

Several issues ago, we reported the five-year charter of Oglebay Norton's 1925-built self-unloader JOSEPH H. FRANTZ to Great Lakes Associates to replace KINSMAN INDEPENDENT in the Buffalo grain trade. The FRANTZ (which will keep the same name at least for this year) has been drydocked at Toledo, repainted in "Kinsman" colours and is scheduled to enter service on May 8th.

Another fleet change which we reported (last issue) is the sale of ELTON HOYT 2nd by the Interlake Steamship Company to Lower Lakes Towing Ltd. Subsequent to that report, the steamer was renamed (b) MICHIPICOTEN (iii) and was drydocked for inspection and hull painting by Fraser Shipyards at Superior. She departed Superior on the evening of May 2 in tow of Gaelic's tug ROGER STAHL, was downbound at the Soo early on May 5, and was expected to arrive at Sarnia late on the 6th or early on the 7th. At Sarnia, MICHIPICOTEN will receive final refitting and painting before she enters service on the ore run from Marquette to the Algoma Steel plant at the Soo.

A most unusual accident occurred on the evening of 21st April when a fast-moving line of thunderstorms rolled across Southern Ontario. The storm caused the collapse of a hydro tower situated on the Canadian side of the St. Clair River at Sarnia. The tower carried high-tension power lines which crossed to the U.S. side by the Marysville DTE Energy plant. A number of the power lines fell into the river, while three were left hanging some 50 feet over the water. The river was closed to vessel traffic for almost 24 hours as the lines were cleared. Later work would be necessary to replace the tower and string new power lines across the river.

Another interesting Sarnia-area accident occurred on April 15, near the Lambton Generating Station, when a dump scow being towed down the river from Sarnia by the McNally Marine tug BAGOTVILLE began to take on water and turned upside-down. Although it dumped its load of gravel into the river, the barge remained afloat and was pushed to shore. On the 17th, BAGOTVILLE managed to tow the still-overturned barge back to Sarnia and secured it in the North Slip.

The bankruptcy courts have approved purchase bids for two financially-troubled U.S. steel-making firms. On April 21, the United States Steel Corporation was granted approval of an \$850 million offer it had made to acquire the National Steel Corporation, including its National Steel Pellet Company which operates a taconite-producing plant at Keewatin, Minnesota. It may be some time before the acquisition is completed as a result of labour contract considerations. Then, on April 22, the court approved International Steel Group's offer to acquire the Bethlehem Steel Corporation for \$952 million and to assume \$700 million of Bethlehem's secured debt. This deal includes Hibbing Taconite, another large Minnesota taconite producer. Regardless of this sale, Bethlehem's two 1,000-foot freighters, STEWART J. CORT and BURNS HARBOR, got an early start on the 2003 navigation season, carrying ore to the Bethlehem steel plant at Burns Harbor.

After an absence of many years, the Canada Steamship Lines 1982-built self-unloader ATLANTIC SUPERIOR, (b) M. H. BAKER III, has returned to the Canadian flag and to lake operation. The ship was re-registered as (c) ATLANTIC SUPERIOR on April 16th, and on the 23rd, she entered the Seaway, bound for Duluth where she would load taconite for the Stelco plant at Nanticoke. C.S.L. now has repatriated all of the former lake self-unloaders that it had been operating on salt water.

On May 4th, another of those C.S.L. self-unloaders that once had run on salt water, the 1984-built ATLANTIC HURON, (a) PRAIRIE HARVEST (89), (b) ATLANTIC HURON (94), (c) MELVIN H. BAKER II (97), departed Port Weller after a major mid-life rebuild that saw her mid-body reconstructed and her sides bustled. Because of her greater original beam, the bustling is not so defacing aesthetically as was the same sort of reconstruction of CSL TADOUSSAC. We are pleased that ATLANTIC HURON was not renamed when she was recommissioned.