

CHAPTER 3



The s.s. Gaspesia (left) and s.s. North Shore (right) at Montreal's Victoria Pier c. 1922

THE CLARKE STEAMSHIP COMPANY: FORMATIVE YEARS

During its formative years, although they had successfully been able to export their woodpulp in chartered ships, the Clarke enterprises on the North Shore had most recently suffered from poor inbound transport services. Several companies had tried to establish subsidized steamship services between Quebec and the North Shore, but the fact that they had met with shipwreck and failure meant that the contract had changed hands quite often, especially since the outbreak of war in 1914.

The area did of course have its problems. A sparse population scattered over a coastline of nearly 800 miles between Quebec and the Strait of Belle Isle at Blanc-Sablon, a lack of adequate harbour and docking facilities, and the many shoals of the river altogether presented a formidable barrier to operating a regular and profitable steamship line on the Gulf of St Lawrence. Clarke City was less than half way to the Strait of Belle Isle and the whole of the Quebec North Shore around 1920 had a total population of only about 15,000 from Tadoussac to Blanc-Sablon, of which one-third was below Clarke City.

Since the South Shore to Gaspé and Prince Edward Island services had sometimes relied upon the same steamship services, a similar story could be told there. Not only had this region lost the services of the Quebec Steamship

Co when the *Cascapedia* was withdrawn from the Gaspé Coast at the end of 1914 and then from Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia in 1917, but it had also suffered the loss of the *Lady of Gaspé*.

A Request from the Canadian Government

The Gulf of St Lawrence Shipping & Trading Co had operated through the 1920 season, but only with government aid and the liberal assistance of the Gulf Pulp & Paper Co. Despite the federal subsidies that had been paid to Gulf of St Lawrence Shipping, and all its predecessors, the latest operator was about to go into liquidation.

At this point, if not indeed earlier, with the sale of the Gulf Pulp & Paper Co, Sir George Foster, Canadian Minister of Commerce, sought the assistance of the Clarke family, who might have the means and the interest to start a new shipping line. As Frank Clarke had been appointed president of the Gulf Pulp & Paper Co, Foster sent for Desmond and proposed that he should form a new line, which the government would back with the usual subsidy, to serve the whole of the Gulf of St Lawrence.

Sir George had been involved with the award of shipping subsidies since as far back as 1889, when as a young Minister of Trade he had presided over the bids for the Canada-West Indies trade. After only seven voyages in 1890 by the winning bidder, the unknown Canadian, West Indian & South American Steamship Co Ltd, that award had then been made to Pickford & Black of Halifax.

The Clarkes, Frank and Walter at Gulf Pulp & Paper, Desmond at Clarke Trading and Wilfrid at Labrador Fisheries, were more than familiar with the situation. Although subsidies were available, they knew that many ships had come to grief in these services. Three, the *Beaver* (1893), *Otter* (1898) and *St Olaf* (1900), had been lost in the ten years before Clarke City opened. And since then, half a dozen, the *St Lawrence* (1904), on which George Clarke had been a passenger, *Lady Eileen* and *King Edward* (1908), *Campana* (1909), *General Wolfe* (1911) and *Lady of Gaspé* (1915), had either been wrecked or lost in the Gulf of St Lawrence. The Fraser and Holliday interests alone had lost five ships in eight years. And this did not include any of the terrible events that had befallen the Black Diamond Line, nor ocean-going ships lost in the same waters.

But the Clarke brothers' own enterprises urgently needed the services being proposed and they had seen the signs of growth when the Ontario Paper Co had joined them in exploiting the resources of the Gulf of St Lawrence. It had been almost ten years since the *General Wolfe* had been lost from the North Shore service. And there had been no losses since Ontario Paper had arrived in 1915.

Louis Garnier reminded us in "Dog Sled to Airplane" that through two decades in the Gulf of St Lawrence, the Clarke brothers had got to know the North Shore ships and their captains, from the Holliday Brothers through Canada Steamship Lines and then Gulf of St Lawrence Shipping & Trading, the last of which they had supported financially. As Garnier reminds us: -

To travel from Clarke City to college and back the only means of travel was by boat. The four brothers have therefore, by their travels and their work, acquired a thorough knowledge of the North Shore and of its needs.

Finally, after Sir George managed to obtain the agreement of the Quebec Government to contribute \$125,000 for 1921 to assist the steamship services of the North Shore and the Magdalen Islands, the Clarkes agreed to proceed.

The End of the Gulf of St Lawrence Shipping & Trading Co

It came as no surprise when the Gulf of St Lawrence Shipping & Trading Co went bankrupt. An internal Clarke memorandum recorded their view as follows: -

In spite of the Federal Government's efforts backed up by subsidies the record of this service to the North Shore was one calamity after another. Many different companies suffered from loss of ships, bankruptcies, etc, until finally the latest company operating this service, after purchasing ships and making optimistic promises of improved operation, also went into liquidation in the winter of 1921.

