

nel in the area of Crysler Shoal; she sank almost immediately, carrying with her to the bottom her cargo of pig iron and nine of the persons on board.

In any event, vessels of the U.S. and Canadian Coast Guards attended at the stranding of OREFAX, and stood by until salvage vessels arrived. A salvage contract had been let to McAllister Towing Ltd., Montreal, and on September 24th, HELEN M. McALLISTER arrived at the scene towing the lighter P.S. BARGE NO. 1 (which had been working for the previous three weeks at the EASTCLIFFE HALL wreck site). DANIEL McALLISTER arrived the same day, towing the cut-down former tug CAPT. M. B. DONNELLY (now used as a wrecking barge), and the tug SALVAGE MONARCH also came to the scene.

A considerable quantity of OREFAX's cargo was taken out of her and, late on September 24th, the vessel was floated free from her rocky and precarious perch on the edge of Battersby Island. The tugs towed her to Prescott on the 25th and there, on September 29, the balance of her cargo was unloaded into HALLFAX for the continuation of its trip to Prince Edward Island. OREFAX herself proceeded to Montreal for the necessary repairs, which were put in hand by the Canadian Vickers shipyard.

Whether the repairs were warranted or not is a matter of some conjecture at this late point in time, for the 1970 season was to be the last for OREFAX in Hall Corporation service. (Incidentally, we should note that the proper name of the firm had, by that time, become Hall Corporation (Shipping) 1969 Ltd.) A vessel of the relatively conservative size and power of OREFAX was no longer competitive in lake service and, accordingly, OREFAX spent the 1971 navigation season in idleness at Hamilton, where she had been laid up at the close of her service in 1970.

Just when it appeared that the career of OREFAX had come to an end, she was rescued from the seemingly-imminent clutches of the shipbreakers. The federal government had decided to embark upon a major dredging of the St. Lawrence River to enable deep-draft vessels to call at the port of Quebec City. The project involved the dredging, to a depth of 45 feet, a 1,000-foot-wide channel to the northeast of the southern end of the Ile d'Orleans, just below Quebec City, and the job became known as the North Traverse dredging project.

The contract for the work was let to a specially-formed group known as the Consortium Ile d'Orleans, Montreal, of which a 43% interest was held by the McNamara Corp. Ltd., and 57% by the J. P. Porter Company Ltd. and its subsidiary, the Richelieu Dredging Corp. Inc., with the latter serving as the project operator. The contract was worth \$21 million, and involved the removal of some 14 million cubic yards of river-bottom material.

The dredging consortium assembled a large fleet of vessels to handle the project, the capital outlay for such being approximately \$6 million, and one of the ships which was acquired was OREFAX, the idea being to convert her into a hopper-bottomed sludge carrier to haul away the dredging spoil. The sale of OREFAX to the consortium took place on October 26, 1971, and before the 1971 navigation season had ended, OREFAX was towed away to the McNamara Corp. shipyard at Whitby, Ontario (east of Toronto on the north shore of Lake Ontario). There, her self-unloading equipment was removed, and during 1972 work progressed on her conversion to a self-propelled spoil carrier. Some reports indicated that she was to be given Harbourmaster outboard propulsion units during the conversion, but we are unable to locate any verification of such a repowering, and photographs do not show any sign of it. It is our belief that she retained her Fairbanks Morse diesel for the duration of her work on the North Traverse project.

The massive dredging project got underway in due course of time, and some of the well-known vessels that were used in connection with it were the former HUTCHCLIFFE HALL, BULKARIER, LOADMASTER (NORMAN B. MacPHERSON), CHARLES R. HUNTLEY, CREEK TRANSPORT, and the east coast trainferry PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND. Most of these were given names which were considered to be more appropriate for the project, and OREFAX was thus rechristened (c) ISLE ROYALE.