

steamers. They were built at Toronto by the Doty Engine Company, to designs by W. E. Redway. Launched on May 24, 1890, was MAYFLOWER, while PRIMROSE followed her into the water on June 28th.

The new steamers were intended primarily for service on the heavily traveled route from the Ferry Company's docks at the foot of Yonge Street to Hanlan's Point, and they seem to have been successful on that run, although there are photographs of them at this time showing Island Park destination signs. We suspect that, from the time MAYFLOWER and PRIMROSE appeared on the scene, CANADIAN and SADIE ran more frequently on the run from Yonge Street to Island Park, which attracted less passenger traffic during the years when the Hanlan's Point amusement park was in its glory.

In fact, under the energetic direction of its longtime manager, Lawrence ("Lol") Solman (who actually gained complete control of the Ferry Company about 1915, and who also served as manager of the Royal Alexandra Theatre in its early years), the Toronto Ferry Company also became operator of the amusement park at Hanlan's Point. Despite a major fire on August 10, 1909, which destroyed most of the park's attractions, including rides and the ballpark, and which finally, despite the best efforts of staff, guests and firemen, spread to and destroyed the Hotel Hanlan, the amusement park was rebuilt (without hotel) and thrived for many more years. The big new ballpark maintained Hanlan's Point as the home of the Toronto Maple Leafs of International League (Triple A) fame, and it was at this park that Babe Ruth hit the very first home run of his professional career.

But let us return to the story of CANADIAN. By 1894, she was in dire need of a complete refurbishing, and so the Toronto Ferry Company sent her off to the Andrews Shipyard at Oakville, Ontario, along the north shore of Lake Ontario between Toronto and Hamilton. The reconstruction must have been substantial, because the steamer emerged afterward still registered at Toronto but with an entirely new official number, 100761, and also with a new name, (b) THISTLE.

Strangely, the reconstruction caused a very significant change in THISTLE's tonnage, and it dropped to 78 Gross and 68 Net. (These figures are confirmed by the 1900 Record of the American Bureau of Shipping, our 1903 Dominion List and our 1908 Great Lakes Register [Bureau Veritas].) We cannot imagine how the tonnage could be so low on a vessel of THISTLE's overall size, and can only assume that it had something to do with her fully open upper deck and the main deck that was also largely open and with no glass in its "windows" down the sides.

And just how the appearance of THISTLE differed from that of CANADIAN, we do not know. Considering the rather "antique" appearance of THISTLE as shown in our photograph, however, and also remembering that she was a double-ender when originally built in 1882, we doubt that she was physically altered to any significant degree in the reconstruction. More likely, she was simply "renewed" as necessary. There certainly was no change in her machinery.

A word of explanation is necessary concerning the extremely rare photograph of THISTLE which accompanies this feature. The image was found on a positive glass-plate transparency, 3½ inches square, which undoubtedly was made to be used as a "lantern slide" for projection purposes. The photo shows THISTLE inbound at the Yonge Street ferry docks on the old Toronto waterfront, and in the background can be seen the old Fisherman's Island and desolate sand-bar area around the Eastern Gap. It very likely was taken about 1898 and we have every reason to believe that the photographer was Galbraith, a local man who took numerous views around the harbour at that time. Note the large wooden sign on THISTLE's upper deck rail, with the legend "Yonge Street to Island Park" inscribed in decorative lettering.

We know of only one accident that befell THISTLE in her lifetime. During the morning of Thursday, August 23rd, 1900, THISTLE was backing out of the lay-