

Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, was the site of a mid-winter marine casualty. The victim was the Purvis Marine Ltd. barge G.L.B. NO. 2 (as her name officially is recorded), a 306-footer built in 1953 at Birmingham, Alabama, and owned by A. B. McLean Ltd. before Purvis took over the McLean fleet of tugs and barges. G.L.B. NO. 2, using its deck crane, was being used to dredge the channel to allow tankers calling at the Soo to load to a deeper draft. On the evening of February 6th, it was noticed that the barge was taking water and the fire department was called to assist. Overnight the barge settled to the bottom but not before it was secured across the end of the "government" (Purvis) wharf. A shore-based crane was able to remove the derrick from the barge in one lift, and it suffered no ill effects. There was no environmental damage. The barge was refloated on February 18th and moved up to the Shell Oil dock. Investigation showed that G.L.B. NO. 2 had cracked across the bottom near to where her Plimsoll mark is painted, and several holes were punched in her bottom when she settled. It is not yet known whether the barge will be repaired. Meanwhile, the dredging work was resumed using the Purvis crane barge McKELLAR.

What could have been a potentially damaging labour problem began on February 8th when some 300 workers at Bay Shipbuilding walked off the job at the Sturgeon Bay shipyard. A large number of vessels are wintering at the yard for repair work or drydocking for inspection. The strike was called by Local 449 of the Boilermakers after eight months of unsuccessful contract negotiations. The workers returned to the shipyard on February 12th, saying that they felt the walkout had drawn company attention to the contract problem.

Last issue, we noted that a number of lakers still were in operation as a result of the unusually mild and ice-less winter. Some of them subsequently did lay up, notably the ULS self-unloader CANADIAN ENTERPRISE at Nanticoke on January 31st, and CSL's NANTICOKE at Montreal on February 2nd. Algoma's JOHN B. AIRD tied up at Port Colborne on February 4th, and PETER R. CRESSWELL finally gave up her salt runs out of Goderich and went on February 16th to Sarnia for a brief respite. A few tankers remained in operation, including ALGOEAST, CAPT. RALPH TUCKER and GEMINI.

But some lakers came back out of lay-up to resume operations, much as we reported last issue re the cement carrier STEPHEN B. ROMAN which made, we believe, three trips on Lake Ontario. The barge MEDUSA CONQUEST and tug SUSAN W. HANNAH came out of lay-up at Milwaukee in early February, and handled cement cargoes to, amongst other places, Grand Haven, Detroit and Owen Sound. Having left Milwaukee lay-up on the 5th, the pair was back to resume snoozing on February 22nd. However, a more permanent start to the new season began on February 9th for the tug JOYCE L. VAN ENKEVORT and barge GREAT LAKES TRADER as they moved from lay-up quarters to the ore loading dock at Escanaba, Michigan. They since have been in regular service, moving ore to Indiana Harbor. Also joining the ranks of the active was Algoma Tankers' ALGONOVA, which departed Sarnia lay-up on February 17th and has been in service ever since, even trading as far up-lakes as the Canadian Soo.

A major refit has been underway this winter at Milwaukee. It involves the 1976-built tug JACKLYN M. which, managed by Andrie Inc. for the Lafarge Corp., usually is seen pushing the cement barge INTEGRITY. The tug has been repowered with two General Motors-built, 20-cylinder Electro Motive Diesel engines, which will substantially increase her horsepower and provide more engine reliability. JACKLYN M., (a) ANDREW MARTIN (91), (b) ROBERT L. TORRES (94), was built with two Stork-Verkspoor diesels built in the Netherlands, and in 1991 was repowered with two less powerful Caterpillar diesels. The second of the two new GM engines was placed aboard JACKLYN M. on January 29th. She will be ready for service when the navigation season opens. With ALPENA possibly stuck for about a month in Cleveland due to the bridge problems, it will interesting to see how Lafarge cement shipments are handled in the early spring.