

CHAPTER 12



The m.v. Cabot and Chimo (above) each operated weekly from Montreal to St John's

THE 1960s: A NEW NAME, NEW SHIPS AND LAND TRANSPORT

The 1960s would bring much change to the Clarke organization. The long-distance passenger services were coming to an end and the company was about to expand through a series of land-based acquisitions to become a nationwide transport operator, rather than the Eastern Canadian shipping company that it had been post-war.

The company would have to deal with continued competition to Newfoundland and labour problems in St John's, but by doing so it would put itself in a position to be able to order two large and modern mechanized ships for what would come to be its main route between Montreal and St John's. Older ships would be sold off, others chartered and a new joint venture would be opened to serve Goose Bay and the Arctic.

And as the Quebec North Shore highway system developed, the Rivière-du-Loup and Saguenay cross-river ferry operations would be renewed. As ferries replaced passenger ships and other cargo operators came onto the scene, the company would also lose some of its long-standing subsidized services. But at the same time, the scene would be set for entering the overseas trades.

Peak Traffic Years

In terms of ship movements, the years 1959 and 1960 were the busiest Clarke would ever see, with the company operating no fewer than 500 scheduled sailings in 1960. It also completed innumerable bulk voyages using a large number of chartered vessels.

A typical summer month for this period was July 1959, the year in which the Seaway opened. That month, Clarke operated forty sailings from Montreal, five from nearby Beloeil with explosives, and four Quebec departures, in addition to the calls made at Quebec by Montreal ships.

At the time, it was running eight ships, the *North Shore*, *North Gaspé*, *North Coaster*, *North Pioneer*, *North Voyageur*, *Mont-St-Martin*, *D'Vora* and *Orléans*, from Montreal to the Gulf of St Lawrence, plus the *Fort Lévis* from Quebec, and another five, the *Highliner*, *Gulfport*, *Novaport*, *Edenwood* and *Melrose*, from Montreal to Newfoundland. That month saw the first voyage of the *Highliner* and the first sailings of the season for Goose Bay and the Far North, with sometimes three or four ships departing Montreal on the same day: -

| <u>Date</u> | <u>Vessel</u> | <u>Destination</u> |
|--------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| Wednesday, July 1 | <i>North Pioneer</i> | Blanc-Sablon |
| | <i>Novaport</i> | Sept-Iles & St John's |
| Thursday, July 2 | <i>D'Auteuil II</i> | Sept-Iles (from Beloeil) |
| Friday, July 3 | <i>North Voyageur</i> | Sept-Iles |
| | <i>D'Vora</i> | Sept-Iles |
| | <i>Edenwood</i> | Corner Brook |
| Saturday, July 4 | <i>Mont-Royal</i> | Sept-Iles (from Beloeil) |
| Tuesday, July 7 | <i>North Shore</i> | Natashquan |
| | <i>North Gaspé</i> | Gaspé |
| | <i>Fort Lévis</i> | Sept-Iles (from Quebec) |
| Wednesday, July 8 | <i>North Coaster</i> | Sept-Iles |
| | <i>Gulfport</i> | Humbermouth/St John's |
| | <i>Orléans</i> | Havre-St-Pierre |
| Friday, July 10 | <i>Mont-St-Martin</i> | Sept-Iles |
| | <i>D'Vora</i> | Sept-Iles |
| | <i>Rexton Kent</i> | Goose Bay |
| Monday, July 13 | <i>North Gaspé</i> | Gaspé & Magdalens |
| | <i>London</i> | Corner Brook |
| Tuesday, July 14 | <i>North Shore</i> | Natashquan |
| | <i>North Voyageur</i> | Sept-Iles |
| | <i>Fort Lévis</i> | Sept-Iles (from Quebec) |
| Wednesday, July 15 | <i>Highliner</i> | St John's & Clarendville |
| | <i>North Pioneer</i> | Blanc-Sablon |
| Thursday, July 16 | <i>Mont-Royal</i> | Sept-Iles (from Beloeil) |
| Friday, July 17 | <i>G Montcalm</i> | Sept-Iles (from Beloeil) |
| Saturday, July 18 | <i>North Coaster</i> | Sept-Iles |

| | | |
|--------------------|---|---|
| Tuesday, July 21 | <i>D'Vora</i> <i>Edenwood</i> <i>North Shore</i> <i>North Gaspé</i> <i>Mont-St-Martin</i> <i>Dashwood</i> <i>Fort Lévis</i> | Sept-Iles Corner Brook Natashquan Gaspé Sept-Iles Rankin Inlet, NWT Sept-Iles (from Quebec) |
| Wednesday, July 22 | <i>Novaport</i> <i>Orléans</i> | Forestville & St John's Havre-St-Pierre |
| Thursday, July 24 | <i>North Voyageur</i> <i>D'Vora</i> <i>Melrose</i> <i>Mont-Notre-Dame</i> | Sept-Iles Sept-Iles Corner Brook Sept-Iles (from Beloeil) |
| Sunday, July 26 | <i>Keta</i> | Baker Lake, NWT |
| Monday, July 27 | <i>North Gaspé</i> | Gaspé & Magdalens |
| Tuesday, July 28 | <i>North Shore</i> <i>Fort Lévis</i> | Natashquan Sept-Iles (from Quebec) |
| Wednesday, July 29 | <i>Gulfport</i> | Sept-Iles & St John's |
| Thursday, July 30 | <i>North Coaster</i> <i>North Pioneer</i> | Sept-Iles Blanc-Sablon & Nfld |
| Friday, July 31 | <i>Mont-St-Martin</i> <i>D'Vora</i> <i>Rexton Kent</i> | Sept-Iles Sept-Iles Goose Bay |

During the whole of 1959, Clarke performed 471 scheduled voyages, of which 346 were for the North Shore. In 1960 the *Fort Lévis* became the ninth ship to sail from Montreal, with the *Guard Mavoline* replacing her at Quebec and two Irish sister ships taking over from the *Edenwood* and *Melrose* on the Corner Brook route. Of the 500 voyages performed in 1960, 355 were for the North Shore.

From this peak, numbers began to fall, mainly because of the opening of the North Shore highway in late 1960, but later also because of increasing competition. The number of North Shore voyages would fall to 222 in 1961, a reduction of over a third, which in turn brought the total number of voyages down to 353, about 30 per cent fewer than in 1960 and almost the same number as had been offered to just the North Shore in 1960. Nevertheless, Clarke ships would still carry 225,000 tons of general cargo to the Gulf and Newfoundland in 1961.

The "Irish Rose" and "Irish Willow"

To replace the *Edenwood* and *Melrose* to Corner Brook, in 1960 Clarke chartered a pair of Irish motorships, the 1,749-ton *Irish Rose* and the 1,743-ton *Irish Willow*, from Irish Shipping Ltd in Dublin. Although Ireland was now an independent country, its ships were still included in the Commonwealth Shipping Agreement, thus allowing them to take part in the

Canadian coastal trade. Trading to Corner Brook from April through December, they made occasional calls at North Shore ports as well.

Michael McDermott, a sailor in the *Irish Willow* in 1960, had these memories of the ship's first season on the Corner Brook run: -

The *Willow* in April 1960 was heading east to commence an eight-month charter to a Canadian company, Clarke Steamship Company, sailing from Montreal to Corner Brook, Newfoundland, on a regular two-week basis, with loading and unloading of general cargo at Quebec City, Chicoutimi, and Stephenville, Newfoundland. The mv *Irish Rose* (our sister ship) was also engaged on this shipping service so when the *Willow* was in Montreal loading cargo the *Rose* was in Corner Brook unloading.

The arrival of the two Irish ships in Corner Brook was greeted by the Newfoundlanders with great interest and a local radio station commenced an Irish music request program where the locals could request music and songs for the crews of the *Willow* and the *Rose*. Great people the Newfoundlanders...

The charter ended in November as the St Lawrence River was icing up and we finally picked up a cargo of pitt props in Rimouski, Quebec, and sailed for Limerick just prior to the St Lawrence River being closed to shipping. On return to Limerick I and all the crew signed off the *Willow* on the 19th December 1960.

The sister ships had St Lawrence canal-size dimensions of 259 feet overall by 39 feet, and a deadweight capacity of about 2,000 tons. Built at Troon, Scotland, in 1956, they were named after two standard-type ships that had been built in the Great Lakes and had served a neutral Ireland during the Second World War. Ironically, the Irish accents of their crews seemed somewhat familiar in Newfoundland, where much of the population still speaks with a bit of an Irish lilt.

"Vagabond Cruises" 1960

The 1960 "Vagabond Cruises" brochure, meanwhile, was the last to include the *North Gaspé* and the first to include the *North Pioneer*, which offered seventeen 14-day sailings to the Lower North Shore and Blanc-Sablon. It was also the first since 1949 to include all the company's original routes, to the North Shore, the Lower North Shore and the Gaspé Peninsula, and it would be the last to do so. By now the *North Pioneer* had added calls at Baie Comeau, Sept-Iles and Havre-St-Pierre, while the *North Coaster* carried on her 8-day return Montreal-Sept-Iles service, with calls at Forestville, Baie Comeau, Franquelin and Godbout.

But while the *North Voyageur* (ii) had offered "Canadian Labrador" cruises in 1949, the *North Pioneer* now offered what were called "North Coast" cruises, for which the fare was \$200 in summer and \$150 in the off-season, plus \$2.50 meal tax. The reason for the change was that as Newfoundland had joined Canada in 1949, the whole of Labrador had become Canadian, thus rendering the description "Canadian Labrador" out of date. Before the season got started, however, on March 29, came news of the death of former commodore Capt William Tremblay at St-Joseph-de-la-Rive.

Clarke ships now sailed from three piers in Montreal, the *North Gaspé* and *North Pioneer* from Victoria Pier, the *North Shore*, *Gulfport* and *Novaport* from Pier 35 and the *North Coaster* from Pier 34. At Quebec, Clarke switched from the long-familiar Shed 19 to Shed 8, on rue St-André on the opposite side of the entrance to the inner Bassin Louise. The company's Quebec office was also now there. In all, it now maintained six separate services, and while most of the fleet carried passengers, the *Highliner* did not. No new passenger accommodation had been added to the fleet since 1950, with the *Novaport* and the doubling of the *North Pioneer's* berth capacity when she was allocated to the Lower North Shore service.

The *North Shore* served Havre-St-Pierre every week, but sailed on to Natashquan in weeks when the *North Pioneer* did not call there on her fortnightly schedule, thus assuring Natashquan of a weekly passenger service. The *North Gaspé* also continued to serve Gaspé, extending to the Magdalen Islands on alternate weeks. The company's main passenger ships had been running in weekly service with fortnightly extensions for some years now. With the *North Gaspé*, it was to the Magdalens and with the *North Shore*, to Natashquan. In 1960, both ships operated their longer cruises in the same week but there was no set pattern to this as in other years the two ships' extended voyages had alternated, depending on the *North Pioneer's* schedule for Natashquan.

Meanwhile, Clarke now had two services to Newfoundland. Where originally Newfoundland had been served by St Lawrence service ships that extended their Gaspé or North Shore sailings to Corner Brook, the service was now direct to St John's with company ships, two of which carried passengers, and direct to Corner Brook with chartered ships. In 1960, the *Gulfport*, *Novaport* and *Highliner* provided thirty-four sailings from Montreal to St John's and another sixteen sailings from Saint John and Halifax over the winter, while chartered ships made thirty-six sailings to Corner Brook, and the *Novaport* performed a single voyage that May.

The company also ran three cargo services from Montreal to the North Shore - twice weekly, on Tuesdays and Fridays, to Forestville, Baie Comeau and Sept-Iles via wayports, with the *North Coaster*, *North Voyageur* and chartered freighters, weekly to ports between Baie Comeau and Havre-St-Pierre with the *North Shore* and fortnightly to the Lower North

Shore and Blanc-Sablon with the *North Pioneer*. And to back these up, it maintained dock offices and freight sheds at Baie Comeau, Godbout, Sept-Iles and Havre-St-Pierre. As well, it had dock facilities at Rimouski and Matane on the South Shore, but while Rimouski had an exceptionally large freight shed, cargo at Matane was worked directly to or from trucks.

It was particularly busy at Baie Comeau in 1960, where Clarke operated the 431-foot Public Dock No 2, with 7,525 square feet of warehouse space. In addition to visits by the usual North Shore ships, the *Gulfport* and *Highliner* each called eight times, the *Irish Willow* four times, the *Novaport* three times, the *Maridan C* twice and the *Irish Rose* once, for twenty-six calls by Newfoundland-bound ships. And the *North Voyageur*, *Mont-St-Martin* and *Guard Mavoline* each loaded two cargoes of aluminum ingot for Quebec or Trois Rivières while the *Fort Lévis* and *Maridan C* took a cargo each.

From time to time, Clarke also used chartered ships for particular movements. Towards the end of the 1960 season, for example, the *Maridan C*, *Fort Lévis*, *Fort Albany* and the 348-ton *Miron C* each carried a cargo of salt from Pugwash, Nova Scotia, for North Shore ports. The *Miron C* was a former Donnacona Paper Co pulpwood carrier that had just been converted to carry bulk and general cargoes by St-Siméon Navigation Inc of St-Siméon, at the northern end of the Rivière-du-Loup ferry service.

The season would end with a major storm at Sept-Iles, on December 17, 1960, which the local paper "L'Avenir" reported on two days later: -

The most damaging storm in twenty-five years hit Sept-Iles at high tide last Saturday afternoon and left thousands of dollars damage in its wake. Old timers hearkened the destruction to the day twenty-five years ago when Captain Brie and the whole crew of the *St Roi David* lost their lives when a tempest pushed their ship onto the Corossol rocks. Although there were no lives lost last Saturday most of Sept-Iles' more early citizens agreed the damage was as high and the storm as bad as they had ever seen along this coast.

Winds of 71 miles per hour were reported at the airport at noon, later, and unofficial estimates from Moisie placed the velocity at 96 mph from the south-east...

In Sept-Iles, the old town wharf was entirely submerged by the high seas. The Agence Maritime freight shed, a building possibly 30' by 20', was lifted bodily from its foundations, carried over the dock and deposited on the other side in front of the cenotaph. Here it gradually broke up in the furious backwash of waves and was eventually found in small pieces along Arnaud Avenue west. The small office building of the Ungava Transport Company followed its larger neighbour a few minutes later.

With the summer season being over by then, the *North Shore*, *North Coaster*, *North Pioneer*, *Mont-St-Martin* and *Orléans* had already made their last voyages from Montreal between November 18 and December 3. Meanwhile the winter service from Quebec had opened, with the *North Voyageur* leaving on December 8 and the *D'Vora* on December 11. A typical Clarke advertisement for the winter of 1960/61 appeared in the "Financial Post" on February 4, 1961: -

Clarke now provides the North Shore with Regular Weekly Winter Service from Quebec, Pointe-au-Pic, Rimouski. 3 Ships 3 Loading Ports.

Pioneer in the Gulf of St Lawrence for 40 years, Clarke has for 33 years served the North Shore in Winter from Pointe-au-Pic, just below Quebec.

Today, to help its shippers provide constant supplies for the fast-growing industrial needs of Baie Comeau, Seven Islands and other North Shore ports, Clarke is operating this winter a regular weekly freight service by 3 ships out of 3 ports.

The three ships concerned were the *North Voyageur*, *North Gaspé* and *D'Vora* and Clarke now advertised "All Winter Services" to Forestville, Baie Comeau, Sept-Iles and intermediate ports, with sailings every Wednesday from Quebec, as well as from Rimouski. After more than three decades of winter sailings from Pointe-au-Pic, however, Rimouski soon became the main alternate downriver rail port for winter sailings, with the Quebec ships calling there en route. Meanwhile, the company advertised the *Novaport* to Newfoundland that winter, with a sailing every eight days between Halifax and St John's.

The "Federal Express" and "Federal Explorer"

The competition, Federal Intercoastal Line, had been chartering ships for its Montreal-Port-Cartier service since 1957, sometimes local, sometimes British coasters. But in 1959 it acquired a ship of its own in the 1,040-ton motorship *Federal Express*, purchased from Fratelli Frassinetti of Genoa. Like Clarke's *North Shore*, she was a converted "Flower" class corvette, and had come from the same shipyard in Midland, Ontario. But unlike the *North Shore*, the *Federal Express* had been converted into a fruit carrier, in 1947, capable of carrying about 1,000 tons of cargo and fitted with two five-ton cargo derricks.

The *Federal Express* served the North Shore for a very short time, however. Late in the evening of May 5, 1960, while lying at Shed 28 in Montreal, a passing Swedish freighter, the 2,085-ton *Polaris*, owned by Rederi A/B Bris, suffered a steering gear failure and, caught in the six-knot

St Mary's current that had once formed an impediment to sailing ships reaching Montreal, she rammed the *Federal Express* at her dock. The *Federal Express* was ripped from her moorings by the impact and the two entangled ships then drifted into Christensen Canadian African Line's 5,758-ton *Thorshope*, putting a thirty-foot gash into her hull above the waterline. Badly holed, the *Federal Express* went down in fifty-six feet of water about 800 feet off Laurier Pier, sinking within fifteen minutes of being rammed, and the harbour had to be closed while the wreck was located.

The ship became a total loss but all her crew of eighteen escaped, either by jumping ashore or rescued by the 182-ton tug *Mathilda*, owned by McAllister Towing Ltd of Montreal, successors to the Sincennes-McNaughton Line. Federal Commerce later recognized the tug's 29-year-old master, Capt Gérard Descoteaux, for his lifesaving efforts. Meanwhile, a much larger chartered vessel, the 7,138-ton "Fort" class cargo ship *Elm Hill*, temporarily filled in for the *Federal Express* while Federal Intercoastal arranged to go back to using chartered ships for its service to the North Shore.

The wreck created a hazard to navigation at the entrance to Montreal's main harbour and it took several months to remove it. Foundation Maritime was awarded the contract to salvage the wreck from its position lying on its side in the harbour. First, her cargo, including 100 drums of hazardous calcium carbide, had to be removed. Then Foundation divers placed explosive charges and blasted the ship apart in order to lift the pieces one at a time from her resting place in the port.

Federal Commerce & Navigation owned several ocean ships as well but the only other coastal ship it owned was the *Federal Explorer*. Acquired in 1955 for the Arctic re-supply business, Clarke had chartered her for two voyages to St John's in 1956 and Federal Commerce has used her to open the Federal Intercoastal Line in 1957. Capt Simon Bouchard, master of the *Federal Explorer*, was a former Clarke employee who had twice commanded the *New Northland* - once in 1940, when he had relieved an ailing Capt Boucher, and once again in 1946 for Seaway Line. While commanding the *Federal Explorer*, Bouchard had delivered most of the new nickel mill to Rankin Inlet in 1956 and had also hauled cargoes of fuel oil in barrels for RCAF stations in the Arctic. In 1958, she was the last merchant ship in Hudson Bay, carrying nickel concentrates to Churchill for shipment by rail to Fort Saskatchewan, and finally leaving Churchill in late October with a cargo of grain for Montreal.

Federal Commerce sold the *Federal Explorer* to the Ithaka Shipping Co Ltd of Nassau, owned by a Greek by the name of J Glikis, in 1960. Under the name *Ithaka*, she was lost only four months after the *Federal Express*, while on charter to Clarke. Leaving Churchill with supplies for Rankin Inlet, now under Clarke contract to carry the nickel concentrate out of Rankin, she lost her rudder and dropped anchor in a storm. On September 14, 1960, she went hard aground about ten miles east of Churchill after her anchor

dragged. Badly holed, she was abandoned by her crew and became a total loss and . Having left Churchill on September 10, the *Ithaka's* time with Clarke was remarkably brief, at just four days. As she could be reached at high tide, her valuable navigating instruments and much of her cargo, two generators and some plywood panels as well as mission supplies, was salvaged. However, Lloyd's of London, apparently believing the grounding to have been suspicious, never settled the owner's insurance claim and the wreck still lies off Churchill today, occasionally visited by polar bears.

Newfoundland Canada Steamships

Newfoundland Canada Steamships had chartered the *Fauvette* from General Steam Navigation for its Goose Bay service in 1959, and in 1960 it began to charter other ships from its new parent to operate in the St Lawrence. The first of these was the 959-ton *Woodcock*, which joined *Belle Isle II* in the Montreal-St John's service. Where Clarke had earlier chartered General Steam's *Sheldrake* for the same run, General Steam, as the owner of Newfoundland Canada Steamships, was now competing head on with Clarke. At the same time, the *Bedford II* ran Halifax-St John's and the *Fauvette* between St John's and Goose Bay, a change from the original routing from Halifax and Charlottetown. The St John's merchants were better suited to supply this part of their own province, but they in turn depended on inbound cargoes from the mainland.

As General Steam Navigation was a subsidiary in turn of Britain's Peninsular & Oriental Steam Navigation Co, it had cut Newfoundland Canada's ties with Furness Withy, awarding the Montreal general agency to the St Paul Shipping Co and appointing the Robert Reford Co Ltd as booking agents for Quebec and Ontario. In St John's, it appointed Murray Agencies, a company that had once operated its own ships and had more recently represented both Constantine Canadian Services and Saguenay Terminals in this trade.

The Loss of the "Belle Isle II"

The year 1960 seems to have been one for former corvettes to get into collisions with ocean-going cargo ships. Newfoundland Canada's *Belle Isle II* was the second that season to do just that, when on August 19 she was hit by the 5,034-ton *Holmside*, owned by Britain's Burnett Steamship Co, while lying at anchor in heavy fog in Lake St Peter about sixty miles below Montreal. A fire started when the *Belle Isle II's* galley stove overturned, gutting the ship as she settled in sixteen feet of water. A constructive total loss, she was salvaged by McAllister Towing and sold for scrap, although they were able to rescue her diesel engine for future use elsewhere.

Just over three months since the *Federal Express* had come to the

same end in Montreal, the hand of fate had cleared a second competitors ship from the trade. It also left the *North Shore* as the only corvette conversion still trading in the St Lawrence, at least for a while. Although Clarke had used a fourth such ship, the *Rexton Kent*, between Montreal and Goose Bay in 1959, she had only served the one season.

With the loss of the *Belle Isle II*, the *Woodcock's* sister ship, the 933-ton *Grebe*, was brought in from parent General Steam to finish the 1960 season together with her sister ship, but Newfoundland Canada's Montreal-St John's service would soon be abandoned in favour of its Halifax-St John's route.

Once introduced to the St Lawrence, the *Grebe* would be chartered by Clarke in 1961 for nine voyages from Montreal to St John's between May and November. And over the season of 1962, Clarke would charter the *Woodcock* for half a dozen voyages between Montreal and Goose Bay, four trips to Tilt Cove, Newfoundland, and a northern voyage to Frobisher Bay.

Thirty years after the original *Belle Isle* began carrying passengers and cargo between Montreal and St John's, with S E Wharton booking the passengers from Clarke's office in Montreal, Newfoundland Canada was no longer active in the St Lawrence River.

A Great Lakes Cruise Ship Comes to the St Lawrence

After the Seaway opened the Cleveland-based Georgian Bay Line began sending its 2,662-ton *South American* on spring and autumn cruises down to Montreal. In June 1959 and 1960, she ran two 12-day cruises from Chicago to Montreal. In the autumn of 1960, she took 359 passengers from Detroit to Quebec, and on Monday, September 12, as she made her way back from Quebec, Albert Bradley spotted the *North Gaspé* in Montreal and wrote about her in "Great Lakes Cruise Ship to Tidewater," an article that appeared "Inland Seas," the journal of the Great Lakes Historical Society in 1961: -

More sightseeing in Montreal and boat watching from our good vantage point at the downstream end of Victoria Basin. Just below us the small Clarke Steamship Line's *North Gaspé*, 188 x 35', is loading supplies and freight for her run to Lower St Lawrence ports. We leave Montreal at noon and enter the Seaway again.

As the *North Gaspé* continued to load for Gaspé and the Magdalen Islands, the *South American*, which was berthed where the *New Northland* and *North Star* had once tied up, slipped away from her berth. This was possibly the only time the two ships met as the *North Gaspé* was soon to be sent on other duties. The *South American*, meanwhile, made only this one cruise to Quebec, following her near sister, the 2,317-ton *North American*,

which had made a similar cruise from Windsor in June. Thereafter, the *South American* would turn at Montreal, where the Great Lakes rules of the road end and seagoing rules and whistle signals begin.

The Georgian Bay Line had started these St Lawrence cruises to Ogdensburg in 1957, while the Seaway was still under construction, and in 1958 both ships visited the new American locks at Massena, with the *South American* sailing from Cleveland, and the *North American* from Chicago. During the 1960s the line usually scheduled one or two 8- to 9-day end of season cruises for the *South American*, leaving Detroit and Cleveland for Toronto, Ogdensburg and Montreal, on a slightly different itinerary each September. During the open season, the Georgian Bay Line also booked cruise passengers on the Fjell-Oranje Line, which offered Seaway cruises between Montreal and Chicago, as well as carrying Transatlantic passengers.

The "North Gaspé" Leaves For the Gulf

By 1960, things on the St Lawrence had changed and the Clarke services were feeling the inroads made not only by airlines, railways and highways but also by other coastal shipping companies. Almost forty years after starting service to the Gaspé coast with the *Labrador* and then the *Gaspesia*, Clarke announced that it would withdraw the *North Gaspé* and close its Gaspé and Magdalens service at the end of the season.

After twenty-three years and more than six hundred voyages in the service for which she had been built, the *North Gaspé* left Montreal on her final voyage to the Gaspé coast on Wednesday, November 30, 1960. On her return, on December 7, she started one last season in the winter North Shore service from Quebec, and in the spring of 1961 she was transferred to the Magdalen Islands Transportation Co to replace the ageing *Magdalen*. Clarke would continue to carry passengers to and from the Magdalen Islands, but from the Maritimes, and travellers to and from Gaspé would no longer be able to travel by sea. Meanwhile, the mainstay of the winter North Shore service would now become the *North Voyageur*, backed up by chartered tonnage.

With a subsidy from the Quebec Government, Agence Maritime of Quebec at least replaced the *North Gaspé's* cargo service when it placed the *Fort Prêvel* into service from Montreal's Shed 28 and Quebec to the Gaspé coast. The *Fort Prêvel*, capable of carrying 400 tons of cargo, would serve the route for the next decade. The steel-hulled vessel replaced the smaller *Fort Ramsay*, which was sold to Jeffrey Dery of Quebec, but burned at Lévis on October 5, 1961.

In addition, the Gaspé Shipping Co Reg'd, also known as Messageries Maritimes Gaspésiennes, introduced the 294-ton goélette *Marsoui* to the Gaspé coast as far as Chandler. This vessel, which Clarke had once chartered

from Romain Bouchard in 1955 for a voyage from Montreal to Sept-Iles and Goose Bay, was awarded a \$45,000 subsidy by Ottawa. She received two new 600 horse power Rolls Royce diesels at G T Davie in Lauzon over the winter of 1960-61. In Quebec, she operated from the Pointe à Carcy wharf, where the Bras d'Or Bay Navigation Co had once been based. Although subsidized, the service was soon supplanted by Agence Maritime.

To the Magdalen Islands, meanwhile, Coopérative de Transport Maritime et Aérien (CTMA) now offered service with the 535-ton "C" Type coaster *Brion*, sailing from Montreal, Quebec and Rimouski. The *Brion* had been acquired in 1958 to replace the wooden goélettes *Havre-aux-Maisons* and *Havre-Aubert*. CTMA's Montreal agents were Eastern Canada Shipping Ltd, who operated a dock at the foot of Guy Street in the Lachine Canal, although CTMA would later move to Montreal's main port area.

With the withdrawal of the *North Gaspé*, the *North Coaster* also closed out her passenger service with her last 1960 sailing from Montreal to the North Shore on November 23. Her ownership had meanwhile been transferred from the North Coast Steamship Co to the Clarke Steamship Co, on the last day of 1957. For the next couple of years the *North Coaster* would carry on with cargo only, until being sold to the Kimberley Navigation Co Ltd of Nassau in 1963 and renamed *Karina II*.

Bulk Cargoes and the "Dashwood"

Meanwhile, Clarke had begun to develop a good bulk cargo business in the Gulf of St Lawrence in addition to its general cargo services. An important charter for three seasons, between 1958 and 1960, had been the 2,156-ton *Dashwood*, a cargo ship owned by Wm France Fenwick & Co. France Fenwick had been managers of a ship that was familiar to Clarke, Canada Steamship Lines' *Winona*, while in the UK coastal coal trade during the war.

France Fenwick's involvement in the St Lawrence had started in 1953, when it chartered the newly-built 6,208-ton *Rushwood* and two other ships to Montmorency Shipping, with Montreal Shipping as managing operators, a role they had performed for Frank Clarke's Montmorency Paper Co. The relationship continued in 1960 with Montmorency Shipping's charter of yet another new France Fenwick ship, the 8,182-ton newsprint carrier *Granwood*, for year-round service from Quebec and Botwood. The *Granwood* took her name from the Anglo-Newfoundland mill site at Grand Falls.

This relationship had also resulted in a joint venture between France Fenwick and Montreal Shipping itself. Incorporated on January 12, 1956, as the Candwood Shipping Co Ltd, this firm operated France Fenwick vessels in the coal, gypsum and newsprint trades in Eastern Canada and on the St Lawrence River.

Clarke, meanwhile, found that the *Dashwood*, at 284 by 41 feet, and with a deadweight of 2,845 tons, was ideal not only for the St Lawrence bulk trades that it was beginning to develop, but also for Hudson Bay. Being available in Eastern Canada, Clarke had used her for fourteen bulk voyages in 1958, seven with coal from Sydney to St John's, Wabana, Carbonear and Bay Roberts, five with pitch from Sydney to Baie Comeau and two with cement from Corner Brook to Montreal. She also performed one general cargo voyage from Montreal to Corner Brook that July.

