

We have received considerable favourable comment concerning our Ship of the Month No. 172 feature in the March issue, which recounted the story of the canal steamer EDWARD L. STRONG and of the Fraser, Bruce shipyard which constructed her. Two members have provided considerable additional detail for us, and we wish to share that information with all of our readers.

Member R. H. Webb, of Surrey, British Columbia, specializes in the history of Canadian shipyards and has written to confirm that the hull numbers allotted by the Trois-Rivieres yard were sequential throughout, despite the various changes in the yard's ownership. Hulls No. 1 and 2 were the wooden-hulled, war-built WAR MINGAN and WAR RADNOR, respectively. Hulls 3 through 12 were assigned to ten wood-hulled steamers for the French government; the complete ten-ship order received by the Anderson Company, New York City, was allocated to the Trois-Rivieres yard, despite our comment in the feature that only five of the ten hulls went to the yard. Later on, we will comment as to why only five of them have been noted in the records.

Hull No. 13 does not appear to have been used and, in this respect, the Trois-Rivieres shipyard does not differ from many other yards, all of which shunned the apparently-unlucky number for any of their hulls. Hull Nos. 14 through 17 were the four steel-hulled tankers which were to be built for La Societe Naphthes Transports, of Marseilles, France. CAPITAINE DAMIANI was Hull 15, and the two tankers that had been laid down just before the yard's bankruptcy were Hull 16 and 17. For some reason, Hull 14 was the number assigned to the fourth tanker, whose construction never was begun.

According to Mr. Webb, the four Hall canallers were given numbers in the 18 through 21 sequence. Despite what has appeared in various shipping registers over the years, he indicates that N. H. BOTSFORD was Hull 18, Hull 19 was FRANK A. AUGSBURY, Hull 20 was JOHN C. HOWARD (II) and Hull 21 was EDWARD L. STRONG. This is unusual in that the hull numbers for the HOWARD and STRONG were reversed from their launch order. Regardless of the strange nature of this detail (the American Bureau of Shipping had STRONG as Hull 19), we are inclined to agree with Mr. Webb's data, as shipping registers never have been noted for their accuracy in respect of hull numbers.

The ten small French steamers actually were part of an order for fifty such ships, which the Anderson Company spread amongst various Canadian shipyards. Of those built at Trois-Rivieres, we had identified five (BOUX-WILER, BOUZONVILLE, BRUMATH, CATTENON and CERNAY). Mr. Webb has identified one more, that being BARR, which was destroyed by fire prior to completion. All ten ships were reported to have been laid down, but there are no references to what became of the remaining four hulls.

In our feature, we indicated that we were not certain when SHERBROOKE's pilothouse was moved aft off the forecastle, such as we knew it when she returned to the lakes in 1952 as (e) WELLANDOC (II). Member Bob Graham, of Massena, New York, has sent us a photocopy of a page from Laurence Dunn's Ship Recognition: Merchant Ships (Coles/Harrap/DeGraff, 1954), which contains a photo of the steamer as (c) AROSA. She is shown with her original pilothouse and texas still on the forecastle, and with her original foremast. The old main, with booms, is still in its original position, and a kingpost with booms has been fitted about halfway between the fore and main. The ship is painted a dark shade (black?) with a white forecastle and, apparently, buff spars. Her stack is a dark colour, with a large, white letter 'A' carried fairly high up the stack. In the photo, she is carrying a large deckload of lumber.

Accordingly, it would seem that the relocation of the bridge structure must have taken place during the steamer's short stint under the Italian flag as (d) IDA O., a stage of her career which lasted only from 1951 until 1952. If only the Italians had left her alone, she would have returned to the lakes looking little different than she had when built in 1922.