

nine windows (sectioned horizontally rather than vertically) in its front and sides, and it sported a sunvisor which seemed continuously to have several rather large dents in it.

At the same time, the old raked foremast was removed, no doubt because it interfered with the unloading legs of grain elevators. In its place, set abaft the forecastle rather than rising out of the texas, was a heavy but stubby pole mast which had virtually no rake at all. The old mainmast also was taken out and in its stead was fitted a rather heavy but not tall pole mast, placed between the fourth and fifth hatches. A boom was fitted on the foremast, while two booms (one slung aft and one forward) were carried on the main. To make way for this new cargo-handling gear, the four remaining whirly cranes were removed entirely.

One additional structural change occurred, this during the early 1920s. The steamer's old stack was removed and a shorter but much heavier funnel was set in its place. This new smokestack had very little rake, but did have a "liner" which visibly protruded above the top of the outside stack.

In the mid-1920s, Canada Steamship Lines, seeking a new image, repainted all of its vessels in new colours, and most of the freighters were repainted about 1927. A photo of MAPLEHILL taken that year showed her with a red hull, and with the company's name spelled out in large white letters down the sides of the ship, in the narrow space between the spar deck and the heavy wooden fender strake which ran along her hull. At the time of this photograph, she had not as yet been given a white forecastle, but this was done shortly thereafter. Her cabins were white, and her stack was red with a white band and a wide black smokeband at the top. The masts were buff, and the foremast was given a white top.

MAPLEHILL was a necessary part of the C.S.L. fleet, but she was not a ship with a particularly large cargo capacity, as a result of her shallow draft. Accordingly, she usually was one of the first into lay-up when cargoes became scarce. However, when the Great Depression hit the lake shipping scene, it claimed MAPLEHILL as one of its victims. She saw little or no service after 1931 and then lay idle, along with many other C.S.L. canallers, at Kingston, Ontario.

The more modern and efficient C.S.L. bulk canallers were reactivated as business conditions improved in the latter part of the decade, but MAPLEHILL and a number of other marginal vessels had no future in the fleet. In 1937, C.S.L. disposed of most of its excess ships, many of which were rusting away at Kingston, as was MAPLEHILL. The purchaser of one group of such vessels, which included MAPLEHILL, was Les Chantiers Manseau Ltee., of Montreal and Sorel. This firm was a forerunner of Marine Industries Ltd.

While many of the old ships were purchased for the sole purpose of scrapping them, MAPLEHILL managed to escape that fate. During 1938, the Sorel shipyard of Marine Industries rebuilt the steamer as a tanker for operation by the new company's vessel-operating subsidiary, Branch Lines Ltd.

During the conversion, an expansion trunk, extending from the forecastle to the after cabin, was added. A new and much larger texas cabin was placed on the forecastle head, and an entirely new and much more spacious pilothouse was built on the bridge deck. A much taller and heavier smokestack was fitted, and the ship was given two new and much lighter pipe masts. The original Bertram-built triple expansion steam engine was retained, but the old boilers were replaced by two Scotch boilers which had been manufactured in 1918 by the Allis Chalmers Company.

The rebuilt steamer was returned to service during the summer of 1938 under the new name (b) OAKBRANCH (I), with revised tonnage of 1749 Gross and 1278 Net. Her hull, including the forecastle, was painted black, while the forecastle rail was white. The trunk, texas and after cabin were painted a dark