In 1959, Clarke used the *Dashwood* in the copper concentrates trade from Tilt Cove, Newfoundland, to Gaspé, carrying six cargoes that June. She then went north to carry nickel concentrates from Rankin Inlet to Churchill, performing nine such voyages in Hudson Bay between August and October. She also participated in various other trades.

On May 27, 1960, the *Dashwood* departed Hantsport, Nova Scotia, with a cargo of woodpulp for Wilmington, Delaware, returning from Norfolk on June 5 with a cargo of coal for St John's. She then left Montreal on July 15 with a cargo of generals and dynamite for Rankin Inlet, before undertaking seven more nickel voyages from Rankin Inlet to Churchill. After her final nickel voyage in October, she loaded some return cargo at Rankin Inlet on the 9th and a cargo of grain at Churchill on the 11th before returning to Quebec and Montreal. It was during this season that the *Ithaka*, that had been sent north to assist the *Dashwood*, was lost on September 14.

However, the *Dashwood* would not return in 1961. By then, Clarke would have its own ship to place on the Rankin Inlet-Churchill service as well as the coal and copper shuttles in the Gulf of St Lawrence.

The Tynedale Shipping Company and the "Yorkwood"

The Clarke-Constantine agreement that had brought the *Highliner* into the fleet saw them purchase a second ship, the *Yorkwood* (ii), on November 30, 1960. Acquired from lay up in Birkenhead for £80,000, or about \$224,000, the former Elder Dempster Lines' *Benin* (iv) had just finished ten years working between West Africa and South Africa and carrying coal between Port Harcourt and Lagos. As it happened, the *Benin* and her smaller running mate, the 1,517-ton *Baro*, had been built in 1950 to replace two former Canada Steamship Lines canallers, the 2,068-ton *Knowlton* and the 1,893-ton *Oxford*, which Elder Dempster had acquired, without change of name, in 1946.

In fact, the *Yorkwood* reversed what had happened with the *New Northland* during the war. Instead of transferring from Clarke in the St Lawrence to Elder Dempster in West Africa, the *Yorkwood* went the other way round. The broker for her purchase, in which Clarke was directly

involved, was Cory Brothers & Co Ltd of London. The new *Yorkwood* was registered to the Tynedale Shipping Co, and as a jointly owned vessel, given a traditional Constantine "wood" name, in her case honouring the Transatlantic trader that had served the St Lawrence trade before the war.

With dimensions of 312 feet overall by 44 feet and a deadweight of 3,130 tons, the new *Yorkwood* was a steamship of split superstructure coaster design, with machinery aft. She also had a dining saloon and smoking room located in a deck structure located midway between her bridge and engine superstructures. Although equipped with four 5-ton derricks, two forward of hold one and two between holds two and three, the *Yorkwood* was really a bulk carrier and was not equipped with 'tweendecks like the rest of the Clarke cargo fleet. Built by James Lamont & Co Ltd of Port Glasgow in 1950, she was powered by a reciprocating engine from Rankin & Blackmore Ltd of Greenock, with 1,100 horsepower giving her a speed of 10½ knots. Like the *Highliner*, she started as a British-crewed ship, carrying Constantine colours, although both ships would later come under Clarke colours, supplied with a Canadian crew and be registered in Montreal.

Having developed the new bulk trades, Clarke acquired the *Yorkwood* to replace the chartered *Dashwood*. But unlike the *Dashwood*, she would also be used from time to time in the regular Newfoundland trades, while Constantine would provide her with winter employment. The *Yorkwood* thus took over the early summer coal shuttle out of Sydney and the late summer nickel shuttle in Hudson Bay that Clarke had started with the *Dashwood*. Constantines and France Fenwick had no direct association, so the similarity in the ships names was purely coincidental, but it did provide a sort of continuity in the trades that Clarke had been developing with the *Dashwood*.

From mid-May to mid-July, the *Yorkwood* loaded coal out of Sydney, delivering seven cargoes around Newfoundland and one each to Montreal and Chicoutimi. Between these voyages she managed to deliver four cargoes of copper concentrate from Tilt Cove to Sandy Cove. For the next few years, she would repeat this pattern in one form or another.

The little *Mont-St-Martin* even helped out the *Yorkwood* by taking a cargo of coal from Sydney to Clarke City, where the Gulf Pulp & Paper Railway were still using steam locomotives. The first arrival at Clarke City that season had been the 6,550-ton Norwegian-flag *Balkarin*, which arrived on April 3 from Sweden. Having had some difficulty with the ice, she didn't get away until April 15 when she finally sailed for Britain.

On July 29, 1961, the *Yorkwood* left Montreal with 331 tons of northern supplies, 266 tons for Rankin Inlet and the rest for Chesterfield inlet. She then entered the nickel concentrate shuttle from Rankin Inlet to Churchill, performing six voyages that season as well as carrying small quantities of supplies back to Rankin Inlet.

Since the *North Pioneer* had gone north to replace the *Nascopie* in 1947, the *Yorkwood* was only the second Clarke-owned ship to navigate that far north. The *Yorkwood's* trading pattern was thus unconventional for an owned ship. For the rest of the season, she made fairly conventional voyages from Montreal to Corner Brook and to St John's, Tilt Cove and Little Bay, Newfoundland, and on her return from St John's, loaded fluorspar at St Lawrence for Port Alfred, Quebec.

The Clarke Steamship Co's involvement in northern supply and now in the bulk trades, on top of its general cargo and project services, emphasised the direction in which the company was headed. The days of the "Vagabond Voyage" were slowly fading away as cargo became king, and no further effort had been made to develop the passenger trade beyond the initial post-war fleet replacement program.

The Copper Trade from Tilt Cove to Sandy Beach

On the chartering side, as well as the *Dashwood*, which Clarke had been using in 1958-60, and then Clarke's own *Yorkwood* in 1960, another frequent bulk trader for Clarke was the *Hudson Sound* of London. Beginning the regular shuttle from Tilt Cove to Sandy Beach, near Gaspé, with copper concentrates in 1958, when she had made nineteen voyages, plus a trip from Sydney to St John's with coal, and a similar number of voyages in 1959, when she had been joined, at least for a while, by the *Dashwood*.

In 1960, the *Hudson Sound* carried seventeen cargoes from Tilt Cove to Sandy Beach, made one trip from Sydney to Baie Comeau with pitch, and another six voyages from Sydney to Newfoundland ports with coal. Returning in 1961 for another similar season, she finished the year by loading a cargo of lumber at Newcastle, New Brunswick, and sailing on December 12 for Belfast, on Clarke's own account. Clarke only fixed occasional Transatlantic cargoes, at the beginning or end of a season, but before the end of the decade, it would take on a more important role in the Transatlantic trades.

The *Hudson Sound* returned yet again in 1962, closing out the season on November 21 with a cargo of woodpulp from Quebec to Rochester, Kent. And in 1964, her charter to Clarke started with a voyage from Ardrossan, Scotland, to Philadelphia with steel. In 1965 however various Canadian-flag ships were chartered in her place.

The Last Days of the "Vagabond Cruises"

With the withdrawal of the *North Gaspé* from the Montreal to Gaspé and Magdalens route in 1960 and the closing out of passenger service in the *North Coaster*, only four ships were left to operate the "Vagabond Cruises" in 1961. The *North Shore* and *North Pioneer* continued to the North Shore while

the *Gulfport* and *Novaport* served St John's, with fares unchanged. In May 1961, a couple of management changes were also made at Clarke when Willie Douville was appointed director of public relations and succeeded as manager, shipping fleet, by Paul Preville, who had joined the company as port engineer in 1954.

After forty years at Victoria Pier, the departure of the *North Gaspé* meant that the *North Pioneer's* departure point would be changed and Clarke passenger sailings would now leave from Pier 35. Piers 33-34-35 had become a mecca for Clarke ships, offering sailings to points east and north, with cargo moving through the sheds and owned and chartered ships departing one after the other. Clarke's passenger schedules began to use the term Shed 35 rather than Pier 35, a usage more typical of cargo ships.

With the "Vagabond Cruises" brochure reduced to just four ships, space was now given over to advertising for La Compagnie de Transport du Bas St-Laurent Ltée, Ungava Transports Ltée, La Compagnie de Navigation Charlevoix-Saguenay Ltée, La Traverse Rivière-du-Loup-St-Siméon and the Magdalen Islands Transportation Co Ltd. The narrative had also become more modern, more industrial and less romantic: -

Enjoy casual stops ranging from quaint fishing settlements amid unsurpassed scenery to places which acquired prominence in the news of Quebec's mighty expansion: fast-developing Seven Islands, bustling Clarke City and the mushrooming, yet model city of Baie Comeau. For here is the scene of the important new mineral discoveries and industrial exploitation programs you have read so much about.

The *North Shore* offered thirty-one "Weekly cruises to the North Shore of the Gulf of St Lawrence," the *North Pioneer* seventeen "North Coast Cruises" and the *Gulfport* and *Novaport* together twenty-five "Newfoundland Cruises" that season. This total of seventy-three "Vagabond Cruise" departures from Montreal still offered enough capacity to take over 3,000 bookings had cruise passengers filled all the berths.

By this time, first-class mails for the Lower North Shore were brought in by air to Havre-St-Pierre, Natashquan and Blanc-Sablon, but second-class and bulk mails and parcel post for the Lower North Shore still moved in Clarke ships during the season of navigation, when the weekly frequency of air service was reduced from four to two. The *North Pioneer* brought in the mails on her fortnightly trips to the coast, and in weeks when she did not sail the *North Shore* took the mail as far as Natashquan, where a pair of local entrepreneurs, the Jones Brothers, picked up Lower North Shore mailbags and took them to destination in their own small boat. The *Matane* also called at Havre-St-Pierre once a week from the South Shore. One change in 1961, however, was that La Tabatière was added as a stop on the twice-weekly mail flights to Blanc-Sablon.

Only half a dozen cargoes of aluminum were lifted from Baie Comeau in 1961, one by the *North Voyageur*, three by the *Guard Mavoline* and two more by the *Mont-St-Martin*. Four of these were moved in April and May and two near season's end. But a new trade developed with four ships bringing in thirteen cargoes of limestone from Carleton, New Brunswick. The *Mont-St-Martin* brought in six cargoes, the *Aigle d'Océan* five and the *Guard Mavoline* and *Maridan C* one cargo each.

As the *North Shore* completed her last season of cruises, the Chambers of Commerce of the Province of Quebec held their 1961 annual convention in Sept-Iles, a three-day event that, now that the new highway was opened, attracted a record 450 delegates and was exceeded only by one held in New York. As a backer of this event, the Clarke Steamship Co sponsored the opening night reception and buffet at the Hotel Sept-Iles on Thursday, September 14, while Sept-Iles terminal manager Brian Doherty had sold all the advertising space in the Sept-Iles chamber's associated tourist guide. Sponsors of other events included the Iron Ore Co of Canada, Quebec Cartier Mining, the new Wabush Mines, Hewitt Equipment, Molson Breweries, Porlier Transports, Texaco Canada and Trans-Canada Airlines. When the *North Shore* arrived that Friday morning, no doubt some of those attending came down to the wharf to see her. By now, however, the little white ship had only eleven more voyages to complete before her time serving the North Shore would finally come to an end.

The "Tadoussac" in Collision

Meanwhile, two weeks before the Sept-Iles convention, on leaving Quebec for the North Shore on August 30, the *North Shore* had passed two ships coming inbound for Quebec. One was Canada Steamship Lines' *Tadoussac*, arriving from Murray Bay, and the other Cunard Line's 21,947-ton *Carinthia*, inbound from Liverpool. That evening, while on their respective overnight voyages to Montreal, the *Carinthia* and *Tadoussac* had collided in thick fog some thirty miles upstream from Quebec. There was damage to both ships and the collision put a premature end to the *Tadoussac*'s 1961 season. With 200 passengers on board, she had suffered broken windows and damaged lifeboats and had to return to Quebec, while the *Carinthia*, with 873 passengers, was able to complete her voyage to Montreal.

These incidents involving other ships only served to confirm Clarke's good safety record. In forty years, Clarke ships had been involved in only two collisions, both with smaller vessels - the *North Gaspé* at Quebec in 1940 and the *Island Connector* at Halifax in 1950. There had been two serious fires, one on the first *North Shore* in 1921 and one on the *Manicouagan* in 1938. And there had been half a dozen groundings, the *Gaspesia* on Ile d'Orléans in 1927, *Sable I* at Shelter Bay in 1932, *North Shore* at les Ilets Caribou in 1933, *North Star* at Miami in 1938, *North Voyageur* (ii) at Harrington Harbour

in 1947 and the second *North Shore* in the Mingan Islands in 1957.

Ten incidents in forty years was an excellent record for any firm involved as it was in coastal shipping in shoal-filled waters that were often fogbound, especially in the days before radar. None of these incidents had involved loss of life on board Clarke ships, and despite the history of shipwrecks in the years before its founding, Clarke had managed so far to maintain an exemplary record.

Also in 1961, trials began using Les Escoumins on the North Shore as the incoming St Lawrence pilot station. After these proved successful, the old Pointe au Père pilot station, active since 1805, was closed, and with effect from October 18, 1961, ships picked up or dropped off their pilots on the other side of the river at Le Escoumins. Since the mid-1930s pilots had gradually stopped using the south channel and prevailing weather conditions on the North Shore were better in any case in spring and fall. The medical inspection service at Pointe au Père had closed in 1936 and the mails were no longer transferred at Rimouski so there was no other reason to remain there. And, as Capt Boucher had pointed out to Desmond Clarke in 1928, the prevailing winds in winter allowed for better navigation along the North Shore and winter service was starting to develop in other trades, particularly the ocean trades.

Clarke and Newfoundland Great Lakes

Meanwhile, Clarke came to an agreement with its major Newfoundland competitor, Newfoundland Great Lakes Steamships, in 1961, with the two companies beginning a joint service that saw Clarke's *Highliner* join the NGL ships in the Great Lakes-Newfoundland trade. Graeme Somner mentioned this in his book "DP&L": -

Trading conditions were becoming increasingly more difficult, resulting in a rate cutting war, and as a result arrangements were made with the Clarke Steamship Co Ltd of Quebec to run joint sailings between Lake Ontario and Newfoundland. At times the company's vessels were chartered to other Canadian owners outside the St Lawrence area. Dundee-registered vessels were now to be seen in small Labrador ports and little *London* (vii), which had been built for the Dundee-London trade, penetrated to Baker Lake, a tiny "Mountie" station at the head of an inlet off Hudson Bay, on 2nd August 1961.

The *London* was working for Clarke when she arrived at Baker Lake, having left Montreal on July 18, and she made further voyages in Clarke's northern services, to Fort Chimo on September 16 and to Goose Bay on October 14.

The particular attraction of this agreement for Clarke was that DP&Ls

Dundee had been designed for the Newfoundland trade. The 1961 season thus saw the *Dundee*, *Gowrie* and *Perth*, as well as the *London*, working together with Clarke ships to Newfoundland. The *Dundee* made ten voyages to St John's and the *Gowrie* nine, along with nine voyages by Clarke's *Highliner*, which was now running in the Newfoundland Great Lakes trade from Hamilton, Toronto and Montreal to St John's.

In addition to the Great Lakes joint service, the *Novaport* and *Gulfport* continued sailings from Montreal and the fortnightly Newfoundland Great Lakes service carried on from Montreal to Botwood. This gave St John's a departure every eight days from Great Lakes ports and twice a week from Montreal, where Newfoundland Great Lakes ships now loaded at Clarke piers. In addition, Corner Brook sailings were scheduled for every Friday, mainly using the *Perth* but also with four voyages by the *Maridan C*, three by the *Yorkwood* and one by the *Mont-St-Martin* in late September.

While Clarke had chartered no *Dundee*, *Perth* & *London* ships in 1960, in 1961 both Clarke and Newfoundland Great Lakes ships were now operating in joint service to St John's. *Dundee*, *Perth* & *London*'s "Hansa" class *Gowrie*, 3,070 deadweight tons, and motorship *Dundee*, 2,900 deadweight, now worked a combined Hamilton-Toronto-St John's-Botwood service, to which was added Clarke's *Highliner*. The smaller *Perth*, 1,430 deadweight, became the principal ship on the Corner Brook run while the *London*, 875 tons deadweight, made voyages to Goose Bay, Baker Lake and Fort Chimo.

The *Gowrie* also made three voyages from St Lawrence, Newfoundland, to Port Alfred with fluorspar, three from St John's to Sept-Iles with machinery, three from Sydney to Sept-Iles with rails and a voyage from Port-Cartier to Port Alfred with iron ore concentrates. The *Dundee* made a voyage from St John's to Sept-Iles with machinery, while the *Perth* made twenty-five voyages between April and December in the Montreal-Corner Brook service, replacing the *Irish Rose* and *Irish Willow* that had been used the year before.

The "Highliner" Gets Into Hot Water

At the beginning of this period, in early May 1961, the *Highliner* got herself into trouble with an oil spill that occurred in Montreal's east end refuelling docks. "The Gazette" gave the story on June 15, 1961, under the heading "First Oil Pollution Charges Await Three Ship's Officers": -

Three officers of a ship and its owner have been summoned to appear in court on charges of oil pollution making it the first time in the long history of the Port of Montreal that such action has been taken. Scheduled for arraignment in court yesterday on charges laid by a Federal Government inspector under terms of the Oil Pollution Prevention Regulations were Capt William Nicol, captain of the s.s.

Highliner, Chief Engineer James Darby and Second Mate James McKechnie.

The arraignments were delayed until next Tuesday when Special Federal Prosecutor R B Holden told the court the three officers were aboard the ship in the Great Lakes and would be returning early next week. At that time a charge will also be laid against Teesdale Steamship Co Ltd of Middlesbrough, Yorkshire, England, owners of the ocean-going vessel.

The complaints were signed by W McInnes, a ship inspector for the Federal Department of Transport, who was an eyewitness to the oil spillage opposite Section 106 in the far east end of the 20-mile harbor on May 9. Mr McInnes was on the inspection of a ship docked next to the *Highliner* when he noticed fuel oil running down the starboard side of the ship. On closer look he saw a fair quantity of oil in the water. Mr McInnes was showered with oil when a gust of wind came up and his outer clothes had to be destroyed.

The fact that the *Highliner* was still British-registered and crewed and carried Constantine colours at this stage served to preserve Clarke from embarrassment but it was quite evident that governments were now beginning to take more serious action over oil pollution in harbours and waterways.

Clarke Puts the "North Shore" Up For Sale

Only a year after the *North Gaspé* closed out the Gaspé service, the *North Shore* too was withdrawn, at the end of her sixteenth season. She thus performed Clarke's last long-distance passenger ship sailing when she left Pier 35 on November 14, 1961, for her final voyage to Quebec and the North Shore. Indeed, on December 26, 1961, "The Gazette" lamented the loss of the passenger service with the words "Clarke Steamships will next year curtail, almost to the vanishing point, passenger services in connection with its runs along the North Shore and the Labrador Coast." As it happened, Walter Clarke, one of the founders and the head of Anglo-Canadian Shipbuilding during the war, died in Montreal, at the age of 72, the day before the *North Shore* departed on her last voyage.

Although the *North Pioneer* would remain for another five years, she was really just a cargo ship with 24 berths. The *North Shore*'s last voyage had ended over forty years of Gulf of St Lawrence passenger ship sailings that had been started by the first *North Shore* in 1921. It seemed fitting, therefore, that two ships of the same name should have made the first and the last Clarke passenger ship sailings to that shore.

The *North Shore*'s withdrawal was a direct result of the completion of

the North Shore highway. The Sept-Iles Chamber of Commerce had outlined the coming change in its promotional publication "Sept-Iles," issued in 1959:

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The Provincial Government is steadily pushing ahead with the completion of the road to Baie Comeau, and hopes to complete the road this summer or by 1960 at the latest. With Sept-Iles linked to Baie Comeau, the road to Quebec will be through. This road will certainly open up a new era to the people of the North Shore.

Autobus Sept-Iles provides a regular bus service between Sept-Iles and Shelter Bay, stopping at Clarke City and other places en route. As the road extends toward Quebec, they have plans for extending the service. The same company also supply buses for the schoolchildren of Sept-Iles.

Clarke had set up a company called Sept-Iles Transports in 1940 to run local bus services in Sept-Iles, but had left the business some years later. Meanwhile, an end to coastal passenger service had similarly been foretold in the magazine "Traffic Quarterly" in 1960: -

The future appears bright for Seven Islands, Clarke City and similar towns along the north shore. Good roads connect Moisie, Seven Islands, Clarke City and other communities to the south and west. In the not distant future, a good road will provide easy motor connection between Quebec City, the Saguenay, Baie Comeau, Clarke City and Seven Islands.

That highway had opened from Quebec all the way to Sept-Iles in October 1960, and just one year of the *North Shore* running alongside the new roadway made it obvious that a subsidized shipping service for passengers was no longer required. The future for passengers travelling to the North Shore, if they were not flying, would be in their own cars or in long-distance coaches.

The "North Shore" is Sold Greek

The *North Shore* soon found a buyer, however, through the agency of New York shipbrokers Jacq. Pierot Jr & Sons Inc, who arranged a sale to Aegean Steam Navigation Typaldos Bros Ltd of Piraeus, who had been looking for a ship. Typaldos renamed her *Lemnos* and placed her into service in the Greek islands, in the same waters where the *Stella Maris* was now trading.

With her sale, the *North Shore* became Typaldos' fifth Canadian ship. They had by now acquired three former coastal liners from Canadian Pacific's British Columbia Coast Steamship Service. And the fourth was the 1,742-ton

Adriatiki, which they had acquired and converted in 1955. The latter had been built as the frigate HMS *Lossie*, whose launch Desmond and Aline Clarke had attended in Montreal on April 29, 1943, on the same day that Mrs Clarke christened her sister ship HMS *Parret*.

Surprisingly, the *North Shore* was not the first "Flower" class corvette to sail the Aegean under the name *Lemnos*, as the 1940-built HMS *Jonquil* had done so from 1946 until 1951, before becoming a whaler. The *North Shore* had also followed that other earlier "Flower" class conversion, the first *North Voyager*, to finish out her days in the sunny Greek Isles.

In typical Greek fashion, the *Lemnos* received some cosmetic improvements before entering service, as well as being refitted internally. Her bow railings were replaced with steel bulwarks, giving her a more substantial look, and new steelwork was added to her funnel and promenade deck to make her look more streamlined. But the basic ship was still there and her corvette engine still pushed her along at a goodly speed, now carrying up to 470 passengers among the islands.

The new *Lemnos* made three voyages a week from Piraeus, the port for Athens. On Tuesdays she sailed to Kea, Kythnos, Serifos, Sifnos, Kimolos and Milos; on Thursdays to Syros, Paros, Apollonia, Donoussa, Aigiali, Katapola, Koufanissia, Schinoussa, Heraklion, Ios, Ia, Santorini and then back by way of Iso, Naxos, Paros and Syros; and finally on Saturdays to Kalymnos, Kos and Rhodes. According to locals she was an extremely popular ship, and particularly in the lesser Cyclades like Donoussa, Koufanissia and Schinoussa, where she now offered a direct service from Piraeus, saving people from having to change ships at Naxos.

The *Lemnos* would see five years' service with Typaldos Lines, which with twenty passenger ships was the largest of the Greek lines. By 1966, her Rhodes itinerary called at St Nikolaos, Sitia, Cassos and Carpathos instead of as previously. But on December 8, 1966, the company's 8,922-ton *Heraklion* sank while on passage from Crete to Piraeus, with the loss of 235 lives, after a truck broke lose in her trailer deck in rough weather, crashing open her cargo doors and letting the sea in. Although the *Lemnos* was still being advertised under the Typaldos name a week after the loss, everything soon came to a halt, with the company going bankrupt and its ships laid up. One at a time, ships were sold off as the legal ramifications were worked through. Others lay at anchor in Perama Bay for many years after, most eventually to be towed away for scrapping, but the *Lemnos*, suffering from much neglect, finally sank.

Newfoundland Cargoes to Sept-Iles

During the construction phase of the Labrador iron ore mining projects there had been pressure from the Newfoundland Government to see that

their traders, merchants and suppliers obtained a fair share of all contracts, as Labrador was a part of their province and not Quebec. Eventually a means of doing this was arrived at by loading goods and supplies in Newfoundland ports for Sept-Iles to be delivered over the Quebec North Shore & Labrador Railway to destinations in Labrador. A brief start had been made in 1956, when the *Gulfport* had loaded a cargo from St John's to Sept-Iles, followed by another from Sydney, most likely steel rails.

In 1961, however, Clarke loaded seven such cargoes in St John's, with the *Gowrie* taking three and the *Gulfport*, *Novaport*, *Highliner* and *Dundee* one each for Sept-Iles. This was followed in 1962 by eight more, with the *Gowrie* loading three times at St John's and twice in Botwood, the *Novaport* twice, in September and October, and the *North Coaster* once, in December, all from St John's. More cargoes followed over the next few years, with the *P M Crosbie* and *Andrew C Crosbie* joining the St John's loaders, and the *Maridan C* loading at both St John's and Botwood. The traffic consisted mostly of machinery and general cargo, but one important item was beer from the St John's breweries bound for Labrador.

The nature of the Clarke operation by this time was revealed in a Canadian Press story carried in Canadian newspapers on November 30, 1961, just days after the *North Shore* had been retired. Headed "Far-Ranging Routes," it confirmed the transition the company had gone through: -

After the Second World War ... the line began to concentrate on freight. Its ships ranged from the Arctic to the Caribbean. French-Canadian crews now man more than 20 Clarke vessels, and the line, which had to charter 15 to handle cargo this summer, is investing \$7,000,000 in three new ships.

Besides carrying 225,000 tons of general cargo for Gulf and Newfoundland outports this summer the line handled coal from Cape Breton, nickel concentrate from Rankin Inlet on Hudson Bay, and fluorspar from Newfoundland. In winter, they steam south for cargoes such as fruit and phosphates. It's Labrador trading company sells and trades in five far-flung ports north of Sept-Iles.

Meanwhile, as Newfoundland cargoes were moving across the Gulf and into Labrador by way of Sept-Iles, the ice-strengthened *North Voyageur* made a couple of voyages in the other direction, leaving Baie Comeau on December 29, 1961, and again on January 10, 1962, with cargoes of aluminum ingots bound for Halifax.

North Shore Shipping Lines Ltd

Yet another competitor arrived in late 1961 when Capt J Romain Bouchard and other investors formed North Shore Shipping Lines Ltd, based

at Shed 47 in the Port of Montreal, where Newfoundland Great Lakes had operated previously. North Shore had negotiated an exclusive contract with the Montreal breweries to deliver their product to ports on the Lower North Shore beyond the reach of the highway. Over the years, Bouchard was involved with various ships and shipping adventures in the St Lawrence.

To undertake this task, North Shore Shipping Lines purchased the 942-ton coaster *Sainte Adresse* in Newfoundland for \$125,000. Its new acquisition departed St John's for the St Lawrence on November 19, 1961, just two days before the *North Shore* was due to leave Montreal on her last voyage. With the advent of the new line, Clarke lost the beer shipments from Montreal to the Quebec North Shore, but held on to those from the St John's breweries to Labrador via Sept-Iles.

The white-hulled *Sainte Adresse* lasted for only two seasons, however, before going aground near Les Escoumains on November 10, 1963, slightly less than two years after having left St John's, after her cargo had shifted. Under command of Capt Bouchard, she was bound for Sept-Iles at the time and her crew of twelve were taken off by the CGS *C D Howe* the next day.

This was not the end of North Shore Shipping Lines, however, as it would carry on using chartered vessels. But that winter the residents of Les Escoumains had a free supply of beer that would last until spring. In 1964, to replace the *Sainte Adresse*, Bouchard acquired the 2,097-ton diesel canaller *Franquelin* (i) from Quebec & Ontario, renaming her *Prince Ungava* and fitting her with deck cranes. Clarke chartered the *Prince Ungava* for an end-of-season voyage with iron ore concentrate from Port-Cartier to Prescott on November 30 that same year. Clarke had previously chartered her as the *Franquelin*, for half a dozen voyages from Montreal to Forestville in 1958.

Southern Sailings

As with many earlier Clarke ships, the *Highliner* went south during the winter season. Clarke usually relied on Shipping Limited in Montreal or a New York shipbroker to obtain these winter charters. Ships were either let out to another operator for delivery back to the St Lawrence in the spring, or operated for their own account as tramps, working the southern charter market for the duration of the winter.

From Angus Wilson, who joined the *Highliner* as relief master in December 1961, we have the following: -

We loaded a cargo of seed potatoes in Summerside for discharge at Jacksonville, Florida. On passage, we put into Halifax for bunkers and left there in an easterly gale. The following day, Christmas Day, conditions were so bad that the galley stove was put out of action so Christmas dinner was delayed until Boxing Day!

We sailed from Jacksonville on New Year's Eve, bound for New York where we were to go on charter to the United Fruit Company... We spent about ten days in New York to load a general cargo for ports in Honduras and Guatemala...

A southbound cargo of potatoes at the end of the season was typical for that time of year. The original *Northland* had taken potatoes to Havana in 1926 and the *Empire Gangway* had done the same to Jacksonville in 1949. Meanwhile, being on charter to United Fruit, the *Highliner* was in and out of New York and Philadelphia often that winter, sailing to and from Central American ports such as Tela, Puerto Cortes and Puerto Barrios as well as Caribbean ports like Santo Domingo.

While one or two ships worked the winter service to Newfoundland, Stanley Clarke and Jim Hutcheson tended to get involved with these southern charters more frequently as they were less routine and offered opportunities. For thirty five years now, Clarke ships had been making money elsewhere while the St Lawrence was closed to all except ice-strengthened ships.

