John William Adcock was born April 8, 1867, on a farm south of Eldon, Miller County, Missouri. He began his steamboating career on the Osage and Missouri Rivers as a deckhand on the Frederick. He then worked as cook on the John R. Hugo. He returned to the Frederick where he obtained his Pilot’s License. He was Pilot and Master of the J. R. Wells when it was commissioned in April, 1898, later becoming Captain. He was Pilot of the towboat Daniel Boone on the Corps of Engineers Missouri River Improvement Project. He maintained his Pilot’s License until 1932. John William Adcock died July 22, 1961, age 94, in Jefferson City, Missouri.
Included herein is my transcript of a report submitted by John William Adcock, Pilot of the towboat Daniel Boone, to the Corps of Engineers detailing activity for the ten-day period from May 1 to May 10, 1915. The work consisted primarily of moving barges loaded with willows or rock between various locations on the Missouri River from Gasconade, Missouri to the foot of Bonhomme Island near Chesterfield, Missouri. Mats woven of willow limbs, held in place with pilings and weighed down with rock were used to help stabilize the river.

Most of the places mentioned in the report are familiar to us today; i.e., Gasconade, Berger, New Haven, Marthasville, Washington, South Point, Centaur, Weldon Springs and Bonhomme Island. From mileage indicated in the report, Bacon’s Landing was almost certainly at or near St. Albans. The Bacons were an early Missouri family, coming in around the time of the Louisiana Purchase and settling in St. Louis, St. Charles and Franklin Counties. There were many entries of public lands by Bacon family members before 1850 in the westernmost parts of St. Louis County near the Missouri River.

I have taken the liberty of adding some punctuation and making a few other minor changes in this transcript to render it more readable. A copy of the original report follows the transcript.

John William Adcock was great uncle of my husband, Phillip H. Smith. John’s brother Samuel Arthur Adcock, Phillip’s grandfather, also worked on steamboats for a while.

Sincerely,

Tarney Smith
IMPROVING:  Missouri River

Report of Operation of  Towboat Daniel Boone  for
the 10 days ending  May 10th  1915

Post office address for next week  Gasconade, Mo.

Saturday May 1st  1915
Cleared from Berger Quarry downbound for Martins Camp
at Marthasville at 6-00 a.m. Took on 50 barrows coal at
New Haven.  Proceeded downstream arrived at Martins Camp
at 9-40 a.m.  Proceeded to Washington for supplies and returned
to Martins Camp.  Went into Chute and picked up drivers and
compressor and took them around to fleet.  Picked up Quarter
Boat and Barge.  Tow now consisting of four pieces and proceeded
upstream.  Dropped fleet at Hodsons Camp and picked up Barge
No 322 and cleared for Jones Camp at Weldon Springs.  Tied up
for the night at Washington at 6-30 p.m.  Miles run downstream
light 28.  Miles run upstream light 4.  Miles run upstream with
tow 3.  Miles run downstream 7.
Coal received Barrows 50.  Coal consumed Barrows 30.
Pieces Handled  5

Sunday May 2nd – 1915
Cleared from Washington with Barge No 322 in tow downbound
for Jones Camp at Weldon Springs at 6-00 a.m. Arrived Jones
Camp at 9-30 a.m.  Took Barge No 318 partly loaded with
willows from Jones Camp to foot of Bonhomme Island.  Tied up
Boat at 11-30 a.m.  Miles run downstream with tow 39.
Coal consumed Barrows 20.  Pieces Handled  2

Monday May 3rd – 1915
Boat at Bonhomme Island waiting for Barge to be loaded with
willows.  Crew engaged in washing Boiler and painting Boat.
Cleared from Bonhomme Island upbound with Barge No 318
loaded with willows at 5-00 p.m.  Tied up for the night at Centaur
at 7:30 p.m. Miles run upstream with tow 10
Coal consumed Barrows 15
Pieces Handled 1

Tuesday May 4 – 1915
Cleared from Centaur with Barge No 318 in tow loaded with
willows at 6:00 a.m. Tied up at New Haven at 6:00 p.m. –
took on 40 barrows coal
Miles run upstream with tow 37.
Coal received Barrows 40
Coal consumed Barrows 30
Pieces Handled 1

Wednesday May 5 – 1915
Cleared from New Haven with Barge No 318 in tow loaded with
willows at 5:30 a.m. Dropped Barge No 318 loaded with
willows at Martins Camp at Rush Island and proceeded to
Gasconade, Mo. Arrived at Gasconade at 11:45 a.m. Took on
75 barrows coal.
Miles run upstream with tow 13
Miles run upstream light 11
Coal received Barrows 75. Coal consumed Barrows 15
Pieces Handled 1

