

Reportedly in need of extensive repairs, MAJOR was retired at the end of the 1919 season and was laid up at Midland. Her engine then was removed and re-conditioned in preparation for its being installed in the new canal-sized steamer GLENCLOVA, which was built for Playfair as Hull 9 of the Midland Shipbuilding Company Ltd. GLENCLOVA was launched at Midland on November 27, 1920, and the MAJOR's 1889-vintage engine served her well until it was replaced by a used diesel engine in 1955.

The engine-less hull of MAJOR was sold late in 1920 or early in 1921 to the Georgian Bay Shipbuilding and Wrecking Company, of Midland, which was owned by David Ganton Dobson. The forward end of the steamer was cut off and broken up, and gates were installed to create a drydock 200 feet in length inside the old steamer's hull. Pumps were installed to empty the water from the hull when the drydock was lifted. MAJOR's fantail also was lopped off, but a small portion of her after cabin was left in place. In this guise she was to serve for some twenty years, and Dobson's firm would do much work for James Playfair over the years. Playfair was a good friend of Mr. Dobson, as also were D. S. Pratt and D. L. White, close associates of Playfair.

In addition to the drydock made from the hull of MAJOR, the Georgian Bay Shipbuilding and Wrecking Company also had a marine railway at the company's Midland yard. Ganton Dobson also enjoyed two periods of ownership of the Midland Boat Works, which built small power boats, rowboats and canoes, and which Dobson sold off for the second and last time in 1924. However, he retained ownership of the Georgian Bay Shipbuilding and Wrecking Company.

We have two clippings that tell us something of what MAJOR did when owned by Dobson. The "Midland Free Press" of July 16, 1931, reported: "Old MAJOR Makes First Trip in Ten Long Years - For the first time since it was acquired in 1921, the Georgian Bay Shipbuilding and Wrecking Company's floating drydock was moved from her time-honoured place at the foot of the Company's yards on Sunday afternoon (July 12).

"The arrival of the s.s. J. E. SAVAGE, with some 2,000 tons of coke to be deposited on the D. S. Pratt yards, next to the shipyards, was the occasion for the moving of the drydock. The huge coal freighter is a self-unloader, and requires ample space for the conveying machinery to operate. In this case, she tied up at the Dobson dock while the coke was unloaded on(to) the Pratt yards across the slip. The 2,000 tons, and an additional 1,000 tons for Clark & Duncan, deposited across the bay, were unloaded in 11 hours. The SAVAGE docked at 1:00 p.m. and cleared about midnight. Although the ship arrived from Fairport at 11:30 a.m., she was not able to dock immediately, as she had to wait until the drydock had been moved to make room for her in the slip...

"At one time, the floating drydock which was moved to accommodate the SAVAGE, was known to mariners as the MAJOR, one of the staunchest vessels on the lakes. For 31 years she sailed with the many wooden-hulled freighters that then ploughed the broad bosom of the northern lakes. But that was in the distant past. A decade ago, the old MAJOR was purchased by the Georgian Bay Shipbuilding and Wrecking Co., and not since she was fitted up as a drydock in 1921 has she stirred from her old moorings.

"The transfer from her old resting place to a berth alongside the town dock was made by the tug LUCKNOW at 2:30 Sunday afternoon, the move taking about three hours. If ships can feel, as some sailors claim they can, what a torrent of emotions must have wracked the soul of the venerable hull as she once again felt the stir of waters against her side, for the first time in 10 long years and at last, after the slow and short but eventful journey, (was) warped in to the (town) dock.

"Perhaps, like a grandfather routed out of his easy chair while the kitchen is being prepared, the old vessel resented being disturbed, and her old joints groaned at the unaccustomed motion. Perhaps it was with a feeling of