Federal Intercoastal Takes the "Mont-St-Martin"

Clarke had succeeded in taking the *D'Vora* away from the Federal Intercoastal Line in 1959, but in 1962 Federal Intercoastal managed to get its own back. At the end of her five-year commitment to Clarke, Federal Intercoastal Line signed with Transport Desgagnés to charter the *Mont-St-Martin* for its own service between Montreal and Port-Cartier.

As it was a Clarke contract that had enabled the *Mont-St-Martin* to be built, this annoyed its management, who became intent on getting the ship back at the first opportunity. In due course the *Mont-St-Martin* would return to Clarke's Montreal-Sept-Iles run, but for now they had to watch her work for a competitor. One can only assume that this competition served to strengthen Desgagnés hand in the process.

The "D'Vora" Finds a New Role

Although the *North Shore* had been a passenger ship, she had also carried express cargo and Clarke needed a replacement for her in that role. For this, it arranged once more to charter the *D'Vora*, the ship over which the rivalry with Federal Intercoastal Line had begun. This little ship thus took a step up in the world, taking over the *North Shore*'s former Tuesday departures for dry and reefer cargo bound for Baie Comeau, Sept-Iles, Rivière-au-Tonnerre, Mingan and Havre-St-Pierre. The only difference to the schedules was that the *D'Vora* turned at Havre-St-Pierre, whereas the *North Shore* had continued on to Natashquan every other week with passengers.

Clarke chose the *D'Vora* because of her refrigerated capacity, a legacy from her work for Mercury Fisheries in the Gulf of St Lawrence. This was important as the *North Shore* had carried fresh produce to the North Shore and returned with cargoes of fish. The *D'Vora's* reefer capacity of 9,000 cubic feet, close to 4,000 feet of it in freezer chambers, was a fifth more than what the *North Shore* had offered and was the key point that set the *D'Vora* apart from the *Mont-St-Martin*, which had no reefer space.

When the *D'Vora* left Montreal for the first time on this run on April 3, 1962, it was a more muted affair than the departures of the *North Shore*. The sounds of taxis arriving, people joining ship, luggage coming on board and passengers and children chatting and laughing on deck were now gone, and in their place were the more workaday sounds of fork lift trucks and stevedores. Nevertheless, the *D'Vora's* 725-ton cargo capacity was double the 368 tons the *North Shore* had been able to lift, and her 28,600 cubic feet of hold space more than double. The *D'Vora* had two holds, one forward served by a three-ton boom and one aft by a five-ton boom, compared to a single forward hold with two three-ton derricks in the *North Shore*.

For the converted naval trawler that she was, the *D'Vora*, with her new diesel engine and refrigerating machinery, was a well-equipped little ship to take over the *North Shore's* cargo business. Although departures were soon changed to Mondays, she would remain in this trade for another four years.

The Revised Passenger and Cargo Services

Even before the *North Shore* was withdrawn, the *North Pioneer* had begun calling at Baie Comeau, Sept-Iles and Havre-St-Pierre on her way to Natashquan and the Lower Coast. This provided a residual passenger service to these ports, albeit fortnightly instead of weekly. But the number of passenger berths had been reduced from seventy-six a week in the *North Shore* plus twenty-four every other week in the *North Pioneer*, or an average of eighty-eight, to a weekly average of just twelve berths in the *North Pioneer's* fortnightly service, for a reduction of over 85 per cent.

To make up for this, the Lower St Lawrence Transportation Co's *Jean Brillant* began a new program of twice-weekly departures from Rimouski, extending her voyages to Havre-St-Pierre and Natashquan. She now left Rimouski every Monday for Sept-Iles, Rivière-au-Tonnerre, Mingan and Havre-St-Pierre, and every Thursday for the same ports plus Baie-Johan-Beetz and Natashquan.

Clarke informed its customers of the changes in the May 10, 1962, issue of the Sept-Iles newspaper "L'Avenir," under the heading "Important Notice to Our Clients": -

The purpose of this announcement is to inform our customers of the freight and passenger services that will be operated in 1962 by the Clarke Steamship Company and the Lower St Lawrence Transportation Company.

For many years the Federal Government has provided subsidy assistance to assure the operation of the s.s. *North Shore* and m.v. *Matane* in the maintenance of passenger, mail, express and refrigeration services from Montreal, Quebec and Rimouski to the North Shore ports from the Saguenay River to Sept-Iles. With the advent of alternative means of transportation the Federal Government has discontinued steamship subsidies to the area Baie Comeau-Seven Islands. This has made it necessary that we withdraw these two vessels.

Clarke Steamship Company and the Lower St Lawrence Transportation Company will continue to provide fast and economical freight and passenger service to the principal ports of Baie Comeau and Seven Islands as well as to ports east of Seven Islands.

The same newspaper carried an article entitled "Fewer Stops for Clarke Steamers." This article went on to summarize the new position: -

Elimination of intermediate stops between Baie Comeau and Sept-Iles this shipping season will enable Clarke Steamship Company to offer faster and more economical service along the north shore.

The service will offer reduced tariffs, consequently, from Baie Comeau and Sept-Iles to ports as far as Natashquan, with an accompanying reduction in insurance rates.

Clarke Steamship Company and the Compagnie de Transport du Bas St-Laurent also have announced that because of the cessation of Canadian Government subventions on them, the s.s. *North Shore* and m.v. *Matane* have been retired from service. For many years, they were familiar vessels along the lower St Lawrence and particularly on the north shore.

Now that the highway had been completed and the subsidy withdrawn, half a dozen ports between Baie Comeau and Sept-Iles, namely Franquelin, Godbout, Baie-Trinité, Pentecôte, Shelter Bay and Clarke City, would no longer be served by ship.

Clarke also chose this opportunity to include marine insurance in its freight rates to the North Shore, as it was already included in the truck rates that were being offered for traffic coming over the new Sept-Iles highway. Insurance was already included in its Newfoundland rates. It then announced the following new arrangement: -

Weekly Express, Refrigerated and General Cargo Service
m.v. *D'Vora*, weekly from Montreal and Quebec, calling at Baie
Comeau,
Seven Islands, Thunder River, Mingan and Havre-St-Pierre.

Twice Weekly General Cargo Service from Montreal
m.v. *North Voyageur* and s.s. *North Coaster*.
Every Tuesday and Friday to Baie Comeau and Seven Islands.

Fortnightly Passenger, Refrigerated and General Cargo Services
s.s. *North Pioneer* from Montreal and Quebec to North Shore ports,
Mingan and intermediate ports to Blanc-Sablon.

Only the *North Pioneer*, working in conjunction with the *Jean Brillant*
from Rimouski, now carried passengers to the Lower North Shore. At the
same time, Clarke made an important announcement containing some good
news for shippers and passengers on the Lower North Shore: -

Also this year, at the request of the area residents, and with the
erection of wharves, the *North Pioneer* will call both ways, weather
conditions permitting, at such ports as Romaine, Kegaska, Whale
Head, St-Augustine and St Paul's River, all of which were formerly
one-way calls only. Also, there will be available to passengers, tickets
including passage, meals, and berth, from Seven Islands to and from
ports east of Natashquan.

Two-way calls were a huge improvement for ports that had previously
received outbound calls only. And if travellers to Havre-St-Pierre,
Baie-Johan-Beetz and Natashquan couldn't make the fortnightly sailing of the
North Pioneer from Montreal or Quebec, they could now catch the *Jean
Brillant* from Rimouski. This meant an extra road or rail journey from
Montreal, but as the *North Shore* was gone this was the easiest way to
replace her weekly passenger service to Havre-St-Pierre, Baie-Johan-Beetz
and Natashquan, where there was still no highway.

On Friday July 27, a delegation from the Sept-Iles Chamber of
Commerce tried out the new service. Boarding the "Clarke Steamship vessel"
Jean Brillant at Sept-Iles, they made a two-night return trip "with calls at the
various villages as far as Natashquan," arriving back in Sept-Iles on Sunday
July 29. "L'Avenir" of June 21 had advised that "if the demand for space
exceeds the maximum available for one voyage, the steamship company will
probably organize a similar trip another time." Father Ambroise Lafortune,
the television broadcaster who had revived "L'Order de Bon Temps," founded
by Champlain in 1606 at Port Royal, Acadia, accompanied the Chamber on its
first trip. From the Chamber's point of view, this was actually an advance, as
although the *North Shore* had also called Sept-Iles on Fridays, she had only
made the return call on her Natashquan voyages while Havre-St-Pierre trips

had returned by way of Baie Comeau.

Further downstream, Havre-St-Pierre had lost its weekly calls by the *North Shore* and *Matane* but it now saw the *Jean Brillant* twice a week instead. And Baie-Johan-Beetz and Natashquan actually saw a gain of sorts, with the new weekly service from Rimouski replacing what had previously been fortnightly calls by the *North Shore*. Meanwhile, the *North Pioneer* continued to serve all three ports.

At Baie Comeau, meanwhile, Canadian British Aluminum shipped ten cargoes of ingots to either Montreal or Trois Rivières, half a dozen in the *North Voyageur*, one in the *North Coaster* and three in the *Guard Mavoline*.

The End of the "Vagabond Cruises"

No more "Vagabond Cruises" were offered after 1961, but the 24-berth *North Pioneer* continued in passenger service to the three North Shore ports and the Lower North Shore, an operation that was still subsidized by the Canadian and Quebec Governments. The company continued to promote its remaining passenger services, however, and "L'Avenir" carried an item on June 28, 1962, "Voyages de Vacances - Holiday Travel," promoting its services to local residents: -

A cruise on the St Lawrence can be very pleasant. The m.v. *Gaspésien* carries passengers and automobiles from Sept-Iles to Ste-Anne-des-Monts in the Gaspé, an overnight trip for which cabins are available. Clarke Steamship Company's *North Pioneer* makes a leisurely trip of several days down the lower north shore visiting villages as far as Blanc-Sablon.

The 12-passenger *Gulfport* and *Novaport* still carried on to St John's, but more ships were now listed in the company's sailing cards as "Freight Only" than "Passenger and Freight."

Meanwhile, in his "Rod and Gun" column in "The Gazette" on August 8, 1962, Izaak Hunter wrote about the means of getting to Godbout after the changes: -

There was a time just before the dawning of a new day for the North Shore when access to the river was a bit uncertain. Study of the schedules of the Clarke Steamships used to be in order...

Then came the completion of the new North Shore highway from Seven Islands to Godbout and one could fly TCA or Quebecair to Sept-Iles and drive back. And now, with the completion of the highway, one can drive right from Montreal to where the salmon are jumping. And for a motor tour, my friends, that can be a thrilling trip

for the sightseer although perhaps a tedious one for an angler impatient to see the salmon jump and try his favourite flies.

For the latter there is a better way to go to Godbout and that is by Quebecair to Baie Comeau, thence 26 miles by road to Godbout...

To get back to the Godbout, I have neglected to mention another means of access. The village is no longer a Clarke Steamship port of call... But there is an excellent twice-daily ferry service between Matane and Godbout which of course makes it possible to drive the South Shore route and make good connections with both Baie Comeau and Seven Islands and intermediate points. A fine new wharf at Godbout accommodates the ferry. And the St Regis Timber Co wharf, destroyed in the big storm of 1960, has been rebuilt along modern lines. Loading of pulpwood has been resumed and contractors moved into the bush early this week to complete the contracts they were working on when halted by the long and sometimes vicious strike of late last fall.

The Clarke Steamship Co no longer served Godbout and several other ports, and the Lower St Lawrence Transportation Co's *Rimouski* and *Matane* had now both been withdrawn from cross-river service. And while the *Ungava* had been brought in to run between Matane and Baie Comeau, Traverse Matane-Godbout's new *N A Comeau* had taken over the regular run between Matane and Godbout that same summer.

Although the *North Gaspé*, now operating in the Gulf of St Lawrence, still called herself a "cruise yacht" the days of "Clarke Line" cruises were now truly over. It was still possible to book passage, but other than the voyages mentioned above all that was left was the Magdalen Islands service from Pictou and a few longer freighter cruises from Montreal.

This was an era of change in the St Lawrence. At the close of the 1965 season, Canada Steamship Lines' Saguenay cruises would also come to an end, with its ships no longer meeting newly-imposed fire regulations. For a while, it looked as if some ships might get extensions, but any hope of that was dashed on the night of November 13, 1965. On that night, the 5,043-ton *Yarmouth Castle*, owned by the obscure-sounding Chadade Steamship Company and operated by Yarmouth Cruise Lines, burned and sank off Great Stirrup Cay in the Bahamas, with the loss of eighty-seven lives, while on a cruise from Miami to Nassau.

In a more glamorous life, years before, the *Yarmouth Castle* had been Eastern Steamship Lines' *Evangeline*, following Clarke's *New Northland* south to Miami for the winter of 1927-28 to become the second cruise ship to operate from that Florida port. The fact that she had lasted a dozen years longer than the *New Northland* had now been lost in the manner of her end.

On November 16, just three days after the fire, Canada Steamship Lines announced that it would discontinue its passenger service as "no longer economic." The *St Lawrence* and the *Yarmouth Castle* had been built in the same year and the *Tadoussac* the year after that. All these ships, plus the *Richelieu* that had been converted in 1923, had been built with much wood in their superstructures and there was now no question of any extension without a substantial rebuilding of the ships, something that was out of the question for forty-year-old vessels. Three years later, Canada Steamship Lines sold its resort hotels at Murray Bay and Tadoussac.

Ironically, this left Clarke's *North Pioneer* as the only ship offering any sort of coastal passenger service from Montreal. But now advertised for "Freight & Passengers" as opposed to "Passengers & Freight," she would perform only one more season of seventeen sailings from Montreal to the Lower North Shore in 1966.

Higher Exports from Clarke City

As Clarke's "Vagabond Cruises" came to an end, across the bay of Sept-Iles, the Gulf Pulp & Paper Co was enjoying good markets. This was confirmed in an article appearing in the May 14, 1962, edition of the Sept-Iles newspaper "L'Avenir" under the heading "Market Requirements Change Boosts Gulf Pulp Shipments": -

The Gulf Pulp and Paper Company mill at Clarke City will ship some 20 per cent more pulp to England this year from the dock at Point Noire than last year, because of a change in the current requirements overseas.

The north shore company expects 19 vessels in all to load pulp at Pointe-Noire, against 16 ships last season. Last year, Gulf shipped the equivalent of 42,500 tons of dry wood pulp, 50% of it high grade, suitable for the manufacture of magazine paper. This involved 80,000 tons of wet pulp.

This year the demand is mostly for newsprint grade pulp, and it will be shipped wet. Total forecast is 95,000 tons, equivalent to 50,000 tons of dry pulp, and 20 per cent above last year. One shipment of high grade will be made.

At the same time, new machinery was replacing some of the old machinery that dated back to 1908. While Gulf Pulp & Paper arranged its own shipping requirements, Clarke ships now called only rarely at Pointe-Noire, as the Clarke City wharf was now called. But this boom was caused by favourable market conditions and would not last.

Caboteurs Unis de Québec

The "Fabric" type coasters mentioned earlier all tended to belong to members of Caboteurs Unis de Québec, or Quebec United Coasters, a co-operative of St Lawrence coastal shipowners that had been formed in 1947 and was supported by their new owners. Several also worked for the Federal Intercoastal Line. But as they had been built abroad, Canadian steamship inspectors were at first reluctant to allow them into Canadian flag. In the circumstances, the only thing their owners could do, quite reluctantly, was to keep them under British flag. Hubert Desgagnés gave us some background on this in an article that appeared in the March-April 1987 issue of "L'Escale" magazine: -

Soon, there were five "Longboats" navigating the river in French. Jean Paul Desgagnés, having sold the *G Montcalm*, bought the *Fosdyke Trader* and renamed her *Fort Carillon*, while Edmond Desgagnés acquired the *Ste Marguerite*.

These ships were all placed with Caboteurs Unis, but the presence of the British flag invalidated or hindered certain contracts. There was lively competition with Agence Maritime and Clarke Steamship, whose ships flew the Canadian flag. The lobbying started, sometimes with members of parliament, sometimes with cabinet ministers, in order to obtain this "magic" flag for Quebec shipowners. Only ten days before the federal election of 1962 ... the Canadian flag was finally granted.

All these vessels worked into the late 1960s and early 1970s, mainly in the North Shore service or in the explosives trade. The *St Pierre* made one rather unusual voyage for Clarke, however, from Port-Cartier to Prescott, Ontario, in October 1964 with a cargo of iron ore concentrates. This must have been the smallest load of Labrador iron ore ever to pass through the St Lawrence Seaway, but it was intended for testing and not for steel-making. A subsequent somewhat larger cargo was carried by the ex-canaller *Prince Ungava* in November.

Discord at Caboteurs Unis

The president and manager of Caboteurs Unis in its early years was Capt J A Z Desgagnés. Membership varied over the years, but in the 1960s it began to compete with Clarke by opening up a regular service between Montreal and North Shore ports. Some owners newly-acquired steel ships had it in mind that they might now be able to compete with Clarke in their own right.

Many of the owners from whom Clarke chartered tonnage were members of Caboteurs Unis at one time or another. Indeed, the organization had been founded by no fewer than twenty-six owners or co-owners,

practically all of whom chartered ships to Clarke at different times. But by 1959 membership had fallen to about a dozen.

Gérard Harvey, whose older brother Henri had set up Transport Maritime Harvey Ltée and now owned the *Longboat* and *St Pierre*, became president of Caboteurs Unis in 1961. He left us an account of how that organisation came to compete with Clarke, and indeed other operators such as Federal Intercoastal Line to Port-Cartier in his book "Marins du Saint-Laurent": -

At the annual meeting that followed that year, we proposed, Henri and I, seriously to consider opening a transportation service, without regard to competitors, whoever they were. The proposal was put to the vote, with the disappointing result of two votes for... Later, at a general meeting that we convened to review the subject, held on December 27, 1960, at the Hotel Victoria in Quebec, the return to this suggestion finally forced the cat out of the bag, as demonstrated by this short extract from the minutes:

"The meeting discussed the question for which it had been convened, that is, to decide to organize lines of transport on the St Lawrence. On proposal duly made and seconded, voting in favour of reorganising the services: Messrs J H Carré, Gérard Desgagnés, J Paul Desgagnés, Roger Desgagnés, Gérard Harvey et Henri Harvey; voting against: Messrs J A Z Desgagnés and Maurice Desgagnés."

The proposal was adopted in dissension. Messieurs J A Z Desgagnés and Maurice Desgagnés informed the meeting that, not being able to work against their own interests, they would be obliged to resign; their resignations would take effect at the annual meeting, called for January 18, 1961, and they asked that their part, as well as their share of the company's assets be reimbursed to them.

It is not surprising that J A Z and Maurice had resigned. J A Z had built his *Mont-St-Martin* four years earlier to operate exclusively in Clarke's North Shore service and she had performed twenty-two voyages that very season and eighty-two since she had entered service. His *Mont-Notre-Dame* and *Mont-Royal* had also completed sixteen voyages between them in the explosives trade from Beloeil to Sept-Iles that summer. Equally, Maurice Desgagnés' newly-converted 432-ton *Aigle d'Océan* had just made a couple of test voyages in 1960 and would go to Clarke full time in 1961, to perform twenty-six voyages from Montreal and Quebec to Sept-Iles and Havre-St-Pierre.

The Desgagnés took with them a long-time connection with Clarke Steamship, offering a position within their own organization to Jean-Marie Dumont, who had been assistant manager at Caboteurs Unis de Québec since 1947. Dumont had worked for Clarke for many years before joining

Caboteurs Unis. He had been on board for the *New Northland's* Goodwill Cruise in 1932, worked with Eric Wharton in the new Miami office when they opened the Miami-Nassau service in 1935 and been a director of the Bras d'Or Bay Navigation Co from 1936 until 1947, when he joined Caboteurs Unis. It had been J A Z Desgagnés who had suggested to Dumont, then Clarke's traffic manager, that he join Caboteurs Unis. Dumont had been succeeded at Clarke by Tom Calhoun, but the Desgagnés showed their appreciation of his support over many years. Dumont's replacement at Caboteurs Unis was Capt Philip Byers, who had been recruited from Saguenay Terminals. Byers knew small ships as he had been commanding officer of the "Flower" class corvette HMCS *Pictou* during the war.

A New Line to the North Shore

The chief remaining participants in Caboteurs Unis were now Compagnie de Navigation Desgagnés Ltée, Desgagnés & Perron Inc, Jean Paul Desgagnés and Transport Maritime Harvey Ltée, plus some other individual owners. The Desgagnés in question here were from a different branch of the Desgagnés family than J A Z and Maurice.

The Caboteurs Unis ships, many of which were steel coasters, could frequently be seen loading at Victoria Pier, at the same quays that Clarke had vacated in 1960. Gérard Harvey described his succession to J A Z Desgagnés at Caboteurs Unis in "Marins du Saint-Laurent": -

I inherited the presidency on February 17, 1961, and with the remaining administrators, without great hope, we changed our methods completely, adopting what should have been put in place in the first place had we been real co-operators from the start. For six years, the management was confided to Captains P T Byers and Roger Desgagnés. At each year-end, except for the first, the result was a loss.

One piece of business Caboteurs Unis managed to get hold of was the oncarriage of steel plates coming in by Canada Steamship Lines from Algoma Steel in Sault Ste Marie from the CSL wharf in Montreal to Davie Shipbuilding in Lauzon. With the recently-opened St Lawrence Seaway, shipbuilding was booming so there was lots of this traffic at the time. The CSL contract called for minimum loads of 400 tons, and if more than 400 tons, Caboteurs Unis would supply a larger ship.

One such shipment was loaded in Montreal on September 12, 1961, when the *Fort Carillon* took 197 tons under deck and 239 tons, consisting of 152 oversize steel plates, on deck. That night, off Contrecoeur, while she was en route to Lauzon, the *Fort Carillon's* rudder jammed and she listed to starboard, causing the loss of 148 steel plates overboard. The next morning, she delivered the remaining four plus the under deck cargo to Lauzon.

Canada Steamship Lines sued Jean-Paul Desgagnés, owner of the *Fort Carillon*, to recover the \$34,533 it had to pay Davie for the value of the lost cargo and the case took more than six years to settle. Although CSL had loaded the ship with its own stevedores, it had been under the authority of her master, and the court found Desgagnés at fault for having allowed the *Fort Carillon* to sail in an overloaded and poorly stowed condition. CSL was ultimately awarded \$33,099 plus interest.

Meanwhile, as Caboteurs Unis was now a competitor Clarke did not charter from its members unless it really had to. In 1960, for example, four ships within the Caboteurs Unis fold were chartered for a total of eleven trips, but in 1961 the *Longboat* and *Torrige Lass*, later renamed *Ste Marguerite*, would get but one cargo each and in 1962 they would get none at all.

The *Longboat* made two voyages to Corner Brook in 1964, but it was 1965 before Clarke chartered many "Fabrics" again. In that year, five of them performed fourteen voyages to Sept-Iles, ten with general cargo from Montreal and four with explosives from Beloeil. The *St Pierre* performed four voyages, the *Longboat*, *Fort Carillon* and *Ste Marguerite* three each and the *Champlain* a single trip.

Desgagnés Coasters

Since joining the Clarke North Shore service in 1957, the *Mont-St-Martin* had worked together with Clarke's *North Coaster* and *North Pioneer* and, until she was sold, the *North Shore*, plus the chartered *Fort Lévis* and *Orléans*, now well known in these trades.

In addition to the "Mont" ships, the Desgagnés fleet was expanded during the late 1960s to include more steel coasters such as the *Guard Mavoline* and the 373-ton *Fort Severn*, a former Hudson's Bay Co ship that was also strengthened for navigation in ice.

Another Desgagnés company, Les Chargeurs Unis Inc, headed by Maurice Desgagnés, owned two steel coasters, the *Aigle d'Océan* and the 489-ton *Aigle Marin*, both of which were classed as strengthened for navigation in ice. A former ocean tug that had been converted to coaster, the *Aigle d'Océan* was reported to have one-inch hull plating at the waterline, while the *Aigle Marin* had the same strong minesweeper hull as the *D'Vora* and the *Guard Mavoline*.

The *Aigle d'Océan* had been built in Southampton in 1919 as a "Saint" class Admiralty tug, and had been used by the Department of Transport at Saint John, Churchill, Halifax and Quebec under the name *Ocean Eagle*. Latterly she had been owned by G T Davie of Lauzon and when sold was converted by G T Davie into a motor coaster in 1960. In the autumn of

1959, in conjunction with Maurice Desgagnés, Clarke had done some estimates on the potential of using her as a ferry between Matane and Godbout, carrying eight cars in her hold and eleven on deck on two round trips a day, compared to operating her as a motor coaster.

The conversion to motor coaster won, and with dimensions of 141 feet overall by 29 feet, a deadweight of 500 tons and crew of nine, the *Aigle d'Océan* went to work for Clarke in 1961 in its Montreal-Sept-Iles-Havre-St-Pierre service as a replacement for the *Orléans*, taking on as well the *Orléans'* cargoes of paper rolls from Bathurst to Baie Comeau, of which she loaded two cargoes in 1961. Her first ten trips were made as *Ocean Eagle*, before her name was translated into the French *Aigle d'Océan* in September, but Clarke used her only occasionally after 1961. She would have a long life, however, lasting until she was lost off Port Burwell, in the Arctic, on August 20, 1975.

Expansion into Rail Freight Forwarding

As Clarke's passenger services were wound down, the company was developing in different directions. In those same years, between 1962 and 1965, it built three new ships in Quebec shipyards and was expanding into land-based transportation.

One of the new services was Clarke Traffic Services, a name that had first been used in about 1958. CTS had been formed to offer a variety of logistical services such as consolidation, furtherance, cartage, warehousing and consulting. Most important was the introduction of rail freight forwarding, or pool car consolidation services. Small shipments were consolidated at inland rail loading terminals and shipped in full railcar lots to company piers in Montreal, to be loaded onto scheduled sailings of company ships. A typical routing guide of the day read: -

Route via Clarke Steamship Co Limited. Ship CTS direct from Toronto and Montreal, Carloads via Clarke Steamships - Less Carloads via Clarke Traffic Services. CNR. CPR. CSL.

Both Canadian National and Canadian Pacific could be used to Montreal Wharf to consign carloads to Clarke, while Clarke Traffic Services consolidated carloads at its own terminals and Canada Steamship Lines allowed connections from Great Lakes ports for shipments bound for Newfoundland or the North Shore. The rail forwarding operation also helped the company maintain year-round service to Newfoundland during the winter, when cargo could be shipped all the way by rail, as well as being loaded onto company ships at Halifax and Saint John when the St Lawrence was closed to navigation.

By 1960 Clarke Traffic Services had developed into a full service, with

through rail-water tariffs for less than carload (LCL) shipments moving from Hamilton, Toronto and Montreal to St John's and Corner Brook, as well as to North Shore ports between Tadoussac and Sept-Iles. This part of the company would go on to acquire the business of other forwarding companies that served Newfoundland, including Tri-Traffic Services and Newfoundland Forwarders of Toronto. In 1961, however, working together with Newfoundland Great Lakes Steamships and its LCL division Cabot Lines Ltd, a joint consolidation service was formed under the name of Clarke-Cabot Services, offering daily departures from Hamilton, Toronto and Montreal to Corner Brook, Botwood and St John's.

Clarke Takes Over Newfoundland Great Lakes

In January 1962, Clarke and Newfoundland Great Lakes reached subsequent terms, which came to be known as the "Ruby Foo Agreement," for the Chinese restaurant in the west end of Montreal where they were negotiated. The results were recorded in a "Memorandum of Items Discussed between Clarke and Dundee and Newfoundland Great Lakes, 23rd & 24th January 1962," in which Item 1 read as follows: -

Slight changes in methods of operating during 1962 were discussed and finalized. The principal item is confirmation that the Clarke organization will take over the administration, sales and management of the various services and be responsible for Clarke-Cabot Services.

In 1962, Clarke took over the NGL service and under an agreement with DP&L, chartered its ships for their joint account. The *Dundee*, *Gowrie* and *Perth* would repeat their 1961 seasons, with the same number of voyages to Newfoundland (the *Perth* made one less to Corner Brook, but this was made up for by the *Dundee*). Typical of their sailing advertisements that year, "The Gazette" carried the following on May 30, 1961: -

Clarke-Cabot Services, Cargo Booking Agents For:

Newfoundland Great Lakes Steamships Ltd
Direct service from Hamilton and Toronto to St John's, Newfoundland
Every eight days
s.s. *Highliner*, s.s. *Gowrie*, m.v. *Dundee*

Clarke Steamship Co Limited
Direct service from Montreal to St John's, Newfoundland
Twice weekly
s.s. *Novaport*, *Gulfport*, *Highliner*, *Gowrie*, *Dundee*

Direct service from Montreal to Corner Brook, Newfoundland
Twice weekly

m.v. *Perth*, m.v. *Maridan C*

Direct service from Montreal
to North Shore Ports Baie Comeau-Sept-Iles
Three times a week
to Thunder River-Mingan Havre-St-Pierre
Weekly

Less Carload Lot Movements In Clarke-Cabot Pool Cars from
Hamilton-Toronto-Montreal to Corner Brook-Botwood-St John's. Daily
Departures.

Clarke now operated all the Newfoundland services, and Newfoundland Great Lakes' owners, Dundee, Perth & London, would receive a percentage of the profits for a period of five years. DP&L ships continued to serve the St Lawrence trades, but on charter to Clarke rather than in joint service. While DP&L continued to maintain an owner's representative's office in Toronto, its Toronto office now came under the control of the Clarke Steamship Co and this was the end of Newfoundland Great Lakes Steamships as an independent operator.

One unintended consequence, however, was that because Newfoundland Great Lakes already had a presence in Toronto, Muirhead Steamships was no longer needed to act as agents for Clarke. As a result, Muirhead took on not only the Ontario agency for the Newfoundland Canada Steamships service from Halifax to Newfoundland ports, but also that of Agence Maritime from Montreal to the North Shore..