Thursday May 6 – 1915
Cleared from Gasconade downbound light for Berger at 8:20 a.m.
Arrived at Berger at 9:25 a.m. Picked up Barge No 163 loaded
with rock and proceeded upstream. Arrived at Gasconade at
12:40 p.m. Cleared from Gasconade with Barge No 153. Dropped
Barge at Berger and proceeded downstream light. Picked up
Barge No 323 at Hodsons Camp and proceeded downstream. Tied
up at Washington at 7:00 p.m.
Miles run downstream light 32. Miles run upstream with tow 11
Miles run downstream with tow 18. Coal consumed Barrows 25
Pieces Handled 3
Friday May 7 – 1915
Cleared from Washington with Barge No 323 in tow downbound at 6-00 a.m. Dropped Barge No 323 at Bonhomme Island and returned to Jones Camp at Weldon Springs and tied up at 11-45 a.m. Making repairs and painting balance of day.
Miles run downstream with tow 32. Miles run upstream light 6
Coal consumed Barrows 15
Pieces Handled 1

Saturday May 8 – 1915
Boat at Weldon Springs. Crew engaged in washing Boiler and painting while waiting for Barge to be loaded. Cleared from Jones Camp at Weldon Springs with Barge No 322 loaded with willows at 4-00 p.m. Tied up at Bacons Landing at 7-30 p.m.
Miles run upstream with tow 10
Coal consumed Barrows 15
Pieces Handled 1

Sunday May 9 – 1915
Cleared from Bacons Landing upbound with Barge No. 322 loaded with willows at 6-00 a.m. Took on 40 barrows coal at South Point. Tied up at Washington at 10-00 a.m. for balance of day. Miles run upstream with tow 16
Coal received Barrows 40
Coal consumed Barrows 20
Pieces Handled 1

Monday May 10 – 1915
Cleared from Washington upbound with Barge No 322 loaded with willows at 6-00 a.m. Dropped Barge No 322 loaded with willows at Hodsons Camp and picked up Barge No 325 with part load willows and proceeded upstream to Martins Camp. Arrived at Martins Camp at 3-00 p.m. Dropped Barge No. 325 part load willows. Cleared from Martins Camp downbound light at 3-20 p.m. Picked up Barge No. 315 at Berger loaded with rock
and proceeded downstream. Tied up at New Haven at 5:30 p.m.
Took on 60 barrows coal at New Haven.
Miles run upstream with tow 30
" "" light 3
" " Downstream with tow 13
Coal received Barrows 60
Coal consumed Barrows 30
Pieces Handled 3
Summary of 10 days work.

Location of party or boat, first of period  
Berger Quarry

Location of party or boat, end of period  
New Haven

On May 1st cleared from Berger Quarry downbound for Martins Camp at Marthasville. Arrived at Martins Camp and proceeded to Washington and returned to Martins Camp. Assembled fleet and made up tow and proceeded upstream and dropped fleet at Hodsons Camp and picked up Barge and proceeded to Jones Camp at Weldon Springs. Arrived at Jones Camp on the 2nd and proceeded to Bonhomme Island with Barge. Cleared from Bonhomme Island on the 3rd for Martins Camp at Rush Island. Arrived at Martins Camp and proceeded to Gasconade on the 5th. On the 6th cleared from Gasconade for Berger. Picked up Barge rock and returned to Gasconade. Cleared from Gasconade for Jones Camp at Weldon Springs. Arrived at Jones Camp on the 7th. Cleared from Jones Camp on the 8th and arrived at Hodsons Camp on the 10th. Proceeded to Martins Camp at Rush Island. Cleared from Martins Camp for Jones Camp at Weldon Springs.