In the spring of 1921, notices appeared in the Montreal and Quebec newspapers from Gordon W Scott and Eugène Trudel, chartered accountants of Quebec, inviting offers under the Bankruptcy Act. Tenders would be received up to 4 pm on April 15, 1921, for the sale of the following vessels (the 1st and 2nd class indicate the number of passengers each ship was licensed to carry): -

s.s. <i>Lady Evelyn</i> , twin-screw	483 gross tons, 25 1st & 30 2nd class
s.s. <i>Champlain</i> , screw	522 gross tons, 20 1st & 50 2nd class
s.s. <i>Labrador</i> , screw	317 gross tons, 14 1st & 30 2nd class
s.s. <i>Guide</i> , screw	156 gross tons, 12 1st & 15 2nd class

The same newspapers reported that only schooners were operating to and from the North Shore and that the Port of Quebec was having one of its worst years on record in 1921, with steamers tied up and only a few schooners operating. Meanwhile, Capt Bernier, now 68, moved on, and within a few years would be in the Arctic as master of CGS *Arctic* once again. And Ottawa was left with what to do about notes amounting to \$26,357 that had

not been paid.

The Founding of the Clarke Steamship Company

While this was happening, the second generation of Clarke brothers was busy in Quebec. In February, they incorporated The Clarke Steamship Company Limited, with headquarters at 17 rue St-Jacques, the location of a relatively new building owned by wholesale grocers Langlois & Paradis Limitée and also home to the Gulf Pulp & Paper Co. Each of the four brothers held 25 per cent of the common shares in the new company, while their uncles, James and George, invested the proceeds from the sale of the Gulf Pulp & Paper Co in preferred shares, with the understanding that their capital would be paid back over several years. Neither James nor George, who had worked together at James Clarke & Co and at Gulf Pulp & Paper, had children of their own.

But unhappy news followed in March 1921, when William Clarke, founder of Clarke City, and father of Desmond, Frank, Wilfrid and Walter, died while visiting his brother James in New York. William had first taken an interest in the steamship business by visiting Ottawa in late 1917, three years before the formation of the Clarke Steamship Co. A copy of a message he sent the Quebec Board of Trade during this visit was published in the "Quebec Telegraph" on November 3, under the heading "Quebec Board of Trade Receives Encouraging News From Mr Clarke, Who Is Now In Ottawa": -

Mr T Levasseur, Secretary of the Quebec Board of Trade, has received a telegram from Mr Clarke of Seven Islands, who went to Ottawa in connection with the predicament of the North Shore inhabitants who are without freight service. The telegram follows:

"Ottawa, November 2, 1917. T Levasseur Esq, Sec Quebec Board of Trade. North Shore steamer service having favorable consideration by Trade and Commerce Department. Sir George Foster away, but hope for definite decision Saturday or Monday. S W Clarke."

The *Cascapedia* had gone to serve Bermuda and the *Percésien* and then the *Gaspésien* that replaced her were requisitioned for the war effort, leaving the North Shore without a ship. Some relief was obtained using the *Savoy* and *Marie Josephine* in 1918, but this was far from satisfactory, and the Gulf of St Lawrence Shipping & Trading Co that followed in 1919 proved no better. Although William had lived to see the formation of the new company, he would not see its first ships.

James took the position of chairman of the new Clarke Steamship Co and Desmond became president. Although Frank and Walter would remain with Gulf Pulp & Paper, their initial involvement in the new company was as more than mere shareholders. Each became president of one of the

shipowning companies set up to acquire the line's first two ships. Equally, Wilfrid's company, Labrador Fisheries, would own a vessel, and he became vice-president of the new steamship line.

The Clarke Steamship Co then signed a contract to provide subsidized service to both shores of the St Lawrence - from Quebec to the St Lawrence North Shore and from Montreal to the Gaspé Peninsula, stopping en route at Quebec. The first contract called for three sailings a month between Quebec and Natashquan, with one of these extended to Harrington Harbour each month, and an additional service to the South Shore and Gaspé coast.

One of the first reports of the new company's plans appeared in the May 1921 issue of "Canadian Railway & Marine World" under the heading Lower St. Lawrence Steamship Service: -

As a part of the rehabilitation of local steamship services, which were seriously interfered with, and in some cases, entirely suspended, by the war, it is announced that arrangements have been completed for a service between Montreal and Quebec, and other ports on the north shore of the St. Lawrence as far as Harrington Harbor, Saguenay County, and to the Gaspé Peninsula, and on to Paspébiac on Chaleur Bay.

The Clarke Steamship Co Ltd has been incorporated under the Dominion Companies Act, with \$1,000,000 authorized capital ... to carry on the business of transportation of passengers, mail and merchandise; towing, wrecking and salvaging, in any navigable waters within or bordering upon Canada; and to build, own and operate ships, docks, drydocks, wharves, warehouses, marine and railway terminals, passenger facilities and accommodation.

It is announced that the company has acquired two steamships of approximately 1,000 gross tons, one of which will make Montreal its terminus, calling at Quebec, and at ports on the south shore as far as Paspébiac, while the other will run out of Quebec, calling at ports on the north shore as far as Harrington. The first named service will be fortnightly and the second every 10 days. The company, which has a contract to carry mail on both routes, is under the operating management of Bouchard Bros, who are stated to be in Great Britain arranging for the purchase of a steamship for the Gaspé route.