For a time the ships kept up the old NGL service from the Great Lakes, but in 1963 these calls were dropped and all the ships began to turn at Montreal. The *Gowrie* and the *Perth* did not operate for Clarke for long, and Graeme Somner mentions this in his book "DP&L": -

Trading conditions in Canada became even more difficult in 1962, mainly due to dock labour problems at the ports, and although *Gowrie* (v) and *Perth* (vi) were found employment, it was to be their last season. *Gowrie* (v) was sold to Greek owners in May 1963, whilst *Perth* (vi), having arrived back at Preston on 23rd December 1962 from Halifax, Nova Scotia, resumed coastal trading for a while.

The *London* had also been sold, becoming first the *Winsor Trader* and then the *Topsail Star*, under which name Clarke would occasionally charter her after 1967. She also worked on charter to Newfoundland Canada Steamships and in Canadian National's coastal services. Her gross tonnage was now 1,205 tons, a substantial increase over her 706 tons as the *London*.

The "Dundee"

The Dundee, Perth & London ship that saw the most service with Clarke was the *Dundee*, which was used on the Montreal-St John's run until 1965-66, when she would operate alongside the first of two ships of a new design that Clarke built for the Newfoundland run.

She also made occasional voyages in the Montreal-Corner Brook and Montreal-Botwood services, as well as trips from St John's to Sept-Iles with beer. Returning from St John's to Montreal she often carried fish oil in her deep tanks and, as mentioned earlier, she was equipped with 40,000 cubic feet of refrigerated cargo space for fish fillets. Somner recounts her last years with Clarke in "DP&L": -

Between 1964 and 1966 *Dundee* (viii) continued to operate in Canadian waters alone but, because of the continuing dock labour troubles that still beset Canadian ports, had to be switched to trading between New York and the West Indies for much of the time. She sailed from the United Kingdom in March 1966 for her last season, returning to the Tyne for lay-up during the following December. In January 1967 she was sold for £100,000 to Israeli interests and sailed from the Tyne on 27th January 1967 via Flushing for Haifa, now renamed *Doron*.

The strike period in St John's would last from April 1964 through to May 1965 and the *Dundee's* first voyage that year did not take place until July 7. The *Dundee* was the last of the Dundee, Perth & London ships to be used in the Newfoundland trade, and would remain only until Clarke's second new ship came into service in 1967.

By the time the first new Clarke ship was delivered the co-operation agreement between Clarke and Dundee, Perth & London, which had given DP&L a share in the service, would have ended. The only alternative for DP&L by then would have been to invest in the new vessels alongside Clarke.

Three Winter Sailings A Week From Halifax

This realignment also saw a rather unusual form of cooperation result in the winter service between Halifax and St John's. For the winter of 1962, with the Clarke and Newfoundland Great Lakes services now combined, Clarke was advertising three sailings a week between Halifax and St John's, a far more frequent service than in the past.

This high level of service could only be achieved, however, by combining forces with Newfoundland Canada Steamships to operate four ships in a pooled winter service. With Clarke's *Gulfport*, Newfoundland Canada's *Bedford II*, General Steam Navigation's *Fauvette* and the chartered-in *Pierre Radisson*, the lines were able to offer a sailing from

Halifax every two or three days. The *Gulfport* was the only one of the four that could accommodate refrigerated cargo. But the experiment would not be repeated.

Steamship Service to Central Newfoundland

As well as turning a competitor into a partner, one of the results of this agreement was that Clarke acquired an additional service to Botwood on top of its routes to St John's, Corner Brook, Tilt Cove and Little Bay. Until now, Clarke had moved Anglo-Newfoundland cargoes over Corner Brook, but Botwood accounted for significant quantities of cargo for the Grand Falls pulp and paper mill, as well as for the merchants, mines and other industries of central Newfoundland.

Clarke was now able to combine its Tilt Cove and Little Bay service into NGL's Botwood one so that ships could now call at Botwood and then at the Notre Dame Bay ports if there was cargo. In 1959, Clarke had operated one sailing by each of the *Gulfport* and *Novaport* from Montreal to Tilt Cove plus five by chartered ships. In 1960, the *Novaport* had run two voyages and the *Gulfport* one, while the *Maridan C* made six Tilt Cove voyages, plus two more by chartered ships, for a total of eleven. Then in 1961 Clarke had operated ten Tilt Cove voyages, with the *Maridan C* and *Guard Mavoline* each making a call at Botwood as well. In 1962 this was increased to twenty voyages to Tilt Cove and Little Bay, and five to Botwood. Although the *Highliner* made a September voyage to Tilt Cove, the *Maridan C* made seven trips and would become the mainstay ship to central Newfoundland.

Clarke could now serve pulp and paper and mining interests across the area and also made occasional calls at Baie Verte, on the Northern Peninsula, where Advocate Mines was mining asbestos. In 1960, the *Irish Rose* picked up a cargo of asbestos at Baie Verte for delivery to Trois Rivières, and ships headed for Tilt Cove also called there to discharge supplies. Other ships such as the *Guard Mavoline*, *Dundee*, *Maridan C* and the newly-built 1,962-ton *Chesley A Crosbie* would also come to Baie Verte to load occasional asbestos cargoes in future years.

Just as Clarke started to get involved in the service to Botwood, the port came under the control of the Price Paper Corporation, as successors to the Anglo-Newfoundland Development Co. Price Bros & Co had accumulated 98.56 per cent of the shares in Anglo-Newfoundland and had finally taken over in 1961. Meanwhile, Associated Newspapers, owners of the "Daily Mail," had become the largest shareholder in Price. On March 4, 1963, Montmorency Shipping, still under the management of Montreal Shipping, became Price Shipping Ltd. and a new firm, Price Pulp & Paper Ltd, was formed in April 1965, with Ross Moore as president. Through a series of later mergers, the company eventually became Abitibi-Price and then Abitibi-Consolidated, while Price Shipping became Abitibi-Price Shipping in

1980, and was finally dissolved in 1982.

Clarke Traffic Services Ltd

On March 26, 1962, two months after the new arrangement had been agreed with Newfoundland Great Lakes, Clarke Traffic Services Ltd was incorporated as a federal company, with registered office in Halifax and executive offices in Montreal. Clarke Traffic Services then became the operator of all the company's pool car services.

Until 1962, the various Clarke companies had been held separately by members of the Clarke family and although the Clarke Steamship Co was the most important of these, it was not a parent company in the true sense of the word. Stanley Clarke was now instrumental in bringing all these companies together under one umbrella, for which Clarke Traffic Services Ltd became the chosen instrument. The shareholders of CTS were Stanley, who held 60 per cent, and his brother Brock, with 40 per cent.

That summer, on July 3, George Clarke, one of the original financiers of the Clarke Steamship Co, died at the age of 96 in Miami Beach. His main interest had been horse racing and he had travelled extensively in later years. He had also maintained a second home at the house in White Plains, New York, where his older brother and partner James Clarke had lived.

In 1963, not long after Clarke Traffic Services took over as the main operating company, it moved its head office from the Canada Cement Building to Montreal's newly-completed 45-storey Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce Tower at 1155 Dorchester Boulevard West, a busy thoroughfare now known as Boulevard René-Lévesque. At the corner of Peel Street, this was just across the square from the Dominion Square Building where Clarke had maintained its Montreal office between 1930 and 1938. The CIBC Tower was the tallest building in the Commonwealth when it was completed but was soon eclipsed by Place Ville Marie a few blocks away.

And on the land side, that January, Clarke Traffic Services opened a new daily overnight pool car service between Canada's two largest cities, Montreal and Toronto. A typical advertisement in "The Gazette" on January 14 had extolled the virtues of this service as follows: -

Now overnight pool car service between Toronto and Montreal ...
another new CTS convenience for shippers!

With daily pool car departures in each direction, Clarke Traffic Services now provide a simplified but comprehensive plan for streamlined movement of merchandise between Ontario and Quebec, as well as to and from many ports of the St Lawrence North Shore, the Lower St Lawrence and Newfoundland.

Rates are fully competitive and include pick-up and delivery. It's one more of the many time-saving, money-saving conveniences for shippers made possible by the wide scope of CTS operations, which include consolidation, cartage, warehousing and consulting.

On June 1, 1963, Clarke Traffic Services Ltd issued \$3 million in secured debentures, \$2.25 million in 6 per cent sinking fund debentures, to mature on June 1, 1985, and \$750,000 in 5½ per cent serial debentures, to mature at the rate of \$150,000 annually from 1966 to 1970.

Winter Advances by Ocean Ships

While Clarke had been operating winter services in the Gulf of St Lawrence for over thirty years, ocean lines operating into the St Lawrence were now making great strides. On February 13, 1959, the 4,040-ton Danish ice-strengthened ship *Helga Dan* had arrived at Quebec, the first ocean-going cargo liner to navigate the St Lawrence in mid-winter. Owned by the J Lauritzen Line, she had been joined by other ships and winter service extended to Trois Rivières in 1961 and to Montreal in 1962. The Lauritzen service from Antwerp, Hamburg and Liverpool now returned every winter and would last until 1968, when the company finally withdrew from the St Lawrence.

Not to be outdone in its own territory, Canadian Pacific decided to charter two ice-strengthened cargo ships, the 4,462-ton *Eskimo* and the 5,852-ton *Fort Chambly*, from Canada Steamship Lines for interim winter service between 1960 and 1963. The *Fort Chambly* had become the earliest ocean-going ship to arrive at Quebec, when she did so on January 1, 1962. The first winter sailing to Quebec by a Canadian Pacific-owned ship took place a year later, in January 1963, with the 4,514-ton *Beaverpine*, newly-built in Scotland. She was soon joined by the 6,165-ton *Beveroak*, built in England in 1965. These two ships later became the container ships *CP Explorer* and *CP Ambassador* (i) respectively, which operated in joint service with the Head Line's 1962-built 8,621-ton *Inishowen Head*, similarly converted.

Agence Maritime Wins the Hydro-Quebec Contract

It had now been five years since the Federal Intercoastal Line had trumped Clarke by winning the Quebec Cartier contract to Port-Cartier. Now, in 1962, Agence Maritime won the Hydro-Quebec contract away from Clarke and La Compagnie de Navigation Charlevoix-Saguenay. Gérard Harvey, who at the time was president of Caboteurs Unis de Québec, and later commanded Agence Maritime ships, gives us a little more background in his book "Marins du Saint-Laurent": -

The change of government at the Quebec Legislature during the summer of 1960 signalled a new start for Agence Maritime. The new Prime Minister, Jean Lesage, as well as two of his colleagues ... were in fact former companions in arms of Léopold Langlois in the House of Commons...

In 1962, Agence Maritime Inc obtained, by way of tender, the contract for the transportation of construction materials for Hydro-Quebec, which up until now had been, without tender, the monopoly of Clarke Steamship. This contract, valued at 150,000 tons over the next three years, was at that time the only thing a company offering a shipping service in the region could count on to have any hope of getting ahead.

The new contract, which included marine insurance and terminal charges, was reported to have saved Hydro-Quebec money. Whatever the case, the initial two-year term would be extended for a third year in 1964, and then renewed again in 1965. This contract thus became the basis on which Agence Maritime built its success, including the construction of two new ships, over the next few years. It also now operated its own terminals and freight sheds at Section 27A in Montreal, in the Bassin Louise in Quebec and at Monseigneur Blanche Wharf in Sept-Iles, a 900-foot pier that offered 46,800 square feet of shed space.

Once Agence Maritime came onto the scene, the number of Clarke's North Shore sailings dropped once more, from 346 in 1959 and 355 in 1960, to 222 in 1961 and then to 180 in 1962, a drop of almost half in two seasons. With such a heavy reduction in traffic, Clarke moved its Sept-Iles office from Shed 2 at Monseigneur Blanche Wharf to the nearby Shed No 1 at the Pointe aux Basques general cargo facility, a 600-foot pier with 7,050 square feet of shed space, later to be expanded to 20,750 square feet. But the arrangements changed with the requirements and during the 1960s it was not rare to see a Clarke ship back at Monseigneur Blanche wharf or an Agence Maritime ship tied up at Pointe aux Basques.

Although the *North Shore* had performed twenty-nine voyages in 1961, the fact that she was gone did not affect the numbers as her cargo was now to be carried by the *D'Vora*, with even more trips. Also, in 1962, Harney Brothers sold the *St Yves* to Guy Harvey of Ile-aux-Coudres, using the proceeds to buy the *D'Vora* from Duval's North Shipping & Transportation and charter her to Clarke. Having performed only two Clarke voyages in 1961, the *D'Vora* would perform thirty-five in 1962.

Meanwhile, the charter on Desgagnés' *Aigle d'Océan*, which had performed twenty-six Clarke voyages in 1961, was not renewed, and the same owner's' *Mont-St-Martin*, which had performed fifteen Clarke voyages plus a number of bulk trips in 1961, went on hire to the Federal Intercoastal

Line in 1962. The *North Coaster*, *North Pioneer* and *North Voyageur*, plus one or two chartered ships, would once again provide the bulk of Clarke's capacity to the North Shore.

Canada Steamship Lines to Newfoundland

On April 6, 1962, it was announced that Canada Steamship Lines' 2,357-ton steam canaller *Battleford* was to operate in competition with Clarke between Montreal and St John's, over thirty years since CSL itself had left the trade. She was to be operated by the Steamship Division of Newfoundland Forwarders Ltd, a company that had been incorporated in 1957. With her inaugural sailing scheduled for April 19, she and other ships would offer weekly sailings thereafter, with a departure from Montreal every Thursday (later changed to Friday) from May through November. The Toronto office was to manage the service while the St John's office acted as local agent.

The *Battleford* had been completed by Swan Hunter at Newcastle upon Tyne in 1925, a year before Clarke's *Northland*, and was sa veteran, but with the delivery of three new Canada Steamship Lines package freighters in 1961, she became available for the Newfoundland trade. As the service was operated and advertised by Newfoundland Forwarders (a firm that Clarke later acquired), her CSL colours were painted over and her funnel painted black. Using the *Battleford* as the mainstay ship, her sailings to St John's were supplemented at different times by four motorships, the 1,328-ton *Dorsetbrook*, the 1,250-ton *Kylebank* and the 2,750-ton *Greathope*, all British, and the *Irish Rose*.

Canada Steamship Lines' ultimate goal was to build two fast package freighters for the Montreal-St John's route, and this was a way to gain some experience of the trade. Instead, however, on March 22, 1963, prior to the opening of a new St Lawrence navigation season, Clarke and Canada Steamship Lines announced a new joint service, to be known as CSL-Clarke Terra Nova Services, to operate between Montreal and St John's. A joint press release stated that the first sailing would be from Montreal on April 11, and that the service was to be operated twice weekly. In addition: -

A fast, package freight ship of the type successfully operated for many years on the Great Lakes, is now building. The ship is furnished with side doors, elevators and all modern cargo handling devices. It will make the run between Montreal and St John's, Nfld, in two and one half days (2½) and will provide a standard of service never before known. The ship will be put on the run in about three months time with the completion of the new St John's terminal.

This ship was the 5,947-ton *Fort St Louis*, completing at Davie Shipbuilding and designed for loading and unloading through sideports.

Although there would be later co-operation between the two companies the *Fort St Louis* would not enter this service in 1963 after all.

Clarke and Canada Steamship Lines To Co-operate

Instead of the intended joint service, Clarke and Canada Steamship Lines came to a subsequent agreement whereby they split their respective services at Montreal. From 1963 on, Clarke ships would not venture into the Great Lakes and the direct calls at Toronto and Hamilton that had been started by Newfoundland Great Lakes in 1949 were dropped. Canada Steamship Lines, in turn, would terminate its package freight service at Montreal, and close the direct St John's service it had started with the *Battleford*. And wherever possible, the two carriers would now interchange freight with each other.

Although Clarke had withdrawn from the Great Lakes, other ships continued to offer a residual service between the Great Lakes and Newfoundland. One of these was the Burnett Steamship Co's 3,932-ton *Tynemouth*, which made several voyages from Great Lakes ports to Newfoundland in 1964, with flour and other cargoes. The *Tynemouth* operated what is called a "parcels" service, delivering larger lots of contracted cargo, rather than offering a general cargo service accepting all cargoes. Almost a century after the Chaffey Brothers began sailing to Newfoundland, flour was still a mainstay cargo and enough to support these residual Great Lakes sailings. The *Tynemouth* finished the season by loading woodpulp from the Gulf Pulp & Paper Co at Pointe-Noire for London. The Burnett Steamship Co, one of the earliest foreign shipowners to equip its ships to navigate the new St Lawrence Seaway, was taken over by Federal Commerce in 1970.

Meanwhile, on the Corner Brook service, Clarke brought the *Irish Rose* and *Irish Willow* back to the Corner Brook run for 1963, also using them for the occasional return voyage from Sydney to Montreal with coal, or from Mont-Louis to Montreal with copper. The *Irish Rose* became the target of several hundred International Longshoremen's Association picketers in Montreal on October 5, 1963, when a waterfront strike stopped her loading for Newfoundland. The interruption was brief, however, as Clarke was not a member of the Shipping Federation of Canada, the association of ocean carriers against whom the strike had been called. Clarke ships were stevedored by the Brotherhood of Freight Handlers and Coastal Longshoremen. The Irish sisters remained with Clarke for two more seasons, but would be replaced by a larger ship in 1965.

Clarke Brings the "Highliner" and "Yorkwood" Under Canadian Flag

When at first the *Highliner* and then the *Yorkwood* had come into the

Clarke fleet in 1959 and 1960, it had been under an arrangement with the Constantine interests in the UK, who until 1962 had operated them under British flag and chartered them to Clarke Steamship Co. Clarke had also taken an interest in each of the two ships through the Teesdale Steamship Co Ltd and the Tynedale Shipping Co Ltd.

By now, however, a decision has been made to bring them into line with the rest of the Clarke fleet by registering them in Montreal and crewing them in Canada. Ownership of the *Highliner* would also be transferred from Teesdale to Tynedale in 1964, after both companies came under full Clarke control.

At the launch of the ferry *Trans-St-Laurent* at Lauzon on April 24, 1963, Stanley Clarke took the opportunity of mentioning this to the guests, particularly the politicians, who attended that ceremony in Lauzon: -

I do not think that anyone can doubt that we have made a substantial contribution to the development of the Canadian merchant marine here. All the ships we own are registered and manned in the province of Quebec. On the other hand, a large portion of our revenue is obtained by operations which are inter-provincial or outside this province. This represents a gross revenue exceeding \$4,000,000 which is brought into Quebec each year.

In line with our constant program to obtain further opportunities for our seamen, we have recently arranged for the transfer to the Canadian flag of two British ships which we had under long-term charter, thus providing employment for 45 additional Canadian seamen.

This is truly a reverse of the modern trend where we see more and more vessels transferring to flags of convenience and further shows our interest and earnest endeavour to maintain a Canadian and Quebec merchant fleet.

The same speech did not fail to mention, however, that only operating subsidies could make this possible. Since the Royal Commission on Coastal Trade, the Clarkes had stated that they had no objection to operating ships under the Canadian flag as long as conditions were equal and that low-cost British flags were not able to compete with them.

The "Tritonica"

A tragic accident occurred on July 20, 1963, when the 12,863-ton bulk carrier *Tritonica* and Head Line's 6,153-ton *Roonagh Head* collided in heavy fog off Petite Rivière St Francois, forty miles below Quebec. The *Tritonica*, on her nineteenth voyage carrying 18,500 tons of ilmenite ore from

Havre-St-Pierre to Sorel, sank quickly, taking with her her St Lawrence pilot and 32 members of her crew of 50. As the *Tritonica* settled on the river bottom, the 8,691-ton Spanish vessel *Conde de Fontanar* came out of the fog and grazed her upper structure. The Spanish vessel picked up seven survivors and the *Irish Willow*, that Clarke was using in its Corner Brook service, rescued ten, while the *Roonagh Head* picked up another six. Also involved in the rescue were the goélette *Notre-Dame-des-Neiges* and the 5,780-ton Hall Corporation self-unloader *Hallfax*.

Although Dingwall Shipping had owned the *Tritonica* when new, she had since been sold to the Snowberry Shipping Co Ltd of Bermuda. Since 1959, Dingwall Shipping had also been active in the Seaway trades. Indeed, that May, the *Tritonica* had been the first large ship to carry iron ore to Contrecoeur and then continue at maximum Seaway draft into the Great Lakes at Ashtabula, and bring grain back down from the Lakehead. Since 1954, these iron ore cargoes had first been shipped direct in canallers and then carried by large ships to a new Iron Ore Co facility completed in 1955 at Contrecoeur, there to be transhipped into canallers.

Meanwhile, the *Knob Lake*, now *Atlantic Splendour*, had been sold in 1961 and with the sale of the *Walton* in the same month the *Tritonica* was lost, Dingwall Shipping no longer had any ships. Within a couple of years, the company would find itself under new ownership.

The "Homerics" Gulf of St Lawrence Cruise

A couple of years after the *North Shore* was sold, Home Lines tried an experiment in the summer of 1963 by scheduling its 18,563-ton *Homeric*, usually engaged in the Transatlantic trade to Europe, on a special summer "Gulf of St Lawrence" cruise. This cruise, for which Home Lines booked 775 passengers, was slightly reminiscent of the *New Northland's* old "Round the Gulf" cruises but much quicker.

The *Homeric* left Montreal on August 3 and Quebec the next day on an itinerary that included Percé, the French islands of St Pierre et Miquelon and, on her way back, Charlottetown, Murray Bay and Quebec. The foreign call at St Pierre allowed the Panamanian-registered *Homeric* to make this cruise within Canadian waters. With fares beginning at \$195, Home Lines touted its new cruise: -

Calling at St Pierre/Miquelon, Charlottetown PEI and Murray Bay;
cruising the coast of Gaspé, Percé, Magdalen Islands, Cape Breton
Island...

Visiting "Old France" in the "New World" and the historic, scenic St
Lawrence in summer.

Never before has it been possible to cruise in these serene waters on such a large luxury liner as the *Homeric* - one of the most celebrated cruise and trans-Atlantic ships in the world. You'll see picturesque St Pierre, historic Charlottetown and fashionable Murray Bay.

As the *Homeric* was too big to dock at Murray Bay on August 8, La Compagnie de Navigation Charlevoix-Saguenay sent its *Charlevoix* up from Tadoussac to tender the *Homeric's* passengers to shore. While reminiscent of the *Père Arnaud* tendering the Cunard White Star liners at Quebec, this also recalled a time at Murray Bay when the Clarke vessel had been the cruise ship rather than the tender. Like the Cunard ships, on this cruise the *Homeric* tendered outbound at Quebec but docked on her return, in this case for a cruise day in port rather than immigration.

Although Home Lines had been the company that developed the Sun Line's Gulf of St Lawrence cruises four and five years earlier, it did not pursue the cruise market from Montreal any further and two years later its entire centre of activity was moved from Montreal to New York.

Chimo-Clarke Northern Services

In 1963, the Clarke Steamship Co also entered into a new joint venture with Chimo Shipping, to manage their competitive services to Goose Bay and the Arctic as a single operation. The new joint venture took the name Chimo-Clarke Northern Services, with Munro-Jorgensson Shipping Ltd of Montreal acting as managers and the Clarke Steamship Co as its Toronto agent. Chimo Shipping also opened its own office in Montreal. The new combined service to Goose Bay left only Canadian National's Labrador coast ship as competition, while to the Arctic Chimo-Clarke's competition included Federal Commerce & Navigation and the Hudson's Bay Co, among others.

This joint operation actually stemmed from a trial that had taken place in 1960, when a similarly-named Chimo-Clarke Northern Services had operated three sailings to Rankin Inlet, Frobisher Bay and Coral Harbour. At the time, Clarke and Chimo Shipping were each operating their own Goose Bay services. The first Chimo-Clarke sailing in 1960 had been performed by the *Dashwood*, which left Montreal on July 15 with general cargo and dynamite for delivery to Rankin Inlet before going onto the Rankin-Churchill zinc shuttle. The Frobisher Bay sailing had been taken by the *Maridan C*, which departed Montreal on July 30. In 1960, Clarke and Chimo had each continued to take their own bookings and the newly-formed Munro-Jorgensson Shipping had acted as port agents.

During 1961, Clarke had operated a total of seventeen voyages, eleven to Goose Bay, four to the High Arctic and two retrograde voyages back from the Arctic. In 1962, it had operated thirteen summer voyages, nine to Goose Bay and four to the Arctic. The chartered *Woodcock* was the

Goose Bay ship in 1962, making six voyages plus a single trip to Frobisher Bay. During her voyage to Frobisher, the *Guard Mavoline* filled in for her with two Goose Bay trips in August, and the 545-ton *O K Service XI* of OK Service Shipping Ltd of La Have, Nova Scotia was hired to make another. This same owner's 488-ton *O K Service X*, made occasional voyages for Clarke as well.

The 1962 Arctic voyages had included one by the *Yorkwood* to Deception Bay and Rankin Inlet, under Constantine master Capt A Fields, plus three by chartered ships. The latter were the *Maridan C*, with a trip to Fort Chimo and Payne Bay and another to Cape Dorset, Ivigurik and Sugluk, plus of course the *Woodcock* to Frobisher Bay. Capt Fields' observations on the approach and general port conditions at Deception Bay during his visit that August were later included in Canadian port guides.

Starting in the summer of 1963, Clarke's former Goose Bay and northern traffic began to be delivered to the Chimo sheds in the Port of Montreal, where Eastern Canada Shipping Ltd looking after the stevedoring.

Munro-Jorgensson Shipping, headed by Nils Jorgensson, now actually managed Chimo-Clarke Northern Services. After having spent some eight seasons in a very competitive trade, Clarke was content to add its own Goose Bay service to the northern ports and sit back and take its share of the joint revenues while it developed plans to modernize its Newfoundland service. Chimo Shipping, on the other hand, had been involved in this business since 1947, and was now in the course of acquiring a fleet of ice-strengthened ships with which to prosecute the summer re-supply operation. One result of the new joint venture, now that Clarke and Chimo were no longer competitors, was that Clarke began to charter Chimo ships from time to time for its own services.

Years later, James McCracken wrote a good description of the work undertaken by operators such as Chimo-Clarke. Published under the title "Arctic Sealift" in the October 1977 issue of "Seaports & the Shipping World," it is worth quoting in detail: -

The annual Arctic sealift, officially dubbed the "Northern Re-supply Operation," ... evolved from the days of the early explorers and fur traders ... involves the delivery of ... cargo shipped from east coast ports to more than thirty settlements and industrial sites on the northern mainland and the islands of the Northwest Territories...

The sealift has been perfected over the years, through experience and experimentation. The cargo is as varied as any, comprising virtually all the supplies needed by each community for the following year, plus the thousands of tons of supplies and equipment required by the mining and oil companies, and by the principal retail outlet, the Hudson's Bay stores.

Arctic settlements are coastal and isolated. The only year-round access is by air, weather permitting, so that the sealift is the practical and economical method for large-scale movement of supplies. However, there are features which make the operation quite unique.

There is a time limitation. Because of ice, ships can deliver only in the short summer season, roughly mid-July to mid-October, with yearly fluctuations. There is no assurance of ice-free operations during this period, but there is absolute assurance that there is no ice-free period at any other time.

The settlements are in beach areas, without docks, and vessels must anchor off the site and barge the cargo to the beach. The barges are carried on deck, along with small tugs or workboats. Because of ice and tides, barges cannot be left in the north, but are carried to each settlement in turn, then returned home to the home port to be overhauled for use the following year...

The ships are small, generally of 2,000-8,000 tons deadweight, and relatively low powered. They must be completely self-sustaining for the entire voyage, usually four to six weeks...

Over the years a routine has evolved, designed to get the cargo to each site at the optimum time. Orders are placed early in the year, through private firms, but also through the Department of Transport, which acts as co-ordinator for part of the sealift. When approximate tonnages for each site are ascertained, sailing schedules for each area drawn up by the shipping companies who were successful low bidders. There are generally three shipping companies operating, each to a group of sites in a defined area. A vessel bound for smaller sites may deliver to seven or eight, while to larger sites may deliver to one or two.

Tonnage rates are all-inclusive, and cover cost of loading, checking, carriage and delivery "above the high-water line." ... Large volume items, in addition to food and clothing, are the thousands of 45 gal drums of gas and heating oil; building materials, particularly steel, lumber and cement; mobile equipment - cars, trucks, bulldozers, snowblowers, etc; mobile homes, housing units; plus shiploads of oil-drilling and mining equipment...

When handling cargo, all hands, including engine and catering personnel, pitch in, and all share in the cargo handling pool. There is no nightfall, and discharge continues until completed, to be curtailed only if fatigue is so great that continuing would be dangerous, or at the dictate of the weather...

Crews of these ships are mainly from Newfoundland, Quebec and the

Maritimes, and some companies beef up the crew size by hiring students on summer vacation.

The first of Chimo's new ships to join Chimo-Clarke Northern Services in 1963 was the 1,859-ton *Sir John Crosbie*, commissioned at Port Weller Dry Docks the previous summer. She joined the second-hand *C A Crosbie*, while the *Woodcock*, previously chartered by Clarke, now worked a joint Montreal-Goose Bay service for Chimo-Clarke. Canadian National's St John's-Goose Bay ship that year was the *Cabot Strait*, a ship that had long since been displaced by larger ships on the Cabot Strait ferry service.

In 1964, the second year of the Chimo-Clarke operation, it added two more ships, Chimo's *Chesley A Crosbie* and the 1,092-ton *Cacouna* (ii), both newly delivered, and more would follow in future years. The CN coastal ship in 1964 was the 1,174-ton motorship *Bonavista*, but with her small holds and the large number of communities she had to serve, the most important supplies came in on the Chimo-Clarke ships.

