

ward cabins were completely rebuilt. The lower deck of the bridge structure may have been retained and rebuilt, but a new texas cabin containing the master's office and quarters was built on the deck above. On a third deck was built a new square pilothouse with three windows in the front, a small sunvisor, and two windows and a door in each side. The pilothouse was uncharacteristically small for steamers rebuilt in those years, but it fitted the steamer's profile. To help avoid interference with shore-based loading and unloading equipment, the two old masts were removed. A new short pipe foremast was placed right abaft the pilothouse, while a pipe mainmast was stepped behind the smokestack. The after mast was raked to match the stack, but the foremast looked in photos as if it almost bent forward to clear access to the adjacent hatch. As a result of the reconstruction, the MORSE's tonnage was recalculated as 4477 Gross and 3376 Net.

In 1929, both the MORSE and the POE were reboilered, although again the HOUGHTON was not so treated at the same time. Both the POE and the MORSE each received two new coal-fired watertube boilers which reportedly measured 3'6" by 13'10". Steam now was produced at 280 p.s.i. but the IHP of the engine of each ship was further reduced to 1,600. In neither case do we know for sure, but it seems likely that the new boilers came from the Babcock & Wilcox Company.

The MORSE survived the Great Depression in the tinstack fleet, and her carrying capacity was needed through the war years. In 1945, the HOUGHTON, along with the former Bessemer barges JOHN FRITZ and JOHN A. ROEBLING, was sold to the Upper Lakes & St. Lawrence Transportation Company Ltd., Toronto, and all three would operate under the Canadian flag well into the 1960s. The MORSE and the POE, however, carried on in the Pittsburgh fleet and, as time passed, they looked very much the part of survivors from the past, with their similar triple-deck bridge structures set back off the forecabin, and their tall smokestacks.

The first change in the colours of the MORSE since 1905 came over the winter of 1949-1950, when the name 'Pittsburgh Steamship Company' was painted in six-foot-high white letters down her sides. At either end of the legend was placed the 'USS' logo in white letters inside a white ring. Also about 1950, the MORSE was fitted with radar, and the large antenna it then required was mounted on the pilothouse roof. In 1952, the ownership of all of the Pittsburgh Steamship vessels was transferred to the United States Steel Corporation, and thereafter the ships were operated by what was known as the Pittsburgh Steamship Division. The only outward sign of the change was that in the "billboards" on the sides of the ships, the word 'Company' was changed to 'Division'. The POE and the MORSE both operated in 1953, and thus they received this paint change, but that would be their last year of active service.

In April of 1954, the MORSE and the POE both were purchased by the Wyandotte Transportation Company, of Wyandotte, Michigan, a subsidiary of the Wyandotte Chemicals Corporation, and they were towed to that company's Wyandotte premises. Also acquired at about the same time was the retired Interlake Steamship Company's 1907-built steamer ODANAH. Wyandotte intended that the three ships be used as barges to transport soda ash from Wyandotte to Chicago, and thus providing additional tonnage to that of the fleet's four self-unloading steamers, ALPENA, CONNEAUT, HURON and WYANDOTTE.

In preparation for this, the MORSE and the POE had their propellers removed so as to avoid drag on the water when under tow. ODANAH never was repainted, as the project was abandoned before that could happen, but both the MORSE and the POE were repainted in Wyandotte colours. Their hulls were a dark green and the legend 'Wyandotte Chemicals' was painted on the ships' sides in large white letters. Their cabins were white, and their stacks silver with a black smokeband. Thus the stacks were just as when in the Pittsburgh fleet. The Wyandotte self-unloading steamers had the famous design on an Indian in red on the silver portion of their stacks, but the barges never were given the Indian insignia.

The new owner renamed GENERAL ORLANDO M. POE as (b) WYCHEM 104, while SAMUEL F. B. MORSE became (b) WYCHEM 105, both registered at Wyandotte. ODANAH became (b) WYCHEM 106, although she reverted to her original name in 1955. As far as we have been able to determine, however, WYCHEM 104 was the only one of the trio that saw any service. With steam up in her boilers to operate the winches, etc., she made a few trips under tow, but proved to be unsuitable for the trade. (One source has said that WYCHEM 105 also made one trip, but we sincerely doubt this.) Accordingly, in March of 1955, Wyandotte Transportation sold all three ships to the Kovalchick Salvage Company, of Indiana, Pennsylvania. The ODANAH and the former POE were resold to the Steel Company of Canada Ltd., and both were towed to Hamil-