

to dispose of their lake steamers.

Fighting the U.S. government was useless, although the Lehigh Valley Transportation Company gave it a try that, five years later, ended in failure. The majority of the upper lake package freighters operated by the various railroad affiliates wound up in the new fleet of the Great Lakes Transit Corporation, which was formed for the purpose. The G.L.T.C., however, was not interested in getting involved with the Ogdensburg line that would have seen its ships mired in time-consuming canalling, and would have meant that smaller ships would have to be kept for that purpose. Accordingly, 1915 was the last season of operation on the through package freight line from Ogdensburg to Chicago.

We shall now concentrate our attention on the A. McVITTIE and her career. She was not, as one might have supposed, named for a principal of the Central of Vermont or of the Ogdensburg Transit Company. Instead, and perhaps as a vote of thanks to the shipbuilders for the excellent vessels that they produced for the line, the steamer was named in honour of Alexander McVittie, an 1848-born New Brunswicker, who long was associated with the Detroit Dry Dock Company. He eventually was named general manager of the company in 1891, vice-president in 1893, and president in 1898. He later moved on to executive positions with the Toledo Shipbuilding Company.

All of our photographs of the steamer show her with the name painted on her as A. McVITTIE, in the same manner as she was officially registered. Nevertheless, the steamer often was referred to as the "ALEX. McVITTIE" and, in fact, the 1894 edition of "Around The Lakes", a book published by the Detroit Dry Dock Company, featured a very good drawing of the ship, and the caption described her as the "Wooden Package Freight Steamer ALEX. McVITTIE". Even our 1899 issue of the Great Lakes Register (Bureau Veritas) fell into the trap of listing the ship's name as "ALEX. McVITTIE", although the error was corrected in later issues (at least by 1908).

The oak-hulled McVITTIE was launched by her builders on Saturday, December 28th, 1889, and the Detroit Dry Dock Company completed her during the winter months so that she was ready for service in the spring of 1890. She was given U.S. Official Number 106710, and she was enrolled at Ogdensburg. The steamer was 240.0 feet in length between perpendiculars (253'4" in overall length), with a beam of 42.0 feet and depth of hull of 23.4 feet. This figure for her depth comes from the U.S. Merchant Vessels register, but the Detroit Dry Dock Company's book recorded her depth as 25'6". Both sources agree that her original tonnage was calculated as 2046.90 Gross and 1552.88 Net.

The McVITTIE was propelled by a single screw which was driven by a fore-and-aft compound engine with cylinders of 28 and 52 inches diameter and with a stroke of 40 inches. This engine gave her Indicated Horsepower of 825 at 74 revolutions per minute. Steam at a working pressure of 120 p.s.i. was generated by two single-ended, coal-fired, Scotch boilers which were equipped with forced draft. The boilers measured 12'0" in diameter and 11'0" in length, and had six furnaces, with 73 square feet of grate surface and 2,654 square feet of heating surface. The engine and the boilers all were built for the ship in 1890 by the Dry Dock Engine Works, of Detroit, which was the shipbuilder's engineering subsidiary.

In her hull dimensions and machinery, the A. McVITTIE was an exact sister-ship of the other four steamers in her class, namely the SMITH, LANGDON, JAMES and PRINCE, there being only very small differences in their tonnage and none at all in their physical dimensions. Likewise, the five were almost identical sisters above decks, although there were a few small differences amongst them that a sharp eye might find.

The McVITTIE had a straight stem and a heavy counter stern, with a very marked sheer to her hull. She was a two-decked steamer, the upper deck being