

from the sides of the island so shade could be provided over the bridgewings in hot weather. The steel pole foremast, which had little rake, rose out of the spar deck immediately abaft the break of the forecastle.

The spar deck had a small but pleasing amount of sheer and open pipe-and-wire rails ran along either side. The first five hatches were set in the spar deck on 24-foot centres. The final hatch was positioned abaft the three-foot-high "step" up to the forward end of the quarterdeck, and there were open rails there too, which gave way to a closed steel taffrail which ran entirely around the stern over the shapely counter. The after deckhouse was large and substantial with an overhang of the boat deck along its sides and over the fantail, the overhang supported by heavy stanchions across its square-cut aft end and under the lifeboats. The two boats, one on either side of the boat deck, were worked with radial steel davits.

A rather massive funnel was positioned far forward on the boat deck, with a large ventilator cowl nearby on either side. The coal bunker hatch was set into the boat deck just abaft the almost rakeless smokestack, and aft of that again was the steel pole mainmast. Another large ventilator cowl and the galley vent rose to the port side of the mainmast. Hard aft on the boat deck were placed two large water tanks.

All three ships were painted in the typical Hall Corporation colours of the day. The hull, forecastle and poop were a light grey while the boot-topping was bright red. All of the deckhouses were white. The stack was black, with the usual white "wishbone" and large white letter 'H'. The foremast was buff while the main was black.

The BUCK (C.151043), the KERNAN (C.151045) and the REYNOLDS (C.151046) were all enrolled at Montreal, and for each ship Gross Tonnage was 1824 while the Net was 983. The forecastle of each ship was 35 feet long. The engine and boilers of each steamer were of the size noted by CR&MW, but although the Scotch boilers all were manufactured by the Collingwood Shipbuilding Company, the engines were not, but instead were surplus World War One "Shipping Board" engines built in 1918 and purchased for the vessels from the U.S.A. The engine of the KERNAN had been built by the E. J. Codd Company at Baltimore, Maryland, while the engines for the other two came from Hewes and Phillips, of Newark, New Jersey. All three engines originally were rated at 700 Indicated Horsepower, although there were some minor variations shown in registers in later years. In the boilers, each ship had 3,146 square feet of heating surface and 90 square feet of grate surface.

Hall used the ships in many trades, most notably including the running of pulpwood from the lower St. Lawrence River up to Waddington, New York. Downbound, they usually would carry either grain from the Canadian Lakehead or, most often, coal from Lake Erie ports. However, big changes were in the works and they would run for Hall only for the balance of the 1925 season.

On March 10, 1926, W. H. Coverdale, president of Canada Steamship Lines Limited, Montreal, announced that on that day, the company's directors had authorized the purchase of four of the Playfair interests, namely the Great Lakes Transportation Company, the Midland Shipbuilding Company, the Midland Elevator Company, and the entire capital stock of the George Hall Coal & Shipping Corporation. The official transfer of ownership took place on April 1, 1926.

Thus, by the time the 1926 navigation season began, the BUCK, REYNOLDS and KERNAN were part of the Canada Steamship Lines fleet which, through the Playfair acquisitions, had grown to include 112 vessels. The appointments announced for the C.S.L. ships in the April 1926 issue of "Canadian Railway and Marine World" included vessels "taken over from Geo. Hall Coal & Shipping Corporation". For that season, R. Chatel continued as master of the BUCK and T. Aussant as chief engineer. W. Liddell and U. Hamelin stayed in the REYNOLDS, while on the KERNAN, B. A. Sullivan remained as master but W. Hurder took over as chief.

It was on May 16, 1926, that the crew of the ROBERT J. BUCK experienced some excitement. Approximately 25 miles off Point Petre in eastern Lake Ontario, the 1889-built, 217-foot wooden steamer CHARLES HORN (U.S.92102), (a) MARION (22), had caught fire and became a total loss. The 17 persons in her crew all got off safely in the lifeboats and then were picked up by the BUCK, which fortunately happened upon the scene.

It took a while for C.S.L. to get its new acquisitions all painted up in its own colours, but by the start of the 1927 season, the ships were wearing the C.S.L. red hull with white billboards down the sides. The forecastles and deckhouses were white, while stacks became