

The Columbia Transportation Division steamer RESERVE suffered bottom damage in two grounding incidents which occurred in the early morning of April 17. RESERVE was downbound with a cargo of taconite when, at 2:14 a.m., the vessel struck rocky bottom in the narrow channel of the lower St. Mary's River near Sawmill Point, about a mile and a half below the Neebish Rock Cut. The accident, which does not appear to have been ice-related but rather attributed to steering problems, caused damage to the ship's portside forepeak tank and also to a ballast tank. The RESERVE's master elected to move his ship from the confines of the narrow channel and took her down toward the Lime Island anchorage area, some 13½ miles to the south. However, RESERVE again went aground off Point aux Frenes, at the entrance to Raber Bay. She remained there while the damage was inspected and 15,450 tons of her cargo were off-loaded into WILLIAM R. ROESCH. RESERVE was refloated and on the 19th arrived at the Carbide Dock at the Michigan Soo, where the remainder of her cargo was transferred into ARMCO. Once the discharge was complete, RESERVE sailed for Superior and, on April 21, she entered the Fraser Shipyards drydock for what appeared to be very extensive repairs.

An earlier incident in the Soo area involved the 1,000-foot tug/barge combination PRESQUE ISLE, which hit the knuckle in the lower approach wall at the Poe Lock on April 12. The barge put an 18-foot crack in her portside plating near the first and second hatches when ice forced her onto the wall. There was no apparent damage to the pier, but after Coast Guard inspection, PRESQUE ISLE set off for the Fraser shipyard at Superior for the necessary hull repairs.

One of the ships which wintered at the BayShip yard at Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin, and was drydocked during lay-up, was the Inland Steel self-unloading stemwinder JOSEPH L. BLOCK. While she was on the dock, her bottom, which heretofore was red, was painted black up to the 26-foot mark. The paint was intended to protect against acidic water corrosion. The remainder of the BLOCK's hull retains its distinctive Inland livery.

In an earlier issue, we commented upon the increase of traffic at the ferry crossing of the St. Clair River between Sombra, Ontario, and Marine City, Michigan, as shoppers took the quick route to lower prices and as travelers sought to avoid long line-ups at the Blue Water Bridge. That ferry service is still using DALDEAN and ONTAMICH on a regular basis, with one of the Harsen's Island ferries added at peak periods. We now learn that the same boom in ferry business has come to the route between Walpole Island, Ontario, and Algonac, Michigan. There, WALPOLE ISLANDER and LOWELL D. are holding down the route (the latter boat used to do it alone), and by mid-June a third ferry will be added. The new boat, under construction at Port Dover, will be 70 feet long and 30 feet wide, capable of carrying 12 cars per trip. The new ferry will be named CITY OF ALGONAC by the Dale T. Dean Walpole - Algonac Ferry Line. Such activity on the St. Clair River ferry crossings is totally unprecedented.

CANADA MARQUIS, the last of the Misener-operated ocean-lakers registered in Canada, was flagged-out recently to Isle of Man registry. We also should note that, on March 17, CANADA MARQUIS was in collision with BRITISH TAY off the Magdalen Islands. The MARQUIS was drydocked at Lauzon on April 10 and was still there during May.

During recent years, the C.S.L. fleet has disposed of most of its idle tonnage. One laid-up ship which the company retained was the self-unloading steamer HOCHELAGA, which went into winter quarters at Cardinal on December 21, 1981. She was towed to Kingston on April 24, 1982, and lay there until November 10, 1987, when she arrived at Toronto under tow. She since has lain in the Leslie Street slip, looking much the worse for her years of inactivity. It would now appear that the decision has been made to sell HOCHELAGA for scrapping, but we understand that the company will retain as spare equipment that 41-year-old steamer's unloading boom, which was placed on her only shortly before her retirement, the original boom having been lost in an accident.