

The Muskoka Navigation Co.

E. L. Sawyer, of Sawyer, Ross & Co., stock-brokers, Toronto, has bought a controlling interest in the Muskoka and Georgian Bay Navigation Co., Ltd., and is organizing the Muskoka Navigation Co., Ltd., to be incorporated under the Ontario Companies Act, with a capital of \$500,000, of which \$200,000 will be preference and \$300,000 common stock, to take over the property, franchises, etc., of the present company, and to extend its operations. It is the intention to improve the fleet by putting in electric lighting and in other ways, and to add other vessels as required. It is also proposed to build several hotels, one of which is expected to be ready for this summer's business.

The authorized capital of the M. & G. B. N. Co. is \$100,000, of which \$72,300 has been subscribed, and \$65,610 paid up. The steamers and other assets of the Co. are valued at about \$125,000, a considerable amount of earnings having been applied to additions to the fleet, etc., besides which the Co. have paid annual dividends of 6 to 8%, last year's being at the latter figure. Of the paid-up stock, A. P. Cockburn, the Manager of the Co., held a majority, amounting to \$39,300, which has been bought by Mr. Sawyer, who has also secured some small holdings, putting him in control of \$41,000 of stock altogether.

The provisional directors of the Muskoka Navigation Co., Ltd., will be A. P. Cockburn and J. S. Playfair, who are now directors of the M. & G. B. N. Co., E. L. Sawyer, E. W. McNeill, R. Gowans, J. Stellar Lovell and W. Bain.

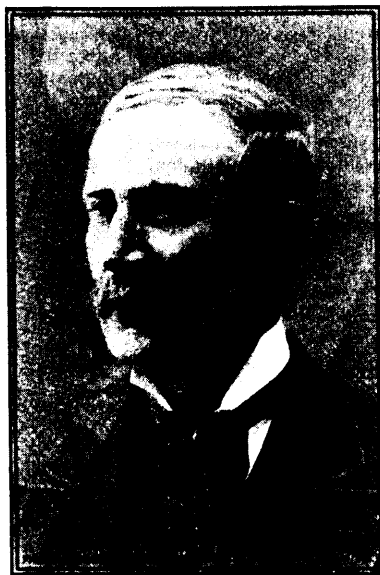
It is understood that when the organization of the M. N. Co. is completed, the directors for the first year will be E. L. Sawyer, A. P. Cockburn, F. J. Phillips, M. C. Dickson and probably two others who have not yet been decided on.

The pioneer of modern navigation on the Muskoka lakes was A. P. Cockburn. It was in 1866 that his first steamer appeared on Lake Muskoka, this being the Wenonah, which was followed by the purchase of a small steamer from Lake Simcoe, to which the name Wabmik (or White Beaver) was given. In 1871 there was added to this fleet the paddle-steamer Nipissing, which was also built on the Lake. In the fall of 1875 the Simcoe, which had been plying on Lake Simcoe, was secured, and was taken by train from Barrie, the railway having then been opened but a short time, and put on Muskoka Lake. The steamers Muskoka and Lake St. Joseph were built in the winter of 1881 at Gravenhurst, and the InterOcean on Lake Nipissing. Following on this development and the increasing numbers of visitors that were being attracted to the district, mainly through the circulation of the guide books, the first of which was compiled by Mr. Cockburn and published in 1874, the Muskoka & Nipissing Navigation Co. was incorporated in 1881 for the purpose of acquiring the boats owned by Mr. Cockburn, and of developing the business carried on by him, as well as of opening up an additional route on the Magnetawan River. The original organization comprised: President, Hon. A. Mackenzie; Manager, A. P. Cockburn; other directors, J. S. Playfair, H. H. Cook, L. W. Smith, and R. Power; Secretary-Treasurer, J. A. Link. In 1886 the Parry Sound Navigation Co. was merged into this Co., and later the Co. became the Muskoka & Georgian Bay Navigation Co.

To the boats taken over by the Co. there was added, in 1886, the paddle and screw boat Wenonah, the second of the name. This steamer was built at Burk's Falls, and was so constructed in order to more easily navigate the narrow and tortuous channel of the Magnetawan River. The other boats added to the fleet by the Co. were:—Muskoka, built at Gravenhurst in 1881; Kenozha, built at

Gravenhurst in 1883; Oriole, built at Gravenhurst in 1886; Wenonah, built at Burks Falls in 1886; Nipissing, built at Gravenhurst in 1887; Medora, built at Gravenhurst in 1893; Ahmic, built at Gravenhurst in 1896. The original Wenonah was broken up, as also were the Simcoe and InterOcean; the Wabmik was sold and transferred to the Lake of Bays; the old Nipissing was burned on Lake St. Joseph in 1896; the Lake St. Joseph was sold and afterwards burned, and the Cyclone had her name changed to the Wanita.

Mr. Playfair succeeded Hon. Alex. Mackenzie as President; and Mr. Cockburn has been Manager from the time the Co. was organized. At the last annual meeting, held in Toronto in Jan., the following board was elected:—President, J. S. Playfair; Vice-President, L. W. Smith, K.C.; Manager and Secretary, A. P. Cockburn; other directors, H. H. Cook and G. Homer. Mr. Playfair is a retired wholesale dry goods merchant, formerly of the firm of Bryce, McMurich & Co., Toronto; Mr. Smith is President of the Consumers' Gas Co., Toronto; Mr. Cockburn was formerly M.P. for Muskoka; Mr. Cook is President of the Ontario Lumber Co.; and Mr. Homer is a general storekeeper at Gravenhurst.