Miles run upstream light 24  Coal on Boat first of period 90 B

" " " with tow 130  Coal received during period 265

" " " Downstream light 60

" " " " with tow 109

Total Miles run 323

Coal on boat at end of period 140 Barrows

Coal consumed during period 215 "

Total 355

Pieces Handled 19

Respectfully submitted

Location: New Haven  
John W. Adcock

Date May 11th 1915  
Pilot
Following are two pictures of the tug boat *Daniel Boone* taken at the Washington, Missouri Landing. Copies of these pictures were given to me by Marc Houseman, Director, Washington (MO) Museum. The date when these pictures were taken is unknown to me. These pictures are followed by images of the “log” written in John W. Adcock’s own hand that were included in Hilary Adcock Dunnaway’s “Adcock Family” written in October 1973.
Tuesday May 11
Cleared from Centaur with Bar 0318 in tow
Winds with WNW at 6-00 A.M. and WSW at New Haven at 6-00 P.M.
Enrolled at 70 Barrows coal
Winds run upstream with low 37
Coal received Barrows 40
Coal consumed Barrows 30
Ricees handled 1

Wednesday May 12
Cleared from New Haven with Bar 0318 in tow
Winds with WNW at 6-30 A.M. and WSW at Bar 0318
Enrolled at New Haven MI and proceeded to be convoyd 400, arrived at Greenock at 11-15 A.M. Took on 75 Barrows coal
Winds run upstream with low 4
Winds run upstream with low 13
Coal received Barrows 15 Coal consumed Barrows 15
Ricees handled 1

Thursday May 13
Cleared from New Haven downstream by 9-00 A.M. for Bar 0323 at 8-20 A.M. arrived at Bar 0323 at 9-25 A.M. and received 1000 L. of 163 loaded with Rock and proceeded upstream arrived at Greenock at 12-40 P.M. Cleared from New Haven with Bar 0323 loaded at 12-55 A.M. and proceeded downstream
Winds run downstream with low 32 Winds run upstream with low 11
Winds run downstream with low 15 Coal consumed Barrows 25 Ricees handled 3

Friday May 7
Cleared from New Haven with Bar 0323 in tow
downstream at 6-00 A.M. departed Bar 0323 at 7-00 A.M. at Bonaventure Island and returned to 1000 L. of Bar 0323 and Rock at 11-45 A.M. Wards damaged and Reel's sailmen of day
Winds run upstream with low 32
Winds run upstream with low 15
Coal consumed Barrows 15
Ricees handled 1
Saturday, May 8

Barge No. 322, loaded with willows, at 7-30 A.M. ready for chartering. Will be loaded at 8-00 A.M. at Alton Landing. Breast No. 322 loaded with willows at 4-00 P.M. Tied at Bacon Landing at 7-30 P.M.

Miles run upstream with low 10
Coal consumed Barrows 15
Rice consumed 1

Sunday, May 9

Cleared by Mr. Bacon's Landing northbound with Breast No. 322 loaded with willows at 6-00 A.M. Tied at Hector Point. Left Alton Landing at 10-00 A.M. For balance of day Miles run downstream with low 16
Coal received Barrows 40
Coal consumed Barrows 20
Rice consumed 1

Monday, May 10

Cleared at Alton Landing northbound with Breast No. 322 loaded with willows at 6-30 A.M. Tied at Hector Point. Breast No. 322 loaded with willows at Hector Point. Left Alton Landing at 3-00 P.M. Tied at 3-00 P.M. Ready for chartering. Breast No. 325 loaded with willows. Tied at 3-00 P.M. Ready for chartering. Left at New Haven at 5-30 P.M. 40 miles to 100 Barrows

Coal at New Haven
Miles run upstream with low 160
Rice consumed 8
Coal consumed Barrows 13
Rice consumed 30

1915
Summary of 10 days work.

Location of party or boat, first of period
Bergen Quarry

Location of party or boat, end of period
New Haven

On May 1st, cleared from Bergen Quarry downstream for Martins Camp at Weldonville, arrived at Martins Camp, and proceeded to Washington and returned to Martins Camp. Assembled fleet and proceeded seaward and proceeded to Eads Camp at Weldon Island.


Miles Run: Summer Light 24 Cotton Boll 790 13
Water Level 100

Total Miles Run 3,347

Letter

Dear Mr. Adams,

I am submitting my report for the period of May 1st to May 10th. During this period, the crew cleared from the Bergen Quarry downstream to Washington and then proceeded to Martins Camp at Weldon Island. From there, they returned to Washington and then proceeded to Eads Camp at Weldon Island. After that, they cleared from Bonhomme Island to Martins Camp and then proceeded to Washington for Bergen. From there, they returned to Washington and then proceeded to Weldon Island, arriving at James Camp on the 7th. They cleared from James Camp on the 8th and arrived at Weldon Island on the 10th.

Total Miles Run: 3,347

Respectfully submitted,

Location: New Haven, 1917

Date: May 11th, 1917

John W. Adams

Pilot