

U.S.C.G. MARIPOSA to Toledo for repairs. The OLDS suffered stern damage, including rudder and shaft damage, and she was repaired over the winter at Lorain.

As an example of what the "Supers" were doing during the last few years they operated, we might look at A. H. FERBERT's 1979 season. She cleared lay-up at Milwaukee on March 29th, bound for Escanaba to load for South Chicago, and she remained in service well into the month of January, 1980. Her cargoes that season were all ore, and there were 42 such ore trips. She loaded 29 of the cargoes at Duluth, ten at Two Harbors and three at Escanaba. One of the cargoes was unloaded at Conneaut, five at South Chicago, 13 at Gary and 23 at Lorain.

In January of 1979, however, the Sturgeon Bay-built EDWIN H. GOTT made her maiden voyage, and in September of 1980, her 1,000-foot sistership EDGAR B. SPEER sailed from the shipyard at Lorain. The advent of the two big self-unloaders, coupled with the beginning of a severe recession which struck particularly hard at the American steel industry, forced almost all of the straight-deck "Steel Trust" boats into permanent lay-up. When they went into winter quarters at the end of the 1981 season, it seemed that all of the "Supers" had run for the last time. LEON FRASER was tied up at Lorain, BENJAMIN F. FAIRLESS at Milwaukee, and A. H. FERBERT, ENDERS M. VOORHEES and IRVING S. OLDS at Duluth.

One last gasp for this distinctive class of ship came in 1982, when BENJAMIN F. FAIRLESS was fitted out to run the grain trade, with some cargoes of ore as well, but by early autumn the effects of the depression had caught up with her. She laid up at Duluth on October 4th, 1982, and never again turned her wheel. One by one, the "Supers" went out of class as they lay in ordinary, and there seemed little doubt that their days were over.

In the years following 1982, the U.S. Steel fleet underwent a major purge of those vessels which no longer were operating. One by one, the idle ships were dispatched to scrapyards around the lakes and overseas, so that eventually the fleet would be reduced to the red-hulled self-unloaders EDWIN H. GOTT, EDGAR B. SPEER, ROGER BLOUGH, PHILIP R. CLARKE, ARTHUR M. ANDERSON and CASON J. CALLAWAY, plus the "Bradley" self-unloaders CALCITE II, IRVIN L. CLYMER, JOHN G. MUNSON, GEORGE A. SLOAN and MYRON C. TAYLOR, as well as the Litton Great Lakes Corporation's big tug/barge combination PRESQUE ISLE, which has operated for U.S. Steel.

By 1986, the "AA" Class ships were being stripped of any usable parts. The bowthrusters were removed from the FERBERT, FAIRLESS, OLDS and VOORHEES and they were installed in the three CLARKE class steamers, as well as JOHN G. MUNSON, to be used there as sternthrusters. That same year, LEON FRASER, which was still lying at Lorain, was sold to the Spitzer Management interests who were said to be considering the incorporation of the vessel into a redevelopment project which was proposed for the Lorain site of the old American Ship Building Company premises. By then, of course, the old shipyard had been closed and was lying vacant.

The first of the "Supers" to be sold out of the U.S. Steel fleet for scrapping were A. H. FERBERT and ENDERS M. VOORHEES, the latter having been the first of the group to have gone out of class after being laid up. During the early spring of 1987, the USS Great Lakes Fleet Inc. applied to the United States Maritime Administration for permission to sell the FERBERT to Marine Salvage Ltd., Port Colborne, for scrapping. The approval granted, Marine Salvage then resold the FERBERT to Dalmeijer Trading B.V., Netherlands, which in turn was granted U.S. MarAd approval to resell her via Equipment Parts Export Inc., New York City, to Turkish breakers.

The VOORHEES (along with fellow tinstacker THOMAS W. LAMONT) was sold to Aaron Ferer & Sons Co., of Omaha, Nebraska. It was then reported that the ships were resold to Birlik Demi Celik, of Istanbul, Turkey, and Constantinos G. Macrydakis, of Greece, for scrapping at the Turkish port of Aliaga. Later reports, however, indicated that the purchaser of the VOORHEES was