A. P. COCKBURN.

From a photograph taken when he was aged 48.

The Co.'s operating headquarters are at Gravenhurst, and its steamers are run on the following routes:—(1) Lake Joseph route, from Muskoka Wharf to Port Cockburn; (2) Lake Rosseau route, from Muskoka Wharf to Rosseau, transferring passengers at Beaumaris to another boat for Bala, Milford Bay, Mortimer's Point, and Hutton House; (3) Bala and Bracebridge, across Muskoka Lake; (4) Burk's Falls to Ahmic Harbor on the Magnetawan River. Of the Co.'s fleet of steamers, the Medora, Nipissing and Muskoka are run regularly on the first three routes in the order named, while the Wenonah and Wanita are on the Magnetawan River. The Kenozha and Islander are run daily on excursion routes, the former for Port Cockburn and intermediate places, and the Islander plying between Bala and Port Carling. The steamer Ahmic is available for special parties and emergency service. Other boats operated by the Co. are the Oriole and Muskoka. The service will be opened this year on June 15, and will be continued until early in October.

Following are the dimensions, etc., of the present fleet:—

Medora, screw-steamer, built at Gravenhurst, 1893; length, 122 ft. 6 ins.; breadth,

25 ft. 4 ins.; depth, 8 ft. 5 ins.; tonnage, gross 299, register, 203.

Muskoka, screw-steamer, built at Gravenhurst, 1881; length, 94 ft.; breadth, 18 ft.; depth, 7 ft. 3 in.; tonnage, gross 99, register 67.

Nipissing, screw-steamer, built at Gravenhurst, 1887; length, 125 ft.; breadth, 21 ft.; depth 7 ft. 6 in.; tonnage, gross 275, register 207.

Wenonah, side-wheel steamer, built at Burk's Falls, 1886; length, 94 ft. 6 in.; breadth, 18 ft.; depth, 6 ft. 8 ins.; tonnage, gross 99, register 84.

Kenozha, screw-steamer, built at Gravenhurst, 1883; length, 100 ft. 8 ins.; breadth, 18 ft. 2 ins.; depth, 6 ft. 2 in.; tonnage, gross 191, register 124.

Ahmic, screw-steamer, built at Gravenhurst, 1896; length, 61 ft.; breadth, 12 ft. 8 ins.; depth 4 ft. 6 ins.; tonnage, gross 43, register 29.

Oriole, screw-steamer, built at Gravenhurst, 1886; length, 75 ft.; breadth, 12 ft. 8 ins.; depth, 4 ft. 8 ins.; tonnage, gross 75, register 48.

Wanita, originally called the Cyclone, screw-steamer, built at Ahmic Harbor, 1896; length, 60 ft. 4 ins.; breadth, 12 ft.; depth, 5 ft. 8 ins.; tonnage, gross 44, register 30.

Islander, composite screw-steamer, frame and machinery built by the Polson Iron Works, Toronto, and put together at Gravenhurst in 1890; length, 100 ft.; breadth, 17 ft., 4-10 in.; depth, 5 ft., 9 in.; tonnage, gross, 165.03; register, 77.56.

The Co. has traffic arrangements with the G.T.R., and enjoys the full advantages of coupon ticket arrangements.

A portrait of A. P. Cockburn is given on this page, being reproduced from a photograph taken when he was 48 years of age; he is now 64, but still hale and active. Mr. Cockburn, whose father was a native of Berwickshire, was born in Finch township, Stormont, Ont., April 7, 1837. After being educated at the local schools he commenced his business career at Eldon, Ont., of which township he was subsequently elected Reeve. At Confederation, in 1867, he was elected to the Ontario Assembly for North Victoria, and while there aided the late Hon. John Sandfield Macdonald in maturing and carrying into effect a liberal land and railway policy. He first visited the Muskoka district in Sept., 1865, subsequently taking up his permanent residence there, and he labored zealously in bringing the resources of the Muskoka and Parry Sound region to public notice, writing largely and effectively of its attractions. He sat for Muskoka in the House of Commons from 1872 to 1882, and for North Ontario from 1882 to 1887, when he was defeated, and he was again defeated at the General Election of 1891; he also unsuccessfully contested the Muskoka district for the Ontario Assembly in 1894. He is a Liberal.

As showing some of the difficulties with which Mr. Cockburn had to contend, it may be mentioned that when his first boat—the Wenonah—was built there were no saw mills in the district, and the whole of the lumber, even for the cabins, had to be cut by whip-sawing. After the passing of the Free Grants and Homestead Act of 1868, the success of the steamship enterprise was assured, as a good trade was done in carrying in settlers from the older districts. The lock at Port Carling was not built until 1871.

Mr. Cockburn is an omnivorous reader, and has now almost ready for the press "A Short History of Administrations," from 1608 down to the present time.

In addition to Mr. Cockburn being a director of the new Muskoka Navigation Co., an arrangement has been made by which his active services will be secured for three years in connection with the management, but it is probable that an outsider will be appointed as active manager.