

Carnegie boats in their original colours, and both of those show all-black smokestacks. It has been said, however, that some of the ships carried a large, white letter 'P' on their stacks.

At the turn of the century, the steel industry in the United States was dominated by Andrew Carnegie, whose mills produced almost half of the ten million tons of steel made annually in the country. Carnegie was, however, anxious to retire from active business pursuits and to devote himself to his love of philanthropy. At the same time, J. Pierpont Morgan, who also was much involved in the steel-making business as well as railroading, was interested in eliminating competition, not through cut-throat price wars but rather by buying up the opposition.

Working through Charles M. Schwab as intermediary, Morgan struck a deal with Carnegie, the former agreeing to the latter's demand of \$400,000,000 for his steel and shipping interests. The transaction was completed on February 25th, 1901, and thus was formed the United States Steel Corporation, with Judge Elbert H. Gary handling for Morgan the legal niceties of the incorporation and subsequent administration. So powerful was the new firm that only one month after its formation, it was able to buy out the steel and shipping interests of John D. Rockefeller! Other acquisitions were to follow.

Very shortly after Morgan and Gary formed the United States Steel Corporation, they also formed a new company to handle the big firm's lake shipping requirements - mainly the carriage of iron ore. The new fleet took its name from Carnegie's old operation, calling itself the Pittsburgh Steamship Company, of Cleveland, Ohio. BRYN MAWR thus was one of the freighters that began sailing for the new firm in 1901, and she was to be part of the largest U.S. fleet ever to operate on the Great Lakes.

The new Pittsburgh fleet adopted some rather stunning colours for its vessels. Their hulls were painted a dark green, their cabins were a straw colour, and their stacks were all silver, without even a smokeband at the top. It is a shame that these colours cannot be seen on the ships today, but in fact they did not last very long at all. As pretty as the ships may have been (and today we can only imagine it), the colours were not very practical for coal-burning ore carriers. The funnels required constant cleaning to remove soot deposits, and the green hulls quickly became streaked with reddish-brown ore dust.

During the 1905 season, the ships' hulls were repainted red, their cabins became white, and their silver stacks were given a black smokeband at the top. It has been said that the black smokeband was first tried on the supply ship SUPERIOR, which serviced the company's boats at the Soo, and that it was adopted by the whole fleet when its efficacy became evident.

The life of BRYN MAWR in the service of the "Steel Trust" was uneventful and we cannot find mention of even one accident involving the barge. She was towed by a variety of steamers over the years, and not just the "College Class" steamers for whose towlines she had been built. (Only one of the "College" boats came to an untimely demise, that being the LAFAYETTE, which stranded to a total loss on Lake Superior in 1905.) In 1921, BRYN MAWR was rebuilt at South Chicago, and we believe that it was at this time that her original masts were taken out of her, to be replaced by very thin and light pipe masts set forward and aft. As a result of this reconstruction, which no doubt included much internal work on the tanktop and sidetanks, her tonnage was decreased to 3854 Gross and 3412 Net.

BRYN MAWR continued to operate for the Pittsburgh Steamship Company through the 1930s, although she probably saw little if any service during the years of the Great Depression. By the latter half of the decade, however, the fleet had begun to dispose of many of its smaller and least economical vessels, and BRYN MAWR, with a capacity of only some 7,000 tons, certainly fell into that category.