



CAPTAIN JOHN MITCHELL

Captain John Mitchell was not only a vessel manager and a licensed lake ship master. He also ran a vessel agency involved in marine insurance and, as well, with his brother, he dabbled in the publishing business with "Mitchell and Company's Hand Book of the Great Lakes". He was a ship designer of extraordinary talent, and he developed his own very distinctive model of upper lakes bulk carriers, all of which were built to his specific order. In 1912, he served as one of the court-appointed appraisers of the value of the Gilchrist Transportation Company's vessel holdings during the disposal of that bankrupt fleet. Captain John Mitchell served with distinction with the Lake Carriers' Association, and was very active in the shipping business in general until his retirement due to ill health in 1918. He passed away at Cleveland on April 15th, 1920.

Captain Mitchell was, perhaps, best known for a class of eleven steamers, all about 420 feet in length, built for his fleet between 1898 and 1905. They were the HENDRICK S. HOLDEN, H. C. FRICK, M. A. HANNA, WILLIAM E. REIS, WALTER SCRANTON, JOHN J. ALBRIGHT, JAMES GAYLEY, WILLIAM H. GRATWICK (III), FRANK H. GOODYEAR (I), MOSES TAYLOR and PENDENNIS WHITE. They were truly beautiful ships, with a sweeping sheer to their decks and an unusual, squared "turret-style" pilothouse. But most of all, they were of extremely good construction. Two of them, the GOODYEAR and the GAYLEY, were the victims of collision (in 1910 and 1912, respectively), while the GRATWICK (PEGASUS), SCRANTON (SATURN) and WHITE (VEGA) were World War Two trade-ins from the Interlake Steamship Company to the United States Maritime Commission and were broken up at Hamilton after the war. The remaining six lasted into the 1960s after some forty years of service for the Paterson fleet. Three similar but somewhat larger vessels, STEPHEN M. CLEMENT, JOSEPH SELLWOOD and LOFTUS CUDDY, were built 1905-1906, and also enjoyed long lives; the first two lasted into the 1960s, while the CUDDY ran through the 1972