

sheds were constructed at Depot Harbour and they were reached via a 2,300 foot long double-tracked trestle. The harbour site, which was nothing at all until Booth chose it as the western terminus for his railway, became a thriving town, completely oriented around the operations of the rail line. The town itself was built on land leased from a local Indian reservation.

In 1899, via the Elphicke interests, the Canada Atlantic Transit Company acquired the 1893-built steamer ARTHUR ORR and also the 1896-built GEORGE N. ORR, both of which actually had been built for Elphicke. The canal-sized OTTAWA was built new for the fleet in 1900, and a number of other steamers operated under charter to Canada Atlantic. In 1907, with the addition to the Depot Harbour elevator completed, the Canada Atlantic Transit Company of the United States purchased KEARSARGE, and thereafter she was a mainstay of the fleet, operating mainly between Chicago and Depot Harbour, but with a number of trips to Duluth. As she remained registered in the U.S., she could not trade between two Canadian ports.

KEARSARGE was painted in the usual Canada Atlantic colours. Her hull was black, while her forecastle (and by this time she had been given a fully-topgallant forecastle) and her cabins were white. Her masts were buff, while her smokestack was dark buff with a broad black smokeband. Sometime after joining the fleet, KEARSARGE was given a much heavier smokestack, and also an enclosed upper pilothouse to provide shelter for the navigation officers. These changes do not seem to have resulted in any difference in the steamer's tonnage. However, the 1922 American Bureau of Shipping register showed that KEARSARGE, by then registered at Duluth, had two coal-fired Scotch boilers, 14'0" x 13'0", with 132 square feet of grate surface and 5,077 square feet of heating surface, producing steam at 178 p.s.i., these boilers having been manufactured in 1909 by the Manitowoc Boiler Works Company, Manitowoc, Wisconsin. It be our guess that it was at the time of the reboiling that the new and larger stack was fitted.

Despite the passage of the years, the lake steamers continued to run under the Canada Atlantic Transit name, although the parent company was taken over in 1905 by the Grand Trunk Railway System, and in 1923 became part of the Canadian National Railways.

The "Collingwood Enterprise and Bulletin" of September 24, 1908, reported: "The freighter KEARSARGE, which had a part cargo for the Collingwood elevator, backed into the dock at Depot Harbour and damaged her wheel, rudder and shoe so seriously that she had to be towed here by the tug TRAVELLER. After unloading, she went on the dock for repairs."

KEARSARGE did not often make the news, but she was mentioned in the "Detroit Free Press" of November 20, 1922. "Blizzard Ties Up Navigation at Soo. Sault Ste. Marie, Ont., Nov. 19 - Steamer KEARSARGE, up bound, struck an obstruction while trying to make the coal dock at DeTour. Examination showed one bucket off her wheel. She proceeded to Lime Island to make repairs. Practically all up bound steamers have come to anchor above Point Aux Pins in the upper St. Mary's River owing to the blizzard. Heavy snow fell all day, making any progress difficult, more so after nightfall."

There is a report that KEARSARGE stranded on June 6, 1928, on Hyde Park Shoal, off Chicago in Lake Michigan. We have no further details, which would tend to indicate that there was no serious damage suffered in the grounding.

The years of the Great Depression were severely unkind to lake shipping in general, but especially to the American upper lakes package freight trade. The business downturn badly affected the Great Lakes Transit Corporation, which had been formed in 1916 to take over the U.S. lake package freight lines which were operated by U.S. railroads, as the Panama Canal Act forbade U.S. railroads from running their own steamship lines on parallel routes. The act did not, however, bar Canada Atlantic Transit, as even though its vessels were registered in the U.S. (apart from CANATCO and DALWARNIC, built in Canada, purchased in 1926 and registered in Canada), the owning railroad was Canadian.

Nevertheless, KEARSARGE did become surplus to the reduced cargo requirements of her owner and, during the late 1930s, she lay idle at Owen Sound (although some reports have said - incorrectly, we believe - that it was at Chicago). The last two ships of the Canada Atlantic fleet, KEARSARGE and ARTHUR ORR, both were taken over by the United States War Shipping Administration with the intent of sending them to salt water for war service, but neither ever left the lakes and the U.S.W.S.A. gave up on both of the venerable steamers as being unsuitable.

During August of 1941, KEARSARGE was towed from Owen Sound to River Rouge, Michigan, by the