The company is reported to have bought the s.s. *Shearwater*, which was offered for sale by tender, in Nov 1920 by the Naval Service Department, and is also reported to have bought a recently built steamship in England, named *Nova Zembla*. The s.s. *Shearwater* was built in England in 1899, with steel hull, wood sheathed, and is fitted with a single screw, two bladed propeller, triple expansion, convertible, surface condensing, reciprocating engines of 1,400 ihp, and 4 water

tube Belleville boilers, with a working pressure of 260 lb. Her dimensions are - length 200 ft, beam 33 ft, draft 12.5 ft, displacement 980 tons. She was expected to be on the route between Quebec and Gaspé ports by the end of April.

The *Nova Zembla* joined the fleet, but the *Shearwater* did not. A three-masted clipper-bowed ex-Royal Navy sloop, declared surplus at Halifax in 1920, the *Shearwater* had been built at Her Majesty's Dockyard in Sheerness, England, and commissioned in 1901. One of the last two units of the Royal Navy's Pacific Fleet to be based in British Columbia, she had been placed on loan to Canada in 1914 for use as a submarine depot ship at Halifax. Her name is preserved today in CFB "Shearwater," the air base at Halifax. Instead, however, the *Shearwater* was sold in 1922 to become the 641-ton *Vedas*, trading down the east coast as far as Jacksonville, participating in the Gulf of St Lawrence seal hunt and then running beer from Montreal to Windsor during Prohibition. Later purchased by J E McQueen of Amherstburg, Ontario, she would be broken up in 1937. Her aft mast survived in a Windsor park for more than seventy-five years before finally being dismantled.

With a wealth of experience in managing a pulp and paper business, but little in shipping other than running the *Amherst* and a few tugs, the Clarke brothers engaged two of the Bouchard Brothers to manage their new steamship line, with Francois as manager in Quebec and Edouard as agent in Montreal. They were known to Sir George Foster and brought with them a wide range of experience. Not only had they operated a subsidized service between Quebec and Gaspé between 1904 and 1913, providing fifteen voyages a year with the *Gaspésien*, but they had also owned the *Lady of Gaspé* until 1915. While the Bouchards did not remain with Clarke for very long, their presence in the formative years helped the company to find the right ships and allowed Desmond to put into place the contracts that set the foundation for its first decade of growth.

The South Shore service, with which the Bouchards were very familiar, had traditionally run from Montreal, connecting with the rail services to central Canada and the Maritime Provinces at each end. Indeed, for the first nine years of Confederation, ships had been the tie that bound Canada together while a railway was being built between the Maritimes and Central Canada. The major operator on the Gaspé route, from 1867 until 1914, the Quebec Steamship Co, had been sold sixteen months earlier to Britain's Furness Withy, and all its ships now sailed from New York. Various others, including Bouchard Brothers and the Gaspé & Baie-des-Chaleurs Steamship Co, had either operated with the Quebec Steamship Co or succeeded them, but the loss of ships to the war effort had reduced services badly that a press report from Quebec on June 25, 1921, stated that "the inauguration of a direct steamship service between Quebec and the ports of the Gaspé Peninsula will mean much to the pulp and fishing industries of the latter."

The North Shore service, on the other hand, had always operated from Quebec, where the major suppliers of that coast were located. The Fraser and Holliday steamers had served the coast for thirty-five years before withdrawing in 1914 in favour of Canada Steamship Lines. The short-lived Gulf of St Lawrence Shipping & Trading Co had been the first to serve both the North Shore and Gaspé, rather unsuccessfully as it turned out, but this did not stop the government from carrying on the idea with Clarke, that a reliable service was required for both shores of the Gulf of St Lawrence.

The Search for Ships

Clarke had immediately set about seeking the right ships for its new Gulf of St Lawrence services. As the old ships had all been sold or lost, there was a shortage of suitable ships and they were difficult to find. Post-war newbuilding prices, meanwhile, had reached new highs. Yet another consideration was that Clarke wanted ships that were suitable for navigating in ice during the early and late seasons. Gulf Pulp & Paper's *Amherst* could bring a few supplies downriver from Quebec, or cross to the South Shore, but she was far from adequate for the role. Even so, although her tonnage was less, she had pretty well the same dimensions as Fraser's old *Otter* and had worked the Labrador coast in the past.

While it had looked as though Clarke might acquire the *Shearwater*, her purchase was not completed. Apart from a report that she had to be towed into Kingston, Jamaica, by a US Navy tug in March 1919 and then towed to Bermuda by a Royal Navy cruiser for repairs, why Clarke did not go through with the purchase is not known. It seems that either she was not suitable for the intended job of carrying passengers and cargo, or her condition was found to be worse than thought. In April 1922, she was sold, by tender again, with the stipulation that it was "for breaking up only." As it happened she went to Halifax buyers called the Shearwater Co Ltd and would trade again..

