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Centennial: Marquette's LS&I Ore Dock

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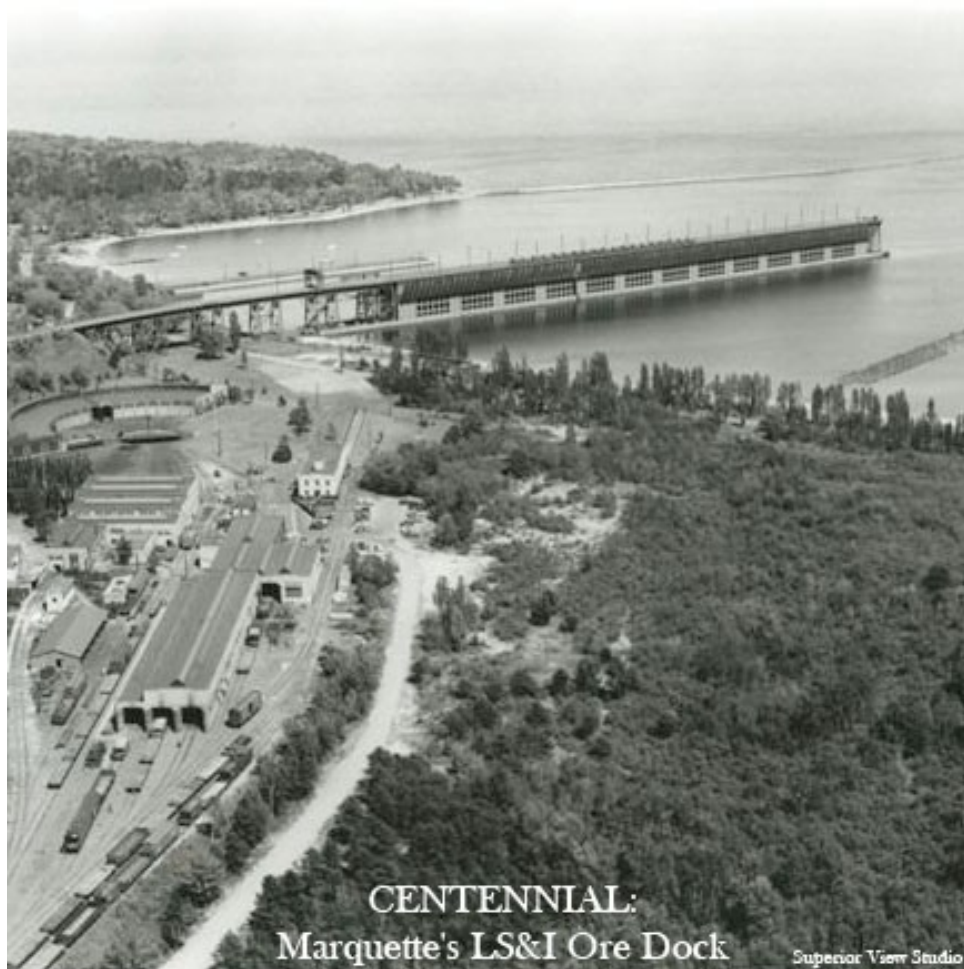
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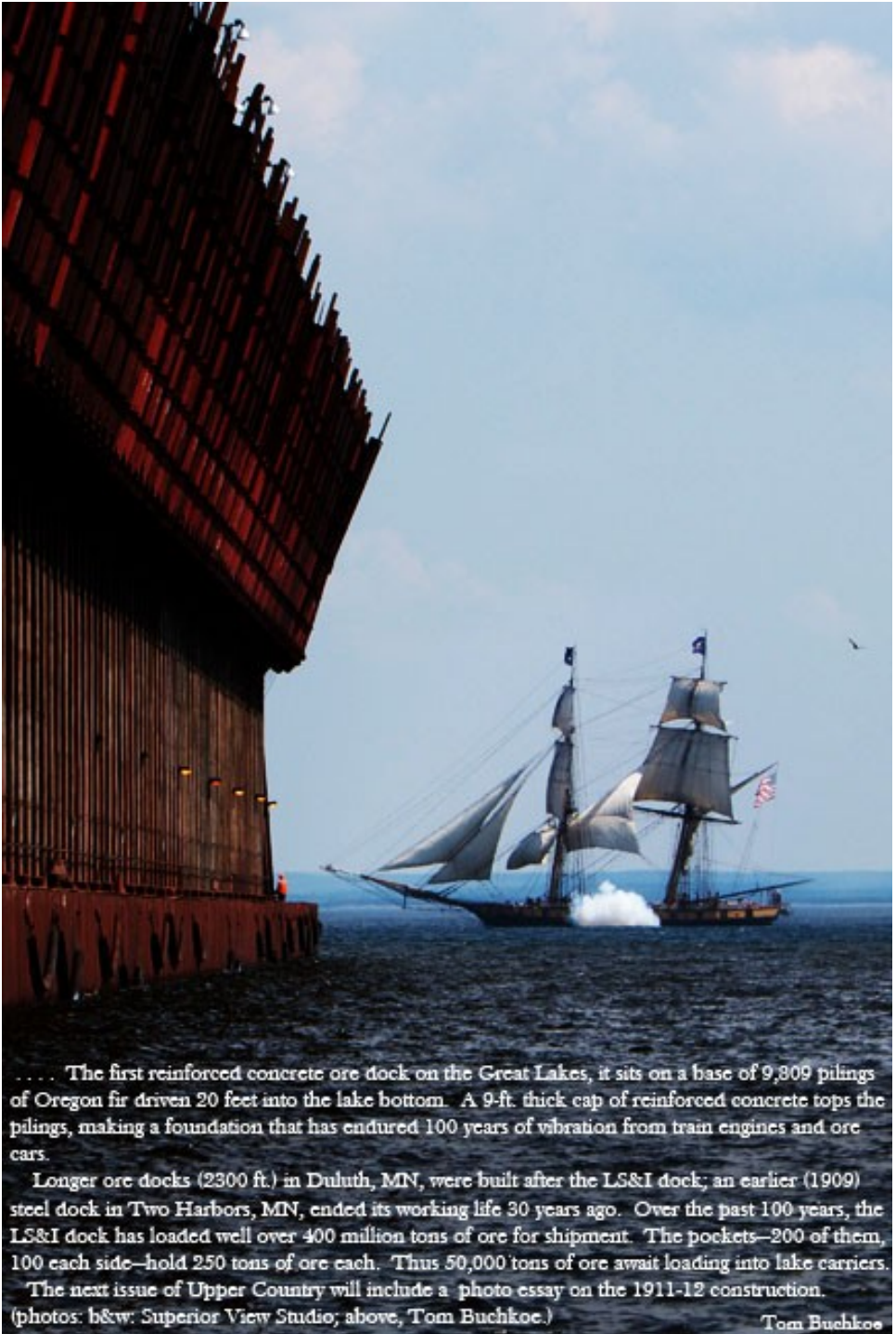
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The Lake Superior & Ishpeming Railroad ore dock in the Upper Harbor near Presque Isle in Marquette, MI, celebrated its Centennial this year. Observances included a visit by the brig *Niagara* from Erie, PA—dwarfed by the dock in the color photo, next page. The 1950s black & white photo above shows the ore dock, railroad sheds, yards and roundhouse; the 75-ft. high trestle over Lake Shore Drive; the 2816-ft. breakwater and light completed by the Army Corps of Engineers in 1939; and Presque Isle. Also visible are the remains of the much shorter 1896 wooden ore dock.

Begun in 1911, construction of the ore dock ended in August of 1912 at a cost of \$1,250,000; the first load of iron ore went out Aug. 5, 1912. . . .



... The first reinforced concrete ore dock on the Great Lakes, it sits on a base of 9,809 pilings of Oregon fir driven 20 feet into the lake bottom. A 9-ft. thick cap of reinforced concrete tops the pilings, making a foundation that has endured 100 years of vibration from train engines and ore cars.

Longer ore docks (2300 ft.) in Duluth, MN, were built after the LS&I dock; an earlier (1909) steel dock in Two Harbors, MN, ended its working life 30 years ago. Over the past 100 years, the LS&I dock has loaded well over 400 million tons of ore for shipment. The pockets—200 of them, 100 each side—hold 250 tons of ore each. Thus 50,000 tons of ore await loading into lake carriers.

The next issue of *Upper Country* will include a photo essay on the 1911-12 construction.

(photos: b&w: Superior View Studio; above, Tom Buchkoe.)

Tom Buchkoe