In its third year, 1965, Chimo-Clarke engaged the Clarke-owned *Highliner* for a summer voyage north. After the *North Pioneer* in 1947 and more recently the *Yorkwood*, the *Highliner* was still only the third Clarke-owned ship to go to the Arctic. She closed the shipping season at Churchill when she left under escort of Canadian Coast Guard icebreaker *Montcalm* on October 16. That summer, Chimo-Clarke also chartered the *North Voyageur* for fortnightly sailings between Montreal and Goose Bay, a new route for this ship.

But ships from Chimo Shipping made up the backbone of the Chimo-Clarke operation and in addition to the purpose-built *Sir John Crosbie* and *Chesley A Crosbie*, its ships would include the ex-Donaldson liner *Andrew C Crosbie*, the *Bill Crosbie*, a former Swedish ship, the *George Crosbie*, acquired from the Hudson's Bay Co, and the Ice Class ex-Lauritzen ship *Percy M Crosbie*. Another Newfoundland ship that Chimo-Clarke used later was the *Topsail Star*, the former *London*, which they would charter from the Topsail Shipping Co Ltd of St John's, starting in 1968.

With a base of a half dozen owned ships plus chartered vessels, Chimo-Clarke performed between thirty and fifty voyages annually to Goose Bay and the settlements or installations of the Arctic. By 1966, its fourth year of operation, ten ships would perform thirty-one voyages that generated \$1.8 million in gross revenue.

Labour Impasse at St John's

Although an announcement had been made that Clarke and Canada Steamship Lines would operate a joint service in 1963, using a sideloading freighter in the trade between Montreal and St John's, this had never come

to pass and instead, the two companies had agreed to split their business at Montreal. Then finally, in late 1963, Clarke had announced that it would build its own sideloaders, which would be built by a shipyard that was owned by Canada Steamship Lines.

But labour problems in Newfoundland were making it very difficult to modernize the trade, and were quite possibly what kept Canada Steamship Lines away in the first place. The "New York Times" reported on these events under date of April 23, 1964, under the heading "Ship Men Boycott Port at St John's": -

Long-standing grievances between the St John's Longshoremen's Protective Union and the Newfoundland Employers Association came to an issue today when the employers announced that ships operated by their companies would be kept out of this port, starting tomorrow night.

Within minutes Norman Donovan president of the union called on its men to leave their posts at 1 pm today. He called a meeting of all longshoremen to consider the association's announcement. The union represents more than 1,000 longshoremen.

The employers association represents Clarke Steamships Ltd, Harvey & Co, A Harvey & Co, Murray Agencies & Transports Ltd, Furness Withy & Co Ltd, Canadian National Railways and Blue Peter Steamships Ltd.

"The shipping companies are now forced to abandon service to St John's until such a time as a reasonable labor contract can be negotiated to insure the future of this industry and the economy of the port," a statement by the association said.

"The situation which now exists on the St John's waterfront, where no labor agreement is in effect and the threat of a longshoremen's strike is ever present, is an intolerable one."

The shipping companies said it was impossible to continue operations while the union's leadership refused "to come to sensible terms for the survival of the St John's general cargo trade."

The situation was precipitated by the companies' announcement last fall that they would introduce side-loading vessels to the port. They said the versatility of these vessels, from which transport vehicles can be more easily loaded, was necessary if the present range of operations was to continue.

The union contends that this system would cut its membership by as much as 40 per cent.

"The closedown of shipping on Friday night will mean a serious loss to the shipping companies," the association's statement said. "It is hoped the Longshoremen's Protective Union will adopt a more realistic approach to the waterfront operations to prevent the loss from becoming permanent."

On April 10 the union and the shippers [shipping companies] rejected a report by a conciliation board that had been set up to look into the dispute. The board recommended that the sideloaders and the union provide a rotation system for regular gangs, each of 21 men. The number of hours worked by each gang would be posted and the gang with the least hours would have first call on the next assignment.

With longshoremen's strikes and continuing disruption at St John's, such disputes led to vessels having to call at outports such as Harbour Grace and Argentia in order to deliver their cargoes overland to St John's by rail and road. The Montreal-St John's service did not see the introduction of a new ship at all but was maintained in 1964 by Clarke's *Highliner*, *Novaport* and *Yorkwood* plus the chartered *Dundee*, with a total of thirty-four St John's sailings.

Compared to the fifty-five voyages it had operated in 1962, using the *Novaport*, *Gulfport*, *Highliner*, *Gowrie* and *Dundee*, this was a drop of almost 40 per cent. However, Clarke performed seventeen sailings to the Central Newfoundland port of Botwood in 1964, using the *Maridan C*, the *Dundee* and the 538-ton *Ste Foy*, on charter from North Shipping & Transportation in Quebec. This was substantially up on five sailings to Botwood and three to Lewisporte in 1962.

In the Lower St Lawrence, 1964 saw fifteen cargoes of copper carried from Mont-Louis to Montreal, with the *Mont-St-Martin*, having returned from her brief time with Federal Intercoastal, lifting seven, the *North Pioneer* three, the *Maridan C* two and the *North Voyageur*, *Irish Rose* and *Miron C* one each, all between late April and mid-June. But from Baie Comeau there were no aluminum ingots in 1964, and there was only one cargo for the *Mont-St-Martin* the following year as traffic patterns changed.

The "Gulfport," "Novaport" and "Yorkwood" Are Sold

The *Gulfport's* last season had been 1963, but the *Novaport* and *Yorkwood* lasted another year, until the end of 1964. Along with the departure of the passenger ships, this left only the *North Pioneer* in overnight passenger service from Montreal and Quebec in 1965. On March 5, 1964, the *Gulfport* was in Halifax, preparing to leave for New York and the Mediterranean under her new name of *Stefani*. Her new owners were the Alma Shipping Co SA and she was now registered in Liberia.

Meanwhile, the *Novaport* undertook eight more voyages between Montreal and St John's before going herself at the end of 1964. The *Novaport* left Montreal on her last sailing to St John's on October 15, 1964, returning from St Lawrence with a cargo of fluorspar for Port Alfred.

She was then delivered to her new owners at Quebec, where Capt George Pateras took command. Triunfo Compania Naviera, another Liberian company, renamed her *Fury*. Her managers, Eagle Ocean Transport Inc, a New York-based Panamanian-registered company, founded in 1947, also owned some "Liberty" ships. But her time with Triunfo was brief - just nineteen days. Reminiscent of the *North Voyager* (ii) in 1950, the *Fury* was lost not long after delivery.

On December 1, 1964, she was bound from Quebec to Walton, Nova Scotia, in the Gulf, to load barytes for New York, but ended up instead stranded a mile off Wedge Island, Nova Scotia, on the eastern shore about 100 miles from Halifax. Travelling in ballast, she had been blown out to sea by winds up to 90 miles per hour and her steering gear had broken down. Unable to keep clear of the shore, her anchors dragged and she ran hard aground, becoming a total loss. Unlike the men of the *North Voyager*, the *Fury's* crew of eighteen escaped without loss of life. As Capt Pateras told the Canadian Press after her grounding, "I am very sorry to see her go. She was a nice little ship. But now her holds are full of water and her engine room is flooded. She is finished."

Towards the end of 1964, while the *Novaport* was still finishing with Clarke, it also sold the *Yorkwood*, in her case to the Mediterranean & Baltic Shipping Co Ltd of Piraeus, who renamed her *Noufaro*. While the *Gulfport* had served eighteen years and the *Novaport* fifteen, the *Yorkwood* had a very short career of just four years with Clarke. The Rankin Inlet mine had closed in September 1962 and other ships were now available for the Gulf bulk trades, particularly from N M Paterson & Sons, which was building a series of small diesel bulk carriers that Clarke could charter as needed.

New Coasters for the St Lawrence Trades

As a result of new federal government construction subsidies of up to 40 per cent on the cost of new vessels, local shipyards were now experiencing a surge of new orders for Canadian coasters.

The first had appeared in 1962, when G T Davie of Lauzon delivered the 604-ton *Polaris Explorer* to Valier Bouchard's *Polaris Shipping Ltd*. In completing this new steel coaster, the builders took the steel superstructure and the 1947 diesel engine that had been installed in the old wooden-hulled *Regina Polaris* when she was converted for the Hudson's Bay Co after the war, and recycled them in the new ship. As the *Regina Polaris*, she had of course worked for the Lower St Lawrence Transportation Co out of Rimouski.

The new *Polaris Explorer* had a deadweight of 1,000 tons and a hold capacity of 40,000 cubic feet, served by two five-ton cranes, compared to 50,000 cubic feet in the *North Voyageur* and 32,500 in the *Mont-St-Martin*, both from the same shipyard.

Clarke had chartered the *Polaris Explorer* quite often, starting with a winter voyage from Halifax to St John's on March 23, 1962. In 1962-63, she made three winter voyages from Quebec to Sept-Iles and Havre-St-Pierre via Rimouski. And during the open navigation season, she made several voyages for Clarke, usually from Montreal to Sept-Iles or to Botwood ,or Newfoundland outports, as well as working with the *North Voyageur* in the winter service from Quebec.

Also delivered in 1962, the *Sir John Crosbie*, used by Chimo-Clarke, was the first of a pair of Lloyd's Ice Class 1 sister ships built for Chimo Shipping by Port Weller Dry Docks at St Catharines, Ontario. At 253 feet overall by 42 feet and with a deadweight of 2,000 tons, she had a hold capacity of 115,000 cubic feet. Cargo handling gear included a five-ton boom at hatch number one and two five-ton booms and a thirty-ton jumbo at number two. Clara Smallwood, wife of Newfoundland Premier Joey Smallwood, had named the *Sir John Crosbie* after the founder of Crosbie & Co Ltd at St Catharines on July 14, 1962.

The 2,575-ton *Menier Consol* was not a coaster but a pulpwood carrier, completed for the Anticosti Shipping Co at Lauzon in 1962. Along with the *Anticosti* and three smaller pulpwood carriers built in the Netherlands in 1959-60, she brought the Anticosti Shipping fleet up to five new ships, all built since 1956.

These three were joined in 1963 by the 916-ton *Fort Ramezay*, the first of two Lloyd's Ice Class 1 coasters ordered by Agence Maritime after they won the Hydro-Quebec contract. On dimensions of 196 by 34 feet, they had a deadweight capacity of 1,500 tons when built. These single-hatch ships, with two ten-ton cargo booms on bipod masts, were built by Marine Industries at Sorel. Bipod masts, already installed in Clarke's *North Voyageur* and the chartered *Mont-St-Martin*, were quite popular on St Lawrence River coasters.

The "Quebec Chronicle-Telegraph" carried a story on the *Fort Ramezay* on April 30, 1963, headed "Newcomer On River Calls Here": -

The 1,500-ton light cargo coastal vessel *Fort Ramezay* made its maiden voyage into Quebec harbour Saturday from Montreal. Owned and operated by Agence Maritime Inc, the \$1,750,000 semi-icebreaker also holds the distinction of being the first Canadian ship to bear French markings and labels.

Built by Marine Industries at Sorel, the freighter was designed as a

new and revolutionary ship to battle extreme winter weather conditions between Quebec and Sept-Iles.

The general cargo vessel, which was christened by Premier Lesage April 27, has been classified by Lloyd's Register of Shipping not only as a top freighter, but also as a first-class icebreaker.

Sister ship to the *Fort Prével*, the ship is skippered by veteran Captain Charles Emile Langlois, son of J Léopold Langlois, president of Agence Maritime. Mr Langlois said the ship will be operated from Quebec and Montreal to Baie Comeau, Port-Cartier, Chicoutimi and Seven Islands...

Mr Langlois, who was captain of a minesweeper during World War II, said the new vessel aided by its modern equipment will be able to operate in the Arctic area, if called upon to do so.

The *Fort Ramezay* followed Clarke's *North Voyageur* by five years and, like her, was a development of the ice-strengthened ship in the St Lawrence. As to the French signage, one has to remember the surprise of American passengers at seeing a sign for a "Salle à manger" on board the *Jean Brillant* in Miami after the war.

The year 1964 saw the culmination of this activity with the delivery of four ships, bringing the total to eight new coasters, six of which were paired sisters.

The 1,091-ton sister ships *Sillery* and *Cacouna*, also used by Chimo-Clarke, were completed in January and December 1964 by G T Davie at Lauzon. Built for La Compagnie de Navigation du Golfe Ltée and Polaris Shipping Ltd, respectively, they had dimensions of 204 by 36 feet and capacities of 2,000 tons deadweight and 66,300 cubic feet. As opposed to bipod masts, however, two 7½-ton swivelling cranes served their holds. Wide hatches and unencumbered hold spaces facilitated the easy loading of containers and oversize pieces. Each also had two reefer chambers of 1,500 cubic feet, located in the forecastle, and a 1,320 horsepower Deutz diesel. As La Compagnie de Navigation du Golfe had bought Polaris Shipping from Valier Bouchard the year before, the *Polaris Explorer* was now the third ship in this fleet.

Agence Maritime's 914-ton *Fort Lauzon*, sister ship of the *Fort Ramezay* was also delivered in 1964. The "Quebec Chronicle-Telegraph" carried the news on July 18, the day of her launch, entitled "Coaster For Quebec Group Down Ways Today At Sorel": -

Agence Maritime's 1,500-ton coaster, *Fort Lauzon*, was to be launched at the Marine Industries Ltd shipyards in Sorel today. The ship is entirely welded and her hull is reinforced as required by Lloyd's Register of Shipping for merchant ships intended for navigation in

Arctic waters and the Gulf of St Lawrence. The main deck is also reinforced for the transportation of heavy deck cargoes. The ship is propelled by a 1,320 horsepower Deutz diesel engine and its cruising speed is about 12 knots fully loaded. The deadweight of 1,500 tons is carried in the 50,000 cubic feet main hold and in an insulated hold provided for perishable cargo. Modern accommodation provides up-to-date comfort for the 15-man crew.

Marine Industries was still boasting about building all-welded ships twenty-five years after launching the *Rimouski* and *Matane*, but we learn that the Agence Maritime ships and the *Sillery* and *Cacouna* all shared the same main engine.

The Agence Maritime ships quickly proved too small and they were returned to their builders in 1965 for the addition of a 20-foot midsection so they could carry more containers. This brought their overall length to 216 feet and deadweight to 1,750 tons, while re-measurement produced a 988-ton *Fort Lauzon* and a 987-ton *Fort Ramezay*. These ships were of course head-on competition for Clarke.

The fourth coaster delivered in 1964, and named at Port Weller Dry Docks on November 7, was Chimo Shipping's *Chesley A Crosbie*, a sister ship of the *Sir John Crosbie*. Like the *Sir John*, the *Chesley A* would see frequent employment with Chimo-Clarke when she was not working for Chimo Shipping's own account and would also be chartered by Clarke for occasional voyages to and from Newfoundland, and later be used in the North Shore winter service as well.

Of the new ships, Clarke took a particular interest in the *Sillery* and *Cacouna*. The *Sillery* would later make many voyages for them, on full season charters to the North Shore. Even when new in 1964, Clarke chartered her for two voyages, from the Great Lakes to Pointe-Noire with grinding balls. In 1965, the *Sillery* set the record as the first arrival when she tied up at Montreal's Shed 47 on January 5. At the time, she was working for Bouchard's North Shore Shipping Lines and about a third of her cargo consisted of beer.

Although Clarke also had occasional work for the *Cacouna*, she worked mainly with Chimo-Clarke Northern Services. These ships owners, not having their own freight service, had taken a gamble by acquiring three new vessels in such a short period of time, and this put a heavy strain on their finances. Within a couple of years, the *Cacouna*, *Sillery* and *Polaris Explorer* were all back in the ownership of their builders.

Together with the *North Voyageur*, the new coasters gave Clarke a source of modern ships to draw on when it needed extra tonnage. And instead of coasters, Clarke took advantage of the same shipbuilding subsidies to build ferries. Two of these, the *Charlevoix* of 1962 and the

Trans-St-Laurent of 1963, had been completed for Clarke's local services and the company was now in a position to begin planning larger ships for its Newfoundland service.

Meanwhile, the St Lawrence Sea Products Co, the Blais company of which Desmond Clarke was still a director, took advantage of the subsidies to build two 312-ton trawlers, the *Excel-O* and *Primo*. Named after their two brands of seafood products, and delivered by G T Davie in 1963 and 1964, these vessels were intended for use in the Gulf of St Lawrence.

And although it had not won any orders for St Lawrence coasters, Davie Shipbuilding was not left out of this business. Its contribution, in addition to ships built for its parent company Canada Steamship Lines, was two refrigerated vessels, the 1,126-ton *Blue Cloud* (ii) and *Blue Peter II* (iii), delivered to Blue Peter Steamships in 1964. This pair was for service on the East Coast, carrying fish from Newfoundland to New England and other United States ports. Although Blue Peter had operated a Montreal service after the war, by now its ships hardly ever ventured into the St Lawrence.

R&R Shipping Ltd

The last competitor to Newfoundland, for a while anyway, was a firm called R&R Shipping, which was run from an office at 1588 Wellington Street in Montreal, the same address as Newfoundland Forwarders. In 1964, R&R offered sailings using five chartered Canadian coasters. Two of these were the brand-new *Cacouna* and *Chesley A Crosbie*, just delivered. Two more, the 857-ton *Domino Run* and the 889-ton *Newfoundland Coast*, originally Coast Lines' *British Coast*, were former British coasters. And the fifth was the Hudson's Bay Co's 1,534-ton *Pierre Radisson*, a small ocean-going ship that had been built for Montreal Shipping's Montship Lines operation to trade into the Great Lakes before the opening of the St Lawrence Seaway.

The R&R operation showed that, partly because of the newbuildings and partly because of second-hand tonnage recently acquired by Canadian owners, Canadian-flag ships were now becoming more common in the Newfoundland trade. While Canada Steamship Lines had used one of its own ships in 1962, the other three ships had all been British or Irish. The availability of ships was no guarantee of a profit, however, and R&R Shipping lasted only one season before closing its doors.

Chimo Shipping Ltd

Once Clarke had formed Chimo-Clarke Northern Services with Chimo Shipping, that company slowly became a source of chartered tonnage for Clarke. Chimo Shipping, an arm of Crosbie & Co Ltd of St John's, had been incorporated as a separate company in 1954. But it was not until the

mid-1960s, after Chimo had started to build up its fleet, that Clarke began to charter ships from them.

The Crosbies had been involved in shipping since 1902, and had also operated two Newfoundland coastal boats under contract between 1912 and 1924. Starting in 1947, Crosbie & Co had been the main carrier for Canadian Government defence radar projects in the Arctic. This included the Mid-Canada Line in the early 1950s and the Distant Early Warning Line in 1955-57, with voyages undertaken almost entirely by chartered ships. At times, Crosbie had had up to fifty ships on charter, many of them Canadian-built former "Park" ships.

Before Chimo-Clarke, between 1960 and 1962, Clarke had occasionally chartered Manchester Liners' 1,803-ton *Manchester Explorer*, a British-flag St Lawrence canal-sized turbine-powered cargo liner that Chimo Shipping used each summer to Goose Bay. With a deadweight cargo capacity of 2,735 tons, and a crew of twenty-six, Clarke had engaged her for four voyages, two each to Goose Bay and Tilt Cove. On one of her Goose Bay voyages, in September 1962, the *Manchester Explorer* had towed Shaw Steamships "C" Type coaster *Mayfall* into Sydney after a breakdown. At the time, the *Mayfall* was on a northern re-supply voyage from Montreal to Pangnirtung.

In 1963, the year in which Chimo-Clarke was formed, Chimo decided to purchase the *Manchester Explorer* for its northern services, renaming her first *C A Crosbie* and then *P M Crosbie*. But it was not until 1965 that Clarke engaged her again, when it chartered the *P M Crosbie* for five Montreal-St John's voyages plus two voyages to Botwood. These were followed by nine voyages to St John's in 1966 and six more in 1967. As the *Manchester Explorer* had been sub-chartered in earlier years, these twenty-two voyages were the first time Clarke had chartered a Crosbie-owned ship.

Chimo later acquired another British cargo liner, Donaldson Line's 2,222-ton *Colina*. At 355 by 45 feet, with a deadweight capacity of 3,435 tons and a crew of twenty-two, Clarke chartered her for ten Montreal-St John's voyages in 1967. Two of these, plus a trip to Corner Brook, she made under the name *Colina*, and the remaining St John's voyages she made as the *Andrew C Crosbie*. By 1967, therefore, Clarke was employing two Chimo-owned ships, on a total of sixteen voyages to Newfoundland.

By 1972, Clarke had the *Andrew C Crosbie* on the Corner Brook run. And by 1973-74, it was using the *Andrew C Crosbie* and the *Maurice Desgagnés* in a new two-ship service from Montreal calling at both Sept-Iles and Corner Brook. In 1974-75, this service was taken on by the Swedish-built 1,589-ton *Bill Crosbie*.

From time to time, Clarke also chartered the Port Weller-built sister ships, *Chesley A Crosbie* and *Sir John Crosbie*. Engaged mainly in the Chimo-Clarke Northern Services, they were chartered by Clarke for various

voyages to Newfoundland. The *Sir John Crosbie* was also later used in Clarke's winter service to Sept-Iles.

Two more Chimo motorships, the *George Crosbie*, formerly the Hudson's Bay Co's *Pierre Radisson*, and the 2,362-ton *Percy M Crosbie*, formerly J Lauritzen's *Perla Dan*, spent most of their time with Chimo-Clarke. The *George Crosbie* would be sold to Jules Jourdain's Jourdain Navigation Ltée in 1978 for a five-year supply contract with the Hudson's Bay Co, but lost when she went aground at Hall Beach in the Canadian Arctic on September 22, 1980.

A Modern Sept-Iles

It was now more than sixty years since the Clarke brothers had started the Gulf Pulp & Paper Co mill at Clarke City. Now, Sept-Iles was the thriving hub for the area. In 1965, the *North Pioneer*, together with the *North Voyageur*, the *D'Vora*, the *Mont-St-Martin* and other chartered ships, performed more than 150 voyages from Montreal and Quebec to Sept-Iles. And this did not include any of the more frequent voyages made from the South Shore by ships of the Lower St Lawrence Transportation Co and Ungava Transports.

An article by Fred Landon entitled "Sept-Iles, 1965" appeared in the Fall 1965 issue of "Inland Seas" and gives us an idea of what it was like to sail into Sept-Iles in the mid-1960s: -

Until about fifteen years ago Sept-Iles was but a small French-Canadian village mainly dependent on fishing and having little communication with the outside world. Today, it is one of Canada's newest cities with a population approaching 25,000 and, as a port, one of the busiest in Eastern Canada, coming close to Montreal in the volume of tonnage handled. The reason for this growth lies in the discovery and exploitation of enormous resources of iron ore in northern Quebec and in neighbouring areas of Newfoundland-Labrador...

We anchored in the bay just at dusk on the second evening after passing Montreal. First sight of the town was a surprise. We had expected to find a crude pioneer town, lacking the facilities and amenities of a modern community, but here before us was an area a mile and a half wide, brilliantly illuminated and with various public buildings standing out clearly. The lights of automobiles could be seen moving about the streets, and vessels at the mooring and loading docks were equally visible by their own lights. The next day we learned that in addition to its modern schools and handsome churches Sept-Iles has an up-to-date and well-equipped 225-bed hospital, a recreation centre with an Olympic-sized pool and a public auditorium.

Elsewhere is a golf course and tennis courts for those desiring outdoor recreation...

The iron ore mined in the Knob Lake area of northern Quebec is brought to the bay port of Sept-Iles by the Quebec, North Shore & Labrador Railway, over a distance of 356 miles through as rugged an area as exists on the continent. Current mining operations are centred about the town of Schefferville, 320 miles to the north where there are known deposits of more than 400 million tons which can be extracted by open pit methods.

Ore production normally goes on between May 1 and November 15, approximately 200 days, and with an average daily production of 60,000 tons, which is often exceeded. From seven to ten trains move daily to Sept-Iles, hauled by powerful diesel engines. The mountains of ore at the port stand out conspicuously on the landscape... During our brief stay, when 21,000 tons of ore went into the holds of the *Scott Misener*, eight other vessels were waiting their turn or were on their way out of the bay. Some of these cargoes were going overseas. The *Scott Misener's* cargo on this particular trip was destined for Cleveland.

The 15,279-ton *Scott Misener*, on which Fred Landon travelled, was one of the dozens of large new Seaway-size lakers that were now being built to carry grain down to the St Lawrence and return to the Great Lakes with iron ore from the new mines in Quebec and Labrador.

Clarke was not directly involved with the mining or shipment of iron ore, but it had made a significant contribution to the development of the new Quebec North Shore ports, the railways and the mines in Labrador and now held supply contracts with many of the mining companies, consolidating cargo for them on the dock on Montreal for shipment to the North Shore. Clarke also advertised regularly in "L'Avenir," as with this typical advertisement headed "Saved by Ship" from May 11, 1964: -

Shipping by water with Clarke Traffic Services saves you at least 20 percent over standard trucking rates from Montreal to Baie Comeau and Sept-Iles. Fast, direct Clarke ships sail from Montreal on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays ... with all rates including Montreal pick-up and quick delivery on North Shore arrival. Gain further savings with Clarke's volume discount - up to 10 percent, based on weight. And be sure of the finest service on the water and off, through Clarke's complete facilities. Start enjoying 20 percent lower freight rates and our sizeable return on the dollar next time you ship.

Now that the *North Coaster* had been withdrawn, the three sailings a week were provided by the *North Voyageur*, *Mont-St-Martin* and *D'Vora*. And in addition to its coastal service, the company now had various interests in

Sept-Iles stevedoring, trucking, construction, equipment and automotive sales and finance in the area and along the North Shore. That same year, it found a novel way of making a statement on its impact on Sept-Iles, which it laid out in an advertisement in "L'Avenir" on June 1: -

"Money on the Move"

This is a progressive region we live in. And Clarke Steamship Company Limited is happy to play an active, ever-expanding role in its prosperity. Today, as a matter of fact, a large portion of every freight dollar finds its way back into the area, through employees' salaries and out investments. And Clarke Steamship have discovered an unusual way to follow this return ... and show just how it happens. June 4th will be our Silver Dollar Payday. Then, our employees ... all from your community and those nearby ... will be paid in shiny, new Canadian silver dollars. These dollars will buy groceries and clothing in your stores; pay school taxes and bills; become offerings in your churches; and be invested for the future. Watch for this flow of Clarke silver dollars. Note how many enter your particular stream of life. We hope Silver Dollar Payday will help us illustrate how shipping via Clarke Steamship Company Limited becomes an investment in your own prosperity.

Clarke Steamship Company Limited, First in the Gulf of St Lawrence
Sept-Iles Wharf. Tel 942-3855. Sept-Iles.

The population of Sept-Iles, which had been only 1,200 in 1951, had grown to 10,135 in 1958, and by 1965 stood at 25,000. Nearby Clarke City was by now completely overshadowed by the new port city. Within two years, however, the Gulf Pulp & Paper Co mill would close, after sixty years in operation, and within five years Clarke City became a suburb of the new Sept-Iles.

When it did close in July 1967, the brand-new 4,980-ton *Lyminge* (ii), just completed at Dundee for Constants Ltd of London, would be caught in the Bay of Sept-Iles for several weeks waiting for the workers to return so that they could load her cargo, one of the last ever to leave Clarke City.

Wabush Mines

At Pointe-Noire, next to the old Clarke City wharf, a major new docking facility was also now under construction for a new company called Wabush Mines Ltd. The new town of Wabush was located only about three miles from the Iron Ore Co town of Labrador City. With the new mine and its town site and a palletising plant and dock being built at Pointe-Noire, Clarke ships were busy, and they would continue to hold the highly contested Wabush Mines' supply contract for many years after its completion.

The new iron ore project came a decade after the development of the Iron Ore Company at Sept-Iles. "Ship-Shore News," the house organ of Upper Lakes Shipping Ltd, one of the major carriers of iron ore pellets from Pointe-Noire, gave some background to the new mine development in its September 1967 issue: -

Iron ore was first reported in the area in 1933 but low-grade materials were of little interest to iron ore producers prior to World War II. Pickands, Mather & Co, searching for a material to meet blast furnace standards for high quality and chemistry, became interested in the Wabush deposit in 1956. They commenced a program of exploration drilling culminating in the construction of a pilot plant, which began operations in 1960 ...

After the production of 100,000 tons of iron ore concentrates, the pilot plant was shut down and construction of the Scully mine commenced in 1962. Construction of its counterpart, the agglomerating plant at Pointe-Noire, began in 1963. The Wabush Project was officially dedicated in 1965.

The same publication recounted how iron ore concentrate was moved from Wabush, which was only about three miles away from Labrador City, to the new port facility at Pointe-Noire: -

The concentrate must go 275 miles by rail southward from Wabush through the Labrador wilderness to Pointe-Noire, then many more by ship to the eight member companies who together financed the Wabush project...

Loaded trains, hauled by four 1,800-hp diesel locomotives of the Wabush Lake Railway leave daily from Wabush easterly to the junction of the Quebec North Shore & Labrador Railway. There the Wabush Lake diesels spot the mile long train on the QNS&L line, pick up the empties, which have been returned from Pointe-Noire and take this train back to Wabush. Four locomotives of the QNS&L take the loaded train south through 216 miles to a junction point outside Sept-Iles. Here a similar changeover of locomotives and cars takes place and the Arnaud Railway then delivers the loaded train the last 18 miles to the pelletizing plant at Pointe-Noire on the St Lawrence River.

The Arnaud Railway connected Pointe-Noire to the Quebec North Shore & Labrador Railway at Arnaud Junction, mile 7 of the main line from Sept-Iles. Its new diesel locomotives, as well as those of the Wabush Lake Railway, had come from Montreal Locomotive Works.

