

far back as 1909. Her forecastle at first was painted white, although it later became red like the rest of her hull, and her black stack was given a large white letter 'H'. There were other changes that Hutchinson made to the steamer shortly after her acquisition. Her old pilothouse and master's cabin were removed and a new pilothouse with five windows in its curved front was fitted. Then a new upper pilothouse was added above that, with seven windows in its curved face and flying bridgewings were installed. The heavy mainmast was removed and a light steel pipe mast was stepped abaft the smokestack. A closed steel bulwark, painted white, was placed around the bunker hatch set in the forward end of the boat deck atop the aft cabin. The pole foremast remained in place for a while but within three years it was replaced with a shorter steel pipe mast.

In the early afternoon hours of Saturday, June 15, 1918, the AUSTRALIA was struck head-on in the St. Clair River off Sarnia by the Interstate Steamship (Jones & Laughlin) steamer B. F. JONES (i). Reports variously blamed the collision on jammed steering gear aboard the JONES, or on the misreading by the JONES of a buoy light in foggy weather. AUSTRALIA settled to the bottom in 20 feet of water and she had to be attended by the Reid Wrecking Company, which was able to pump her out after temporary patching was applied to the port side of her crumpled bow. Complete repairs to AUSTRALIA were put in hand at Ecorse, Michigan. An interesting sidebar to the accident is that it was reported that the wheelsman of the JONES was arrested and taken to jail after the collision as it was alleged that he was a German sympathizer!

AUSTRALIA's next mishap occurred on June 10, 1919, but it was only minor in nature. The steamer MARTIN MULLEN was alongside AUSTRALIA at the Cleveland dock of the River Furnace Company, when the wash of her screw caused AUSTRALIA to impact the end of the concrete wharf, damaging two of her steel plates and the internals behind them.

The next change for the steamer came late in 1924 or early in 1925 when AUSTRALIA was renamed (b) S. B. COOLIDGE. Her new name honoured Sollace Burroughs Coolidge, born at Columbus, Ohio, on August 21, 1874. At the time the ship was named for him, Mr. Coolidge was vice president of the Clarkson Coal & Dock Company (which presumably was a client of Hutchinson & Company). He had been in the coal business his entire working career and later, in 1938, he formed the S. B. Coolidge Coal Company. Retiring in 1950, he passed away at Cleveland on March 10, 1957.

S. B. COOLIDGE seems to have served the Hutchinson fleet well and the only further change of which we are aware was a rebuild reported by the American Bureau of Shipping as having occurred in 1926. This very likely was the same sort of rebuild given around that time to older steel-hulled upper lakers, wherein the cargo holds were reconstructed with side tanks and arches to replace the obstructive beams and stanchions with which they originally were equipped. This work, according to the A.B.S., reduced her tonnage to 3695 Gross and 2818 Net. It would seem probable that it was at the same time that her upper pilothouse and flying bridgewings were removed. We have no idea why that would have been done, however, as visibility over the bow would almost certainly have been much better from the upper house than from the much lower one.

The COOLIDGE likely saw only limited service during the years of the Great Depression but she and AMAZON did survive. They were more fortunate in this respect than their former Corrigan fleetmate POLYNESIA, which had been renamed (b) A. D. MacBETH in 1924 after having been sold by Pioneer to other operators whose shipping venture proved not to be successful. The MacBETH was back under Hutchinson ownership in 1927 after a U.S. Marshal's sale, this time with the Buckeye Steamship Company. However, she was sold for scrapping on October 8, 1940, and subsequently was broken up at Hamilton, Ontario, by the Steel Company of Canada Limited.

S. B. COOLIDGE and AMAZON continued running for Pioneer but not for many more years. The United States had entered World War Two and the United States Maritime Commission came up with the plan of building large new freighters for the Great Lakes iron ore trade which was such an integral part of the war effort. The new 600 foot, 16,000 gross ton capacity ships would be turned over to lake operators in exchange for older, obsolete tonnage, and the old ships then would be chartered back to their old owners for operation for the duration of the war, thus actually increasing the amount of tonnage available to haul ore to the steel mills. The trade with the government was on the basis of roughly equal cargo tonnage, which in some cases meant that two small old steamers would be traded in for one big new one, although in somecases it was three-for-one.