

## The Col. James M. Schoonmaker

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Chorus: She sits today in layup, no more the waves to fight.  
She'll ne'er again sail into Erie past Toledo Harbor's light.  
But she's still alive at anchor for everyone to see  
The Col. James M. Schoonmaker, still Great Lakes royalty.

As the steamer Shenango locked through the Soo, two men on her deck were seen  
One said to the other, "You'd haul more ore on a ship with a broader beam."  
That man was James M. Schoonmaker, of Medal of Honor fame  
And two years later they'd built that ship and gave to her his name.  
In October, 1911, she started her maiden trip  
And Col. James M. Schoonmaker stepped aboard his namesake ship.  
In the Grill Room he looked up through a skylight of glass  
And he stayed in a stateroom furnished with mahogany and brass.

The world's largest Great Lakes freighter, no longer someone's dream.  
Her three coal-fired boilers turned water into steam.  
And she pulled away from her moorings on that calm October morn  
And she whistled a parting salute to the workers on the shore.  
Her hull wore a gown of green, she was the Queen of the Inland Seas  
And from the first time she sailed from Toledo, the records fell with ease.  
She set a speed record that October from Duluth to Ohio.  
And the records fell for Flax and Wheat, Rye and Coal and Iron Ore.

Looking out for other ships and shoals and things that sailors dread,  
The Wheelsman at the wheel and the Watchman, eyes ahead.  
The Mates overseeing all the painting to be done  
Day In and Day Out on every Great Lakes run.  
She took all the Lakes had to give her, be it calm seas, fog or gale.  
Like the White Hurricane in 1913, a storm that made all the others pale.  
She was sold in 1969. Changed her name, her colors, too  
She retired as the Willis B. Boyer on the Maumee in Toledo.

I walked past her the other day, her engines silent now  
And I wondered about what her crew had seen from the portholes on her bow.  
After 69 years of service, she rests at anchor now  
The freighter is now a museum ship at the port of Toledo.  
With the High Level Bridge on her stern, downtown Toledo off her bow  
Her great holds empty caverns and will be ever more.  
She may not sail the Lakes again, but a laker she'll ever be  
The Col. James M. Schoonmaker, still Great Lakes royalty.