By the time this article was published, Wabush Mines was already shipping 5,000,000 tons of iron pellets a year to Canadian, American and

European steel makers, with an average of ten ships calling at the Pointe-Noire loading dock each week.

The effect of these ore developments on the growth of the Great Lakes fleet alone between 1960 and 1966 was recorded in "The Financial Post" on February 11, 1967, with the figures given in deadweight tons of carrying capacity: -

Since 1960, Canada has added 1,349,612 tons of shipping to the Lakes fleet. They were: 42 new cargo ships (826,850 tons), 37 second-hand US lakers (381,982 tons), four conversions (91,500 tons), five new tankers (36,505 tons) and three second-hand tankers (12,775 tons)... In the same period, nearly all of the large pre-Seaway canaller fleet was disposed of and some of the older US-built lakers were retired.

While lakers and deep-sea bulk carriers loaded at Pointe-Noire, Clarke delivered Wabush Mines' supplies through the general cargo facility at Sept-Iles and then by the QNS&L Railway to Labrador or by road to Pointe-Noire. Occasionally, however, Clarke ships made direct calls at Pointe-Noire. In late 1964, the chartered *Sillery* unloaded two cargoes of grinding balls, loaded at Sault Ste Marie and Hamilton, with two similar voyages following in May 1965. The official opening of Wabush Mines took place on June 22, 1965.

A New Ship for Newfoundland

After thorough research, Clarke had by now decided to build two new and efficient sideloading 'tweendeck vessels for its service to St John's, Newfoundland. Plans were based on the general arrangement of Canada Steamship Lines' *Fort St Louis*, but with significant improvements. The first of the new ships was ordered from Davie Shipbuilding, who had built the *Fort St Louis*.

The *Fort St Louis*, the latest of four "Fort" class package freighters, had actually been built to trade between Montreal and Great Lakes ports. The first, the 5,729-ton *Fort Henry* of 1955, had been of traditional Great Lakes design with bridge forward, and the second, the 6,021-ton *Fort York* of 1958, had her bridge located aft in the style of an ocean-going ship. Both were turbine-powered. Two similar bridge-aft motorships, the *Fort Chambly* and the *Fort St Louis*, had followed in 1961 and 1963, designed as full ocean-going vessels. The "Forts" all measured between 462 and 466 feet in length overall and had a beam of 56 feet.

Two single-deck package freighters, the 6,639-ton *English River* and 6,637-ton *French River*, had also been built for the Seaway trade in 1961. The delivery of these ships and the *Fort Chambly* had been what freed up the

Battleford to compete with Clarke to Newfoundland in 1962. Meanwhile, a fifth "Fort" ship had been ordered from Davie Shipbuilding after the delivery of the *Fort St Louis*. That order, delivered as the 494-foot 6,793-ton *Fort William* in 1965, brought the Canada Steamship Lines package freight fleet to seven ships.

The new Clarke ship was designed by naval architects German & Milne, working together with Clarke and Davie Shipbuilding, and the Maierform design office of Geneva, Switzerland, who were consulted with regard to the ideal bow shape for navigation in ice and for the heavier weather encountered in the Newfoundland service. On December 20, 1963, Stanley Clarke wrote to the chairman of the Canadian Maritime Commission to advise how a final price of \$5,675,000, on which the 40 per cent shipbuilding subsidy would be paid, had been arrived at: -

This contract called for the construction of a vessel exactly similar to Canada Steamship Lines' *Fort St Louis* which, it appeared, would be ideal for our Newfoundland service.

Since that time, we have, in conjunction with Davie, carefully studied all details of the design and specifications in order to make sure that the vessel, when built, will properly fulfil the purpose intended and thus render profitable employment more likely.

Our studies have confirmed the fact that the original dimensions shown, the power required and the general type of ship were all correct and these characteristics will be retained in the ship as built.

One fact that has, however, become quite evident is that our operations are not identical with those of Canada Steamship Lines and certain changes must be made if the ship is to perform for us with the maximum efficiency and profitability.

Stanley went on to explain that improvements on the CSL design would include strengthening to Lloyd's highest Ice Class 1 (compared to Ice Class 3 for the *Fort St Louis*), heavy deck hatches and two 20-ton cranes, while a single slow speed Sulzer diesel would replace CSL's multi-engine arrangements. This change alone would save Clarke \$100,000 a year in fuel costs. The new ship would also be fitted with controllable pitch propellers. Final modifications would include a new overhanging bridge design with bridge wing engine controls and radio officer's quarters for deep-sea operation.

Capt Alphonse Bégin, whose first command had been the *North Gaspé* in 1940, supervised the construction of the new ship at Lauzon. He had now spent sixteen years in command of the *Gulfport*, including several winters trading in southern waters. Bégin was to become the first master of the new ship, which he would command until retiring in 1972, a span of fifty

years since he started sailing in Clarke ships in 1922.

The new ship would join the *Charlevoix* and *Trans-St-Laurent* in the ownership of the Gulf Ports Steamship Co. As it happened, Gulf Ports had also been the registered owner of Capt Bégin's *Gulfport*. Clarke ships were now registered to different companies for fiscal reasons to do with ship construction, financing and shipbuilding subsidies.

The "Doriefs"

In early 1965, one deep sea ship, the 6,331-ton Liberian-flag *Doriefs*, made a voyage for Clarke. The *Doriefs*, a 1958 product of the Cammell Laird shipyard in Birkenhead, was chartered from Compania Naviera Doriefs SA, owned by Z L and G L Cambanis, to transport a cargo of Canadian newsprint south. The ship's managers were S G Embiricos Ltd in London.

She made only one early season voyage, leaving Quebec on April 4, Port Alfred on April 6 and Dalhousie, New Brunswick, on April 12, with a full cargo for Houston and Miami. While the *Doriefs* was loading at Quebec, another ocean-going cargo ship was nearing completion for Clarke's own account across the river at Lauzon.

To some extent, the voyage of the *Doriefs* followed in the tradition of the *Gulfport* and *Highliner*, which had carried cargoes such as potatoes and pulpwood south from Souris, Prince Edward Island, and Hantsport, Nova Scotia, to places such as Wilmington, North Carolina, and Jacksonville.

In another way, it might have been an attempt to enter into the newsprint shipping business where Montmorency Shipping, now Price Shipping, was the dominant force. While it was insignificant on its own and didn't develop into a new business or trade, this modest voyage was an early prelude to Clarke's entry into the deep-sea trades.

Newfoundland Steamships

With the St John's-registered Terra Nova Steamship Co no longer having a ship with the sale of the *Novaport*, on June 28, 1965, Clarke changed that company's name to Newfoundland Steamships (1965) Ltd. Under this name, it now became the chief operating company for Clarke's Newfoundland services. In view of the high building costs for new ships and equipment, Newfoundland Steamships had also negotiated a contract with Ottawa for a freight subsidy of \$7 per ton on cargo it carried to Newfoundland.

The subsidy was agreed to on the basis of a much-improved service to Newfoundland, and provided that a regular service was maintained to Corner

Brook as well as St John's. What lay behind this contract was the very large amounts of money that Ottawa was now paying out yearly to underwrite the heavy losses Canadian National was making in its Newfoundland business.

The subsidy to Newfoundland Steamships was substantially less per ton and would save the government a great many dollars on each ton of cargo that moved by ship with Newfoundland Steamships as opposed to overland by rail with Canadian National. Initially administered by the Canadian Maritime Commission, management of the subsidy would eventually pass to the Water Transport Committee of the new Canadian Transport Commission in 1967.

Along with Clarke, there were a number of minority shareholders in Newfoundland Steamships, mainly representing the merchants of St John's. As well as Crosbie & Co, owners of Chimo Shipping, these included Baine Johnston & Co Ltd and A E Hickman Co Ltd, each of which had also once operated ships for its own account. Outside directors were thus appointed at different times that included Andrew Crosbie of Crosbie & Co Ltd, Henry Collingwood of Baine Johnston, Albert Hickman of A E Hickman and Ewart Pratt of Steers Ltd. The well-known A Harvey & Co Ltd of St John's had also been a minority shareholder in Newfoundland Steamships, and had acted as Clarke's agent in Newfoundland before Newfoundland Steamships opened its own office in St John's.

The "Cabot"

The 6,017-ton *Cabot* was launched on May 12, 1965, and completed in June. Her dimensions were 471 feet overall by 56 feet and she had a cargo deadweight of 7,900 tons, including the ability to carry up to seventy-six 20-foot containers on deck. A single Sulzer diesel burning intermediate fuel oil, as opposed to the more expensive marine diesel oil, gave her a service speed of 17 knots on a consumption of 25 tons a day.

On the day of her launch, "The Gazette" announced "Smallwood's Wife To Christen New Freighter," giving further details of the ship herself: -

A package freighter designed and built in Canada for deep sea operations, the 8,000-ton m.s. *Cabot*, will be christened and launched at the Davie Shipbuilding Limited yard at Lauzon, Quebec, on May 12. Mrs J R Smallwood, wife of the Newfoundland Premier, will perform the ceremony. The *Cabot* will enter service in late June between Montreal and St John's, Newfoundland. In the winter it will operate between Halifax and St John's, its hull being reinforced to permit the vessel to navigate through Gulf of St Lawrence icefields.

"The completion of this modern and efficient vessel provides the assurance of a highly improved shipping service between Montreal and

Newfoundland," stated Stanley D Clarke, president of Clarke Traffic Services Limited, the parent company. "The installation of cargo handling devices was given very serious thought, and will contribute greatly to speed as well as efficiency."

All cargo will be moved on strapped pallets or cribs, which will be loaded into the vessel through hydraulically-operated side doors by mechanical equipment. Three elevators will ensure the rapid movement of this unitized cargo from the 'tweendeck to the hold for proper stowing therein.

Arrangements have also been made for the handling of 20-foot containers on deck by two large travelling cranes and the necessary mechanical attachments for securing and stacking these containers two high over the hatch and deck area.

The *Cabot's* high speed and faster cargo handling ability allowed her to do what the *North Gaspé* had done in 1938 and the *North Shore* in 1946, that is to make a full round voyage within a week. In the case of the *Cabot*, however, it was from Montreal to St John's and back, a round voyage of over 2,000 nautical miles.

The new ship's superstructure consisted of four decks - working from the bottom up: the Spar Deck, containing sailors' quarters; the Poop Deck, on which were found the mess, galley and engineers' quarters; the Boat Deck, with captain's, officers' and owner's quarters and the Navigation Bridge Deck. Her crew numbered twenty-one.

For cargo handling, there were four sideports on each side and three elevators between her 'tweendecks and lower holds. Cargo was driven into the ship through the sideports on specialized tractor-trailer units and stowed on board by elevator and forklift truck. The same process was followed in reverse for discharging cargo.

At the end of the year, the *Cabot's* introduction was described in the December 1965 issue of "Canadian Shipping": -

A new link between Quebec and Newfoundland was formed earlier this year, when the 8,000-ton package freighter *Cabot* was launched at Davieship. The honour of sponsoring the 471-foot ship went to Mrs J R Smallwood, wife of the Newfoundland premier.

The \$6 million *Cabot*, delivered at the end of June, is in service with Newfoundland Steamships Ltd between St John's and Montreal.

Reinforced for ice navigation, she will operate throughout the coming winter and has a speed of 17 knots...

The *Cabot* derives its name from the explorer John Cabot, who discovered Canada's East Coast in 1497, with the belief that he had found a route to China.

The federal government furnished the necessary construction subsidies and depreciation allowances - 40 per cent - which enabled the *Cabot* to be built in Canada.

Italian explorer John Cabot, or Giovanni Cabotto, had sailed from Bristol in 1497 and claimed Newfoundland for the English on behalf of King Henry VIII. The new *Cabot* left Montreal on her maiden voyage on July 2, and arrived in St John's for the first time on July 5, there to be shown off to the locals.

More Labour Problems in St John's

Heavy labour bills and high port times had led Clarke to research the whole cargo-handling situation. By way of comparison, when the *Highliner* came into port it took 103 stevedores thirty-three hours to unload 1,400 weight tons of cargo, while for the *Cabot*, with her mechanized gear, 44 men would be able to unload more than 2,000 tons of cargo in ten hours.

The bid to change to more efficient technology had cost the company thirteen months of labour disruption and strikes at St John's, starting in April 1964. At the time there were 550 full time longshoremen on the St John's waterfront. Representative of this period was a report from St John's that appeared in "The Gazette" on October 28, 1964, "Cargo, Vessels Begin To Pile Up In St John's": -

Clarke Steamships ... may be the first shipping company here to feel serious affect of a waterfront strike by 500 longshoremen that resumed Monday. A spokesman for the company's office here said it has about 800 tons of perishable freight - mostly canned goods in an unheated shed - that will spoil if not moved before a heavy frost touches it.

He also said the company's ship *Highliner* arrived here late Sunday and is now lying at the Clarke dock with more than 2,000 tons of cargo on board. Two other Clarke ships are en route from Montreal with consignments for Newfoundland wholesalers. He could not say immediately of the ships might be diverted to other Newfoundland ports.

The walkout is a resumption of a 50-day strike that tied up this port last May and June. The Longshoremen's Protective Union (Ind) has been working on an interim agreement with the shipping companies pending a report by a government-appointed industrial enquiry

commission set up to study the dispute.

The St John's Employers Association, representing the shippers [shipping companies], accepted the recommendations of the report issued two weeks ago, but the union disagreed with almost every provision.

Other members of the Employers Association have problems similar to Clarke. A spokesman for Blue Peter Steamships Limited said it has a large volume of freight tied up in its sheds and at least one ship partly unloaded at the dock.

E K House, area CNR manager, said the coastal freighter *Nonia* is lying at the docks, partly loaded with 15 carloads of winter supplies to the tiny isolated communities on the east coast of Labrador.

Nearly 1,000 men are out of work due to the strike, and the number is expected to grow each day the tie up continues. In addition to the 500 LSPU members, about 400 truckers are affected.

Main points in dispute are the commission's recommendations for discontinuance of gang rotations and lower severance, and pension pay asked by the union.

The Labrador ship *Nonia* was a 1,173-ton coastal freighter that had been built in Scotland in 1956. Meanwhile, the *Highliner* had left Montreal on Sunday, October 20 and arrived at St John's on the 25th, while the *Yorkwood* had left Montreal three days later and was diverted to Harbour Grace, about fifty miles west of St John's. As the *Yorkwood* discharged in Harbour Grace on October 29, members of the Longshoremen's Protective Union set up a 25-man picket line to prevent trucks from collecting any diverted cargo for St John's. On the same day, in St John's, Clarke employees began to discharge the *Highliner*, which had perishables on board, and transfer her cargo into the shed. But a crowd of strikers, who had come to the dock to collect pay from before the strike, threatened to interfere. Violence was only averted when the union president managed to distract his members away from the scene for a meeting.

The last of these strikes would only be settled on May 25, 1965, a few weeks before the *Cabot's* maiden voyage.

Changes in Technology

Sideloaders had finally been decided upon when it was found that two such ships would be quite capable not only of replacing four company-owned ships, the *Gulfport*, *Novaport*, *Highliner* and *Yorkwood*, but also of doing away with the need for chartered tonnage. A sideloader could make a round

voyage in less than a week while it took 11-14 days for a conventional ship. Some of these improvements were recorded in a year-end harbours report carried by "Shipping Register & Shipbuilder" in December 1965, under the title "Big Strides in St John's, Nfld": -

Side loading lifts and ramps were installed at Pier 5 of our main cargo terminals and on July 5th the *Cabot* made her maiden voyage to this port from Montreal. This modern 8,000-ton vessel has instituted a revolution in cargo handling. Approximately 2,000 tons of cargo can be discharged in a little over 8 hours and with the use of containers, both wood and steel, breakages are kept to a minimum.

This little quotation requires some explanation. First, the reference to lifts indicates that the side-loading ramps in St John's had to be vertically adjustable to adapt to the state of the tide. And the reference to containers of wood and steel indicates two different ways of moving cargo. While the *Cabot* could carry standard 20-foot steel containers on deck, these wooden containers were "cribs," a form of unitization that Clarke had adopted as its own.

These small collapsible plywood containers, measuring about 8-feet long and four feet in width and height had pallet-style bases and could be handled by forklift trucks. Cargo that was not readily palletized could be stowed into cribs, and small individual consignments consolidated for individual receivers. Each ship could load about 600 cribs and in order to accommodate them being delivered, loaded, picked up and waiting for loading a supply of about 3,000 was needed to keep things moving.

In preparation for the trip back to Montreal, empty cribs were collapsed and stacked so they could be loaded in multiples, thus reducing handling costs. And finally, the reference to breakages was of course something that was uppermost in the minds of receivers. The buyers of the cargo in St John's wanted their goods delivered in fine condition. In the days before containers, this solution was a good one. Packaging and insurance costs were lowered, damage was lowered substantially and pilferage was almost eliminated.

While 2,000 tons of cargo doesn't sound like a lot for an 8,000-ton ship, these were high volume consumer goods, foodstuffs, some of it corn flakes, and building products, including insulation and chipboard. The same 2,000 weight tons, if measured in volume tons of 40 cubic feet, would soon come to 8,000 freight tons, or 320,000 cubic feet, and the ships under deck cargo capacity was 377,000 cubic feet. The maximum weight of this kind of volume cargo that the *Cabot* could carry was about 2,400 tons, at which point her holds and her decks would both be full. A weekly movement of about 2,000 tons of cargo meant an annual capacity of about 100,000 weight tons for such a ship, or about 400,000 volume tons.

Clarke's 20-foot containers were built to International Standards Organization (ISO) standards and were among the first in Canada, preceding the container revolution by almost five years. While general cargo was handled under deck, containers were used to handle specialised movements such as refrigerated, liquid or bulk cargo. The first refrigerated containers were used for door-to-door shipment of packaged products from Canada Packers in Toronto to distributors in St John's. Containers moved by Canadian National Railways from Toronto to Montreal and then Clarke to St John's, where final delivery was effected by road. Other units included tank containers, for chemicals and other liquids, and later, top-loading bulk containers, to move malt in bulk from Canada Malting in Toronto to the breweries in St John's. Malt had previously moved in full shiploads with N M Paterson & Sons, but with Clarke's assured schedule, Canada Malting could now take advantage of containers to make regular deliveries in twenty-ton lots instead of 3,000 tons every few months. Ship's gear was used to load and discharge all containers, as well as vehicles, heavy lifts and other deck cargo.

Coinciding with the delivery of the *Cabot*, Clarke moved its Montreal terminal from Piers 34-35 to new sideloading facilities at Sheds 67-68, where ramps had been installed to access the ship's sideports while loading and unloading. These sheds, immediately adjacent to Canada Steamship Lines' package freight piers at Sections 63-64-65, allowed easier interchange of through traffic between the two companies, and also had excellent rail access. Although North Shore traffic stayed at Shed 33 for the time being, it soon followed the Newfoundland trade, moving to Shed 67 on May 4, 1966. Sheds 67 and 68 each had some 90,000 square feet of cargo space compared to the 44,000 and 53,600 square feet at Sheds 34 and 35.

New Colours

When she entered service, the *Cabot* introduced a new colour scheme of an orange hull with green boot-topping. The choice of orange was to make her more visible in ice, especially to icebreakers. For the same reason, the hulls of Canadian Coast Guard icebreakers had been painted red in 1962.

All company ships, including those of subsidiary and associated companies such as the *North Gaspé*, *Jean Brillant* and *Trans-St-Laurent*, adopted the orange hulls in 1967. At the same time, all ships, whether operated by Clarke or by affiliates, adopted the Clarke funnel colours of buff with four narrow blue bands first worn by the *New Northland* in 1935. The use of the Clarke funnel by affiliates had started with the Magdalen Islands Transportation Co's *Magdalen* in 1945 and been adopted by La Traverse Rivière-du-Loup-St-Siméon on the delivery of the *Trans-St-Laurent* in 1963. This left the Lower St Lawrence Transportation Co's *Jean Brillant* as the last ship to carry different colours and she too would now carry the four bands of the Clarke funnel on her voyages to the North Shore. In fact, the *Jean*

Brilliant had first worn these funnel colours in 1946, when she operated in post-war service between Miami and Nassau for the account of the Clarke Steamship Co..

Last Voyages of the "Highliner"

The *Highliner's* master for her last three seasons, which included the St John's strikes, was Capt Jacques Chouinard, who had moved over from the *Novaport* in 1963. Her 1964 season had included ten trips between Montreal and St John's, seven of which included calls at Sept-Iles on the North Shore service. As well, she had loaded a dozen cargoes of fluorspar at St Lawrence, Newfoundland, for Alcan at Port Alfred, plus a cargo of coal from Sydney to Montreal at the end of November. But the fluorspar business was about to change.

In 1965, the *Highliner* loaded nine fluorspar cargoes for Port Alfred, but as the *Gulfport* and *Novaport* were now gone she was backed up by three recently-built motorships chartered from N M Paterson & Sons. The 3,358-ton *Hamildoc* (iii) carried six cargoes, the 2,497-ton *Lawrendoc* two and the smaller *Lachinedoc* one. Two Crosbie ships, the *Sir John Crosbie* and *Chesley A Crosbie*, also took two cargoes each and two chartered canallers, Hall Corporation's *Northcliffe Hall* with one cargo, and Northwest Steamships' *A A Hudson*, with two, completed a total of twenty-five cargoes to Port Alfred.

But after the *Highliner* was sold and larger ships introduced, Clarke was no longer in a position to handle the fluorspar. Paterson's new small bulkers were more suitable for this cargo, especially when they could bring a cargo of bulk malt from Toronto to St John's on the way out. With Clarke's inability to continue to handle the product, it was inevitable that the Alcan fluorspar traffic would eventually pass directly to Paterson.

One of the *Highliner's* more interesting cargoes in 1965 was a shipment of submarine parts, loaded at Montreal on April 10 for the account of Canadian Vickers, bound for Groton, Connecticut. That same month, the *Maridan C* made another unusual voyage when she was sent to New York for a special cargo of steel bound for Bay Bulls, Newfoundland.

After the *Highliner* returned from her voyage to Groton, she made three trips to St John's in May and June before the *Cabot* was delivered, a voyage to Corner Brook on July 2, and then a longer trip north with Chimo-Clarke before taking her final departure for St John's on August 10.

With the *Gulfport*, *Novaport* and *Yorkwood* all having been sold in 1963-64, the *Highliner* was the only company-owned ship left in the Newfoundland trade when the *Cabot* arrived. Once this happened, the *Highliner* too was sold, in 1966, for £75,000 or about \$180,000, to the

Cocconis Navigation Co Ltd of Cyprus, who renamed her *Virgin Mary*. She had served Clarke for seven years.

Weekly to St John's

The *Cabot* made twenty-six round voyages to St John's in her first season, turning around more quickly than any ship had ever done in that trade. This was a huge advance over earlier schedules, and one that meant that two ships could provide two sailings a week. One of the things that made this possible was that the *Cabot* loaded only whatever return cargo could be found at St John's, together with the return of empty containers and cribs. Unlike the conventional ships that preceded her, she could not seek return cargoes of gypsum, fluorspar or coal from other ports, as she had no time left in her schedule if she was to sail weekly.

Until a second new ship could be delivered, chartered ships were still needed for St John's, and in 1965 the *Dundee* made ten voyages and the *P M Crosbie* a further five. In addition to the *Cabot* and *Highliner* and the *Dundee* and *P M Crosbie*, several ships were also hired for single voyages. The *Sir John Crosbie* and the *Eastcliffe Hall* each made a voyage in June, followed by the *Sternecliffe Hall* in September and the *A A Hudson* in October, the last two both steam canallers. Burnett Steamship's *Tynemouth* on October 15 made for a total of fifty sailings.

Thirty-one years after the *Winona* had supported the *New Northland* to St John's, the occasional canaller was still being used even to support the *Cabot*. Although the 3,335-ton diesel-powered *Eastcliffe Hall* had been lengthened to 349 feet, the *Sternecliffe Hall* was a steamship of the original dimensions. But these ships were now disappearing fast, displaced by the new St Lawrence Seaway.

North Shipping & Transportation's "Charny"

One of the larger Canadian coasters Clarke ever chartered, and certainly the biggest from Raymond Duval's North Shipping & Transportation was the 2,129-ton *Charny*, which it took on in 1965 for its Corner Brook service. Built by Marine Industries at Sorel in 1948 as the *Kabyle*, and later renamed *Josephine Le Borgne*, she had dimensions of 313 by 46 feet and a deadweight of 2,305 tons,. She was one of six sister ships built in Canada after the war for French owners. North Shipping had brought the *Josephine Le Borgne* back from France in 1964 and renamed her *Charny*, after a suburb of Quebec. Clarke used this ship in its Montreal-Corner Brook service from 1965 through 1967.

The *Charny* replaced the *Irish Rose* and *Irish Willow* to Corner Brook service, leaving Montreal on her Clarke first voyage on April 21, 1965. This

was the first of twenty-one voyages she would perform that season, maintaining the Corner Brook service on her own except for a voyage each by the *Highliner*, in July, and the *Dundee*, in November.

Expansion in Road Transport

During this period Clarke's non-marine transport activities were also expanding, as the company acquired and established various rail forwarding and road transport companies into the 1960s.

By now, the company's major trucking operation was Express Services Inc, a company that had received a Quebec charter in Montreal on May 26, 1958. Express Services succeeded in 1963 to Porlier Transports Ltée, the company Clarke had worked with in 1958 to haul cargo it landed at Sept-Iles to Port-Cartier for the Quebec Cartier Mining Co and its mine development at Lac Jeannine. By April 1961, with the backing of the Sept-Iles Chamber of Commerce, Porlier had received an extension of its license that allowed it to operate daily through service from Montreal and Quebec to Port-Cartier and Sept-Iles, and had offices in all four centres plus Toronto.

A successor to Porlier, Sept-Iles-based Porlier Express Inc, would eventually come to be an independent stevedoring contractor at Sept-Iles, Pointe-Noire, Port-Cartier and Havre-St-Pierre.

Express Services did not include just Porlier's interests. Both Porlier and Piuze Transport Inc had taken equal shares in Express Services in order to eliminate duplication and to act as joint agent for the two existing permit holders in order to compete against the other carriers to the North Shore, Nolin Transport, Port-Cartier Transport and Sept-Iles Express. Within just a few years of the North Shore highway to Sept-Iles having opened, no fewer than five trucking companies had been competing for the business, against each other as well as Clarke's coastal operations. Where Porlier had started its North Shore trucking operation from the Eastern Canada Shipping sheds on the Lachine Canal, however, Express Services would eventually build its own new terminals in Montreal and Quebec.

Express Services took over the North Shore route and ran daily road transport service under its own name from Montreal and Quebec to the North Shore, delivering goods by road to St-Siméon, Tadoussac, Les Escoumains, Baie Comeau, Port-Cartier, Shelter Bay, Sept-Iles, Moisie and Havre-St-Pierre, all of which had previously been served by the Clarke Steamship Co, and onward by rail to northern points such as Carol Lake, Churchill Falls, Knob Lake, Labrador City, Lac Jeannine, Schefferville and Wabush.

With the survival of its shipping services to the North Shore now being threatened by the extended highway, Clarke had decided that the best way

to protect its interests was to buy into the long-haul trucking business from Montreal once the new highway was opened.

Express Services was the lead company of a group of transport firms that included Charlevoix Express Inc, serving Baie-St-Paul, Clermont, Pointe-au-Pic and La Malbaie, and Piuze Transport, as well as Chicoutimi Transport Ltée, added in 1965 and serving Chicoutimi, Bagotville and Port Alfred.

Express Services now also owned a local cartage company in Montreal, Yvon Larocque Transport Ltée, which in the 1950s and early 60s had participated in the Arctic sealift, with as many as 75 units sent north to deliver goods to DEW Line stations for Eastern Canada Stevedoring Ltd. While the long-haul companies were all active to points within the province, Larocque looked after local pick-up and delivery in Montreal for Clarke's steamship operations and its pool car operations to other parts of Canada. By 1965, Larocque was operating a fleet of 385 units, with business split 60 per cent in waterfront cartage, 30 per cent general cargo and 10 per cent in DEW Line operations.

As well as Quebec, Clarke had interests in local trucking in Newfoundland through Western Transit Ltd, a subsidiary of the Corner Brook terminal operation, Western Terminals Ltd. This operation, which had traditionally delivered cargo from Clarke ships in Corner Brook, would later be expanded throughout the province, eventually becoming known as Newfoundland Transport Ltd.

Clarke Buys Muirhead Forwarding

Clarke Traffic Services substantially expanded its pool car business in 1965 when it acquired Muirhead Forwarding Ltd, an established rail freight forwarder that had been incorporated in Toronto on May 23, 1947. The company had been in business much longer, however, having been founded as the Muirhead Forwarding Company in 1929. Muirhead's chief competitors were Howell Forwarding, founded in 1913 as Howell Warehouses Ltd, and the Cottrell Forwarding Co Ltd, founded in 1930, although during the 1960s a proliferation of new pool car companies opened up to compete with the original consolidators.

Muirhead had been involved in international freight forwarding as well, and its subsidiary Muirhead Steamships Ltd had been active as shipping agents for many years, acting for both Clarke as well a number of shipping lines that offered direct ocean services to and from the Great Lakes. Muirhead Steamships offices in Toronto, Hamilton, Windsor, Fort William and Waterloo had represented South African Marine Corporation, since 1949, and Interocean Marine Ltd of Montreal, operating to Antwerp and Rotterdam during the seasons of 1957 (the last year of Frank Clarke's North American

Marine) and 1958, after which they too had gone out of business after two ships were trapped at Montreal by winter ice. By 1958, Muirhead Steamships also represented Irish Shipping Ltd, which operated to Dublin.

