

vey and inspection, which both passed, thus boding well for their continued operation. U.S. operators dabbled a bit in the export grain trade for the first time in many years, as both AMERICAN MARINER and J. L. MAUTHE made trips down to Montreal with grain which had been loaded at Toledo.

Some other older units of the U.S. fleet continued in active service. American Steamship Company continued to run the steamer JOHN J. BOLAND, which was reactivated in 1992 after many years of idleness. Inland Lakes Transportation indefinitely postponed the repowering of S. T. CRAPO because the cement trade was such that the fleet could not spare her, and the venerable E. M. FORD, built in 1898, not only saw summer service for I.L.T. but remained in commission deep into the autumn.

The U.S. tanker fleet remained small and unimpressive, and we look back with fondness to the years when the big tankers of the Standard Oil and Cleveland Tankers fleets were common sights around the lakes. Today, all one normally sees is barges, just like on the inland rivers! One of the major self-propelled tankers, GEMINI, owned by Cleveland Tankers (1991) Inc., but marketed by EnerChem USA Inc., not only spent much of her time in idleness, but spent that time not at an American port but rather in the North Slip at Point Edward!

The package freight trade on the Great Lakes is well and truly dead, it seems, and no major lake vessel was engaged in this service during 1993. The last of the big package freighters remaining in the system, albeit idle for many years, was sold for scrapping, as the former Canada Steamship Lines' FORT ST. LOUIS made her way to a Colombian shipbreaking yard.

There was little passenger boat activity on the lakes in 1993, apart from the services provided by the small local excursion vessels, although the historic SEGWUN continued to do well on the Muskoka Lakes. It seems likely that an interesting new passenger service may begin on the lakes in 1994, although the ship to be used will be a small one, but the 1995 season seems likely to see the arrival of a major passenger ship in lake service, if present plans come to fruition. Perhaps those of us who have been yearning for the possibility of standing once again on the decks of a big passenger boat as we cross the lakes and transit the rivers and canals may see our dreams come true.

In the meantime, we must let our imaginations take us back to those days when the D & C, Great Lakes Transit, Georgian Bay Line, Canada Steamship Lines and Canadian Pacific Railway steamers carried us around the lakes, and those of us who actually experienced firsthand ANY of those operations are the lucky ones, even though our numbers decrease with the passing of each year...

On a more pleasant note, 1993 was a good year for shipwatching around the lakes, at least as respects the weather. The rest of the continent may have experienced weather that was the pits, with major floods, fire storms, or cold and damp weather, but we had almost perfect conditions. True, water levels were unusually high in the spring due to run-off from the major snows of last winter, but even though Ward's Islanders had to sandbag their homes and install pumps to keep the waters of Lake Ontario at bay, the water dropped early and quickly, and we then enjoyed a long, hot and sunny summer.

Even Lake Ontario off the Toronto beaches became warm enough and (dare we say it?) clean enough that people flocked to the water to swim. It seemed almost as if the "good old days" had returned, but as Ye Ed. swam at the Ward's Island beach (or what remains of it), he was not able to catch even the briefest glimpse of a Niagara passenger boat coming or going through the Eastern Gap. Where on earth went those three operators who were so enthusiastic a short while ago concerning their plans to run cross-lake passenger services in 1993? And the late Alan Howard's beloved CAYUGA was nowhere in sight, no matter how hard we tried to conjure up her image!