

1939 through 1942, and from 1944 into 1946 he was a broker for the Overlakes Freight Corporation.

Browning's operation of the seven Nicholson-Universal/Overlakes ships (CORALIA, CRESCENT CITY, D. A. MOLONEY, PENOBSCOT, SONOMA, SONORA and SULTANA) did not begin as early as anticipated. All seven of the boats had been laid up for the winter of 1946-1947 at Erie, Pennsylvania. On Thursday, March 20, 1947, a storm of unusual intensity ripped through the area and damaged many of the ships moored at Erie. All seven of the Browning charters received damage and two of them, SULTANA and SONORA, sustained sufficient damage that they were never operated by Browning, and instead were sold late in 1947 to the Nicholson Transit Company. The other five were repaired and ran for Browning on the charter, although SONOMA was rechristened (d) FRED L. HEWITT (II) before she entered service in 1947. The charter was successful, but PENOBSCOT was sold to the Nicholson Transit Company on July 22, 1948, thus reducing to four the number of Nicholson-Universal ships running on the Browning charter.

On March 1, 1949, the Browning interests acquired all of the shares of the Nicholson-Universal Steamship Company and, concurrently, the T. H. Browning Steamship Company acquired ownership of CRESCENT CITY, CORALIA, FRED L. HEWITT and D. A. MOLONEY for the princely sum of \$500,000. The four were getting a bit long in the tooth by then and were nearing the end of their useful careers, so the sale price was not unrelated to their remaining usefulness.

When the steamers were purchased by Browning, they were given that company's colours. CRESCENT CITY's hull became black, while her forecastle and deck-houses were white. The foremast was dark buff, while the main was black. Her smokestack was painted a "moss" green with a black smokeband. On the green portion of the stack was the old Nicholson-Universal flag, but now it was painted red with a large, white letter 'B' on it. Down the side of the flag was painted a yellow stripe, meant to represent a flagpole. This was one of the most distinctive stack designs ever seen on the Great Lakes and it was exceptionally attractive. It is unfortunate that it was not used for more than just a few years.

The four venerable steamers operated well for Browning for the few years that the company owned them, and none of them got into any trouble during this period. In 1950, CRESCENT CITY was renamed (b) CARL W. MEYERS in honour of Carl Wilhelm Meyers, president of the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company. CORALIA also was rechristened, becoming (b) T. H. BROWNING in 1949 and (c) L. D. BROWNING in 1952. The "fearless foursome" last operated in 1954.

By 1955, the Browning fleet had sufficient newer, larger and more economical boats in its fleet that it no longer needed the four former Nicholson-Universal steamers. So, during that year, all four of them were sold to the Continental Grain Company for use as grain storage hulls at Buffalo. In the years prior to the opening of the St. Lawrence Seaway, Buffalo was a major trans-shipment port for U.S. grain and, as well, major milling operations still were being carried on at the port. The city's many grain elevators along the waterfront and up the river as well as the city ship canal were, perhaps, its most recognizable feature. Continental Grain accumulated a fleet of about a dozen retired lake vessels, all of which were used to supplement the grain storage capacity of the firm's elevators. The ships' propeller blades were removed in order to facilitate their movement about Buffalo harbour and around the many tortuous turns in the river whilst under tow of the local Great Lakes Towing Company tugs which regularly shifted them from berth to berth.

Each of the Continental Grain storage barges was owned by a separate company and, in March of 1955, CARL W. MEYERS was placed under the ownership of the Delta Lake Ship Co. Inc., Buffalo, and Buffalo became her port of registry. The only change in her appearance was the removal of the radar scanner, ra-