

(W. J. Sheppard had become president of the N.N.Co. after the death of H. C. Hammond. It will be recalled that Hammond had been too ill to attend the launch and christening of HAMONIC.)

A photograph taken as HAMONIC left Collingwood on June 12, 1909, is probably one of the all-time classic images of the ship, and we present it herewith. It was reproduced over the years in various artistically altered versions (see the Memories page in the April issue), all of which paled in comparison with the original. The ship was so impressive that a large number of photos were taken of her during the delivery trip to Sarnia, when she was at Sarnia preparing for her first revenue run, and during the maiden regular voyage.

HAMONIC departed Sarnia, upbound on her maiden scheduled trip on her regular route, on Wednesday, June 23rd, 1909. Upon her arrival at Port Arthur two days later, the steamer was presented with a Canadian ensign in silk, and her master with an illuminated address. Civic welcomes were accorded to the ship in both Port Arthur and Fort William. HAMONIC enjoyed a very successful maiden season on the route. There was thrice-weekly service on the route from Sarnia to Sault Ste. Marie, Port Arthur, Fort William and Duluth, maintained by HAMONIC, HURONIC and the wooden steamer SARONIC, which was the former UNITED EMPIRE, refurbished over the winter of 1904-1905 at Collingwood and renamed. This state of affairs would continue through the 1913 season. Her 1909 season ended, HAMONIC was sent to winter quarters. She normally was laid up at Sarnia, which would be her regular winter lay-up port every year for the rest of her life, with the exception of those winters when she was sent to drydock for survey and inspection or for repairs.

Interestingly, we have a photo of HAMONIC taken at Collingwood in November of 1909, which would lead us to think that she wintered there; however, the May 1910 issue of "The Railway and Marine World" reported that "The Northern Navigation Co.'s s.s. HAMONIC is undergoing repair at (the American Ship Building Company yard at) Lorain, Ohio, after having been somewhat damaged last fall at Point Edward when a large barge broke loose among the shipping there". We do not know whether HAMONIC spent the entire winter at Lorain, or whether she steamed down there in the early spring of 1910 - or even why when she already had been at Collingwood. Once in service in 1910, however, with Capt. Foote and Chief Brisbin again appointed to her, HAMONIC managed to make 31 trips to the head of the lakes and sailed 41,200 miles, which was claimed to be a record.

In 1910, after ongoing disputes with the Collingwood town council and the local Board of Trade, Henry Herchmer Gildersleeve pulled the Northern Navigation head office out of Collingwood and relocated it in Sarnia. The latter city was very pleased with the move, but there was much disappointment in Collingwood. As for berthing facilities for the ships at Sarnia, the passenger loading normally was done at what was known as Clark's Dock, a wharf in downtown Sarnia, while the ships were shifted up to Point Edward, where Grand Trunk rail service was more readily available, for the loading of freight. In due course, the Sarnia city stop was discontinued altogether and the steamers called only at Point Edward.

At the January 31, 1911, annual general meeting of the Northern Navigation Company Ltd. (the "of Ontario" apparently having been dropped by this time), reference was made to a ten-year agreement that was in place between the N.N.Co. and the Grand Trunk Railway, under which the G.T.R. could, if business conditions should warrant, and on 18 months notice, require the navigation company to build another vessel of the HAMONIC type, and upon completion of such vessel, the agreement would be extended for a further ten years. N.N.Co. president W. J. Sheppard intimated that the construction of a new vessel probably would become necessary in "the near future". From this we can see what a close relationship had developed between Northern Navigation and the Grand Trunk. It definitely was the G.T.R. that pulled the strings.

Also at that meeting, in reply to a question from a shareholder, Sheppard