Of the former Gulf of St Lawrence ships, meanwhile, three were unsuitable. The former mail tender *Lady Evelyn* had been built as a day boat. Purchased by the Howe Sound Navigation Co Ltd of Vancouver, she reverted to her original role of excursion steamer and served the Union Steamship Co of British Columbia Ltd out of Vancouver from 1923 until 1936, when she was finally broken up.

The second ship, the *Champlain*, had already given the Clarkes enough trouble with the endorsement of her promissory notes. At 120 by 30 feet, she had been built in 1904 as a short and beamy 120-passenger icebreaker, used by summer for Intercolonial Railway service between the South Shore railhead at Rivière Ouelle and St-Irenée, Murray Bay and Cap-à-l'Aigle on the North Shore. By winter, she was used as an icebreaker in the river. Canadian Government Railways' new Quebec to St-Irenée line, opened in 1919,

rendered the *Champlain* redundant and she went to Gulf of St Lawrence Shipping in the same year it went bankrupt. Both the Intercolonial and Canadian Government Railways soon became part of the new Canadian National Railways.

The third ship was the little *Guide*, which despite having won the North Shore mail contract in 1919 was really an ex-pilot tender and of no interest to Clarke, especially after the report of Schmon's experience on his voyage to Shelter Bay. Not sold in the April auction, she was placed up for auction a second time in September. Her new owner then became Capt Antoine Fournier, who had been master of the *Champlain* and had applied to become master of the CGS *Montcalm*.

Clarke did take an interest, though, in the *Labrador*, a ship they knew from her two seasons running to Clarke City. Although ordered as a naval trawler, she had been completed in April 1919 as a sturdy coastal trader with room for a few passengers. At least this offered a ship with which to get started. Fairly new, she was known on the coast and, believing that she would suit their requirements, Clarke placed a bid on her.

The "North Shore"

A somewhat grander ship was the *Nova Zembla*, which the company had located in England. An 811-ton clipper-bowed passenger and cargo ship completed in February 1896 by Newcastle shipbuilders W Dobson & Company, she was the former *Queen Olga Constantine* of the Archangel-Mourman Steam Navigation Co Ltd of Archangel. She was one of half a dozen ships built by Dobson for these owners, who according to the "New York Times" had a fleet of thirteen ships totalling 6,233 tons at the end of 1900. Having worked from the then booming port of Archangel through the ice-prone White Sea on passenger, mail and cargo services to Murmansk and the Mourman coast, it was thought that the ship would be suitable for the St Lawrence as well. While Lloyd's Register gave her original name as *Queen Olga Constantine*, Russian sources give *Koroleva Olga Konstantinova*, *koroleva* being Russian word for queen. The words *Olga Konstantinova* were indeed inscribed on her ship's wheel when Clarke acquired her.

The Archangel-Mourman Steam Navigation Co had operated regular services around the White Sea for a subsidy of 3.33 roubles per mile. A sister ship, the 805-ton *Grand Duchess Xenia*, launched at Newcastle three months before the *Queen Olga Constantine*, stayed in Russia. Renamed *Sever* in 1917, she became the *Sosnovets* in 1921. Two more Dobson-built fleetmates were the slightly larger 1,120-ton *Emperor Nicholas II*, which had followed in 1896, and was renamed *Mikhail Sidorov* in 1917, and the 977-ton *Lomonosoff* of 1891. Becoming the British-flag *Antioch* and *Antissa* in 1922, these two went to Turkey as the *Mersin* and *Antalya* in 1924. The 1,640-ton *Kildin* of 1908, lost in 1917, and the 834-ton *Keret* of 1910, renamed *Umba*

(ii) in 1921, were two later Dobson-built Archangel-Mourman ships, the *Umba* named for an Archangel-Mourman ship that had been lost in 1918.

Although early Clarke brochures described the *North Shore* as "once the pleasure yacht of a Russian princess," she had in fact been built for commercial service but named, like her sister ship, for a Russian Grand Duchess. Olga, granddaughter of Czar Nicholas I, had become Queen of Greece when she married King George I of the Hellenes in 1867. The *Queen Olga Constantine* was not the first vessel named for Olga as two years after her marriage, the Hellenic Navy had named the ironclad *Queen Olga* in her honour and the Russian Steam Navigation & Trading Company of Odessa had another *Queen Olga*, completed by Denny of Dumbarton in 1894. As a devotee of the sea, Queen Olga had been made an honorary admiral of the Russian Navy's Mediterranean and Black Sea squadron in 1894.

The *Queen Olga Constantine* may have carried royal passengers, but it is unlikely that she ever served as a yacht. The Russian royal family had a fleet of imperial yachts, the largest of which, the 401-foot *Shtandart* was completed in the same year as the *Queen Olga Constantine*. Queen Olga herself made ample use of the Greek royal yacht *Amphitrite*, making her annual voyage from Athens to Odessa in her. One of Queen Olga's grandchildren, Philip, later Prince Philip Duke of Edinburgh, was born on June 10, 1921, just as the Clarke Steamship Co was getting started. Meanwhile, a near sister ship to the *Queen Olga Constantine*, the 720-ton *Sergei Witte*, was named for Count Sergei Witte, Finance Minister, promoter of the Trans-Siberian Railway, developer of the Russian north and briefly Russian Prime Minister.

