

## CEMENTKARRIER

The years around the turn of the century brought with them a boom in the construction industries and, as a result, a great number of cement manufacturing plants were built across Canada. The concentration of such operations was particularly great in Southern Ontario where there were huge deposits of the limestone necessary to manufacture high-quality Portland cement. Unfortunately, many of the firms were set up in such a hurry to cash in on the building boom that plants were not as efficient as they might have been, and little thought was given to the problems involved in the transportation of raw materials and finished product. Plants located in Ontario could compete on their own turf, but were unable to do well in the market in outlying provinces where imported cement could be obtained cheaper.

The demand for Portland cement continued to increase over the years, but the plethora of cement producers were flooding the market with their products to such an extent that, by 1908, supply far exceeded demand and many of the manufacturers stood at the brink of disaster.

In 1909, a group of gentlemen headed by the young entrepreneur Max Aitken (later to be known all across Canada as Lord Beaverbrook), formed the Canada Cement Company Limited by merging the interests of ten existing cement producers; two of these were located in Montreal, one in Hull, Quebec, two in Belleville, Ontario, one each in Marlbank, Lakefield, Shallow Lake and Port Colborne, Ontario, and one in Calgary, Alberta. Additional interests were acquired in subsequent years. The first president of the new company was Senator W. C. Edwards, of Ottawa, who served in that capacity until his death in 1921. He was succeeded by F. P. Jones and in 1927 by A. C. Tagge.

The new company set about cutting down operating expenses, eliminating overproduction and reducing the cut-throat competition for markets. Inefficient plants, such as those at Shallow Lake and Marlbank, were closed down, equipment at surviving plants was modernized, and new facilities were opened in areas where they could compete effectively.

The Canada Cement Company realized the value of water transportation in the movement of raw materials and products, and it set up a lake shipping subsidiary incorporated as Canada Cement Transport Limited. Its first vessels were purchased in 1913, these being the wooden steamers JOHN DUNCAN (16), (b) HOWARD W. (U.S.76969, C.133821), and PUEBLO (16), (b) RICHARD W. (23), (c) PALMBAY (U.S.150512, C.133822). Both of these were 225 feet in length between perpendiculars and were built in the same year, 1891, the DUNCAN at Green Bay, Wisconsin, and PUEBLO at Milwaukee.

These two steamers carried raw materials and also packaged cement. They were sold in 1916 to the Canada Import Company and, thereafter, Canada Cement Transport Limited chartered ships as required, usually the vessels of that same Canada Import Company's fleet. The chartering of tonnage continued until 1929, when the self-unloading bulk cement carrier BULKARRIER, of maximum canal dimensions, was built for Canada Cement by the Furness Shipbuilding Company Ltd. at Haverton Hill-on-Tees, England. This steamer unloaded by means of a boom, much like a collier, and in fact she could and did carry an assortment of bulk cargoes, including coal.

Late in 1929, Canada Cement Transport returned to the same British shipyard on the Tees and ordered another vessel, this one of remarkable and highly advanced design. She was the ship which eventually was commissioned as CEMENTKARRIER, and she was built as the Furness yard's Hull 175. To describe her construction, we can do no better than to quote from the June, 1930, issue of "Canadian Railway and Marine World".

"Canada Cement Transport Ltd., Montreal, had a ship launched by Furness Shipbuilding Co. at Haverton Hill-on-Tees, England, (Wednesday) April 16, and christened CEMENTKARRIER by Miss Doble, daughter of one of the owning