

ALTADOC (ii)

In last month's feature article, your editor outlined some of the reasons why we choose certain ships about which to write for these pages. We selected SAMUEL F. B. MORSE last month simply because we liked her appearance. Well (surprise, surprise!), we chose this month's feature ship for the same reason. When Ye Ed. was a little boy, he very much admired this particular steamer which was very handsome but which wasn't quite like any other vessel then operating. Whereas most of the older Paterson steamers were originally either Mitchell or Gilchrist boats, and therefore of definite "types", this ship wasn't from either of those fleets. Also, Paterson ships often came to Toronto with soybeans or with coal, but ALTADOC (ii) came here only very rarely and didn't even often come down the Welland Canal. So just because she was different and we admired her, here she is!

Last issue, in connection with the MORSE, we recounted briefly the history of the Lake Superior Consolidated Iron Mines Company, which came to be controlled by the famous industrialist John D. Rockefeller, and of which the lake shipping arm was the Bessemer Steamship Company. Next largest to Rockefeller's firm in the size of its iron mining operations was the Minnesota Iron Mining Company, established in 1882 by a man appropriately and grandly named Charlemagne Tower, who bought up other operations that had failed. At Two Harbors, Minnesota, on Lake Superior, he built the largest ore dock ever constructed and he built his own railroad to haul the ore from his mines to the Two Harbors loading dock.

Rockefeller wasn't even on the iron mining scene yet when, in 1887, the Minnesota Iron Mining Company created its own lake shipping fleet to ensure that it would not be reliant on other operators for hauling its ore down the lakes. It formed the Minnesota Steamship Company and for a while used chartered vessels. But in 1890-1891, the company took delivery of six very similar steamers ranging in overall length from 290 to 320 feet. They were christened MANOLA, MARISKA, MARUBA, MATOA, MASABA and MARINA, and they started the company's practice of giving its ships names beginning with the letters 'Ma' and ending with an 'a'. In 1892, Minnesota Steamship took delivery of the 348 foot overall steamers MARITANA and MARIPOSA, which were the largest cargo-hauling ships on the lakes when built, but which originally suffered from severe vibration problems when operated at full speed - problems that caused crews and observers to fear for the seaworthiness of the ships until the problems were rectified. From 1895 through 1900, the company added four much larger steamers and a group of ten large consort barges.

The first of the next group of steel steamers built for the Minnesota Steamship Company was Hull 21 of the Chicago Shipbuilding Company, which was launched on Thursday, July 2, 1896. Enrolled as U.S.92736 and registered at Duluth, Minnesota, she was christened MARICOPA. The derivation of the name is unclear. There is a small town named Maricopa in California, located southwest of Bakersfield, and another south of Phoenix in Arizona. There also are the Maricopa Mountains of Arizona. We cannot find any other places similarly named anywhere in the world, nor any biographical references, but Minnesota Steamship was nothing if not inventive in finding names for its ships.

MARICOPA was 406.0 feet in length between perpendiculars (425.0 feet overall), 48.0 feet in the beam and 28.0 feet in depth, and her original tonnage was 4223 Gross and 3669 Net. She had four cargo holds and three watertight compartments, with 12 hatches spaced on 24-foot centres. Her hull was, in typical fashion, strengthened by a series of beams and stanchions inside the holds. She was powered by a triple expansion engine which had cylinders of 25, 40 and 68 inches diameter and a stroke of 42 inches, and it produced Indicated Horsepower of 2,000 at 80 revolutions per minute. Steam at a working pressure of 175 p.s.i. was produced by an unusual arrangement of three coal-fired, single-ended Scotch boilers which had a total of nine furnaces, 238 square feet of grate surface and 6,795 square feet of heating surface. Each boiler was 13'0" in diameter and the same 13'0" in length. The engine and boilers were all built for the ship in 1896 at Cleveland, Ohio, by the Cleveland Shipbuilding Company.

MARICOPA had a straight stem, a graceful counter stern and a pleasing but not exaggerated sheer to her deck. There originally were wooden fender strakes along her sides for protection when docking and canalling. Two stockless anchors were hung from hawseholes on either side of the bow, close to the stem and just above the loaded waterline, and a kedge anchor was carried on the fantail aft. There was a very short half-topgallant forecastle, with a small section of closed steel bulwark at the stem and then an open rail, and from the break of the forecastle, a closed steel bulwark ran back along the spar deck to the after end of