

white letter 'H'. The name Pioneer Steamship Co. appeared in white letters under the ship's name on the bows. STADACONA was renamed (b) W. H. McGEAN, while SIR TREVOR DAWSON became (c) CHARLES L. HUTCHINSON (II). Captain Charles L. Hutchinson was the son of John T. Hutchinson, founder of the Hutchinson family interests in lake shipping. John T. had acquired an interest in his first vessel as early as 1861. The Hutchinson family would remain in the shipping business for 101 years, during which time the fleet always was an "independent", that is to say that it never was controlled by any particular industrial corporation for the purposes of carrying its own raw materials or products, but rather carried for anyone who had cargoes available.

CHARLES L. HUTCHINSON (II) appears to have had a fairly uneventful time in the Pioneer Steamship Company's ownership. She normally carried iron ore on her downbound trips, returning up the lakes light. She did, however, carry coal on occasion when upbound, and Hutchinson ships were known to take grain cargoes when they were available.

After her acquisition by Pioneer, the HUTCHINSON's port of registry was changed from Duluth to Cleveland and, still later, it became Wilmington, Delaware. She never had a major rebuild, but in 1941 she received new side tanks, and in 1942 a new tanktop. A large new doghouse was built on the boat deck aft to provide additional crew quarters during the 1940s, and during the 1950s, the pilothouse was substantially modernized as the windows were enlarged and she lost the "beatle-browed" look. The pilothouse was particularly notable for what was on top of it. A liferaft had been carried on the monkey's island for many years, but a very large one was placed there during the years of World War Two. In the 1950s, an extremely large radar scanner was placed atop the pilothouse.

In 1951, CHARLES L. HUTCHINSON was renamed (d) GENE C. HUTCHINSON. The change was made because a new vessel was being constructed for the fleet, and the family wished the new ship to bear the name of Capt. Charles L. Hutchinson, who had passed away in 1944. He had been succeeded as president of the Pioneer and Buckeye Steamship Companies by one of his sons, John T. Hutchinson, and John's brother Gene, who also was active in the management of the fleet, succeeded John after the latter died in 1958.

But the day of the independent fleet was drawing to a close, as it was becoming more difficult to secure cargoes, most of which were carried by the "captive" lake shipping arms of the big industrial corporations. In addition, income was not such that major programmes of new vessel construction could be undertaken. Fleets like that of the Hutchinsons found themselves operating an aging collection of inefficient ships. The Buckeye Steamship Company became independent of the Hutchinson interests when control was acquired by other parties in 1960. Eventually, Hutchinson & Company retired from the shipping business, going into voluntary liquidation on May 17, 1962. As a result, the ships of the Pioneer Steamship Company were scattered to the winds, most of them going to scrapyards on the lakes and overseas. Today, only two former Pioneer ships remain in lake service; PIONEER CHALLENGER still runs as Oglebay Norton's MIDDLETOWN, while CHARLES L. HUTCHINSON (III), completed in 1952, is in service as (c) KINSMAN INDEPENDENT (III).

Of the two former American Interlake Line steamers, W. H. McGEAN, (a) STADACONA, was sold in 1962 to the Ford Motor Company and ran as (c) ROBERT S. McNAMARA in the coal trade until 1972. She was scrapped in Spain in 1974. The GENE C. HUTCHINSON also found a new owner but she did not last quite as long as did the McGEAN.

Late in 1962, GENE C. HUTCHINSON was acquired by the Reoch shipping interests of Montreal. The Reoch fleet, although comprising a number of separate companies, was all controlled by Capt. Norman J. Reoch, who had enjoyed many years of association with Canada Steamship Lines Ltd., latterly serving as C.S.L.'s operating manager. He left C.S.L. in 1951, and in 1952 became a