

PARKER EVANS

- by Ronald F. Beaupre -

with the Editor

Last issue, we began our story of the steamer which was built in 1908 as Hull 40 of the Great Lakes Engineering Works at Ecorse, Michigan, for G. A. Tomlinson's Mutual Steamship Company. She was built as (a) HARRY A. BERWIND, but late in 1916 she was sold to the Headwaters Steamship Company, Harvey H. Brown & Company, managers, and she began the 1917 season as (b) HARVEY H. BROWN (III). About 1923, or shortly thereafter, she was transferred to the ownership of the Stewart Furnace Company, whose fleet Brown also managed. In 1929, when the Brown-managed fleet was being disbanded, HARVEY H. BROWN was acquired by the Youngstown Steamship Company, managed by Pickands Mather & Company, and later that same year, Pickands Mather transferred her to the Interlake Steamship Company. It was at that point that we left the steamer's story in the April issue.

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HARVEY H. BROWN operated successfully for the Interlake Steamship Company for many years, mostly in the iron ore and coal trades, and she carried the same familiar colours throughout, with her dark, reddish-brown hull, white cabins, and black smokestack with a broad orange band. During the winter of 1942-1943, two new single-ended Scotch marine boilers were installed in the BROWN. Manufactured by the Toledo Shipbuilding Company Inc., the boilers each were 14'6" in diameter and 13'0" in length, with total grate surface of 120 square feet and heating surface of 6,430 square feet. Coal fired, they provided steam at a working pressure of 190 pounds per square inch.

When the new boilers were fitted, a new liner was placed inside the smokestack, and it extended somewhat above the top of the outer funnel. Some other changes were made to the BROWN during her Interlake years. The "doghouse" on deck, which had contained the diningroom, galley and pantry for company guests, was removed. It no longer was needed, for guests generally were carried on the newer and larger ships of the fleet, rather than on the BROWN. The big windows in the front of the observation room in the texas cabin were plated over and portholes were cut in the plates. The guest bedrooms in the forecastle were converted into crew quarters. Wind hoods were placed on either side of the pilothouse to provide shelter for the doors there. And, as we mentioned earlier, larger anchor pockets were added during the early 1950s.

The BROWN operated for many years for Interlake without major mishap, and very few people associated with her would have recalled the fact that, back on December 5, 1909, the ship had rammed and sunk the steamer HENRY STEINBRENNER (I) in Lake Munuscong on the St. Mary's River. Unfortunately, the STEINBRENNER was not the only ship that the BERWIND/BROWN would sink by collision during her lifetime.

The next such incident occurred at 3:17 a.m. on Wednesday, October 17, 1951, when HARVEY H. BROWN collided with the self-unloading bulk carrier GEORGE F. RAND (I), of the American Steamship Company, managed by Boland & Cornelius, Buffalo. The ships met in the St. Clair River, just below the Huron Cut, and fog, as well as the current in the river at that location, most certainly were major factors in the accident. Both ships were heavily damaged in the collision.

The RAND was in the most danger, and she was beached, facing upriver on the U.S. side, near the mouth of the Black River. She soon settled to the bottom with a 10-degree list to starboard (or out into the river). There was danger that her cargo of silica sand would shift and cause the RAND to roll over onto her starboard side but, fortunately, this did not occur. The United States Coast Guard cutter ACACIA assisted at first with pumping on the RAND,