

PROMISE did not go very far before she struck the tied-up freighter and was secured before she could get into any further trouble. The much larger TASHMOO, however, swung out into the open river and the newsmen, stopping here and there along the waterfront in an effort to find out where the big paddler had gone, finally discovered her lying alongside the Belle Isle Bridge, grinding her port side against the structure. Two tugs eventually managed to put lines aboard TASHMOO and tow her away from the bridge and down the river, but when the tow was abreast the Walkerville ferry dock at the foot of Detroit's Jos. Campau Street, TASHMOO again got her freedom, breaking her lines as the tow battled its way into the wind. The wayward sidewheeler again swung upstream, and she was only a few yards from the bridge when the tugs managed to get lines on her once again. This time they succeeded in moving her to safety downstream.

TASHMOO soon was placed on drydock for the repair to her damage. Somehow, she had been spared from this accident with her life, but not by much of a margin. As may be seen from the photograph, her main deck rail on the starboard side forward was stove in, as was the promenade deck above, undoubtedly as a result of the collision with the ferry PROMISE and the grinding of the two as PROMISE was torn from her dock. The big steamer's stempost was twisted askew at the promenade deck level, and the steering pole, usually attached to the top of the stempost on the boat deck, was broken off completely, and appears in the photo to be leaning from the hurricane deck up against the parapet of the bridge.

One can only imagine the damage that must have been inflicted to the decks on the steamer's port side, where TASHMOO was pounding against the bridge. The situation reminds one of the storm which did in the venerable Hudson River sidewheeler ALEXANDER HAMILTON, much similar to the TASHMOO, when she was awaiting preservation after her retirement from service in the early 1970s. That TASHMOO survived her wild ride and bridge encounter was something of a minor miracle indeed.

But what of the TASHMOO herself? We know that we need not recount her history for the benefit of any of our Detroit or Windsor members, all of whom will be thoroughly familiar with this steamer either as a result of reading about her exploits or else in consequence of riding upon her decks in those palmy days when she served upon the waters of the Detroit and St. Clair Rivers.

TASHMOO was built in 1900 at Wyandotte, Michigan, as Hull 131 of the Detroit Shipbuilding Company. Enrolled as U.S.145843, she was 302.9 feet in length, with a hull beam of 37.6 feet (her main deck was 69.0 feet wide over the guards), and a depth of 13.6 feet. Her tonnage was 1344 Gross and 766 Net. She was powered by an inclined triple expansion engine with cylinders of 33, 51 and 82 inches bore and a stroke of 72 inches, which drove her feathering sidewheels. In fact, this very large engine could turn the wheels at a remarkable 35 revolutions per minute.

The steamer, which was designed by famed marine architect Frank E. Kirby, and whose design was generally similar to that of the big sidewheelers of the Hudson River Day Line, had three spacious passenger decks, with much open promenade and observation space but also with large enclosed saloons. She had two massive smokestacks, which rose almost without rake. One of her most unusual features was a pilothouse which was curved on all four sides; originally it had no sunvisor, but after one was installed (and it ran all the way around the house!) the ship looked much better. The addition of more shade deck above the boat (or upper promenade) deck also helped to improve TASHMOO's appearance.

TASHMOO was built for the White Star Line, a famous Detroit operator of excursion steamers, and she served for most of her life on the daily run between Detroit and Port Huron, although she occasionally ran the company's