

HAMONIC

When we left the history of the famous and beautiful passenger steamer HAMONIC in the April issue, we had just finished describing the ship and her fabulous interior. This grandest of Canadian lake passenger ships had not yet turned her screw and was still undergoing final fitout at the yard of the Collingwood Shipbuilding Company Limited, where some 500 workmen had been employed in getting her ready for service for the Northern Navigation Company of Ontario Limited. It was reported that HAMONIC cost the N.N.Co. about \$500,000 which in 1909 was a very large sum of money indeed. She had been constructed with strict regard to the rules of the Bureau Veritas and the Great Lakes Register.

The 1909 season for the N.N.Co. got underway quite early (by the standards of those days) and the fleet's 1901-built steamer HURONIC left Sarnia on April 17th, arriving at Port Arthur on the 19th. "The Railway and Marine World" noted that this was the earliest opening of navigation at the Canadian Lakehead "in recent years". HURONIC had many new officers and crew members that year because a great number of those with seniority had been appointed to the new HAMONIC. Amongst those stepping up to the new flagship were the master, Capt. R. D. Foote (who was known as "The Fog King" because of his ability to navigate in thick weather when other vessels went to anchor), and the chief engineer, Samuel Brisbin (whose name sometimes, but apparently erroneously, was reported as Brisbane). Brisbin had been named chief in UNITED EMPIRE in 1893, and he would supervise the installation of the engines in HURONIC, HAMONIC and the later NORONIC, taking over as chief engineer in each when she was commissioned. He remained as chief in NORONIC until his retirement in 1935.

HAMONIC ran her first trial trip out on Nottawasaga Bay on Wednesday, May 12th, 1909, and her speed and endurance trials were run on Victoria Day, Monday, May 24th, at which time she managed an average speed of approximately 19 miles per hour. Her sailing master for the trials was Capt. Peter M. Campbell who, it will be recalled, had been one of the founders, back in 1875, of the old "White Line". The new steamer proving to be totally as expected, Northern Navigation accepted the ship from the builders, and she set out on what the company referred to as the "owners official trial trip" (in reality her delivery voyage) on Saturday, June 12th. There were some 300 passengers aboard, including about 100 ladies. From "The Railway and Marine World" issue of July 1909, we have the details of this special trip.

"The trial trip of the s.s. HAMONIC took place June 12 and 13 when, at the invitation of the Northern Navigation Co., and the G.T.R. (Grand Trunk Railway), a number of press representatives from Ontario, Quebec and Michigan joined officials of the two companies in a run on the vessel. A G.T.R. special train left Toronto at 8 a.m., June 12, for Collingwood, where the party embarked. A call was made at Owen Sound (where passengers were forced to embark at the grain elevator because the C.P.R. would not let them use its passenger wharf -Ed.), and Sarnia was reached about 12:30 p.m. June 13, where, after inspecting the recently erected terminals, the party returned on a special train to Toronto.

"Prior to arriving at Sarnia, a presentation of silver plate was made to the vessel, for which the press representatives subscribed about \$250, and (it was) acknowledged by Capt. Foote. Votes of thanks were also extended to the Northern Navigation Co. and the G.T.R., and (were) responded to by C. H. Nicholson, Traffic Manager, Northern Navigation Co., and C. M. Hays, Second Vice President and General Manager, G.T.R."

Amongst the guests present on the trip, representing the G.T.R. were the aforementioned C. M. Hays and no less than 23 other railway officials of varying rank and importance. Amongst the many representing the N.N.Co. were W. J. Sheppard, president; H. Y. Telfer, vice-president; H. H. Gildersleeve, manager; C. H. Nicholson, traffic manager, and C. A. Macdonald, comptroller.