

**Toronto Telegram, December 17, 1955**  
**Schooner Days MCCL (1250)**  
**By C. H. J. SNIDER**

PASSING HAILS

**THAT SOUTHERN BELLE**

*Kingarvie*, Florida bound, reported from Charleston, S.C., 43 days out from Toronto and 1,250 miles on her way.

*Moonshine II*, 18 feet long, going down the other way by the Mississippi under the blue ensign, last heard from at Memphis, six week out.

“YOUR article ‘Kitchener Rides Again’” hails Alfred J. Adams, 108 Church avenue, Willowdale, Ont., “brings back old memories to me. The mention of the competitor *Goldfinch* in the barge race in the Thames reminds me that I saw her being built at Faversham in Kent.

“She was built by Mr. ‘Cocky’ Goldfinch, a short, thickset man, who was, I believe Mayor of the town at one time. It also reminds me of a pleasure trip that I took in the summer of 1886 on the barge *Pomona*, Capt. Avery, from Faversham to Margate. It was a lovely day for sailing, but going down we lost our topmast, and of course our sail and gear.

“We were lucky, for coming back we ran into an offshore gale which would have made it very unpleasant if the topmast had gone then. Off Herne Bay we picked up two men in a rowboat being blown out to sea, and no doubt saved their lives.

“Farther out to sea was another barge trying for the Medway or the Thames. She was making heavy weather of it. The scudding black clouds and the angry sea made a picture that I shall never forget. Would that I could see my native England and get a whiff of that ozone again! Well - thanks for the memories.”

Librarian Miss Kathleen Keech, of Picton Public Library obligingly asks for some of her customers from the U.S. for any authentic information “on the boat *Southern Belle* which is reported to have been broken up in Picton about 1889?”

It is to be feared that her American friends may have got off on the wrong tack. Perhaps they will have to come about and cross the line properly. Only *Southern Belle* in Schooner Days’ gallery was a steamer of that name taken to Hamilton, not Picton – to be broken up there in 1891.

We remember being given a brass galley-tap from her by one of the Frankel brothers when going to Jarvis Collegiate, the “Old Grammar School”. We had gone to the Frankels’ yard to see the boilers of the steamer *Monarch*, which had just been salvaged from the lake bed at the Eastern Gap, where they had been lying since her wreck Nov. 29, 1856. We saw the rusted tubes and cylinder and were given a loose rivet as a precious souvenir. One of the brothers, appreciating a schoolboy’s interest, gave him the little brass lever with a diamond shaped opening in the head, which he said was from the *Southern Belle*.

There was a connection between the two, as this secondary quotation from Robertson's Landmarks of Toronto, long our marine bible will show:

“This noted steamer was a blockade runner during the American civil war. Built on the Clyde, 1864, she was bought by Andrew Heron and Capt. Thos. Leach in 1866 and brought to Lake Ontario under the name *Rothsay Castle*, running between Toronto, Niagara and Hamilton. She was sold to the government of New Brunswick, and burned at Shediac, N.B., in 1874, but rebuilt and brought to Toronto again, renamed *Southern Belle*. She was wrecked on the boilers of the *Monarch* near the Eastern Gap Aug. 17, 1875, but was refloated and plied between Toronto, Hamilton, Niagara and Buffalo in connection with the Canada Southern Railway until dismantled at Hamilton in 1891”.

If there was another *Belle* we do not know. There was another Steamer *Rothsay* in New Brunswick, and this has caused some confusion. But – the steamer *Empress of India* was rebuilt at Picton in 1899, ten years later than the reputed – or confuted *Southern Belle* breaking up there. Would there be any connection? Or was there another *Southern Belle* of which we have not heard? The files of the excellent Picton Gazette answer the question.