

ANOTHER LOOK AT J. H. PLUMMER

It is gratifying indeed that so many of our recent Ship of the Month features have generated such a great amount of interest amongst our members, many of whom have written or called to express their sentiments or to offer assistance. Most particularly appreciated by your Ink-Stained Wretch of an Editor (we borrowed those words from a former confrere in the field who managed to express what it feels like sometimes to be editor/writer/whatever of a publication of this nature), however, is the tangible support provided by those members who have managed to dig up additional historical material and photographs to help us to round out the stories of the vessels which we have chosen to feature, and who so generously have shared that material with all of us via the pages of "Scanner".

In some cases, it really is true that the writing of the original Ship of the Month manuscript is the smallest part of what the feature may eventually become!

Perhaps we chose J. H. PLUMMER for our Ship of the Month No. 201 in the January issue without realizing what interest our feature would arouse. To be perfectly honest, the T.M.H.S. Secretary thought this one up "out of the blue", and cogitating on it together later, we agreed that it might be a good choice. Ye Ed. has always admired photos of the PLUMMER and her sisters although for what reason we cannot say exactly, because they were hardly the most handsome of the canallers of their era and, although the Secretary recalls seeing the PLUMMER in Toronto when she came back briefly during the autumn of 1923, the Editor never came close to seeing any of the three sisterships although one of them did survive into his lifetime.

After all of this lead-up, readers may well be wondering whether we actually have anything more to say about the PLUMMER and her sisters or not. Well, the fact is that we do, and we even have an additional photograph of her which is presented on the photopage in this issue!

Extensive reading of the pages of "Canadian Railway and Marine World" has revealed little more concerning the PLUMMER other than the fact that she was reported as grounding off Lake Ontario Park at Kingston on September 18th, 1914. The report of the accident indicated that the steamer was released, with little apparent damage, on September 21st, presumably after some considerable lightering and the eager ministrations of assorted tugboats.

We are most pleased, however, to present the accompanying photograph of the PLUMMER taken whilst she was operating on the West Coast as (d) AMUR (II), under the ownership of the Coastwise Steamship and Barge Company Ltd., of Vancouver, British Columbia. This photo comes to us through the extreme courtesy of longtime T.M.H.S. member Ralph Roberts, of Saginaw, Michigan. Ralph also provided us with two photos of this AMUR's predecessor, AMUR (I) (C.98073), which was 216.0 x 28.1 x 17.9, 907 Gross and 570 Net, built back in 1890 at Sunderland, England. It was to replace this steamer that the PLUMMER was acquired by Coastwise after the financial failure of the first and only trip of the PLUMMER in the Kirkwood Lines service from the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River to Vancouver.

Ralph Roberts' photo of AMUR (II), a good broadside (although we wish it were a sharper image), shows how she was altered for her new service. The old masts have been removed and replaced with heavier post masts, the foremast relocated forward of the first cargo hatch. It carries two very long booms on the after side, while the mainmast has been fitted with four long cargo booms, two on the forward side and two slung aft. Her smokestack seems to be black, with three white bands. We know not what colour the dark bands betwixt the white may have been, nor can we make out a small design which seems to appear at the centre of the middle white band.

Member Bill Schell, of Holbrook, Massachusetts, has another photo of AMUR (II) on the West Coast, a Canadian Forces photo taken on May 11, 1943. It is a starboard side aerial view, showing the steamer with what appears to be a