

On June 16, 1962, PRESCOTT entered drydock at the yard of Collingwood Shipyards Ltd., for she was due for survey and inspection. It was found, however, that the steamer required very extensive repairs, including major work on her boilers and the complete renewal of her engine mountings. The latter item was the "last straw" and, with the vessel condemned by the inspectors, Canada Steamship Lines decided to retire her rather than spend the funds necessary to place her back in class. PRESCOTT was taken off the drydock, and a skeleton crew sailed her light from Collingwood to Toronto, where she arrived on June 27th. She was laid up alongside the old C.S.L. passenger shed on the west side of the Yonge Street slip, and steam was soon let down for the last time.

During the summer months, Canada Steamship Lines sold PRESCOTT to International Metals, of Hamilton, Ontario, for scrapping. On November 29, 1962, PRESCOTT left Toronto, bound for Hamilton in tow of the tugs MACASSA and ARGUE MARTIN. By July of 1963, the scrapping of most of the steamer was completed at the yard of the Steel Company of Canada Ltd. However, some 150 feet of PRESCOTT's bottom was turned over to the Hamilton Harbour Commission for possible conversion to a derrick barge.

Nevertheless, this small part of the old steamer was never made into the projected barge, as it was decided instead to build an entirely new crane barge, which made its appearance in August 1964 as the 136-foot CARGO MASTER, which was built at Kingston. The last remains of PRESCOTT eventually were dismantled by Stelco and today we are left with nothing but memories of this graceful and distinctive steamer.

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THE UNWANTED ANNIVERSARY

During the early morning hours of Saturday, September 17, 1949, forty years ago, the Canada Steamship Lines passenger steamer NORONIC was destroyed by fire as she lay berthed for the night on the west side of the C.S.L. passenger terminal at the foot of Yonge Street, Toronto. It was the worst fire disaster ever to strike the City of Toronto. The property damage, of course, was limited to the ship and the passengers' belongings and could never compare, for instance, with the utter devastation caused in the great fire of 1904, but no fire in the city's history ever resulted in such great loss of life.

NORONIC (C.134014) was Hull 6 of the Western Dry Dock and Shipbuilding Company Ltd., Port Arthur, Ontario, and was launched on June 2, 1913. She was 362.0 x 52.0 x 24.8, 6905 Gross and 3935 Net, and she was powered by an 805 N.H.P., four-cylinder, triple expansion engine with cylinders of 29½, 47½, 58 and 58 inches and a stroke of 42 inches. Steam was provided by four coal-fired, single-ended, Scotch boilers, measuring 15'6" by 11'0", and there was one auxiliary boiler. The engine and boilers were built by the American Ship Building Company at Cleveland, Ohio.

The ship sailed from Port Arthur on her maiden voyage on November 26, 1913, her destination being Sarnia. Her regular service was the passenger and package freight trade from Windsor and Sarnia (Point Edward) to Port Arthur and Duluth. Unfortunately, once NORONIC was in her normal service, it was determined that she was unstable enough to be unseaworthy, and in 1915 she was taken to the AmShip yard at Lorain, where her hull was "blistered". This operation widened the hull by six feet at the waterline and gave her lower sides an unusual outward slope.

NORONIC operated successfully and profitably, carrying both passengers and general cargo during the summer months and moving mostly freight in the spring and autumn each year. Her running mates on the route were the 1902-built HURONIC and the beautiful HAMONIC of 1909. HAMONIC was destroyed at Point Edward on July 17, 1945, in a fire which began in the terminal at which she was moored. Thereafter, NORONIC carried on alone in the passenger trade, HURONIC having earlier been relegated to freight-only service.