

ton terminus of the line was at Browne's Wharf, East Flamboro, across the Bay from downtown Hamilton. Passengers were conveyed from the Great Western Railway dock, in Hamilton, across to Browne's Wharf by the ferry VICTORIA.

Joseph Doyle, forwarding and shipping agent for Capt. Bowen, and long associated with the St. Lawrence Wharf at Kingston, leased the Atlantic Wharf at that port for a period of ten years, commencing in 1859. The lease on the St. Lawrence Wharf had been held by Capt. Bowen, who at the time owned BANSHEE and CHAMPION (the latter steamer being partially visible, astern of BANSHEE, in the 1856 Kingston photograph). Most of the old warehouses on this wharf were removed in 1859 and new, "fire-proof" warehouses were constructed. The wharf itself was lengthened and widened. George Anderson, Capt. Bowen's book-keeper, assumed the duties of wharfinger for the season.

Lake Ontario played havoc with the sidewheeler BANSHEE on Saturday, October 8th, 1859 (only a few days before the other BANSHEE ran aground on Whiskey Rock). Captain Howard steamed his ship out of Kingston for Toronto at 5 o'clock on Saturday afternoon, but BANSHEE had a tempestuous trip, encountering strong southwesterly head winds and rough seas. BANSHEE was heavily laden with freight and had on board about 140 passengers. When she was within seven miles of Cobourg, it was discovered that she was short of fuel and would not likely make it to port, as she was making very little headway and, at times, the waves were breaking completely over her.

Capt. Howard wisely turned his ship and ran with the wind and seas back to a village near Kingston, where he "wooded her up" (took on wood fuel) and again headed out into the lake. For lengthy periods, the ship made no more than three miles an hour, and once she even was borne backward in her course by the force of the waves. She hauled into the shelter of Toronto Harbour at 11 o'clock on Monday morning, 44 hours after her initial departure from Kingston. [15]

A typical freight cargo delivered at Toronto in October, 1859, was consigned as follows: S. Gregory, 2 bundles of mail bags; C. Reading, 1 case cocoa, 1 case brandy, 2 gr. casks gin; C. Moore & Co., 40 barrels herring; J.C. Griffith & Co., 15 baskets champagne, 3 gr. casks spirits, 1 hogshead sherry, 2 cases bitters, 1 case show cards; Cowan & Co., 17 boxes glass; Commisariat Office, 2 bales; Sessions, Carpenter & Co., 10 cases boots and shoes; G. Ewart & Co., 1 pipe wine; Shaw, Turnbull & Co., 1 case; J. Baker, 3 cases; P. Hendershalt, Streetsville, 3 hogsheads earthenware, 1 barrel; McCoppen & Co., Welland, 2 cases; J. M. Cooper, Port Robinson, 1 case; R. Davis & Co., 3 barrels ale, 5 boxes; J. Flemming, 4 baskets, 10 bags; Heinfeld, 50 boxes, 1 bed; J. Flynn, 89 empties. [16]

In the spring of 1860, the "Whig" announced that PASSPORT, KINGSTON, BANSHEE, NEW ERA, CHAMPION and JENNY LIND would form a line between Kingston and Quebec. The Hon. John Hamilton, who was the Royal Mail Line's chief manager at Kingston, owned PASSPORT, KINGSTON and CHAMPION, and chartered the other steamers for the season. The boats departed Kingston in the night, after the arrival of the express train from Toronto, and reached Prescott on Ogdensburg in sufficient time to take on the eastbound passengers from the Lake Ontario Express Line. The ships would arrive at Montreal early in the afternoon, and proceed down to Quebec the following day.

William Bowen was the agent for the line at Toronto, and Alexander Milloy was the Montreal agent. John Hamilton, in addition, chartered the steamers NEW YORK and NORTHERNER, which had formed the American Express Line in 1859, and these vessels now were run between Lewiston, Toronto, Cape Vincent, Kingston and Ogdensburg, connecting at Prescott with the Mail Line. As well, the company acquired the steamer WALTER SHANLEY, which ran twice a day between Kingston and Cape Vincent, her ferry run connecting with the Grand Trunk Railroad and also with the Rome & Cape Vincent Railroad. The Grand Trunk, in turn, chartered all of these ships from the Mail Line for a period of three years.