

had operated the original Pittsburgh Steamship Company which was owned by Henry W. Oliver. On that same date, Gary and Morgan incorporated the United States Steel Corporation, and formed a new Pittsburgh Steamship Company as its lake transportation arm. The first president of the new Pittsburgh Steamship Company was D. M. Clemson.

Additional lake ships soon were added to the fleet. The vessels of the Bessemer Steamship Company and the American Steel Barge Company were acquired on May 17, 1901, while the fleets of the Menominee Transit Company and the Mutual Transportation Company were acquired on May 23, 1901, and those of the American Steamship Company and the Zenith Transit Company, both operated by Augustus and Roy Wolvin, on June 10, 1901. The vessels of the Minnesota Steamship Company were purchased on April 1, 1902. Thus came into being a huge fleet of 112 ships, comprised of 69 freight steamers and 43 consort barges. This was the largest fleet that ever would operate on the Great Lakes at any one point in time, and some even have called it the world's largest steamship company although we cannot vouch for that statement.

Gary, Morgan and Clemson set about finding distinctive new colours for the ships of the new fleet, borrowing certain components of the livery from acquired fleets. Accordingly, the MORSE soon had her hull painted dark green, while her cabins became straw yellow and her stacks were all silver. Thus, the vessels of what commonly was called "The Steel Trust" came to be known as "the tinstackers". By all accounts, the Pittsburgh Steamship vessels looked very attractive in these colours when they were fresh, but not as time passed. The green hulls soon became streaked with ore dust, and the soot from the coal smoke stained the funnel tops, all of which kept the crews busy scrubbing to keep the vessels neat. Accordingly, starting in 1905, the ships began to be repainted with ore red hulls, white cabins with dark green trim, and a broad black smokeband was added to the top of each silver funnel.

The new company, while operating a huge fleet, did have to keep its eye on the corporate balance sheet, however, and it was not long before it was realized that it was costing a veritable fortune to keep the MORSE, HOUGHTON and POE running with their huge engines and their four boilers each. Accordingly, changes were made in the interests of economic viability. Some sources have reported that the three ships were re-engined as well as being reboilered, but such was not actually the case. In fact, their original engines simply were rebuilt to decrease the diameter of the cylinders, and two watertube boilers replaced each set of four Scotch boilers. It would appear that the POE was the first to receive this treatment in 1902, while the MORSE got the work in 1903 and the HOUGHTON was the last. The latter never did have her engine rebuilt, but she did get two new Scotch boilers in 1910.

According to the 1908 issue of The Great Lakes Register (Bureau Veritas), the MORSE's quadruple expansion engine (still shown as having been built by Wheeler in 1898) now had cylinders of 17, 25, 38½ and 60 inches diameter, with the same 42 inch stroke. Indicated Horsepower was now reduced to 1,750 at 85 revolutions per minute. Steam at 250 p.s.i. was produced by two watertube boilers, each 12'0" by 10'0", manufactured in 1903 by the Babcock & Wilcox Company, of New York. There were four coal-fired furnaces, with a total of 144 square feet of grate surface and 4,568 square feet of heating surface. With this change, the MORSE's second funnel was removed, only the forward one remaining. This made the ship a little less formidable in appearance but, in all honesty, it actually improved her appearance by removing some of the heaviness aft.

SAMUEL F. B. MORSE ran for the Pittsburgh Steamship Company for many years. About the time of World War One, she was given an enclosed upper pilothouse on what had been the monkey's island, but it provided only rudimentary shelter to the officers on watch.

In 1922, the MORSE was rebuilt to modernize her holds, her deck and her forward cabins. Most lake freighters built prior to the turn of the old century had holds that were cluttered with beams and stanchions designed to give the hull the requisite strength. But after the arch type of hull construction was introduced, most of the older ships were rebuilt, the main reason being to permit of more easy and rapid loading and unloading by shore-based equipment. The introduction of the Hulett type of unloading gear required free and easy hold access. The first working model of a Hulett unloading machine was built at Conneaut in 1899 and, within a few years, the machines were in use at Conneaut, Ashtabula, Cleveland, Lorain, Huron and Toledo.

The MORSE was rebuilt with arch supports in her hold and with sidetanks and tanktops, and her deck was rebuilt with new hatches on widely-spaced centres. At the same time, her for-