

A serious grounding, which previously escaped the notice of our news-gatherers, involved the USS Great Lakes Fleet's 1929-vintage self-unloading motorship CALCITE II, (a) WILLIAM G. CLYDE (61), which lost steering and took the shore hard on the Canadian side of the Detroit River below the Coast Guard station at Amherstburg on July 14th. The tugs PATRICIA HOEY, OREGON and STORMONT attended the scene, and after part of CALCITE's cargo was lightered out of her, the vessel was refloated early on July 16th. She was taken to the Nicholson Dock at Ecorse, where the remainder of her cargo was unloaded and the damage to the ship assessed. Immediately thereafter, CALCITE II sailed for Toledo, escorted by the G-tug OREGON, and she went right into the shipyard at Toledo for repairs.

Another self-unloader of the USS Great Lakes Fleet Inc. finally has reached the end of her long and successful career. Idle since November of 1990 at Superior, Wisconsin, has been the steamer IRVIN L. CLYMER, (a) CARL D. BRADLEY (I)(27), (b) JOHN G. MUNSON (I)(51), which was built in 1917 as Hull 718 of the American Shipbuilding Company's Lorain yard. She was built to the order of the Bradley Transportation Company, and followed that fleet through its various stages of integration into the U.S. Steel lake vessel operations. She was repowered with General Electric steam turbines in 1954, and she later went through a lengthy period of idleness, following which she was substantially refitted and returned to service. She outlasted all of the other first-generation Bradley self-unloaders which were her fleetmates for so long. Latterly laid up at the Superior premises of Fraser Shipyards Inc., the IRVIN was towed around to the Azcon scrapyard at Duluth on June 18th by the G-tugs KANSAS and MINNESOTA, and it was intended that the dismantling of this handsome steamer would begin during the summer months.

The two remaining operative steamers of Kinsman Lines Inc. were both drydocked by Fraser Shipyards at Superior during the early summer of 1993. In late June, KINSMAN ENTERPRISE (II), (a) HARRY COULBY (II)(89), was docked, and during the first week of July, she was followed into the shipyard by KINSMAN INDEPENDENT (III), (a) CHARLES L. HUTCHINSON (62), (b) ERNEST R. BREECH (88). Upon completion of their respective shipyard visits, both steamers went back into the grain trade. The drydocking of these two handsome ships would indicate that their owner plans to keep them in service for the foreseeable future. The ENTERPRISE was built in 1927, the INDEPENDENT in 1952.

The May, 1993, issue of "Marine News", monthly journal of The World Ship Society, reported the scrapping of an old friend from the lakes. Sold by Navisur S.A., de C.V. Mexico, to Mexican breakers, and delivered at Tuxpan, Mexico, on September 14, 1992, was the motorship TELCHAC, (a) GRIFFON (67), (b) FRANQUELIN (II)(87), (c) EVA DESGAGNES (89). Built as Hull 18 of Port Weller Dry Docks Ltd. in 1955, she was one of three sisterships constructed for Beaconsfield Steamships Ltd., Montreal. The other two were TECUMSEH, which also came from Port Weller, and BELVOIR (II), which was built at Ramey's Bend, Humberstone, by E. B. Magee Ltd. GRIFFON later served the affiliated Mohawk Steamships Ltd. (another enterprise of R. A. Campbell, Montreal), and eventually passed to the Quebec and Ontario Transportation Company Ltd., and upon its dissolution in 1983, she became part of the fleet of Groupe Desgagnes Inc. Your Editor well remembers the early morning of Saturday, September 23, 1989, when he awoke to hear the sound of a motorship out on Toronto Bay. He reached his front window just in time to see EVA DESGAGNES, which had been laid up for some time at Toronto, heading out the Eastern Gap wearing new stack colours and with the name TELCHAC on her bows. (Unfortunately, there was no time to pull on clothing and bicycle to the Gap, so we could not record the event on film!) The only member of the Beaconsfield trio still in existence is the last of them to be built (Port Weller in 1956), STELLA DESGAGNES, (a) TECUMSEH (67), (b) NEW YORK NEWS (III)(86), which is still serving as a member of the Desgagnes fleet despite her many years of hard use.