

then the SEVONA... 72 feet, and the VICTORY... 72 feet... the SEVONA at the Buffalo yard, and the VICTORY at West Superior. The changes... will increase their carrying capacity from 1,300 to 1,600 tons according to their lengths." By mid-March, the company's No. 1 drydock at Buffalo was readied to commence the lengthening of SEVONA. This was the first major ship lengthening ever carried out at a Buffalo shipyard.

Another yard was lengthening a steel hull in the spring of 1905, and another Wheeler hull at that. The Craig Shipbuilding Company at Toledo put a piece into the 1896-built L. C. WALDO (16), (b) RIVERTON (44), (c) MOHAWK DEER, which had been Wheeler's Hull 112. Like VICTORY and SEVONA, she also was lengthened by 72 feet, and like VICTORY, she also had been larger - 387 feet long as built. It also is interesting to note that both VICTORY and the WALDO were 48 feet in the beam, seven feet broader than SEVONA.

In early April of 1905, there was a major fire at the Buffalo Dry Dock Company (control of which had been acquired by American Ship Building in 1900). Much of the yard's machinery, however, was saved, and the company claimed that it was capable of taking care of its work, and so the SEVONA project continued.

In addition to the lengthening, numerous other changes were made to SEVONA. The tween deck was removed, and to compensate for the resulting loss of hull strength, heavy steel plates were added on deck near the hatches. The steering engine, which had been forward, was moved aft, and the steering was modernized so that right wheel turned the ship to starboard.

The mainmast was relocated abaft the stack. The "doghouse" was removed from the spar deck, after which the deckhands were quartered below deck, aft of the engine room. The coal box was removed and the boilerhouse was repositioned closer to the aft cabin. The wooden lifeboat which had been carried on the spar deck was removed but, unfortunately (as events would prove), not even a liferaft was placed forward. The second lifeboat was now carried atop the boilerhouse, and both boats there were worked by newer style radial davits without braces. An open post-and-wire rail replaced most of the steel bulwarks down the sides of the spar deck.

When the work was finished, SEVONA was 372.5 feet in length, and her tonnage was 3166 Gross and 2258 Net. Temporary Enrollment Certificate No. 76 was issued for the ship at Buffalo on June 5, 1905, but this was surrendered after the ship made her delivery voyage from the Buffalo shipyard. Permanent Certificate No. 84 was issued to document enrollment of SEVONA at Cleveland, Ohio, on 8th June, 1905, and it showed that the steamer's home port was Fairport, Ohio. (We have commented many times in the past on the apparent interchangeability of Cleveland and Fairport as registry/home ports for locally-owned lake freighters.) In any event, the sole owner of SEVONA was shown as the Pennsylvania Steamship Company, of Mentor, Ohio, as sworn for the enrollment by the company's 2nd vice-president, who just happened to be Capt. John Mitchell, himself a prominent vessel owner and designer. McBrier was still the principal of the new owning company.

Captain Beggs, who was master of Mitchell's steamer MAJOR, (a) JOHN MITCHELL (I)(02), was asked by his friend, Captain McDonald, to come over and look at the lengthened SEVONA. On viewing her, he stated: "I don't like her; she is like a snake". Presumably he was referring to her relatively narrow beam for a ship of that length.

On Wednesday, June 28, 1905, the rebuild SEVONA loaded her first cargo, hard coal, at the Lackawanna docks. More uneventful trips were made during the summer of 1905, but the coal which she loaded on August 24th at Cleveland for Duluth would be the last cargo that SEVONA ever delivered. Aboard, in addition to SEVONA's regular crew of 21, were two women passengers and the wife of the chief engineer, William Phillipie, of Buffalo. A fourth woman