

In the March issue, we featured as our Ship of the Month No. 254 the wooden-hulled freighter MAJOR, (a) JOHN MITCHELL (I)(02), which was built in 1889 by F. W. Wheeler at West Bay City. She served the Mitchell and Playfair fleets, and latterly the Georgian Bay Shipbuilding and Wrecking Company, in a career that lasted for 52 years.

We mentioned that we had no photos of her as JOHN MITCHELL but, thanks to two stalwart members, Rev. Peter J. Van der Linden and Ralph K. Roberts, we have several good photos of the MITCHELL to share with our members. The first, unfortunately with her stem cut off, shows her when she was very new and, surprisingly to us, shows her with four masts and auxiliary sails. The second shows her when the two middle masts had been removed and she ran sporting two tall, wooden, fidded masts. The third photo shows her as MAJOR, but with the two masts cut down, before they were replaced by the steel pipe spars she was carrying when caught in the photo we used of her passing under the bridges at Chicago.

We thought that this information was going to constitute this month's (second) follow-up to the MAJOR feature, but then we got a surprise in the form of a letter from member Carmen Paris, of the Michigan Soo. He was responding to our request about the salvage of MAJOR after her encounter on Lake Superior with the tail end of the Great Storm of 1913.

In the original feature, we noted that after rolling her stack out some thirty miles past Whitefish Point, and after her crew was removed by the passing steamer A. M. BYERS, MAJOR was found by the steamer GEORGE G. BARNUM, which towed her into the Soo on Sunday, November 16, 1913. That report came from Julius F. Wolff Jr's Lake Superior Shipwrecks, a usually reliable source. Our only reason to doubt Wolff's report (credited to the "Duluth News-Tribune" of November 15, 1913, and the "Marquette Mining Journal" of November 17, 1913) was that our records showed that GEORGE G. BARNUM, the former SOCAPA, did not take the BARNUM name until 1915. We wondered if it could have been the similarly-sized JOHN J. BARLUM that had rescued the wallowing MAJOR.

However, as noted in the April issue, hawk-eyed member George Ayoub checked shipping registers to which Ye Ed. did not have ready access, and determined that SOCAPA was renamed earlier than we had supposed, as she showed up as such in both 1913 and 1914 sources. Accordingly, we reconciled ourselves to the fact that it must indeed have been the BARNUM that picked up the MAJOR, and that our BARLUM speculation was just "mist on the breeze". But was it?

Carmen Paris has provided a front page of the final edition of "The Evening News", of Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, for Saturday, November 15, 1913. It carried extensive coverage of the aftermath of The Great Storm, and one absolutely fascination portion of the report read as follows: "Pick Up MAJOR. Wallowing about in the seas just past Whitefish Point, was the derelict MAJOR, which was abandoned by her officers and crew last Thursday afternoon, was picked up by the steamer BARLUM of the Postal Steamship line Friday night and towed inside the Point. Information as to her condition has not been obtainable." In another part of the article, it was stated: "Her smoke-stack was torn away and the after cabin badly smashed up, but she appeared to be all right forward."

We continue: "The tug (B. B.) INMAN was sent up and is towing the derelict down today. They are expected to arrive here this evening. The salvage will net the BARLUM owners, officers and crew a neat sum. The amount of the salvage will be decided by the United States admiralty court when it sits in the federal building in this city. In cases like this one, the amount of the salvage is usually fifty percent of (the value of) vessel and cargo.

"The outcome in this case of the MAJOR may cause (her) Captain Rouvell some trouble. Of course this will depend largely on the actual condition of the MAJOR when picked up. The fact that she remained afloat may count against