

which had been originated by the South Chicago shipyard in 1894. The steamer had four holds, with three watertight bulkheads, and access to the holds was provided by twelve 8-foot hatches on 24-foot centres, three hatches to each hold.

The IRELAND was powered by a triple expansion steam engine which had cylinders of 22 3/16, 35 and 58 inches and a stroke of 40 inches. It delivered 1,480 Indicated Horsepower at 90 revolutions per minute. Steam, at a working pressure of 170 p.s.i., was generated by two coal-fired, single-ended Scotch boilers which were 13'2" in diameter and 11'6" in length, and were fitted with induced draft. There were four furnaces with 88 square feet of grate surface and 4,292 square feet of heating surface. The engine was built for the IRELAND by the shipyard at South Chicago, and was given the same number (62) as the hull, while the boilers were manufactured by the American Ship Building Company at Cleveland. The machinery was to serve the ship throughout her long career, although in latter years her working steam pressure was reduced to 130 p.s.i. The boilers, in particular, must have been very well made to be serviceable for 68 years.

R. L. IRELAND, in appearance, was very typical of the steel-hulled bulk freighters of her day. Her hull had a pleasing sheer, and she had a straight stem and a graceful counter stern. The anchors were carried from hawseholes in either bow near the stem, just above the loaded waterline. Atop her half-forecastle was a closed steel bulwark which gave way to an open rail about half-way back.

On the forecastle head was placed the small "turret-style" pilothouse, which had five large windows in its curved front, and abaft the pilothouse was the texas cabin, containing the master's office and quarters. The deck officers and crew were accommodated in rather spartan quarters in the forecastle. An open navigation bridge was provided on the monkey's island atop the pilothouse, with a wooden dodger, a canvas weathercloth, and an awning overhead (the latter in hot weather) as the only shelter. A vertical steering pole was set at the stem, and the tall and rather heavy pole foremast rose up out of the texas.

There was an open wire rail down either side of the spar deck. The steamer had wooden covers for all twelve of her hatches, and these had to be manhandled by the crew whenever the ship made or cleared port. The wooden covers were dogged down when in place, and were covered with canvas battens to make them reasonably watertight.

The steel after cabin sat on the flush quarterdeck, with the boilerhouse in its forward end, and a closed steel taffrail gave some protection from boarding seas. The cabin had large windows, and a skylight admitted daylight into its interior. There was one lifeboat on each side of the boat deck on the cabin roof, worked from radial steel davits. The smokestack was tall, fairly heavy and well raked, with several large ventilator cowls set near its base to provide fresh air for the boiler room. The mainmast was another tall and heavy pole, which was placed quite close abaft the stack and was raked to match the foremast as well as the funnel.

The Gilchrist fleet always kept its boats looking very trim, but they never wore flashy colours. R. L. IRELAND had a black hull and forecastle, with a light grey boot-top. The steamer's name was carried on her bows in small raised letters, which appear to have been gold-coloured, and the company's name appeared in white letters below, although as on most Gilchrist boats, not directly under the ship's name but rather off-centre. The IRELAND's cabins were painted white, while the smokestack was all black. The houseflag that she flew had a dark blue field and a large, white letter 'G'.

Joseph C. Gilchrist, the founder and driving force behind the Gilchrist Transportation Company, was one of the best known lake vessel operators of the period. Born at Port Huron, Michigan, in 1850, he grew up in Marine City