

Company Ltd. All of the Eastern vessels retained their old names under the new ownership.

JUDGE HART went into active service for her new owner, the effects of the Great Depression receding. She retained her black hull and white cabins, but her fore-castle became black and only the closed rail forward on the fore-castle head remained white. The stack became green, with a broad white band and a black smokeband at the top. This stack design was carried through the 1936 and 1937 seasons by the HART and her fleetmates, but early in March of 1938, Upper Lakes & St. Lawrence Transportation acquired the vessels of the Great Lakes Transit Corp. Ltd. and Midland Steamships Ltd., which had been controlled by the late James Playfair. At this time, Upper Lakes & St. Lawrence adopted the Playfair funnel livery (crimson with a black smokeband) for all of its ships, and HUDGE HART soon took on these colours.

The HART operated relatively uneventfully in the grain trade for Upper Lakes & St. Lawrence. She also carried such other cargoes as were available, being pulpwood on some of her upbound voyages, and an occasional load of coal. Like most canallers, she suffered her share of bumps and scrapes in the confines of the canals, but it would not appear that she was involved in many accidents of any consequence.

We do know that she once managed to strike one of the piers of the Quebec Bridge, but we have no details or date, other than the fact that it did happen in the last few years of the steamer's life.

On Friday, September 5th, 1941, JUDGE HART stranded off the Canadian National Exhibition grounds, just outside Toronto's Western Gap. At the time of the stranding, the HART, inbound loaded for Toronto Elevators, was trying to find the Western Gap in a very dense fog, but lost her way and failed to make the appropriate turn to starboard, as numerous other ships have done before and after the HART's grounding. The ship's predicament was fully visible to the large crowds attending the Exhibition at the time, because the ship was so close in to shore. The location of the incident was very close to where the September, 1938, view on our photopage was taken, for in that photo the buildings of Exhibition Park are clearly visible, especially the Prince's Gates which can be seen over the steamer's bow.

Fortunately, the sandy bottom of the shoreline caused the HART no serious damage. The tugs GEORGE A. WALLACE and NED HANLAN were sent to the scene and they had the HART refloated in relatively short order.

Nevertheless, JUDGE HART was destined to meet a violent end which overtook her exactly fifty years ago this November. The only fortunate aspect of the incident was that all of the steamer's crew were rescued. In fact, nine of the former Eastern Steamship canallers met untoward ends. Six of them (BAIRD, FIELD, NISBET, POMEROY, HOLLOWAY and TORIAN) did not return to the lakes after World War Two, four of them having been lost by enemy action and two by the elements. The GRAMMER and HART were lost on the lakes by accident, and the NORMAN P. CLEMENT, much later converted to a sulphuric acid tanker, suffered severe explosion damage in her holds at the Collingwood Shipyard in 1968, and subsequently was scuttled in deep water off Christian Island in Georgian Bay.

Concerning the loss of JUDGE HART, the various reports of the incident seem to be very much at variance, and it is left to the historian of today to pick a fine line through the conflicting data.

Late in November of 1942, JUDGE HART, under the command of Captain Frederick M. Burmeister (most press reports spelled the name "Burmister"), of Collingwood, loaded a cargo of some 101,500 bushels (3,200 tons) of grain, mostly wheat, at Port Arthur, bound for Toronto. (Some press reports indicated that the cargo was loaded at Fort William, but we do not believe that was the case.) The loading was completed on Tuesday, November 24th, and because of the inclement weather, the ship did not sail immediately, but remained in the shelter of the port whilst her crew went about securing her hatchcovers.