Clarke's real interest in Muirhead, however, was not shipping agencies or foreign freight forwarding but its nationwide rail freight forwarding network, which by 1965 was serving all ten Canadian provinces from a number of loading terminals in Ontario and Quebec, as well as connecting with Clarke's own steamship services. This acquisition was particularly useful at a time when the company was expanding its Newfoundland service, especially with the recent delivery of the *Cabot*.

Clarke pool car operations now included loading terminals in Montreal and in the cities of Toronto, Hamilton, Kitchener, Peterborough and Brockville in Ontario, and shipments were routed nationwide. In addition to all points in Newfoundland, service was provided to three cities in New Brunswick and three in Nova Scotia as well as to Charlottetown, and in the west to Thunder Bay, Winnipeg, Regina, Saskatoon, Calgary, Edmonton, Vancouver and Victoria. And as well as receiving inward shipments from Quebec and Ontario, the terminals in Moncton and Saint John loaded outbound shipments to St John's.

Daily service was also provided between Montreal and Toronto and from Hamilton and Kitchener to Montreal and from Toronto to Quebec, where the terminal was located in Lévis. Special furniture cars were loaded from Victoriaville, Quebec, to Western Canada and carload consolidation and distribution services were offered in Montreal, Toronto, Kitchener and Winnipeg as well as Moncton.

At certain destinations agents made the final distribution and these included companies such as Johnston Terminals Ltd in Vancouver and Victoria, Tremaine Cartage in Regina, MacCosham Van Lines in Saskatoon and Jenkins Incorporated in Charlottetown. Johnston Terminals was a fair-sized company, having trucking, freight forwarding, port and warehousing operations in Vancouver and New Westminster, and would later acquire Fraser-Surrey Docks.

The result of this expansion into land-based transport was the eventual reorganization of Clarke Traffic Services into three operating divisions, for steamship, pool car and road transport services. Management in the 1960s included Jim Hutcheson as general manager transportation and Paul Preville at steamship; Bob Vince, who had come with Muirhead Forwarding, at pool car; and Louis-Georges Cossette, from Express Services, at road transport.

Non-Transport Activities

Clarke had now begun to divest itself of its non-transport subsidiaries. The longest-standing of these was Labrador Stores Ltd, the former Labrador Fisheries, whose activities had begun with the Clarke Steamship Co. Its last general store had been built at Havre-St-Pierre in 1943 but by 1960, Labrador Stores had found itself involved not only in general merchandising but also in fashion shows for the growing female population of Sept-Iles and Port-Cartier.

Labrador Stores' four Quebec outlets were sold in the early 1960s to the Hudson's Bay Co, and a fifth store in Labrador to Bowring Brothers of St John's. The main Havre-St-Pierre store was retained by the Hudson's Bay Co from 1963 to 1969 and then abandoned. In 1981, it was purchased by the town of Havre-St-Pierre, eventually to become a museum.

Other non-transport activities included the North Shore Construction Co Ltd and Quebec Newfoundland Equipment Ltd, the heavy equipment dealership at Sept-Iles, which operated the wholesale business of Goodyear Tire and Esso as well as a tire retreading operation and had been closely linked to the Clarke Steamship Co and the many mining developments on the North Shore.

On the automotive side, Basques Auto Ltée at Sept-Iles and LaFlèche Auto Ltée at Hauterive, near Baie Comeau, both Ford and Mercury car dealerships, had been added, and Arnaud Acceptance Corporation, a vehicle financing operation, was opened at Sept-Iles. The automotive section came in handy for buying and financing company cars for Clarke executives and personnel as well as the local populations of the North Shore.

None of these companies now constituted part of Clarke's main line transport services, however, and they were eventually sold off as well.

Weekly to the Lower North Shore

In 1965, Clarke placed the *Guard Mavoline* into service from Quebec to Blanc-Sablon, running opposite the *North Pioneer*, thus introducing weekly service to the Lower North Shore. On her first voyage of that season, in early April, the *North Pioneer* had difficulty breaking a channel into St-Augustin and needed an icebreaker to get in. Then, on April 22, the day on which the *Guard Mavoline* departed on her first sailing to Blanc-Sablon, Clarke wrote to the Quebec Transport Commission: -

We wish to confirm that the Clarke Steamship service to St Lawrence North Shore ports between Sept-Iles and Blanc-Sablon will be augmented from today with the addition of the *Guard Mavoline*.

This ship will make a voyage every two weeks, leaving Quebec seven (7) days after departures scheduled for the *North Pioneer*, so as to

ensure users of the service a regular weekly service for their shipments.

This decision has been taken in order to improve service to customers as ships assigned to this service in past years have often had too much cargo, which has delayed shipments to the dissatisfaction of customers.

Clarke, acknowledging that the *North Pioneer* alone was no longer sufficient for the cargo needs of the Lower North Shore, had decided to double frequency on the route. As this was the *Guard Mavoline's* tenth season with them, her capabilities were well known. She could carry 730 tons of salt, 700 tons of fluoride, 300 cords of pulpwood or 400 drums on deck. In her busiest season, 1959, she had completed thirty-two round trips between Quebec and Sept-Iles and four winter voyages on the same route, but now she would run fortnightly to Blanc-Sablon.

Four-Times Weekly North Shore Schedule

For some time now, Clarke had been providing three sailings a week to a good part of the North Shore. For the early summer of 1965, the *North Voyageur* and *Mont-St-Martin* each provided a weekly sailing from Montreal to ports between Baie Comeau and Sept-Iles, the *Mont-St-Martin* on Tuesdays and the *North Voyageur* on Fridays. And the *D'Vora* now provided weekly service from Quebec to ports between Baie Comeau and Havre-St-Pierre, which together with alternate weekly sailings by the *North Pioneer* and *Guard Mavoline*, meant twice-weekly service from Quebec as well.

Such combinations had always been typical of Clarke's approach to scheduling. Ships on differing itineraries were routed so that together they provided various ports with different frequencies, according to need. Before the war, two ships on fortnightly schedules had been able to provide weekly frequencies at some ports. But with the economic development since the war, a combination of weekly and fortnightly sailings now provided twice-weekly service to the more developed ports.

While the *Gaspesia* and *Sable I* had each sailed fortnightly, the *North Shore* had introduced weekly North Shore sailings in 1946, and this practice had now also been adopted for ships such as the *Mont-St-Martin*, *North Voyageur* and the *D'Vora*, with the latter having taken over what would have been the *North Shore's* schedule in 1962.

Meanwhile, the *North Voyageur* made a couple of unusual voyages in 1965 when on July 7 she made a trip from Sept-Iles to St John's and on October 13 a voyage from Montreal to Botwood. These were in addition to her early summer Montreal-Sept-Iles trips and five return cargoes of copper

from Mont-Louis, plus Goose Bay sailings in late summer and winter service between Quebec, Sept-Iles and Havre-St-Pierre. The *Guard Mavoline* also loaded two copper cargoes at Mont-Louis that summer.

Clarke Uses Canadian Ships in the Copper Trade

Meanwhile, in the Tilt Cove-Gaspé copper trade, seven different Canadian-flag ships fulfilled the 1965 requirement, performing a total of sixteen voyages among them.

The new coaster *Sillery*, just completed at Lauzon in 1964, performed seven voyages. And two more coasters, the *Polaris Explorer* and Chimo Shipping's *Chesley A Crosbie*, made one voyage each. Like the *Sillery*, these two ships had been completed in Canadian shipyards in the early 1960s, and were operated by crews of ten, fifteen and twelve respectively.

Three Hall Corporation canallers, the 3,335-ton *Eastcliffe Hall* and the 3,543-ton *Rockcliffe Hall*, both of which had been lengthened to 349 feet, and the 2,220-ton unmodified *Sternecliffe Hall*, performed another five voyages. And an older canaller, the 2,222-ton *A A Hudson*, owned by Northwest Steamships Ltd of Toronto, completed two voyages

Other Tilt Cove-Gaspé Charters

The 1966 season saw the *Hudson Sound* back once again, making sixteen voyages between Tilt Cove and Sandy Beach. But this time she was assisted by the *Chesley A Crosbie*, with seven voyages, and her sister ship, the *Sir John Crosbie*, with four. As well, the *Sillery* and her sister ship, the *Cacouna*, made one voyage each before the business came to an end in 1967. Over the ten years of the Tilt Cove mine's second life, it produced 818,500 tons of copper concentrate for delivery by ship to Gaspé.

The Former "Labrador" Meets her End

Elsewhere, a survivor from the original Clarke fleet, the *Labrador*, now trading as the *Bernier* and converted to a motor coaster in about 1960, was wrecked at Red Bay, Labrador, not far from Battle Harbour, in August 1965. She was still listed in the "Canada List of Shipping" as Valier Bouchard's *Bernier* six years later, while in fact she lay on her side, not far from the wreck of the Basque galleon *San Juan*, lost at the same place four centuries earlier, in 1565.

The first ship to be sold out of the fleet, as long ago as 1930, the bones of the former *Labrador* still survive, a ghost of days past, long after her larger and more glamorous fleetmates had disappeared - the *Gaspesia* to

the Grand Banks fishing grounds, the *North Voyageur* (i) to German bombs in Greece, the *New Northland* to the reefs off Cuba and the *North Star* to breakers in Italy.

The "Guard Mavoline" Runs Aground

On November 4, 1965, one of the *Labrador's* successors, the *Guard Mavoline*, left on her fifteenth consecutive trip for the Lower North Shore. However, while passing St-Augustin on her homeward voyage she managed to run aground. Capt Léo Chouinard, then in command of the *Jean Brillant*, recounted the story in "Capitaine Silence": -

We had just left Mutton Bay at 22:00 hours when I received a radio call from the captain of the *Guard Mavoline*, advising me that his ship was aground near Ile Muskrat, St-Augustin. The damaged vessel had a leak. After stopping at La Tabatière, we hastened to the rescue in hazardous conditions: in the dark of night, without buoys, encircled by snow, winds and reefs. The fraternity of seamen called on us to do so. As it was impossible to take the narrow channels we headed for open water. I then received a second call from the *Guard Mavoline*. She was listing badly to port, in danger of capsizing at any moment. Her crew had taken refuge on the island. Towards 03:00, after several hours of waiting anxiously, they were happy to see us arrive. Her crew came aboard, chilled to the bone. By daybreak, we were approaching Blanc-Sablon. The captain and first officer remained aboard ship, awaiting the arrival of a tug.

A somewhat more detached account appeared in the "Quebec Chronicle-Telegraph" report on November 18, a week after the incident: -

The 700-ton coaster [*Guard*] *Mavoline*, heavily damaged when it ran aground November 11 near St-Augustin, a remote community on the north shore of the Gulf of St Lawrence, arrived at Sept-Iles yesterday, escorted by a tug.

The ship, operating out of Quebec City, serves communities along the north shore as far as Blanc-Sablon in the Strait of Belle Isle. It is owned by George F Gagné of Quebec City and chartered to Clarke Steamship Company.

The small vessel ran onto a reef when it was blown off course in a storm. The hull was badly damaged and two holds were flooded.

A tug was called from Halifax and by the weekend the crew had succeeded in pumping out the flooded holds. Temporary repairs were made to the hull and on Monday the ship was towed off the reef by the tug.

The *Guard Mavoline* would only occasionally now work for Clarke, and her service became more sporadic, especially after she joined the Desgagnés Group. In 1968, for example, she made only two voyages for Clarke, one in May and one in November.

The North Shore Winter Service

Despite Clarke's recently-acquired interests in road transport operations to the North Shore, it also continued to stress the economy of shipping by water. The following announcement, appeared in Sept-Iles' "L'Avenir" on December 23, 1965, typically urging local businessmen to save money by using the North Shore winter service now offered from Quebec by the *North Voyageur* and *Polaris Explorer*: -

Save ... Ship by Boat. Shipping by water with Clarke Traffic Services saves you at least 20 percent over standard trucking rates from Montreal to Baie Comeau and Sept-Iles. Of all the means of transport, ships are the most economical. This factor particularly applies to Clarke Steamship, which offers frequent, regular and reliable service. Wise North Shore businessmen know that they can reduce their transportation cost appreciably by having their orders shipped by boat.

Sailing from Quebec every Tuesday.

On request refrigerated space or heated hold space.

The winter service had now taken hold from Quebec and although higher-value products moved over the road on the daily services from Montreal and Quebec, the shipping service would continue for some years yet.

Winter Sideloader Service from Halifax

After her first season running between Montreal and St John's, the *Cabot* moved to Halifax for the winter. New ramps had been installed for sideloading operations and she made her first call at Pier 9A on December 23, 1965. Her first 1966 sailing left Halifax on January 3, carrying twenty-nine containers in addition to her normal cargo. Undertaking seventeen winter voyages from Halifax to St John's, she made her last sailing from Halifax on April 2 before returning to Montreal for the summer.

In 1966, Davie Shipbuilding, noting the *Cabot's* winter sailings from Halifax, as well as the fact that she had been designed for ocean service, used these attributes in its advertising. Their new advertisement claimed

that "Big Davie builds them all" and among the ships it built were "Package Freighters ... such as the new ocean-going m.s. *Cabot*, which carries cargoes to the Gulf, Newfoundland, Atlantic coast points and international ports."

This turned out to be the only time that Clarke actually operated a sideloader in winter service from Halifax, as due to unforeseen circumstances the *Cabot* would not be available the next winter and thereafter she and her new sister ship would operate year-round from Montreal. The loading ramps that had been installed at Halifax did not go to waste however, as they were moved to Corner Brook when sideloader service was introduced to that port a few years later.

The Clarke Services in 1966

On April 10, the *Cabot* began a season of thirty-six voyages from Montreal. She was assisted once more by the *Dundee* with seventeen voyages and the *P M Crosbie* with nine, plus a single voyage by the *Irish Willow*, providing sixty-three sailings in all. The *Dundee* and *P M Crosbie* each lifted a cargo of copper from Mont-Louis to Montreal that April as well. To Corner Brook, meanwhile, the company continued to run the *Charny*, with twenty-seven sailings that season, and to Botwood the *Maridan C*, with thirteen trips. These services were supplemented by occasional sailings by other ships.

As the Botwood service was a low-volume route, Clarke obtained a \$75,000 subsidy in 1966 in order to keep it open. This compared to the \$100,000, later increased to \$135,000, that was paid to CTMA for providing service between Montreal and the Magdalen Islands. Nevertheless it was the beginning of the end for the Botwood service, which, after a period of subsidies paid to Newfoundland Steamships and then to the Gulf Ports Steamship Co, would be closed by 1969. Steamship cargoes for central Newfoundland were eventually routed over Corner Brook, with the exception that pool car traffic was still routed by rail to Clarke's terminal at Grand Falls.

Meanwhile, the *North Voyageur* and the *North Pioneer*, now in her last season, worked the North Shore service, assisted as usual by chartered tonnage. Weekly service was extended all the way from Montreal to Blanc-Sablon in 1966 by running the chartered *Ste Foy* opposite the *North Pioneer*, whereas the *Guard Mavoline* had turned at Quebec. Passenger service remained fortnightly, as before, but the Montreal cargo service was now weekly.

North Shipping & Transportation's "Ste Foy"

As far as North Shipping was concerned, its coaster *Ste Foy*, at 184 by 30 feet, and with a crew of ten, replaced the *D'Vora* on charter to Clarke,

except that she ran all the way to Blanc-Sablon. This of course meant that she would only make eighteen trips compared to the thirty-six the *D'Vora* had achieved in 1965 on a weekly turnaround. With machinery aft, the *Ste Foy* was served by four five-ton booms and a fifteen-ton jumbo, and had a deadweight capacity of about 680 tons. At 46,300 cubic feet she had 60 per cent more cargo space than the *D'Vora*, an important consideration in the coastal trades.

The *Ste Foy* had been completed by Canadian Vickers at Montreal in 1950 as one of eight sister ships that had been built for coastal service to connect with Saguenay Terminals' ocean ships on the coast of Venezuela and up the Orinoco River. She had been acquired by North Shipping & Transportation and named for the suburb of Quebec where Capt Duval lived.

Prior to 1966, Clarke had used the *Ste Foy* only occasionally, but at the end of 1965 it had also returned North Shipping's *Gaspésien*, which had just closed out the Ste-Anne-des-Monts-Sept-Iles ferry service. The *Ste Foy* thus replaced both *D'Vora* and the *Gaspésien* in the Clarke fleet. The *D'Vora* made one farewell voyage for Clarke on her old route on May 3, 1966, and later, still under Harney Brothers ownership, she would be broken up after grounding on the Gaspé coast on December 27, 1968.

The *Ste Foy*, meanwhile, now sailed beyond Havre-St-Pierre to Blanc-Sablon, leaving Montreal for the first time on April 5, 1966, and thereafter alternating with the *North Pioneer* to Blanc-Sablon on weekly sailings from Montreal and Quebec.

Waterfront Unrest in Montreal

The spring of 1966 also saw waterfront unrest in Montreal as 3,500 men of the International Longshoremen's Association went on strike on May 9 against the Shipping Federation of Canada, representing deep sea operators. However, injunctions were issued against the ILA to prevent them from interfering with any of the coastal operations of not only Clarke but also Canada Steamship Lines and Agence Maritime. While about 115 ocean ships were effected by the walkout Clarke ships continued to work.

Eventually, after a two-day wildcat strike in May 1967 that saw three of the company's Newfoundland ships sail light, Clarke's own stevedores would drop their representation by the Brotherhood of Railway and Steamship Clerks and Freight Handlers. Instead, they signed with the International Longshoremen's Association that October.

Meanwhile, in Sept-Iles, on June 1, the stevedores working for Clarke, Eastern Canada Stevedoring and Agence Maritime, all represented by the United Steelworkers of America, agreed to a two-year contract that saw them gain wage increases.

The "North Voyageur"

The *North Voyageur* saw special duty in August 1966, when she briefly replaced the *Jean Brillant* on the Rimouski to Blanc-Sablon service after the latter had suffered an engine breakdown and had to be towed into Havre-St-Pierre by the *Ste Foy*. As luck would have it, this was the very voyage on which "La Patrie" reporter Danielle L'Heureux had booked her trip in the *Jean Brillant*.

While her passengers were flown to their various destinations and the *Jean Brillant* taken to Quebec for repairs, the *North Voyageur* went to Rimouski to perform the next contracted voyage.

That Clarke kept the *North Voyageur* well maintained was noticed by the Sept-Iles newspaper "L'Avenir," which carried the following item in its "On the Waterfront" column on November 3, 1966: -

Folks who travel the waterfront, for one reason or another, can't help notice the difference in the appearance of ships. Most of the big ore boats and tankers range from spotless to clean. Among the coasters, the *North Voyageur* is about the cleanest but then some of the coasters look like they'll fall apart if somebody was to lay a paint brush on them.

Finally, at the end of 1966, Clarke announced that it would no longer make regular calls at Baie Comeau due to reducing cargoes and mounting costs. Although it added that it would still make calls by inducement, this put an end to thirty years of scheduled service to Baie Comeau, where it had made its first regular calls in 1936. Although Clarke coastal service to the North Shore would continue for another dozen years, this was a sign of things to come.

An Accident Befalls the "Cabot"

The 1966 season did not end at all well for Clarke. The *Cabot's* last voyage from Montreal to St John's had been scheduled for December 30, 1966, and her first from Halifax to St John's for January 5, 1967. But neither took place.

Instead, on December 16, while loading for one of her last voyages of the year, at the Clarke pier in Montreal, the pride of the fleet capsized onto her port side, sinking in about 30 feet of water. She had listed too steeply during loading operations and water had entered her cargo doors. As she rolled over she took two of her officers with her. A Canadian Press report the following day reported as follows: -

Frogmen recovered a second body early today from the coastal freighter *Cabot*, which capsized early Friday while being loaded in Montreal harbor.

Police said identification of the body was expected later today. It was found in the cabin of missing crew member Gérard Leblond of Cap Chat, Que, the vessel's second officer.

The body of Marcel Côté of St-Siméon, Que, third officer ... was recovered Friday afternoon. Nine of the ship's 21 crew members were injured when the ship keeled over.

Federal investigators today were trying to establish why the 400-foot [sic], \$8 million, 18-month-old ship suddenly capsized. She now is lying on her starboard side in about 30 feet of water.

At the time, the *Cabot* was in her final stages of loading at Shed 66 for one of her regular runs to St John's, Nfld. This is a few hundred yards from Shed 63, where the package freighter *Fort William* caught fire and sank following an explosion September 14, 1965, causing the deaths of five men. An official of the ship's owners, Clarke Steamship Co Ltd, said Friday the cause was not a shift in cargo.

James Hutcheson, general manager of the company, said the company had begun an immediate investigation. He believed the cause was a leak although the lowest of the ship's cargo loading doors, all open at the time, was two feet above the waterline

Most of the crew members were asleep when the ship rolled. They escaped, some in underclothing, some in nothing at all. Some were taken off by firemen using ladders.

Canada Steamship Lines' brand-new *Fort William* had been delivered from the same yard in the same year as the *Cabot*. In her case a heavy deck load of steel had made the ship unstable, causing her to take on a rapid list and allowing water into her side doors. The result in that case had been an explosion that was caused when water came into contact with 300 tons of powdered carbide in her cargo. The presiding judge had decided that the pumping of ballast tanks before the deck cargo had been discharged was at fault. The case of the *Cabot* was different but these two unfortunate accidents emphasized the extra care that has to be taken while working ships with open sideports.

While arrangements were made to divert Clarke pool cars and full carload and truckload cargo to other routes, a joint contract was awarded for salvaging the *Cabot*. This went to Foundation Maritime Ltd, the company that had salvaged the *Fort William* the year before, and Marine Industries Ltd, to

restore the ship to operating condition. Salvage preparation began on January 10, 1967, and she was righted on January 18. On January 22, thirty-seven days after the accident, the *Cabot* was refloated after a twelve-day salvage operation.

On February 11, the *Cabot* left Montreal in tow of three tugs, bound for the Marine Industries shipyard at Sorel for reconditioning. This downriver tow from Montreal was the first such operation to be attempted above Quebec during the winter season. Repair work included making good all the water damage and the complete replacement of one of her deck cranes, which had been destroyed during the accident. The *Cabot* finally returned to service on June 8.

The "North Pioneer" is Retired

Also at the end of 1966, a year after the withdrawal of CSL's Saguenay steamers, the *North Pioneer* was retired and laid up at Quebec. The last Clarke ship to carry passengers down the St Lawrence from Montreal, her steam engines had made her uneconomical to operate. The retirement of the *North Pioneer* closed out the final chapter in over forty-five years of overnight passenger service on the river. Her subsidy had lasted five years longer than the *North Shore's*, but now only the Lower St Lawrence Transportation Co's *Jean Brillant* out of Rimouski and the Magdalen Islands Transportation Co's *North Gaspé* out of Pictou still carried overnight passengers.

Until the end of 1957, the *North Pioneer* had been owned by the North Pioneer Steamship Co, but she had then been taken into direct ownership by the Clarke Steamship Co. Around 1965, she had been transferred to a new affiliate, the Dingwall Shipping Co Ltd, of 1646 Barrington Street in Halifax, which put her on the sales lists in search of a new owner.

Possibly because she had more passenger accommodation than buyers wanted, the *North Pioneer* spent three years laid up at Quebec before finding a new owner. In 1969 she was sold to Steel Factors Ltd of Montreal, who in turn sold her to Mars Naviera Panama SA. Under the new name of *Vivian*, she arrived in Halifax on January 9, 1970, dry-docked at Dartmouth Marine Slips, and sailed on January 28 with a light blue hull and a cargo of potatoes for the Caribbean.

Almost a year later, on December 26, 1970, the *Vivian* was back in Halifax again. Sailing with another load of potatoes, this time for the US East Coast, she almost joined the second *North Voyageur* and the *Novaport* as victims of heavy winter weather. Suffering rudder damage and then losing power completely twenty miles off Shelburne the day after leaving Halifax, she sent out a distress call as she was in danger of going aground. Luckily, she managed to regain power and was able to continue her voyage.

The "Sillery" Joins the North Shore Service

After the *North Pioneer* was withdrawn, Clarke decided not to renew the *Ste Foy*, which had been running opposite her to Blanc-Sablon. To replace both ships, it chartered the three-year-old *Sillery* and ran her on a modified schedule from both Montreal and Quebec to Sept-Iles, with occasional calls at Rimouski en route to the North Shore. The Rimouski calls were to support the *Jean Brillant*, which was now handling the North Shore passenger, express and reefer business from Rimouski. Main line ships made sixteen Rimouski calls to assist her in 1967.

The *Sillery* left Montreal on her first Clarke voyage on April 13, 1967, and took her last departure on December 3, making seventeen voyages that year compared to fifteen by the *North Pioneer* and eighteen by the *Ste Foy* in 1966. Other chartered ships made up the difference, particularly the *Maridan C* from the Botwood service, which made eight North Shore voyages that year.

By this time, Canadian Vickers, who owned the G T Davie yard where the *Sillery* had been built, were her owners, and she now carried a plain black funnel, her previous markings having been painted out. Malcolm Mackay of Halifax remembers seeing her at Quebec on one of her coasting voyages in September 1967, and described her cargo: "partly loaded with big Brock Steel gas tanks, general cargo filled up the rest, with Corn Flakes and some Special K."

The *Sillery* brought a modern ship to the service now that the *North Pioneer* was gone, and she became the main Montreal vessel to the North Shore, while the *North Voyageur* now ran from Quebec. The *North Voyageur* took over the *North Pioneer's* position on the Lower North Shore service, running from Quebec to Sept-Iles and then along the coast to Blanc-Sablon, along with the *Jean Brillant* from Rimouski.

The schedules were also revised so that the *Sillery* departed Montreal on Monday rather than Tuesday and the *North Voyageur* left Quebec on Tuesday instead of Wednesday. This allowed for the delivery of fresh fruits and vegetables in time for the weekend to grocers located between Rivière-au-Tonnerre and Natashquan.

A Proposal for a New Ship

As the *Sillery* left Montreal for the first time that April, Stanley Clarke was in Sept-Iles. As well as encouraging city officials to get on with planning a larger port for a new generation of ships of up to 200,000 tons, he gave a speech to the Sept-Iles Chamber of Commerce outlining the company's plans

for the Lower North Shore, which were reported in "L'Avenir" on April 18, 1967: -

Speaking to some 150 people who gathered in the Hotel Sept-Iles, Mr Clarke went on to speak about the operations of Clarke Steamship in general and its service to the North Shore in particular. He said that in order to improve the company's service to the Lower North Shore an additional vessel would have to be put into operation and that the best type of vessel for the Lower North Shore service would be of the Class I Star icebreaking vessel.

Such a vessel would cost in the neighbourhood of \$4 million and to justify the cost of building the ship, the company required a three-year subsidy contract "to serve the underdeveloped area below Sept-Iles."

It would take three years to build the vessel and Mr Clarke pointed out that the s.s. *North Pioneer* had already been retired from service and that the m.v. *Jean Brillant* was 37 years old and did not have long to go.

The company president said that in order to keep shipping costs down and give better service, Clarke Steamship was resorting to newer and better shipping methods and larger ships.

He outlined the company's use of pallets, new packaging for small shipments and the use of tow-motors in the holds of ships for loading and unloading purposes.

He stated that the company could only use these conveniences if the ports along the Lower North Shore were equipped to handle the vessels. He told the audience that improvements would have to be made to many of the Lower North Shore docks.

Mr Clarke said that the need for improved service along the Lower North Shore indicated that the turning point for the vessel servicing that region (currently the m.v. *Jean Brillant*) would have to be altered from Rimouski to Sept-Iles. This he said would enable the vessel to make one weekly trip from Sept-Iles to Havre-St-Pierre and return as well as a weekly return trip to Blanc-Sablon.

This would mean that material from Montreal and Quebec would be transhipped from the m.v. *North Voyageur* and the m.v. *Sillery* to the m.v. *Jean Brillant* at Sept-Iles. Mr Clarke said that the company would establish through rates so that although cargo would be transhipped at Sept-Iles the cost to the customer would remain the same as a direct movement.

Mr Clarke said that although discussions for the improved service to

the Lower North Shore had been going on between the Federal and the Provincial governments and the company since 1963, no contract had been signed. "It must be clear to all of you, as businessmen, that a \$4 million ship cannot be undertaken without a firm commitment as to the terms of a subsidy contract."

Mr Clarke then told his audience that they would have to put pressure on government "to obtain the service his company is offering." From this, it seems safe to assume that something else was going on.

A reluctance by both governments to commit to a new ship seems likely to have resulted from the activity of others, and chief among these others was Agence Maritime, who had taken the Hydro-Quebec contract in 1962 and built the *Fort Ramezay* and *Fort Lauzon* in 1963 and 1964.

Dingwall Shipping and Orleans Steamships

The Dingwall Shipping Co, which had become the last owner of the *North Pioneer*, had found its way into Clarke's hands after it was no longer needed as a shipowning company by National Gypsum. One immediate connection was that Brock Clarke had acted as Dingwall Shipping's counsel, filing that company's submission to the Royal Commission on Coasting Trade in 1958. Dingwall had of course owned three of the last Canadian-flag "Park" ships, as well as the three larger bulk carriers that had replaced them. Thus, the company that had once owned "Park" ships and bulk carriers soon came to be the registered owner of several Clarke ships, including the *Cabot*, *Trans-St-Laurent*, *Charlevoix* and *Saguenay*. In fact, by 1970 most of the Clarke fleet would be owned by Dingwall Shipping.

In the 1960s, things were not always what they appeared to be in Canadian shipping. Shipowning companies changed hands for fiscal and tax reasons, including the right to replace tonnage on special terms. Steel companies, lumber companies, turbine makers and even bus lines ended up owning ships for tax reasons, under something known as the "angel" system. There were good fiscal reasons for Clarke wanting to acquire Dingwall Shipping and so it did.

