

shrouded June 1, 1943, collision with the C.S.L. package freighter BATTLEFORD. Fortunately, no lives were lost in either accident.

When ONTADOC was brought into Canadian registry, she was given Canadian official number 153112, and she was enrolled at Fort William. Her dimensions were shown on the Dominion register as 423.8 x 50.2 x 23.9, and her tonnage as 4467 Gross and 3082 Net. She underwent very few changes over her Paterson years, except that in the early 1950s, her upper pilothouse was enlarged and somewhat modernized, and a catwalk was built around the front of it. A closed steel rail was built around the catwalk for protection and closed bulwarks also were constructed around the bridgewings and also around the bunker hatch atop the boilerhouse aft.

One of ONTADOC's Gilchrist sisterships ran with her in the Paterson fleet, this being MANTADOC (I), (a) FRANK W. GILCHRIST (13), (b) CEPHEUS (26), (d) R. G. SANDERSON. The careers of the two steamers ran parallel for almost their entire lives, and like all the rest of the Paterson boats, both saw only intermittent service during the Great Depression of 1929 and the 1930s. Both had been given internal rebuilds by Interlake at Fairport in 1925, and both received almost the same alterations in their later years as well. Their pilothouse windows were, however, a little different, and the closed rails on MANTADOC's bridgewings ended abruptly where they met the bridge catwalk rail, whereas ONTADOC's were faired nicely upward in a graceful curve to the top of the upper rail.

Whereas, not counting the lost ALTADOC and PRINDOC, MANTADOC was the first of the former Interlake boats to leave the service of the Paterson fleet, it is likewise worth noting that her sistership, ONTADOC, was the last to do so. MANTADOC was retired because of problems related to her age in 1963, and she was sold for use as a grain storage barge at Goderich. She fulfilled these duties well and was not scrapped until 1983, by which time she had become the very last former Gilchrist Transportation Company vessel still afloat on the Great Lakes.

Paterson retired the other former Interlake boats one by one over the next few years as they fell victim to deteriorated condition or were facing the need for expensive drydocking for survey and inspection, the cost of which could not be justified as newer tonnage was capable of handling the fleet's cargo commitments. Eventually, ONTADOC was the last of them to run, and during the 1968, 1969 and 1970 seasons, she was the only traditional-style steamer still operating for Paterson.

Even so, her operation was rather different than it had been in better years. She spent the winter of 1962-1963 laid up at Collingwood, and she did not fit out again until September of 1963, when the new grain crop began to move. Although in her last few years she did carry some grain, she spent much of her time on the coal run to Toronto and Hamilton from Lake Erie. At Toronto, she usually unloaded her coal at the Weaver Coal Dock, a facility long since closed and almost forgotten.

When we wrote our earlier piece about ONTADOC for the November, 1969, issue, we remarked that "Shipping enthusiasts are always interested in new developments in the marine transportation field and, in particular, in the appearance of newly-built carriers. It seems, however, that even more interest is generated by what is about to, or has just faded into the past, to be lost forever from our sight. Perhaps this is why one particular small steamer seems to have attracted more attention recently than she or her sisters ever did during the better part of their careers." We concluded our article by expressing the hope that "business conditions improve and that the waters of the lakes are kind to her so that a few more years of operation will be possible for this handsome vessel".

Well, she did run for a while longer, but all good things, it seems, must come to an end and, during the 1970 season, observers knew that the end was