

Our Ship of the Month No. 225, which appeared in the December, 1995, issue, was the canaller PHENICIA, (b) CHEYENNE, (c) SORELDON (II), which spent most of her life in the service of the St. Lawrence Steamships and Paterson fleets. Last issue, we mentioned a humorous incident involving SORELDON in 1949, when she was dressed up for the occasion and participated in a Chicago River version of the Santa Claus Parade.

This month, we have for you some additional information on the early history of this attractive little steamer, and it comes to us through the courtesy of members George Ayoub, of Ottawa, and Bill Schell, of Holbrook, Massachusetts, to whom we are most grateful.

First of all, we should correct what we said about the original registry of PHENICIA and IMARI. Like the majority of the British-built canallers of the late 1920s and early 1930s, they were not immediately registered in Canada, but rather their first enrollments were at United Kingdom ports. PHENICIA and IMARI were registered at Newcastle, and thus PHENICIA's Official Number should be shown as British rather than Canadian. The numbers were interchangeable, however, and thus did not change when the ships came into Canadian registry. Hence, PHENICIA was Br.149498. It was not until 1931 that she and IMARI were brought into Canadian registry and enrolled at Montreal.

The renaming of PHENICIA also took place in 1931, the official date of the change to (b) CHEYENNE having been recorded as March 13, 1931.

Readers will recall that we also commented upon the "Canadian Railway and Marine World" report of May, 1929, which mentioned that the owners of PHENICIA and IMARI was the "Inland Steamship Co. Ltd.", of Winnipeg, whereas a later item in the same magazine reported the 1929 formation of Inland Lines Ltd., the company that would operate DAMIA and SARACEN (the sisterships of PHENICIA and IMARI) for so many years.

Interestingly, the June, 1929, issue of Lloyd's Confidential Index shows that PHENICIA and IMARI were registered to the builders (Swan, Hunter & Wigham Richardson Ltd.), but the actual owner of each was shown as the Inland Steamship Co. Ltd. Why the differences in the corporate name of Inland? We suspect that it had something to do with the reorganization of the interests of Kenneth A. Scott, perhaps as a consequence of the Depression economy, that resulted in PHENICIA and IMARI being sold, while Scott retained DAMIA and SARACEN. Later issues of Lloyd's Confidential Index indicate that PHENICIA and IMARI were sold to St. Lawrence Steamships Ltd. in 1930.

We mentioned in our feature that we had never seen mention of the dates of arrival in Canada of either PHENICIA or IMARI. The microfilm of the "New York Maritime Register" indicates that PHENICIA sailed from Swansea, Wales, on April 6, 1929, bound for Toronto, and passed Cornwall, upbound, on May 6th. The Toronto Harbour Commission once published a photo of PHENICIA unloading a cargo of Welsh anthracite at Toronto in May of 1929, and this undoubtedly was the cargo that she carried across the North Atlantic on her delivery trip.

Incidentally, the "New York Maritime Register" confirms that IMARI sailed from Port Talbot, Wales, bound for Montreal, presumably also with anthracite in her holds. However, she lost several propeller blades when off "Scatterie" (read Scatarie Island -Ed.), Nova Scotia, on April 23rd, and she was towed into Louisburg the next day by the government icebreaker MIKULA. She sailed on the 30th from Louisburg for Montreal, and passed Coteau Landing, upbound, on May 8th, no doubt en route to Toronto to unload her coal cargo.

Any further details concerning PHENICIA / CHEYENNE / SORELDON would be much appreciated, but meanwhile we extend our thanks to George and to Bill for sharing these fascinating tidbits with us.

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