

This has, indeed, been a summer of interesting developments amongst the lake fleets. One of the most unusual happenings concerns the Misener ocean-lakers. During the spring, the third ocean-laker to be flagged-out from Canadian registry took on a foreign flag when CANADA MARQUIS was re-registered in Hong Kong. This permitted the replacement of her Canadian crew and officers with non-Canadians. Then, during July, came word that both CANADA MARQUIS and SELKIRK SETTLER were in the course of being sold to off-lake purchasers. The first to go, apparently, was SELKIRK SETTLER which, with a cargo of petroleum coke, passed downbound at the Soo on July 9th, allegedly bound out of the lakes. The "Misener billboard" was noticeably missing from her sides. CANADA MARQUIS was sent to the drydock at Thunder Bay in preparation for her change of ownership and she passed down at the Soo during the morning of July 12th. At the present time, we do not have confirmation of actual delivery dates, nor of the identities of the new owners. It has been suggested that the third sistership ocean-laker, SASKATCHEWAN PIONEER, which is owned by Pioneer Shipping Limited and managed by Misener Shipping, may be sold off-lakes by the end of the year. SELKIRK SETTLER, CANADA MARQUIS and SASKATCHEWAN PIONEER were built in 1983 by Govan Shipyards at Glasgow, Scotland, and measured 709.0 (b.p.) x 75.7 x 48.0, 21549 Gross and 16052 Net. Despite the fact that they were the best vessels ever operated as part of the Misener fleet, they were too deep of hull to carry full loads whilst operating within the lakes and as such they had to operate with full loads consistently when on salt water during the off-season in order to turn a profit. Recently, however, the association which had existed between the Misener and Louis Dreyfus organizations, and which provided work for the ocean-lakers when they were on salt water, was terminated and the profitability of the ships to the Misener fleet became questionable.

Two other familiar lakers sold recently were the motorships SOODOC (II) and ONTADOC (II) of the fleet of N. M. Paterson & Sons Ltd., Thunder Bay. These two sisterships were the last in the series of small, general cargo, "new canallers" in the Paterson fleet and SOODOC, in particular, had spent much of her time operating on salt water in recent years. ONTADOC was built in 1975 and SOODOC in 1976, Hulls 207 and 210, respectively, of Collingwood Shipyards Ltd. They were 339.3 x 49.0 x 30.5; ONTADOC was 4488 Gross and 3168 Net, while SOODOC was 4490 Gross and 3177 Net. This summer, they both were sold to Groupe Desgagnes Inc. (Desgagnes Transport Inc.) for service on the St. Lawrence River and the east coast, and it would seem likely that they may also see summer service to the Arctic as in the past. ONTADOC was upbound at the Soo on July 10, flying the Paterson flag and bound for Thunder Bay. There she loaded a cargo of grain for Newfoundland, and had the booms of her deck cranes reinstalled (they earlier had been removed temporarily). On July 20, she was downbound at the Soo, still carrying her old name and the Paterson insignia on her bows, but with an all-black stack and flying the Desgagnes houseflag. En route down the lower canals, the vessel was renamed (b) MELISSA DESGAGNES. The SOODOC was to be rechristened (b) AMELIA DESGAGNES (we are not absolutely certain about the spelling), but she was not in the lakes at the time and we do not believe that she has been back in lake waters since the time of the sale.

On August 31, 1990, the historic Gooderham & Worts distillery, located in the Parliament Street - Lakeshore Boulevard area of Toronto's central waterfront, was closed and all operations were transferred to the owner's Hiram Walker distillery at Walkerville (Windsor), Ontario. The Toronto plant, with its collection of beautiful and historically significant buildings, could no longer operate economically, and the City of Toronto is now attempting to find a use for the designated historic site, vowing that none of the structures will be demolished. (In fact, atop one of the buildings is situated one of Toronto's first lighthouses.) Of importance to shipping observers is the fact that the closing of the G & W distillery will bring to an end the shipping of molasses into the port of Toronto. Various tankers have handled this trade over the years, the most recent being the barge SAN JUAN which, tended by the tug ATOMIC, brought molasses to Toronto from Yonkers, New York.