

Work on the new ship progressed rapidly, and the hull was fully framed by mid-July. By early August, steel decking was being laid and, by mid-September, the hull was plated in and work was progressing on the steel framework for the superstructure. The July 1908 issue of "The Railway and Marine World" had commented: "Press reports recently stated that the Northern Navigation Co.'s steamship now under construction was to be named SUPERIORIC but we are advised that no name has been settled on, the intention being to have a competition to decide". That such a name might follow from HURONIC is understandable, but we are indeed glad that it was not chosen, as SUPERIORIC sounds more like some sort of chemical compound than the name of a ship.

The September 1908 issue of the same publication reported: "The Northern Navigation Co.'s new steamship, now under construction, will be named PACIFIC". That was a better name but not lake related except in that it recalled the earlier and popular wooden-hulled steamer of that name. But it was not to be. The October issue of the magazine commented further: "In our September issue, we announced that the Northern Navigation Co.'s steamship, now under construction, was to be named PACIFIC. On application to the (federal) Marine Department for the registration of this name, the company was informed that as there were already two vessels on the register bearing that name, and as a regulation had recently been passed respecting the duplication of names, that name could not be registered. The company has, therefore, decided to name the vessel HAMONIC, in honour of its President, H. C. Hammond."

This was a good name; it rolled easily from the tongue and continued the "ic" naming sequence started by the Great Northern Transit Company and retained by Northern Navigation. It is, however, interesting to note that the name often was reported in the public press as "Harmonic", and even an august Canadian marine publication, from which we frequently provide quotations, fell into that error at least once (no doubt as a result of careless late-night typesetting)! Even some people, including at least one who claimed to have worked aboard the ship, swore up and down that her name actually was "Harmonic"; they obviously were sorely in need of remedial reading instruction.

On Thursday, November 26th, 1908, six months to the day from the laying of her keel, HAMONIC successfully was launched, port side first, into the slip alongside the Collingwood building ways. A large crowd was in attendance, comprised not only of local townfolk and staff from the Northern Navigation office, but also of officials from the Grand Trunk Railway and numerous guests from Toronto. With the aid of a gaily decorated bottle of champagne, HAMONIC was christened by Mrs. H. H. Gildersleeve, wife of the fleet's manager. Great regret was expressed that H. C. Hammond was unable to attend the ceremonies as a consequence of a serious illness. Shortly after the launch, HAMONIC was towed out to the shipyard's fitout berth where, over the winter, she was completed. It is said that at one time, some 500 workers were involved in the ship's construction.

HAMONIC was, in due course, enrolled at Collingwood (which would be her port of hail for her entire life) and was given Official Number 122553. She was 365 feet in overall length and 349.7 feet in length between perpendiculars. Her beam was 50.0 feet. Her depth of hull was variously reported as 24.0 feet (the Canadian register), 32.0 feet (Lloyd's Register) or 35.0 feet (the American Bureau of Shipping), the differences simply reflecting different methods of measurement. Her tonnage was calculated as 5265 Gross and 3295 Net. The hull was built on the channel system with solid longitudinals extending from the "top of floors" to the inner bottom, chocked to the shell plating and continued fore and aft as far as possible. The spar and main decks were built of steel for the entire length of the ship. The hull was fitted with nine watertight bulkheads, namely afterpeak, engine room, two coal bunker bulkheads, boiler bulkhead, three bulkheads in the cargo hold, and a forward collision bulkhead. A double bottom extended from stem to