

company owned the 1911-built WILLIAM C. AGNEW (26), (b) GEORGE F. RAND (I)(54), (c) BEN W. CALVIN, the 1907-built HUGH KENNEDY (30), (b) J. F. SCHOELLKOPF JR., and the 1917-built FRANK H. GOODYEAR (II)(39), (b) DIAMOND ALKALI (II)(76), (c) BUFFALO (78), (d) SAGINAW BAY.

But Capt. John Mitchell's health was deteriorating, and he retired from the shipping business in 1918. He passed away at Cleveland on April 15th, 1920. Mitchell & Company remained in business, however, with Capt. Alfred Mitchell (John's younger brother) at the helm, and the operation of The Buffalo Steamship Company continued for a few years more. In 1922, however, all four of the company's ships were sold to the American Steamship Company, of Buffalo, which was managed by Boland and Cornelius. All four of the Mitchell boats would serve the Boland & Cornelius fleet for many years and the last of them, the GOODYEAR, lasted until she was sold for scrapping during 1984.

By the time that American Steamship acquired STEPHEN M. CLEMENT, she had been given a large enclosed upper pilothouse. It was roughly the same shape as the lower house but had a great many windows all around. Entrance to the new house was gained via a door in its aft face, accessed by means of a set of steps leading up from the texas roof. American Steamship painted the ship in its usual colours, with a black hull, white forecastle and cabins, and a black stack with two silver bands and a red band.

Things went well for the CLEMENT, which was re-registered at Buffalo following the change in ownership, and she operated for the new owners for many years, serving in the same sorts of trades that she had for the Mitchell fleet. The first major change came in 1931 when, to honour one of the major clients of Boland & Cornelius, the steamer was renamed (b) UNITED STATES GYPSUM (I). Not only was this name painted in very large black letters on the bow, but it also appeared "billboard style" in large, white letters down both sides of the hull amidships. The "billboards" were not applied immediately, but they had been painted on by the late 1930s, no doubt in an effort to curry favour with the client. The same "billboards" were carried for many years by most of the BoCo vessels that were named for corporate clients.

In 1939, UNITED STATES GYPSUM was renamed (b) JOHN J. BOLAND (II) in honour of the gentleman who, along with Adam E. Cornelius, Jr., had formed the American Steamship Company back in 1907. Another reason for the rename may well have been the loss of the contract for the United States Gypsum Company's float, because the name did not resurface in the BoCo fleet until 1953, when one of the fleet's self-unloaders, THUNDER BAY QUARRIES (I), (a) THEODORE H. WICKWIRE JR. (32), was renamed (c) UNITED STATES GYPSUM (II). She was to carry that name until 1973, when she sank whilst bound in tow for a Spanish scrapyard.

JOHN J. BOLAND (II) ran well for Boland & Cornelius until late in the 1948 season, when disaster struck. On Tuesday, November 2nd, 1948, the BOLAND was out on Lake Erie, bound light from Lorain to Toledo. It was foggy on the lake, and about four miles west of the Middle Ground (Shoal), in the Pelee Passage, the BOLAND collided head-on with the downbound steamer FRANK ARMSTRONG, (a) PILOT KNOB (I)(43), owned by the Interlake Steamship Company. This was not the first collision for the 1943-built, "Maritime-class" ARMSTRONG, nor would it be her last. On June 5, 1943, only two days into her maiden voyage, the ARMSTRONG collided with GODERICH in the St. Mary's River, and on July 6, 1958, she rammed the Swedish ERHOLM on the St. Clair River.

Things went considerably worse for the BOLAND in the collision than for the ARMSTRONG. One of the BOLAND's crew was killed and two others were injured, while the steamer herself received near-mortal damage. Indeed, the force of the impact was such that the BOLAND might well have foundered had the impact not been head-on. But she stayed afloat, and the Great Lakes Towing Company tug WYOMING towed her into Toledo and up the Maumee River to the shipyard there, where surveyors assessed the damage. It may be of interest to our readers to see what the surveyors found.