

Oglebay Norton Company self-unloader CRISPIN OGLEBAY (II), converted into an ore transfer hull rechristened HAMILTON TRANSFER. Her operation was, however, less successful than anticipated, and she may well wind up as an active ULS Corporation boat sooner than expected.

Canadian self-unloaders have seen another active year, with only C.S.L.'s SAGUENAY remaining inactive. Lower Lakes Towing has ventured into the trade with the CUYAHOGA, formerly Oglebay Norton's idle "Maritime Class" steamer J. BURTON AYERS. Canadian tankers have had another so-so year, with boats idle and several disposals. On the other hand, Imperial Oil brought the Irving tanker WELLINGTON KENT into the lakes under charter during July to augment its own fleet of mostly-coastal tankers.

Canadian waters still were without the benefit of any major upper lake cruise service in 1995, although several small vessels ventured into the lakes again. The CARIBBEAN MERCY, a former Norwegian passenger and freight boat, came into the lakes but she was not carrying passengers. Instead, she was begging money for "third world" relief.

The otherwise relatively-stable economy was rocked during the autumn by the Quebec Referendum, which caused absolute convulsions in the financial world, but with that behind Canada (at least until the next time around), the Canuck dollar rebounded out of the depths of despair and things now seem back on some kind of track. Bound where, however, we are not sure...

On the U.S. side of the lakes, things remained active during 1995, with the ore trade holding strong and almost all available tonnage in service. Once again, however, the long-rumoured and much-hoped-for self-unloader conversion of EDWARD L. RYERSON did not take place, and she remained in lay-up while Inland Steel continued its charter of ADAM E. CORNELIUS.

The Inland Lakes Transportation Inc. fleet remained busy carrying cement for the U.S. arm of the Lafarge organization, and S. T. CRAPO finally got her conversion to oil fuel last winter. However, Lafarge is getting its own tug-and-barge combination and this may well affect the future of some of Inland Lakes' older vessels, about some of which we already have heard nasty rumours.

There were a few scrappings of major Canadian lake boats in 1995. Socanav sent its LE FRENE NO. 1 to breakers in the Far East, while four Seaway-size straight-deckers from the Seaway Bulk Carriers consortium began the long trip overseas. Algoma Central disposed of its ALGOSTREAM, while the ULS Corporation sent CANADIAN HARVEST, CANADIAN PATHFINDER and CANADIAN HUNTER to foreign scrappers.

After a relatively mild winter with very little ice congestion and few ice-related accidents, the majority of the navigation season was free from any abnormal number of serious accidents, although there were quite a few groundings and some interesting impacts. The fury of the lakes, however, was demonstrated on November 11th, when a sudden and very severe windshift caught JAMES NORRIS trying to back away from the stone-loading trestle-dock at Colborne on Lake Ontario. She was flung against the stern-most caisson and, her hull punctured, she sank with engine and boiler rooms flooded.

The few major lake shipyards that still are operating did a thriving repair and drydocking business. A major and happy shipyard development was the settlement of the lengthy labour dispute at Port Weller Dry Docks in the spring. The problems at Port Weller had threatened to close the yard permanently, but this unfortunate possibility was avoided.

The Bay Shipbuilding, Fraser, Erie Marine and Toledo shipyards remain active in repair work on the U.S. side, while PASCOL at Thunder Bay and Port Weller Dry Docks are the only two large Canadian shipyards working on the lakes. The Davie yard on the St. Lawrence at Lauzon is still functioning, but the Quebec government is attempting to dispose of it.

No large lake vessels were built during the year, but three U.S. lake ship-