A slightly more arm's-length company was the Orleans Steamship Co Ltd, of 1010 Beaver Hall Hill in Montreal, which had been introduced to Clarke by Bob Boyle, of Shipping Ltd, then at the same address, and Quebec City lawyer Claude Pratte, who was also a director of Express Services. In the same building, but not related, was the Sutcliffe Shipping Co, which had acquired a number of former American lakers and in 1965 became managing operators of the Labrador Steamship Co Ltd, a Canadian subsidiary of Pickands Mather & Co of Cleveland. Labrador Steamship had been formed to carry iron ore from the Wabush Mines loading dock at Pointe-Noire, near Clarke City, into the Great Lakes, using two US lakers acquired from Pickands

Mather's Interlake Steamship Company and two maximum Seaway-size ships built in Canada. Sutcliffe had acted as agents for Dingwall Shipping's *Walton* during her sale at Sorel in 1963.

Ownership of the *Gulfport* had been vested with the Orleans Steamship Co when the *North Voyageur* and *Saguenay* were registered with the Gulf Ports Steamship Co in 1958. Meanwhile, the *North Gaspé*, then the *North Voyageur* and *Saguenay*, were in turn registered with the Orleans Steamship Co for parts of the 1960s, but in 1969 the *North Gaspé* and *North Voyageur* were both transferred to the Dingwall Shipping Co.

Dingwall Shipping and Orleans Steamship were not operating entities but holding companies, used to own ships in the company fleet. Different ships changed hands at various times from Clarke and Gulf Ports to Orleans to Dingwall, and to the observer these transactions must have seemed complex. But to meet prevailing tax rules, ships were sold in order to create value to build new ships, and for these purposes the holding companies proved their worth.

The "Chimo"

The second modern sideloader, the 6,026-ton *Chimo*, was launched on June 27, 1967, also by Davie Shipbuilding at Lauzon, and indicative of the close co-operation that now existed between Clarke and Canada Steamship Lines, the *Chimo* was registered to Canada Steamship Lines and bareboat chartered to Clarke. This was strictly a finance arrangement however, as the *Chimo* was a Clarke ship in every way as much as the *Cabot*. While the lease ownership passed to CSL's parent company, Power Corporation of Canada Ltd, in 1974, Clarke would finally take full title in 1979 and the *Chimo* was always crewed, managed and operated by Clarke.

Capt Jacques Chouinard, formerly of the *Novaport* and *Highliner*, was the first master of the *Chimo*, a ship he would command until his retirement. Thus, while Capt Bégin, former master of the *Gulfport*, commanded the *Cabot*, Capt Chouinard of the *Novaport* was now in charge of the *Chimo*.

The *Chimo* was almost identical to the *Cabot* except that she had three hatches instead of four and was fitted with flume stabilizers. This was a system of inboard water tanks constructed in such a way that the movement of their contents in rough weather acted as a counterweight to the ship's roll.

The July 1967 issue of "Canadian Shipping" reported on the launching ceremonies at Lauzon: -

The 8,000-ton package freighter *Chimo*, designed for all-year service between St John's Nfld and Montreal, was launched recently at Davie Shipbuilding in Lauzon, Que.

The \$7 million vessel, which doubles the carrying capacity of Newfoundland Steamships Ltd, was sponsored by Mrs F W Rowe, wife of Newfoundland's finance minister.

The *Chimo* is a sister ship to the Davie-built *Cabot* and will enter service in mid-August. The vessels will provide two round-trips a week between Newfoundland and Montreal.

For the first time, two modern purpose-built sister ships were available to handle the St John's trade on a year-round basis.

Automated Bridge Controls

While the installation in the *Cabot* was identical, the November 1967 issue of "Canadian Shipping" particularly noted the *Chimo's* bridge arrangements: -

Better described as a command room, this space is so equipped as to enable one man to control every movement of the vessel day or night and communicate with every area of operation. An extensive central console houses indicators, radio and internal telephones, public address system, talk-back docking control, navigation lights, alarms, steering gear and a host of important devices, including the single level main propulsion engine and propeller control.

The single lever control enables the master to govern every movement of the vessel ahead or astern at will from the "rest" condition to a "full advance" of 17 knots.

Supplementing the central control are two additional slave consoles from which the Master can also command his ship from either side of the vessel, ensuring maximum visibility and control while docking.

The *Chimo* was the fifth Clarke ship to be fitted with controllable pitch propellers that included bridge controls, a feature that was common to all of the *Saguenay*, *Charlevoix*, *Trans-St-Laurent* and *Cabot* as well. For their masters, these ships must have seemed a spectacular advance on the war-built *Gulfport* and *Novaport*, or even the post-war *Highliner*.

Shipbuilding in Canada

Some of Stanley Clarke's comments during his speech on the evening of the *Chimo's* launch touched on the subject of shipbuilding subsidies and were recorded in the June article in "Canadian Shipping": -

A warning that the Canadian shipbuilding industry may be heading for trouble was given by the president of Clarke Traffic Services, Stanley D Clarke, when he addressed a Quebec City banquet following the *Chimo* launching.

Mr Clarke said Canadian shipowners will be forced to build their vessels outside Canada if the federal government proceeds with its plan to reduce its shipbuilding subsidies. He said the government may cut its subsidy payments from 25% to 17%.

"Instead of reducing federal assistance in construction of ships, it should be increased to at least 30%," Mr Clarke said. "The only way to keep shipbuilding alive in Canada is to make it an attractive proposition for shipowners."

Noting that the shipping industry is operating in a competitive world, he said the government should adopt the right attitude towards shipping laws.

"I feel that our other ship, the *Cabot*, is just as good as any vessel produced in Japan or other foreign shipbuilding centres. In fact, Canadian shipbuilders are just as advanced in the concepts of modern shipbuilding as most foreign countries."

The subsidy had dropped from 40 per cent for the *Cabot* to 25 per cent for the *Chimo*, and stepped reductions would begin in 1969 so that subsidies would be totally eliminated by 1982. Stanley's speech turned out to be prophetic in one way. Beginning with the *North Gaspé* at the same yard almost 30 years earlier, Clarke companies had ordered nine ships in Canadian shipyards, and had purchased three Canadian-built newbuildings from the wartime shipbuilding program, totalling a dozen products of Canadian shipyards. Although the *Chimo* was not the last ship to be built for Clarke, she was the last to be built in Canada.

The name "Chimo"

Finally the article in "Canadian Shipping" contained a comment on the choice of name for the new ship: -

Mr Clarke explained the origin of the name *Chimo* for the new vessel.

"This is an Eskimo word used as a friendly greeting," he said. "We hope it will prove appropriate for a ship used to improve communications between the mainland and Newfoundland."

The building of the *Chimo* confirms that the new concept of water transport to Newfoundland, developed and implemented by the *Cabot*,

was an essential improvement for modern transportation.

To some, the ship's name seemed to confirm a link between the Clarkes and the Crosbys, who owned Chimo Shipping and had a small interest in Newfoundland Steamships. However, this was always denied as there were other minority shareholders from Newfoundland besides the Crosbys. Chimo is in fact a corruption of the native word "saimouk," meaning to extend one's hand, and is found in the name of Fort Chimo, Quebec, on Ungava Bay.

The "Fort St Louis"

Clarke's good relationship with Canada Steamship Lines continued in 1967 when it chartered the sideloader *Fort St Louis*. She left Montreal on April 13 for St John's, replacing the damaged *Cabot* until the latter's repairs could be completed at Sorel. Later that season she ran together with the *Cabot* in order to maintain a two-ship service until the *Chimo* could be delivered from the builder's yard.

The *Fort St Louis* performed nine voyages for Clarke in 1967, leaving Montreal on her last trip on October 10. The *Chimo* then took her maiden voyage on October 16 and two Clarke sideloaders were now in service to St John's for the first time, offering two departures a week. This pattern would be followed for the next fifteen years, and while the *Fort St Louis* was returned to Canada Steamship Lines for now, she would also become an important ship in Clarke's Newfoundland trade.

Elsewhere in 1967, Cunard Line performed two cruises from Montreal, but these were their last. Its 22,637-ton *Franconia* offered a 12-day cruise on July 24 to Boston, Bermuda, St Pierre and Charlottetown and the 22,592-ton *Carmania* 5 days on August 8 to Quebec, St Pierre and the Saguenay River. But this was Cunard's last year of service to Montreal as the *Franconia* took over the old Furness Bermuda Line contract between New York and Bermuda and the *Carmania* went into full-time cruising.

It was also the last year for the Georgian Bay Line's *South American*, which during Expo'67, the Montreal World's Fair of 1967, operated seven cruises from Cleveland and Detroit to Victoria Pier in Montreal. At the end of the summer, this veteran, built in 1914, the same year as Canada Steamship Lines' *Noronic*, was withdrawn from service, another victim of the *Yarmouth Castle* tragedy. Since the withdrawal of the *North Pioneer* in 1966, however, Clarke no longer embarked any passengers at Montreal.

More Change at Caboteurs Unis

G rard Harvey, who had recounted how Caboteurs Unis had gone from

being an association into an active competitor of Clarke's in 1961, carried on the story in his "Marins du Saint-Laurent": -

On April 16, 1967, at a meeting of the management committee, again at the Hotel Victoria, Capt Roger Desgagnés, who had been appointed general manager on February 16, 1966, in order to manage on the spot, at Shed 22 in the Port of Montreal, the traffic of eight vessels, while also being a member of the group, was asked to resign his post, because of certain activity incompatible with the function with which he had been entrusted.

Roger Desgagnés' Compagnie de Navigation Desgagnés had owned the coaster *Champlain*, but that same month it had acquired the co-operatives largest ship when it bought North Shore Shipping Lines' *Prince Ungava* and renamed her *Jean Talon*. Harvey continued the story: -

They insisted then that I take on two functions, as president of the co-operative and traffic manager, making the point that I was now the only one who knew all the inner workings. I accepted temporarily, a little like a challenge, dreading this radical change from my past occupations. And thus I dropped anchor in the Port of Montreal for three years.

During the first two years, assisted by some very capable employees who, at first, greeted my arrival with unease, we made good the losses of the five previous years; the third, alas, was less fruitful. This was to be expected and for several reasons.

Two of our members, who had acquired their ships with finance company assistance, forced to pay a usurious interest rate that put a strain on their finances, ceased trading on short notice; another disappeared under mysterious circumstances at Rimouski quay.

Very uneven work opportunities, stevedoring strikes that descended on us without notice, and what's more, strikes by employees at our major clients (North Shore companies Quebec Cartier Mining, Iron Ore and Wabush Mines) all forced us frequently to interrupt our operations, all the while still paying our operating costs. Against these events, which were also occurring in other sectors, but which for us were disastrous, we were helpless and we had to contemplate the moment when we might have to cease.

The iron ore strikes that occurred in Quebec and Labrador during this era affected not only Caboteurs Unis, and indeed its competitors, Clarke and Agence Maritime, but also idled large fleets of lakers that were used to carry the ore traffic to the Great Lakes.

Caboteurs Unis eventually incorporated, scaling down its activities at

the same time. While it had managed to obtain cargo and to run a regular service for a decade, it usually ran at a loss and there was often dissension in its ranks.

Ironically, seeing that Jean-Marie Dumont, who Capt Byers replaced, had come from Clarke, when Byers resigned in 1967 it would be to go to Clarke.

Winter Service from Montreal

In the autumn of 1967, Clarke announced the new two-ship St John's service would now be year-round. In an announcement in "The Gazette" on October 10, headed "M/S *Cabot* and the new M/S *Chimo* (Starting 16th October): -

The New Year-Round Service. The addition of the m.s. *Chimo* to Newfoundland Steamships Ocean Express Service operating between Montreal and St John's now enables twice-weekly summer service. Sailings from Montreal each Friday and Monday assure arrival of merchandise at St John's each Monday and Thursday. Winter service is weekly, with sailings each Friday to arrive Monday.

Transit Time - 60 hours. Wholesalers, retailers, all business men in Eastern Newfoundland can forget waiting about 6, 7 or more days for goods from the mainland. Via the new *Chimo* or *Cabot*, St John's is only 60 hours from Montreal.

Lower Freight Rates. On freight originating west of Montreal destined St John's or beyond St John's to rail points as far as Glenwood the rate is lower via the rail-water or rail-water-rail route than the normal rail routing.

Faster service is now coupled with lower rates with one single billing covering goods from point of origin to destination as far as Glenwood including all Avalon Peninsula and Conception Bay area.

Route via Montreal and Newfoundland Steamships Limited.

Glenwood was a rail station 230 miles from St John's on Canadian National's Newfoundland railway, located about fifteen miles west of Gander. But it was the use of the term Ocean Express here that was interesting as one of the line's successors would be called Oceanex.

During the winter of 1967-68, Clarke chartered the *Cabot* to Federal Commerce & Navigation (Fednav) of Montreal for its winter service between Montreal and Antwerp. A Canadian Pacific Railway circular headed "St Lawrence Winter Service - Federal Atlantic Line" and dated December 4,

1967, gave some details: -

This service was inaugurated last winter by the Federal Commerce & Navigation Co Ltd, Montreal, PQ, with their ship *Charny* between Continental Europe ports and Montreal.

This coming winter season, they expect to have only the *Cabot*, which will leave Antwerp December 15th and is expected to arrive Montreal December 25th. Two other voyages of this ship are expected but the schedule is not available at this moment...

They also advertise a containerized cargo shipping service on this ship for the winter time.

This was the first time a Clarke ship had operated Transatlantic other than the odd positioning voyage by the *Highliner* or *Yorkwood* or chartered ships at the beginning or end of the St Lawrence navigation season.

While the *Cabot* was chartered to Federal Commerce, the new *Chimo* opened up the new winter service between Montreal and St John's, cutting the transit time for goods destined for Newfoundland from five days to two-and-a-half. The first winter sailing, set for January 2, 1968, thus marked the beginning of year-round service between Montreal and Newfoundland.

The first month did not go at all well, however. That winter was one of the worst on record and on January 9 the Port of Montreal was closed by a massive ice jam between the port and downstream Sorel. By January 12, several ships were trapped in Montreal and it would be January 31 before the Coast Guard icebreaker *d'Iberville* arrived, by which time eleven ships were trapped by ice.

With eight icebreakers working the Montreal-Quebec shipping channel, Montreal was finally re-opened on February 2, with the *Chimo* arriving from St John's and the 4,049-ton *Thora Dan*, of the J Lauritzen Line, departing for Europe. The severe freeze-up had brought shipping to a standstill for twenty-six days and the channel would be blocked for four more days between February 2 and February 6 by another giant mass of ice.

Nevertheless, Clarke's new Ice Class 1 tonnage had worked very well and this allowed the company to move its winter service permanently from Halifax to Montreal. The next serious report did not come for two years, when on February 28, 1969, both the *Cabot* and *Chimo* were trapped near Quebec City, along with two other ships. Montreal was now Clarke's year-round port. Starting with Pointe-au-Pic in 1928-29, then Quebec in 1958-59, and now Montreal in 1967-68, Clarke had always been in the vanguard of companies operating winter services in the St Lawrence River.

A novelty that spring, after the *Cabot*'s return from her charter to

Federal Commerce, was a call at Sept-Iles by the *Cabot*. Under Capt Bégin, she opened the 1968 season on April 3, when she called at the Iron Ore Co standby dock to discharge a deck cargo of rolling stock for the Quebec North Shore & Labrador Railway before proceeding to St John's. More than 100 local guests were invited to tour the ship and it was duly noted that Capt Bégin had been with Clarke for forty-three years. The next day, the *Jean Brillant* arrived under Capt Léo Chouinard, on her first weekly trip of the season, now wearing the same orange hull that had been introduced by the *Cabot*. It had now been twenty-seven years since these two men had first served together in the *North Gaspé* under wartime conditions.

The 1968 Season

By this time, Clarke had both the *Cabot* and *Chimo* in year-round service to St John's and needed another ship for Corner Brook plus the *North Voyageur* and a number of chartered coasters for the North Shore. But the ship that the *Cabot* had replaced on her charter to Federal Commerce that winter, the *Charny*, was lost that winter and therefore no longer available for the Corner Brook run.

Although a good ship, the *Charny* saw only three years under the Canadian flag. She was lost in heavy seas 550 miles east of Cape Hatteras on February 10, 1968, after developing a crack in her hull. On a voyage from Quebec to Bermuda, Haiti and Jamaica with pipes at the time, her 22 crew and two passengers were rescued from their lifeboats by the 22,124-ton Norwegian bulk carrier *Vinni*, which was nearby. Her master was Capt Jules Jourdain, 41, former captain of the *Cap Diamant*, which before her loss had been competing with the *Jean Brillant* to Blanc-Sablon.

To replace the *Charny* to Corner Brook, Clarke chartered the 2,709-ton Cypriot-flag *Salamina*, a 1956-built motorship that her owners had just purchased from the Prince Line as the *Norman Prince*. Cyprus being a Commonwealth country, this ship was allowed in under the Commonwealth Shipping Agreement, but a Greek-speaking crew was very unusual for a Clarke charter trading between two ports in Canada. Although the *Salamina* had accommodation for a dozen passengers, it was not used. It was her 3,440 tons of cargo capacity that was wanted. The *Salamina* served only the 1968 season, as a stand-in, but four years later Clarke would employ another Prince Line ship when it chartered the 1,499-ton *Chiltern Prince* for the Corner Brook run in 1972. The *Chiltern Prince* would become the last British-flag ship to be chartered by Clarke.

Plans for winter service over the season 1968-69 were meanwhile announced in "L'Avenir" from Sept-Iles on October 28, headed "Clarke Steamship To Maintain Service Over Winter Months": -

Clarke Traffic Services Ltd has assured that a winter service will be

maintained this year between Sept-Iles and Montreal. This information was made public by a spokesman for the maritime firm this week. Two ships will be in service over the winter season.

The m.s. *Chimo*, the newest addition to the Clarke fleet, will depart from the Port of Montreal bound for Sept-Iles every ten days. The *North Voyageur*, which is well known at ports all along the North Shore, will make a regular trip from Quebec City to Sept-Iles every week.

m.s. *Chimo* will continue to call at ports on the island of Newfoundland as well as her regular calls at Sept-Iles. This will provide a regular link between Montreal and Newfoundland, with a call at Sept-Iles en route.

Even though some of the ocean services were still developing their winter operations, the introduction of the *Cabot* and *Chimo* had now made the Port of Montreal a year-round port for the company.

The "North Voyageur" and the "Sillery"

With the *North Pioneer* now out of service and laid up at Quebec, the *North Voyageur* was now the only Clarke-owned ship still in regular summer service to the North Shore. Although Clarke asked German & Milne in 1968 to prepare a plan to lengthen the *North Voyageur*, this was never done and she stayed in year-round service from Quebec.

From Montreal, meanwhile, the *Mont-St-Martin* was now taking the Tuesday sailings, to arrive in Sept-Iles on Thursday, while the *Sillery* took the Friday ones, sailing over the weekend to arrive in Sept-Iles on Monday morning. With a 120-foot hold for extra-length cargoes and reefer chambers, the *Sillery* was a useful ship for the North Shore. Now owned by Marc Carrière Ltée of Montreal, she became the mainstay of the Montreal-Sept-Iles service. In addition to local pick-up service in Montreal, both ships were supported by pool cars with local pick-up of shipments from Toronto, Hamilton and Kitchener/Waterloo to Montreal Wharf to connect with the Montreal sailings.

But the *Sillery* saw only four full seasons with Clarke. While carrying scrap from Sept-Iles to Montreal on November 11, 1970, she was seriously damaged by an engine room fire, laid up at Sorel and subsequently put up for sale. But she would never sail again. Her only use thereafter was to provide an emergency bow for her sister ship *Cacouna* after she became involved in a head-on collision below Quebec in July 1971. After her bow was welded to the *Cacouna* by Montreal ship repairers J & R Weir Ltd, the *Sillery* was scrapped. The *Cacouna* was an equally unfortunate ship, as under the name *Jennifer* she was lost in December 1974 when a 1,406-ton cargo of steel shifted in Lake Michigan. By then, her owners were Mathew Shipping

Ltd of Montreal.

As usual, other chartered vessels, particularly the dependable *Mont-St-Martin*, continued to offer service from both Montreal and Quebec. The *Topsail Star* even made a few Newfoundland voyages for Clarke in 1968 while the *Cabot* and *Chimo* were in drydock. One blow that hit Clarke that same year, however, was the loss of the British Newfoundland Corporation Ltd (Brinco) supply contract for the Churchill Falls power plant in Labrador to Agence Maritime, who benefitted from the additional \$800,000 business from Montreal to Sept-Iles. For this contract, Agence Maritime purchased the *Inland* from the Quebec North Shore & Labrador Railway Co to add her to their own *Fort Lauzon* and *Fort Ramezay*. Churchill Falls, on which construction had begun in 1966, was the second largest hydro-electric project in North America and would generate 100,000 tons of project cargo annually over a period of eight years.

Clarke Loses the Lower North Shore Subsidy

After the withdrawal of the *North Pioneer*, the *Jean Brillant* had continued to serve the Lower coast as far as Blanc-Sablon, but passengers now boarded at Rimouski or Sept-Iles. While they could no longer travel from Montreal or Quebec, they could still travel by rail to join ship at Rimouski. This last cruise of the *Jean Brillant* was described towards the end of her service: -

From April to November this six-day cruise takes the adventurous to fifteen tiny Quebec fishing ports on the north shore, all the way from Sept-Iles to the Strait of Belle Isle at Blanc-Sablon.

Meanwhile, the *North Voyageur* continued to run opposite her but from Quebec rather than Rimouski. In 1969, however, a year short of fifty seasons to the North Shore, Clarke received another blow. Although it had proposed a new ice-strengthened ship to serve the coast eleven months a year, its submission to continue the Lower North Shore service was refused. Preliminary news of the bids was carried in "L'Avenir" on November 6, 1969:

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Officials in Ottawa advise that an announcement expected for last week in connection with the new contract to provide a maritime service from Montreal, Quebec, Rimouski and Sept-Iles to the Lower North Shore, is expected to be made next week.

Two firms, of the three original tenderers for the contract, remain in the running. These are the Maritime Agencies which submitted a tender of \$1,098,000. Two thirds of this amount is subsidized by the Federal Government and the remaining third by the provincial authorities. The other firm is the Clarke Steamship Line which

submitted a tender which was \$92,000 above the Maritime Agency bid.

There has been some information that there was a possibility that the Maritime Agency firm could not meet the exigencies of the contract which requires certain specific facilities such as refrigeration space, and a larger carrying capacity than has been provided in the past. The Maritime Agency firm is reported to have purchased a new vessel in Norway which is presently on the way over from Europe.

The final decision in connection with the contract rests with the Canadian Transport Commission. The award is likely to be announced by the provincial government however.

The final news, was carried by the same newspaper on November 18, under the heading "Maritime Agency Awarded North Shore Maritime Contract": -

Maritime Agency has broken the Clarke Steamship monopoly for maritime services between Montreal, Quebec, Rimouski and Sept-Iles and Lower North Shore ports.

The firm, with head offices in Quebec City, signed a contract late last Wednesday evening which is the largest freight and passenger maritime service contract ever awarded in Canada.

The agreement, arrived at between the firm and the Minister of Transport Fernand Lizotte, was signed in the presence of Mr Pierre Taschereau, Vice-Chairman of the Canadian Transport Commission, by Paul Gourdeau, president of Maritime Agency.

The contract means an increase in revenues for the firm of \$15,000,000 in the next five years. Three firms bid for the contract in reply to a request made by the federal government. Two of the submitters' bids were retained, that of Maritime Agency and the other from the Clarke Steamship firm. Maritime Agency's bid was set at \$5,490,000 government subsidy, while the Clarke bid was in the neighbourhood of \$500,000 higher...

There had been some question as to whether the Maritime Agency firm could meet the exigencies of the contract of providing adequate passenger, freight and refrigerated services to the ports served in the agreement.

Mr Paul Gourdeau said that he was completely satisfied with the conditions of the contract. He added that his firm will not stop at this point. The firm is looking at opening a new service to Newfoundland and a regular service to the Arctic ports in Hudson's Bay and the Ungava District.

"In addition to this," continued the president, we are looking at providing a much improved service to Gaspé and the North Shore."

"To meet the exigencies of this new contract, Maritime Agency will open an office and a warehouse at Rimouski which will become one of our principal ports of call. There will also be an agent in every port served by the contract" he added.

Because of the six ships that Maritime Agency have purchased during the course of the past seven months the firm has confirmed its position in the St Lawrence maritime world as the largest freight and passenger service existing at this moment.

Two of the firm's ten ships, the *Fort Ramezay* and the *Fort Lauzon*, will be placed in the Lower North Shore service. Both these ships are quite modern and were constructed for navigation through ice. They will initiate their service as of January first. Joining these two ships will be the *Oslo*, which was recently purchased in Oslo, Norway. This freighter-passenger ship is expected to go into service on April first.

The firm also holds several important North Shore contracts with the Iron Ore Company of Canada, Churchill Falls and Quebec Hydro, as well as several other lesser agreements.

The firm has also purchased three old barges formerly owned by Anglo-Canadian Pulp and Paper, which will be used for the transportation of raw materials. These are the *Frank J Humphrey*, the *Robert McMichael* and the *R A McInnis*.

Last April Maritime Agency Inc purchased from Canadian Vickers the former *Polaris Explorer*, which has been rechristened the *Fort Lévis*. It also purchased another barge, the *Guy Bartholomew*, which was renamed *Fort Kent*.

This coming summer two ships will leave Montreal at a week's interval to head downstream to Quebec, Rimouski, Sept-Iles, Rivière-au-Tonnerre, Mingan, Havre-St-Pierre, Baie-Johan-Beetz, Natashquan, Kegaska, La Romaine, Harrington, Tête-à-la-Baleine, Baie des Moutons, Tabatière, Saint-Augustin, Rivière-St-Paul and finally Blanc-Sablon, returning via the same ports.

During the same times, the *Oslo*, likely to be renamed the *Nordbec*, will leave Sept-Iles with passengers and cargo to make the same calls to Blanc-Sablon. This vessel will replace the *Jean Brillant*, which plied these waters for many years.

The firm is making a serious study of the feasibility to keep the *Oslo* in

service during the winter months, either on the North Shore, or elsewhere, in view of the fact that this ship is constructed for navigation through ice.

However, during the winter the only freight service will be two trips per month from Quebec City to Blanc-Sablon. These trips will also have stops at Sept-Iles, Rimouski but will not serve the smaller ports because of prevailing ice conditions.

The federal and Quebec subsidies, by now totalling in excess of \$1 million annually, were awarded to Agence Maritime (or Maritime Agency) under a five-year contract to run to December 31, 1974. In return, Agence Maritime was to operate regular cargo service from Montreal to the Lower North Shore with the *Fort Lauzon* and *Fort Ramezay*, and weekly passenger and cargo service from Sept-Iles, soon to be switched back to Rimouski, with the *Fort Mingan*, here named as the *Nordbec*. This was the same basic service that had been provided by Clarke, but at lower cost.

One main difference was that the *Fort Lauzon* or *Fort Ramezay* would make two additional voyages, around the 1st and the 20th of January. The new service duly got under way in January 1970, with sailings scheduled by the *Fort Ramezay* from Shed 19 in Quebec on January 8 and 22, calling at Rimouski the next day en route to Sept-Iles, with further calls to be made at thirteen ports between Sept-Iles and Blanc-Sablon.

In order to carry the extra cargo, Agence Maritime had acquired more ships, as outlined in "L'Avenir." First came the *Polaris Explorer* in 1969, renamed *Fort Lévis*, then, over the winter of 1969-70, Anglo-Canadian's 3,600-ton pulpwood carriers, which were converted to carry both general and project cargo.

Once the *Jean Brillant* completed her last season in 1969, almost half a century after its founding, Clarke ships would no longer be seen in Natashquan, Harrington Harbour and Blanc-Sablon, or any of the other harbours along that coast. And in May 1970 the esteemed Lionel Chevrier, Transport Minister in Ottawa for almost a decade, and first president of the St Lawrence Seaway Authority when it was formed in 1954, became a director of Agence Maritime.

Although Clarke ships no longer sailed to the Strait of Belle Isle, they would continue to serve Sept-Iles and Havre-St-Pierre, and of course Newfoundland, which was now served by the company's most modern vessels sailing directly to St John's through the Cabot Strait. Another sign of the times, perhaps, in 1970 the Quebec Government took over the hospital at Harrington Harbour, thus ending sixty-five years of medical care by the Grenfell Mission.

The Newfoundland Services

On the Montreal-Newfoundland services, Canada Steamship Lines' *Fort St Louis* came back again in 1970 when it was announced that Clarke had chartered her for the Montreal-Corner Brook service, while the *Cabot* and *Chimo* continued to serve St John's.

On the Corner Brook run, the *Fort St Louis* was commanded by a Newfoundlander, Capt Gilbert Lacey. A new sideloading terminal having been opened at Corner Brook in 1970 from the ramps that had been installed at Halifax and removed in 1969, the *Fort St Louis* would now work every summer for Clarke. For the first time, this gave Newfoundland Steamships three modern sideloaders on their routes to both St John's and Corner Brook.

A major change also came about on the St John's service at this time. While the new ships had been introduced without subsidization, partly because the new ships could not handle bulk backhaul cargoes, the levels of traffic and revenue achieved were inadequate to produce a profit/ This lead Newfoundland Steamships to apply to the Canadian Transport Commission for a subsidy, which was granted in 1969. On July 8, 1969, the company dropped the 1965 in its name to become known simply as Newfoundland Steamships Ltd.

The character of the Clarke fleet was now changing. Overnight passenger services had disappeared, newer and bigger ships had been added to the cross-river ferry services, large new ships had been built for Newfoundland and, with the construction of the *Cabot* and *Chimo*, tentative steps had been taken towards entering the deep sea trades.