A year or two before being acquired by Clarke, the *Queen Olga Constantine* had been renamed *Nova Zembla*, after the islands in the Russian Arctic. These new names replaced the original Czarist ones after Lenin's February 1918 decree had nationalized all Russian shipping. The *Sergei Witte*, an 1898 product of Newcastle's Wigham Richardson & Company, was renamed *Proletariy* in 1920 and then *Kanin* in 1921, after a nearby peninsula. The ships were all taken over by the state shipping company Sovtorgflot, but the *Nova Zembla* and a few others had ended up in British hands between the Allied occupation of Archangel in August 1918 and the Communists' arrival there in February 1920. As to the Queen herself, she would be remembered by the Hellenic Navy once more, when it named the destroyer *Queen Olga* in 1939.

Canadian and Newfoundland Ships in Russia

During the First World War, the *Queen Olga Constantine* and her fleetmates in the White Sea had been joined by several former icebreakers and ice-strengthened ships from Canada and Newfoundland, brought to Archangel to keep Russian supply lines open. The Canadian Government

supplied the icebreakers CGS *Earl Grey* in 1914 and CGS *Minto* in 1915, and the Reid Newfoundland Co the ice-strengthened 1,616-ton *Lintrose* in 1915 and 1,553-ton *Bruce* (ii) in 1916. The *Earl Grey*, which had supplied winter passenger service between Pictou and Charlottetown, became the Russian icebreaker *Fedor Litke*, a ship that would last until 1959.

Four more Newfoundland ships had followed in 1916: the 1,140-ton *Beothic* (i), from Job Brothers & Co Ltd, and the 1,761-ton *Adventure*, 1,132-ton *Bellaventure* and 1,118-ton *Bonaventure*, all from A Harvey & Co, and the last important ships to be owned by them for many years. The Canadian Government had chartered the *Bellaventure* and *Bonaventure* in 1913 during the building of new port facilities in Hudson Bay for the Hudson Bay Railway.

From before the war, in 1913, Dominion Atlantic's former *Prince Edward*, now renamed *Vasiliy Velikiy*, had also operated in the same waters as the *Queen Olga Constantine*, running between Archangel and Vardo in north Norway, a voyage of four or five days. The *Vasiliy Velikiy* was wrecked in early March 1916 on Kekurski Point, near Murmansk, a long way from the Miami-Havana route she had once served for P&O.

The largest Canadian ship to go to Russia was the icebreaker CGS *J D Hazen*, the first ship built by Canadian Vickers Ltd in Montreal. Sold to Russia in 1916, she was renamed *Mikula Seleaninovitch*. Scuttled by the Communists, she was raised by the Allies, reconditioned in England and awarded to the French Navy in 1919. Repurchased by Canada in 1921, she was brought back to the St Lawrence from Cherbourg by Capt Hearn, to join the Marine Department in 1922 as CGS *Mikula*.

Clarke's First Ship

In early 1921, the *North Shore* (i) became the company's first ship, and was eventually registered to the North Shipping Co Ltd of 17 rue St-Jacques, Quebec, with registry in Newcastle upon Tyne. The North Shipping Co was incorporated on July 28, 1921, with a capital of \$500,000, Frank Clarke as president and Desmond Clarke as director, with the Clarke Steamship Co acting as both manager and agent.

A handsome vessel with raked funnel and masts and classical clipper-style hull, the *North Shore* had dimensions of 207 by 28 feet, berths for 56 passengers, space for 500 tons of cargo, and was manned by a crew of thirty-two. Powered by 122 nominal horsepower reciprocating engines by the North Eastern Marine Engineering Co Ltd of Newcastle, she was a twin-screw vessel and had a speed of 12 knots.

The ship's public areas included a good amount of open deck space, a smoking room aft on the Upper Deck and a dining saloon located in the stern on Main Deck. At first, her passengers were carried in twenty-eight two-berth

cabins, eleven on the Upper Deck and seventeen on Main Deck. This capacity was later reduced to 46 when two passenger cabins on the Upper Deck, renamed Promenade Deck, were set aside for use as the Purser's office and for the first officer, and two more on Main Deck, now Saloon Deck, were taken over for the chief steward and for waiters.

The *North Shore* arrived at Quebec from Newcastle at 7:30 pm on Sunday, April 24, in time for Clarke's first season on the St Lawrence. The June 1921 issue of "Canadian Railway & Marine World" reported her arrival as follows: -

The s.s. *North Shore*, which arrived at Quebec, Que, towards the end of April from North Shields, England, is intended for the Clarke Steamship Co's service between Quebec and Gulf ports. She is a screw driven steamship of about 800 tons, with good passenger and cargo facilities. A second ship for service to south shore ports is reported to be in Halifax undergoing general overhauling and was expected to be ready for service toward the end of May.

