

spars. There was a tall jackstaff right aft, while the mainmast was stepped one hatch forward of the boilerhouse. As was the custom with the early steel steamers, the lifeboats were not carried atop the after cabin; instead they were positioned roughly midships, one on either side of the spar deck, and worked with radial steel davits. It appears that this was done to make the boats more readily launchable and equally as accessible to those working forward and to those located aft. However, they interfered with cargo handling and within a few years were relocated to the hurricane deck aft.

BRITON had a black hull with a narrow white stripe at the level of the spar deck. The rims of the hawseholes were painted white as were the upper links of the anchor chains. The upper section of the forecastle (above the spar deck bulwark) was painted white. Some sources have said that the deckhouses were painted red, but they were not. The woodwork was stained and varnished, thus making the cabins appear dark in black-and-white photos. Cabin trim and rails were white. The foremast was buff, while the mainmast was buff for its lower section but black above that. The smokestack was black with a light blue shield on which were the letters 'M.T.Co.', probably in black.

The "Buffalo Morning Express" of June 3, 1891, reported that NORMAN, SAXON and GERMAN already had made trips, while BRITON had sailed from Cleveland "last night" on her first trip bound light for Escanaba. GRECIAN was not yet finished and ROMAN was still on the builder's stocks. The article also mentioned that there had been filed with the Collector of Customs Gary a mortgage of \$1,020,000 (\$170,000 for each of the six boats), given by the Menominee Transit Company to secure bonds. The Inland Lloyd's register valued each of the ships at \$200,000. The report went on to refer to the fact that Schlesinger had suffered financial failure and that the F. W. Wheeler & Company shipyard at West Bay City had been stuck with four ships it had been building for Schlesinger. The Globe company found itself in a somewhat similar situation with the six Menominee sisterships. It was reported that the personnel of Globe Iron Works were (or, perhaps, had become) the shareholders of Menominee Transit, and that Leonard C. Hanna was the president of Menominee. As well, Marcus A. Hanna had succeeded in acquiring controlling interest in the Chapin Mining Company and had become its president.

And so, in this manner, Globe was not stuck with BRITON and her sisters, and it was thus that M. A. Hanna & Company came to control the ships of the Menominee Transit Company. Other sources had intimated that such control did not commence until around 1895 or perhaps even later, but we now see that there was Hanna control almost from the outset, and before all of the ships were even in service. And interestingly, the ships of the Mutual Transportation Company (mentioned along with the Menominee boats in the item about the fitting of electric lighting) had been operated by the Hanna interests right from the time the Mutual ships were ordered.

A press report originating in Cleveland on July 23, 1891, noted that Capt. M. W. Gotham, of the BRITON, stated that on her last trip down, the steamer had struck an obstruction near the Bar Point lightship off the lower mouth of the Detroit River. A subsequent report indicated that the obstruction had been found to be a nest of boulders and that appropriate markers had been placed to prevent any further problems.

A report from Port Huron dated September 1, 1891, advised that BRITON had struck Gull Island Reef in Lake Michigan, and that when she arrived at Port Huron on August 31, she was taking water and was drawing 18 feet 5 inches forward. Some 300 tons of cargo were lightered into the barge MAGNET to permit BRITON to proceed down the St. Clair River. On arrival at Cleveland, BRITON went on drydock and was found to have a large hole in her lower port bow, which required the replacement of nine steel plates and numerous frames. Embedded in the hole had been a number of boulders from the reef, and "The Marine Review" of September 10 humourously suggested that they probably would be used to "mark the driveway through one of the lawns of Mr. M. A. Hanna, where they may serve as an object lesson for some of the members of Congress who happen this way and desire to be informed in the matter of obstructions to lake navigation"!

The same publication, in its issue of November 12, 1891, waxed eloquent on the prowess of Escanaba as an ore-loading port, and noted that BRITON recently had been loaded there with a cargo of 2,600 tons in only three hours.

The 1892 season saw BRITON involved in a very serious collision, concerning which we have a large number of press reports. At 12:15 a.m. on June 2, off the Mamajuda Island light in