

THE QUINTE

A short while ago, we came to the realization that we soon would be coming up on time to write our 300th "Ship of the Month" feature for this publication. What a milestone! We had thought that we might be able to run a really major article for this special occasion but, for a number of reasons, it just did not work out that way. So instead we will feature a small ferry but one that did yeoman duty on an important Ontario highway crossing for many years.

As many (but not all of you) may know, the Bay of Quinte is located on the north side of the eastern end of Lake Ontario. It is a long (some fifty miles), winding and generally narrow body of water which separates Prince Edward County on the south from the Canadian mainland on the north. Located along the bay are the cities of Trenton and Belleville and the towns of Picton and Deseronto. The easternmost section of the Bay of Quinte is known as Adolphus Reach, which is some eleven miles in length, extending from Cressy Point westward to Youngs Point. From Youngs Point, there is a ferry crossing to the village of Glenora, located on the south shore of the Reach.

The ferry service has been a vital connection in what variously has been called the Danforth Road, the King's Highway or the Loyalist Parkway. Ferry service appears to have been commenced about 1880 by one Joe Thurston. Over the subsequent years, ferries were operated by James C. Wilson, John Green, William Powless, Hugh McWilliams, Theodore Forest, Charles and Albert Francis, Harold Hudgins and Robert McLeod. The latter put the double-ended, diesel ferry NAHOMIS on the route in 1928.

In 1936, what then was known as the Ontario Department of Highways took over the operation of what became Highway 33 from Trenton to Kingston, and also assumed the operation of the ferry service between Youngs Point (Adolphustown) and Glenora. It soon was decided that a new and more efficient ferryboat was needed for the service and the provincial government let a contract for the construction of a double-ended automobile and passenger ferry which eventually would be christened THE QUINTE.

The October 1939 issue of "Canadian Transportation" reported: "The boat was built by Russel Brothers Ltd., Owen Sound, Ont., and is of electric welded steel construction throughout. She is 69 ft. 6 in. long (overall), 32 ft. wide, with a moulded depth of 7 ft. Draft is 4 ft., and capacity for 15 automobiles is provided. Speed is 8.5 m.p.h.

"This craft is powered by a 170 h.p. Cummins Diesel engine, with friction clutches and propellers at each end. The engine, electric lighting plant, fire pumps and air compressors are located in the centre section, below the main deck. The gang planks at each end are counter-balanced and operated by hand winches. A rudder is fitted at each end, these being operated by Russel hand hydraulic steering gears. The main deck is divided into three 10 ft. (wide) runways and, with this arrangement, automobiles are enabled to be driven on at one end, proceed straight through, and be driven off at the other end. This ferry boat operates from 6 a.m. to 11 p.m. daily, and, like other Ontario Government ferries, carries passengers and automobiles without charge.

"The boat was completed in June, and made the trip from Owen Sound to Glenora by way of Georgian Bay, Lake Huron, Lake Erie and Lake Ontario in about one week, proceeding under her own power.

Unusual Design
of Bottom of
Quinte.



"Attention is called particularly to the small illustration presented herewith, showing the bottom of the boat, and the centre boat-shaped section in which the power plant, etc., are installed. The object of this design was to get this equipment below the deck level and maintain the required displacement."

When "The Owen Sound Sun-Times" of June 23, 1939, featured a photo of the "New Steel Welded Ferry Boat Built in Owen Sound"