Intended to sail the 515-nautical miles from Quebec to Natashquan every ten days, the *North Shore* took on the new Clarke colours of black funnel with four narrow white bands, representing four brothers. Her hull was black with a thin band of white setting off her red boot topping. As the *North Shore's* first master, Clarke appointed Capt Joseph Boucher, who had previously commanded Joseph Fafard's *Natashquan*, Canada Steamship Lines' *Laurentian* and Gulf of St Lawrence Shipping's *Labrador*.

While the *North Shore* was being prepared, Menier's Anticosti supply ship, the *Savoy*, and the 145-ton three-masted auxiliary schooner *German L*, built at Ste-Anne-des-Monts in 1919 and owned by A E Côté of Quebec, were used to carry the first mails of the 1921 season to the North Shore.

The *North Shore* was soon ready, however, and arrived at Pointe-aux-Esquimaux for the first time on May 7, passing Rivière Pentecôte on her return three days later. The North Shore service was advertised under the name of the North Shipping Co, with Clarke acting as agents. While she was a most handsome and distinctive ship, the *North Shore* would develop a reputation for one fault. She often ran short of coal or water and had to replenish these supplies at Clarke City.

The "Labrador"

While the *North Shore* was crossing the Atlantic, tenders for the Gulf of St Lawrence ships were opened and the Clarke Steamship Co's bid for the *Labrador* was successful. This little steamer was acquired in April and was registered with the South Shipping Co Ltd, again with Clarke as managers and agents, at 17 rue St-Jacques in Quebec. The *Labrador* bore a name that

was suitable for the trade so Clarke chose to retain it. Earlier ships with that name had included a Hudson's Bay Co supply ship and a Dominion Line Transatlantic liner. Her purchase gave the fledgling Clarke Steamship Co two ships with which to commence its mission.

The *Labrador* was a seaworthy if not luxurious ship and measured 140 feet overall by 23 feet. Completed as Davie Shipbuilding's yard number 440, her 61 nominal horsepower coal-fired reciprocating engine from the Dominion Bridge Co Ltd of Montreal gave her a speed of 9 knots. She was licensed to carry up to 125 passengers, including fifteen first class in upper and lower berth cabins off the main saloon, and 200 tons of cargo, but her government contract stated that she could carry 36 passengers, unspecified as to class. Capt Joseph Brie was appointed as master, presiding over a crew of twenty.

Walter Clarke was president and Desmond a director of the South Shipping Co, a firm that was incorporated on the same day as the North Shipping Co, to own the ship that ran the South Shore service between Montreal, Quebec and the Gaspé coast. The *Labrador* thus became the first Clarke ship to operate this service, in 1921.

If the Gulf of St Lawrence company's *Lady Evelyn* had not met with approval, the *Labrador* could hardly have been any better. But she was a temporary solution while Clarke sought a larger and more suitable ship. Later, it was planned to allocate the *Labrador* to the Quebec North Shore as a running mate for the larger *North Shore*.

Quebec to the North Shore

The author Henry Beston recorded the sights passed on a typical voyage in a Clarke ship, sailing downstream from Quebec to the North Shore, in his book "The St Lawrence": -

Leaving Quebec reach, the ship channel swerves to the south to follow the pleasant rural shores of the Isle of Orléans.

So Quebec falls behind, a narrows of rushing water and a rock, an old city and a new, a place of ships and modernity, a place of cannon and walls and a noble sound of bells, the north and the wilderness fixed at its gates, and the clouds beyond it tinted pale to the far shores of Hudson's Bay...

The beginning day is pleasant with sunshine and midsummer warmth, the river is busy, and the enormous scale of the broken continent to the east invests the entire scene with a quality of drama...

Field beside striped field, farmhouse and barn, church spire and tiny

summer villa, the pleasant shore and broad upland top of the Isle of Orléans sail along beside the ship. To the south another upland stands with mainland fields and farms above, and a fine precipitous shore of cliffs and trees. One by one, incoming ships pass flying astern the colors of many nations; a churning sound, a smell of oil and iron, an exchange of casual stares, and they are gone towards the narrows and Montreal or the wharves of Quebec. Island and island-passage ending, the width of the river opens ahead, a sidereal stream now, almost a part of space and the sky.

The Laurentian mass has risen above the river to the north. It is as a coastal wall that the higher country begins at [Cap] Tourmente, shoulder after shoulder of grey archaic rock fronting the new immensity of the river, with occasional small glens of forested gullies hid between. Save for a next-to-invisible railroad managed at the base, there are few signs of human occupation, and one goes as along a local solitude. The channel now holding a northern course, the south shore dims to a blueness withdrawn into a serenity of dream. Far across, islands lie atop the stream like the crests of all-but-submerged mountains, their blue-black lengths melting into one appearance with the blue of the southern coast.

A first break in the northern wall, a first river mouth at Baie-St-Paul, and the traveler has a glimpse of the farming country inland, and of the mountain rims and valley contours of so huge an earth. Still following close below the Laurentian scarp, the ship channel now enters the narrow passage between the mainland and Ile-aux-Coudres...

