going to the raft between hatches 2 and 3.
From my place up on the spar deck, I see the 30 foot sea
That battered the Daniel J. Morrell. The stern I couldn't see.
Wearing only shorts and vest, to the cabin back I flew
But could only find my pea coat. So that would have to do.
I feel ice and snow beneath my toes as I climb into the raft.
I hear the engine crying. The wind screaming through the wires.
Such noise! I can't believe the noise, we can do this. We'll be okay
But the Morrell tears in two and we're thrown into the spray.

Chorus: They'll never be forgotten, my shipmates on that day
The brave lakesmen who perished out on Huron's lake.
In the storm that broke apart the Daniel J. Morrell
Their in my thoughts and prayers each day, their story I will tell.

I swim up to the raft, through the freezing waves.
Up on the raft, just four of us the raft would save.
I found the gun, shot off some flares and looked for our shipmates
And a ship to come and save us, but the odds were just too great.
By morning light, two shipmates dead. By nightfall it was just me.
Dear God, it's cold. Where are you, God? Oh, please save me.
The storm was gone I was alone upon the choppy sea
With the water temp 44 degrees and the air at 33.
It's cold out here. It's so darned cold. No land within my sight.
I could hardly move or speak, I want to give up the fight.
I shouldn't be here today. It was too cold to stay alive.
But in a heavenly place, a shipmate said, "Go back, It's not your time."
I found myself in places I've never seen before,
Like a warm beach in Hawaii and a home upon the shore
The man who said, Don't eat the ice if I want to stay alive,
And the ones who urged me to stay warm, all helped me to survive.

Since that day in November '66, I think about and pray
For each of my shipmates on the Morrell on that day.
My life has not been easy, but this thing I have found.
It's not the man you once were, but the man you have become.
So many feel helpless as a life raft on the sea.
The waves of life are sometimes high and make it hard to see.
God had a plan for me but it took me time to know
You have to face those hard times and trust God to pull you through.