

The bridge structure was, in the custom of the day, set back off the fore-castle and abaft the first cargo hatch. A large cabin for the accommodation of the deck officers formed the lowest level of this structure, and its roof protruded on the two sides and across the front in a marked overhang. Atop this house sat a fairly small texas cabin, which contained the master's quarters and office. Forward of this, and raised up a part-level on a small "platform" was the pilothouse, which was a fairly large cabin with curved corners in its front. There were six windows around its face, and the fact that there was a mullion in the centre rather than a centred window would indicate that the steamer had "armstrong" (or, probably, only marginally steam-assisted) steering, with a large steering wheel manhandled from either one side or the other by the wheelsman, who often would have to stand on one of the spokes to turn the wheel. This is why the windows were not centred.

There was an open bridge on the monkey's island above the pilothouse, and it was from there, behind a canvas "dodger" and beneath a big awning in sunny hot weather, that the steamer was navigated. A tall and very heavy pole foremast rose out of the texas cabin, and it was very heavily raked.

Down the spar deck abaft the bridge structure were spaced six cargo hatches. They gave access to the ship's single large cargo hold which, because marine architects had not yet learned how to build all the longitudinal and transverse strength required by a steel hull into its sides, bottom, and the deck above, was a maze of steel stringers and stanchions.

The lifeboats originally were carried on either side of the deck, amidships, and were worked with radial davits. It had been thought that in this location, they could be accessed easily by crew members from both the fore and aft parts of the vessel. Unfortunately, they also proved to be subject to wave damage in that position, and also interfered with cargo handling, and it was not long before they were moved to a drier and safer location atop the boilerhouse aft.

At the stern of the vessel, there actually were two separate deckhouses. The first of these was a rather "bald" steel boilerhouse, which had a door in either side and but two windows, both equipped with shutters and placed in its forward bulkhead. The fairly short but well-proportioned and nicely-raked smokestack rose out of the boilerhouse, behind two prominent ventilator cowls, and the mainmast, raked to match the foremast, was stepped immediately forward of the boilerhouse and right up against its front.

The second aft deckhouse was the accommodations cabin, built of wood and fitted up to house the engine staff and to contain the galley, pantry and messrooms. It had large windows down each side, almost no overhang of the hurricane deck above, and an assortment of skylights, ventilators, and other gear up above. The jackstaff rose out of the after end of the cabin roof.

MARUBA originally was enrolled at Duluth, Minnesota, under U.S. official number 92191. As was the normal practice of the Minnesota Steamship Company, she was given a name beginning with the letter 'M' and ending with 'A', but the actual derivation of this particular name is obscure. It might refer to a little-known stream in Kenya, Africa, as has been suggested, or it might not. We have no way of knowing what the person who chose the name was thinking at the time.

As we already have noted, the MARUBA originally was owned by the Minnesota Steamship Company, of Duluth, the lake shipping affiliate of the Minnesota Iron Mining Company, but she and her various fleetmates were managed by Pickands Mather & Company, of Cleveland. While the Pickands Mather partners, namely Colonel James Pickands, Jay C. Morse and Samuel Mather, held an interest in the Minnesota Steamship Company, the controlling interest was held by the Merritt Brothers, of Minnesota iron mining fame. The well-known industrialist, John D. Rockefeller, whose interests included the Bessemer