A second opening at Murray Bay, ninety miles from Quebec, discovers the hidden country of the ranges to the north. Like blue mountains out of a fairy tale they rise, outposts of the wilderness rolling mile upon empty mile to the end of the earth and of all human things...

Seen from a ship, the coast on the level of the eye seems to present a grim and unbroken front of rock. Concealed by the perspective, however, are wild crannies and inlets and amphitheater coves: plunging rivers descend to them, their green silence is broken only by the sound of cataracts and the confused wash of waves in a confusion of rock, and seabirds swim all untroubled in their peace.

Now fourteen, now eighteen, now a long twenty miles across, the river is widening in its giant path. Distant but substantial still ... the south coast remains in sight, continuing to the east its blue and impressive parallel. An island lies midstream, flat as a shadow on the river and overgrown from end to end with trees - the uninhabited Isle aux Lièvres. Mountain shapes and the forest now take over the north, a lighthouse marking all that seems left of man. Presently from the

shore comes a new gleam of light on cliffs of sand, and a vast discoloration overside. The traveler has reached Tadoussac, the mouth of the Saguenay.

The coastal lift of the Laurentians is dying out of the scene. A new country lies ahead, falling off to the ever-widening east, a coast of bold terraces and rock occasionally widened below with tidal flats and salt-hay fields. It is a frontier country of frontier fishermen, farmers and cutters of pulp, a thread of human life along one adventuring road.

Fifty miles beyond Tadoussac and a fair hundred and fifty beyond Quebec, the road comes to its present end at the Portneuf River. Sand bars, miles long and lying parallel to the coast, lead the tributary forth into the greater stream, and half conceal a valley which might have emerged but yesterday from under the glaciers and their sands. The caribou drift here betimes, moving down through the ragged firs to the river plain with its bog vegetation and winding miles of scrub.

The coast beyond (La Côte-Nord) is the coast of wilderness America. An inconceivable shore of rock topped with a stunted savagery of trees, it remains the country of the trapper and the Indian.

The south coast has vanished out of one's consciousness. Far away, certain of its hills rise in the east like blue and solitary isles, very beautiful in their shapes of earth. All else is the St Lawrence, and the long wilderness to the north with its brow of green and its surges breaking below. Miles to the east and north will lie the Pointe des Monts and the white tower of the light, the sudden turn of the coast to the north'ard, and the vast opening of the waters of the gulf.

While Beston described the first day or so sailing downriver from Quebec, beyond Pointe des Monts lay not only Clarke City and Sept-Iles, Havre-St-Pierre and Natashquan, but also the many outposts all the way to the Strait of Belle Isle.

The "North Shore" on Fire

Hardly had the new line got started when, on June 9, the *North Shore* became involved in a fire in the Princess Louise Basin at Quebec, suffering damage to her superstructure. The Quebec newspaper "Le Soleil" recounted the story in its pages the following day: -

Fire caused very considerable damage in the port yesterday afternoon at about 3 o'clock. The Harbour Commission's Shed 13, which had been leased to the Clarke Steamship Company, was razed completely and the latter company's steamer *North Shore*, a vessel recently bought in England to undertake the North Shore service, has been

partly destroyed.

The shed contained a large quantity of merchandise, consisting of fish, meat, machinery, oil and other matters. It is a total loss and this morning, it was still not possible to evaluate the damage. The shed itself was insured for a sum of \$1,500....

As to the steamer, the damages are mainly to her poop: but the fire almost completely destroyed the wooden structures of the vessel. It is believed that the losses will be about \$75,000. The *North Shore* was valued at about \$150,000, but we are informed that the damages are covered by insurance...

Shed 27, situated very nearby, managed to avoid the flames, and the prompt intervention of the firemen avoided a bigger disaster.

The source of the fire is unknown. The flames were discovered a little after 3 o'clock and an alarm was raised immediately... From the outset, it was impossible to think of saving Shed 13, where the fire had broken out in an area under lock and key ... that had been leased to the French Government and contained various materials and a quantity of mattresses.

The firemen, under command of Chief Lawrence Donnelly, concentrated their work on the adjacent buildings, but with a continuous strong wind, they couldn't prevent the flames from spreading to the *North Shore*, which was docked at Shed 13, where she had only arrived that morning. Within a few minutes, the fire took hold within the structure of the vessel, on which five crewmembers were still on board.

The flames made extraordinary progress and they thought for a while they were going to perish. None of them could swim and to get out of their perilous position, they had to descend by a ladder alongside the vessel where they were helped by Mr Franck Dinan, who had brought over a rowboat to take them ashore...

Meanwhile, the firemen, assisted by the crews from the tugs and the Government barge that were in the basin, fought the flames without respite. The rescue vessels' pumps played an effective role, but as the danger became more threatening, it was decided to tow the *North Shore* to a location further removed from the harbour.

The tug *Busy Bee* was charged with this difficult task. Three other tugs came to the aid of the *Busy Bee* and soon the *North Shore* was moved alongside Shed 27, which was full of wood and pulp. The sparks from the burning vessel put the shed in some danger, but the firemen's intervention prevented another disaster and it was judged more

prudent this time to ground the *North Shore* on the flats. They also reached this decision for fear that the ship might sink. Once the *North Shore* was beached, the fight against the flames continued and it was only when all danger had disappeared that they brought her back, close to Shed 19, where she remained overnight.

