

The 1991 navigation season has been marred by yet another major accident, this one involving the steamer BEECHGLEN, (a) CHARLES M. SCHWAB (75), (b) PIERSON DAUGHTERS (82), owned by P. & H. Shipping Division of Parrish & Heimbecker Limited. At 1:00 a.m. on April 29, BEECHGLEN arrived at the elevator at Cardinal, Ontario, and began to unload her cargo of corn. With the stern portion of the ship unloaded, the elevator leg was working on the third (or centre) hold when, at 4:00 a.m. on April 30, BEECHGLEN's hull buckled some thirty feet aft of the plimsoll mark. The hull reportedly cracked up from the bottom to within about seven feet of the deck. On her first job since joining the McKeil Marine fleet, the lighter D. C. EVEREST was hurriedly towed to the scene by the tugs STORMONT and TRAVELER. She took a full load of corn out of BEECHGLEN and then was towed to the elevator at Prescott, which also was the destination of trucks which were suction-loaded with part of the damaged ship's cargo. The remainder of the corn was unloaded by the Cardinal elevator direct from BEECHGLEN, and at last report it was intended that the 68-year-old steamer would be taken (presumably under tow) to Port Weller for survey of the damages sustained in the bizarre incident.

In recent issues, we have followed the fortunes of the venerable dredge and former canal steamer CHARLES R. HUNTLEY, which was acquired in the autumn of 1989 by Alexander Hume Inc., of Etobicoke. The ship worked at Saint John, New Brunswick, late in 1989, and then wintered at Shelburne, Nova Scotia. She was busy in the North Traverse of the lower St. Lawrence River in the summer of 1990 and then headed east again, sustaining damage in a late autumn storm off Halifax whilst en route to Saint John. The March 25, 1991, issue of "The Evening Times-Globe", Saint John, reported that the HUNTLEY was lying in Saint John at the Pugsley North Terminal and was under arrest, with her officers and crew stranded aboard. The newspaper stated that documents filed in the Federal Court of Canada on March 4 by Custom Fabricators and Machinists, a J. D. Irving division, claimed \$40,144.81 for services, labour and materials provided to the ship at Saint John from December to March, and put a claim on the vessel itself to satisfy the debt. The newspaper quoted a source at Public Works Canada as having stated that the HUNTLEY had a \$1 million contract to dredge 188,000 square metres in Courtenay Bay and the main harbour channel, but that the contract had expired without the work being completed.

Another vessel in trouble at Saint John during the winter months was the former lake package freighter WOODLANDS, which was sold early this year and re-registered at Kingstown, St. Vincent & Grenadines. Reports indicate that, by late March, WOODLANDS had cleared Saint John (we are not aware of her destination) and thus it would appear that the financial dispute which had caused her to linger at Saint John was resolved satisfactorily.

In previous issues, we have mentioned that the Enerchem Transport Inc. tanker ENERCHEM FUSION, (a) CHEMICAL TRANSPORT (86), had been idle ever since a grounding in the Saguenay River on July 20, 1990. She wintered at Lauzon, Quebec, and on April 23rd she arrived at Montreal, displaying the name REAL PROGRESS and flying the Liberian flag. We have no additional details at present but must assume that the damage to the ship was sufficiently extensive that Enerchem did not wish to keep her in its fleet.

An unusual flurry of activity occurred recently on the waterfront at Port Lambton, Ontario. On April 16, the Star Line excursion boats STAR OF CHICAGO II and STAR OF CHICAGO III arrived at Port Lambton for lay-up. STAR OF CHICAGO III was moored at Lee Marine in North Port Lambton, while STAR OF CHICAGO II was docked at the South port on the Chenal Ecarte. An April 18, STAR OF DETROIT and STAR OF CHICAGO arrived and were laid up in the Chenal Ecarte with STAR OF CHICAGO II. The Star Line operated all four ships in the dinner/cruise service at Chicago and Detroit during 1990, but now they are for sale and face an uncertain future. All of them sailed to Port Lambton under their own power.