

had built a brand new set of wharves and a modern terminal building. This facility even had a second story, which was designed to permit upper deck loading of the big double-enders. BLUEBELL, MAYFLOWER and PRIMROSE were thus fitted with an upper deck loading ramp at one end (and TRILLIUM later was built that way). The new dock was not to be enjoyed for long in its first version, however, and the reason why is best described by quoting an article which appeared in "The Toronto Daily Star" of Tuesday, August 6th, 1907, under the headline "Ferry and Waiting Rooms Burned By A Swift Blaze".

"Fire broke out on the ferry steamer SHAMROCK about five or ten minutes past two o'clock this morning and the steamer was totally destroyed, and the new waiting room of the Toronto Ferry Company completely gutted and the wharf somewhat badly damaged. The SHAMROCK was lying at the west side of the dock close to the street, and has sunk in about fifteen feet of water, parallel with the street line, and her bow pointing toward the demolished sheds.

"The MAYFLOWER and the PRIMROSE, two of the largest of the company's fleet, were lying across the wharf in the back slip (the two main south slips used by the double-enders -Ed.) and were about three hundred feet from the burning steamer and about one hundred feet south of the waiting rooms. These were badly scorched before they were removed, but a few hours under the painter's hands will leave them none the worse.

"The loss of the buildings is the most serious loss to the company in that it disturbs the business for a time. Mr. Lawrence Solman, Manager of the Ferry Company, said this morning: 'You may say that our full regular service will be in force at two o'clock this afternoon. We will run from the old Geddes Wharf on the west side of Yonge Street (which was the home of the ferries prior to 1906 -Ed.). We will have just as good accommodation and can handle the people with just as much comfort to them if not to ourselves as we could before.

"'Yes, it is unfortunate at this time if it keeps people away from the Island, as we have this band, to which we are paying \$2,500 a week, to play for the people, and I would not like to see the traffic drop off much. I don't think it will.

"'We keep everything covered by insurance with Lloyd's. The SHAMROCK is worth, I suppose, about \$15,000 and the fittings, fences, office furniture, electric wiring, etc., will cost about \$500 to replace, but it is all insured. We have twenty-five men at work this morning and the city has about twenty, so it will not take long to get things fixed up a little.'

"The city owns the wharf and the buildings, and these were insured for \$12,000, spread among the forty different companies which carry the city's insurance, and the loss will not exceed \$4,000.

"There are different stories as to where the fire originated. Perhaps the most authoritative opinion is that of Jas. Auld, watchman at the Somerville Wharf, who says that he saw the fire inside the wharf buildings and that the boat was not then on fire. He rang the fire department up by phone and gave them the first intimation of the trouble. Almost the same moment, an alarm came in from box No. (illegible) which was rung in by Ed. O'Brien, first mate of the TURBINIA.

"The firemen were soon on the scene but the boat and the whole building were enveloped in flames. At first, they tried to save the steamer, but soon saw the impossibility of doing so and turned their attention to the buildings. The fire was prevented from spreading, and the TURBINIA sheds and office, which are separated from those of the Ferry Company by a lane about eighteen feet wide, escaped with about \$2,000 damage to the building and contents.

"The steamer TURBINIA had arrived from the late trip about 1:20, and the office men had just locked up and gone home, but the crew were eating their late lunch when Ed O'Brien looked out and noticed that there was fire some-