

The straight-deck bulk carrier LEON FRASER (U.S.241856) was built in 1942 as Hull 287 of the Great Lakes Engineering Works at Ecorse, Michigan. She was 623.3 x 67.0 x 35.0, 10291 Gross and 6401 Net. Launched on February 28, 1942, she was the first of five steamers, in a class known for years as the "Supers", built for the United States Steel fleet. The FRASER served her owners well until she was laid up at Duluth in 1981. The USS Great Lakes Fleet Inc. sold the FRASER in 1986 to Spitzer Management for possible use as part of a redevelopment project planned for the site of the former American Ship Building Company yard at Lorain, Ohio. The FRASER was towed to Lorain and has remained there ever since although no effort was made to include her in any redevelopment. Now comes word that LEON FRASER, the last of the five "Supers" to remain on the lakes, has been resold to Fraser Shipyards Inc., of Superior, Wisconsin. She is to be towed this autumn from Lorain to Superior by TUG MALCOLM and, on the drydock over the winter (or, perhaps, later) she will be shortened by some eighty feet. She then will be converted to a cement carrier, purportedly for eventual transfer to the ownership of Inland Lakes Transportation Inc., the "Huron Cement fleet". This most interesting development, if it proceeds to fruition, will undoubtedly prolong the life of LEON FRASER by many years.

Early this autumn, Enerchem Transport Inc. announced that it had placed on charter the 19,954 d.w.t. motortanker NORDIC, for the transportation of chemical and petroleum products between the Great Lakes and Europe. It took us a while to find out what vessel this might be, but we finally determined that she is the former (a) NORDIC SUN, 475.8 x 74.5 x 45.3, 11781 Gross and 7342 Net, which was built in 1981 as Hull 1244 of the Hayashikane Shipbuilding and Engineering Company Ltd. at Shimonoseki, Japan. The tanker, owned by the Welland Shipping Company, registered at Monrovia, Liberia, and managed by Sun Transport Inc., has spent every lake navigation season since her construction in the liquid cargo trades out of the Sunoco refinery at Sarnia, Ontario. Despite the charter, it is understood that NORDIC will continue in Sunoco service for a period of two years, but it is not yet known whether she will be painted up in the usual Enerchem fleet livery. Although she is not yet available, it is believed that Enerchem may later bring under charter NORDIC's exact sistership CHIPPEWA, (a) SUNCOR CHIPPEWA, which preceded her out of the Hayashikane shipyard in 1981 as Hull 1243. Managed by the same operators but owned by Sunchem Shipping Inc., CHIPPEWA also has spent every summer in service out of the Sunoco plant at Sarnia.

Arriving at Toronto early in the week of October 16th was the 102-foot, 281 Gross Ton excursion vessel ISLAND QUEEN V (C.369343). Built in 1975 at Oshawa and owned by Thirty Thousand Island Cruise Lines Inc., of Parry Sound, Ontario, the boat has been acquired by Joel Davidson, the owner of the Toronto excursion vessels VULCAN II and JUBILEE QUEEN. ISLAND QUEEN V had a stormy passage across Georgian Bay and had to stop at Tobermory for emergency repairs. In 1990, she will be added to the rapidly expanding fleet of charter boats which threatens to choke the waters of Toronto Bay. We understand that other operators may also be planning to increase further the size of their charter fleets in 1990 and one cannot but wonder how many party boats the trade in this city may be able to support...

In an earlier issue, we reported the departure from Sorel under tow of the former U.S. Steel straight-deck steamers ROBERT C. STANLEY and RALPH H. WATSON. It now has been confirmed that Corostel Trading Ltd., Montreal, resold the two vessels to Cukurova Celik Endustrisi, A.S., and they arrived at Aliaga, Turkey, behind FAIRPLAY IX on June 19, 1989.

The remains of an old steam cannaller are rapidly disappearing. Since 1965, the hull of CHEMBARGE NO. 2 (C.160046), (a) CASCO (55), (b) THORDOC (II)(63), has been lying in the North Slip at Sarnia, where she was used as a dock for vessels unloading sand consigned to the Holmes Foundry. Chrysler closed the foundry in 1988 and the dock area is slated for redevelopment. In late summer, the sand was dug out from around the former steamer and the work of cutting up her hull began.