The steamer's cabins are partly destroyed, but the engine room is virtually intact...

During the fire on the *North Shore*, the quantity of water accumulated between her decks caused her to list considerably, to the point where at one time it was thought she was going to sink.

Yesterday's fire attracted a huge crowd to the scene itself, but from the Terrace and the Ramparts, one could easily follow the different phases. The view of the steamer in flames being towed to shallow water offered an interesting show.

Of the *North Shore* it will now be necessary to replace all the wooden structure and it is not believed that the repairs can be finished before a couple of months. In the meantime, the *North Shore* will be replaced by the *Labrador*.

With the latest news, we learn that the losses caused by the destruction of Shed 13 will be almost \$20,000 to \$25,000. This, added to the damage caused to the steamer, will bring the loss to about one hundred thousand dollars all told.

As it happened, the *Busy Bee*, a 115-ton tug completed and owned by the Davie Shipbuilding & Repairing Co Ltd, had been built alongside the *Labrador* in 1919.

Clarke Charters the "Aranmore"

In order for the *Labrador* to continue her service to the Gaspé coast, Clarke arranged to charter another ship for the North Shore while the *North Shore* went to Canadian Vickers in Montreal to have her fire-damaged accommodations rebuilt. The Government steamer CGS *Aranmore*, which had been under repairs herself, was therefore delivered to the Clarke Steamship Co on July 8 to perform the North Shore service until August 19. The cost for the six-week charter, during which the *Aranmore* completed three round voyages, was \$2,710.

Having been the last Holliday-owned ship on the North Shore, the *Aranmore* was a most suitable candidate for the job, and one that Capt Boucher had served in. It was not the *Aranmore's* first return to commercial service, however, as she had run between Yarmouth and Boston between

April 1918 and the spring of 1919 while the regular Yarmouth-Boston steamer had been away at war. It was not her last either, as in 1928 she would be used briefly between Halifax and St Pierre and Miquelon.

The First Season

Despite the fire on the *North Shore*, the Clarke Steamship Co found the tonnage to supply the service that was needed, and a report in "Canadian Railway & Marine World" that August reported as follows: -

The Clarke Steamship Co, which started steamship services out of Montreal and Quebec recently along the St Lawrence, is operating the steamships *Aranmore*, *Tremblay* and *Labrador*.

The s.s. *Aranmore*, which is sailing from Quebec to ports along the north shore from Franklin to Harrington, has been chartered from the Dominion Government while the company's s.s. *North Shore*, formerly the British *Nova Zembla*, is being overhauled and repaired, following damage by fire at Quebec, June 9. She is expected to be ready to resume her service about the end of August.

The s.s. *Tremblay* is only operated by the company, being owned by Jos. Tremblay, Ste Anne de Chicoutimi, Que, and sails from Montreal in conjunction with the s.s. *Labrador*, calling at Quebec, and then along the south shore and the Gaspé coast from Cap Chat to Paspébiac.

The s.s. *Labrador* was owned formerly by the Gulf of St Lawrence Shipping & Trading Co, Montreal, now in bankruptcy.

The s.s. *North Shore* is in charge of Capt Jos Boucher as master and E Bolduc as chief engineer; and the s.s. *Labrador's* master is Capt J A Brie, with J B Masselle as chief engineer.

J F Bouchard, Quebec, Que, is manager of the company, and Ed Bouchard is agent at Montreal.

This report contained one error, however. Joseph Tremblay's *Tremblay* was a 129-ton sidewheel paddle ferry, one of several that were used to span the Saguenay River at Chicoutimi in the days before a bridge was built. The ship Clarke was using was actually the steam schooner *A Tremblay*, the same ship that Gulf of St Lawrence Shipping & Trading had been running to Gaspé in 1919. The error likely arose when the reporter checked on an incomplete name. Both vessels had been built in 1916, the *A Tremblay* at Matane and the *Tremblay* at Chicoutimi.

The *A Tremblay* was owned by La Compagnie de Navigation Tremblay Ltée and registered at Quebec. With dimensions of 120 by 28 feet and a good

cargo capacity, she came in useful while Clarke was still searching for another ship but she was not used by them for long. In May 1923, Alphonse Tremblay, along with other members of the Tremblay family from Matane, and Ulric Tremblay at Quebec, formed La Compagnie de Transport de Fret de Gaspé Ltée to engage in the coasting trade. Between 1925 and 1929, the Tremblays entered the *A Tremblay* into the bootlegging trade from St Pierre, but in May 1929 she was seized at Godbout. Some of her owners, including Ulric Tremblay, then went to prison for a few months before going on to acquire another vessel and continue in the St Lawrence coastal trade.

Birders in Labrador

As a result of the Migratory Birds Act of 1918, a new kind of passenger had joined the merchants, mounties, lumberjacks, priests and fur traders, not to mention tourists, who travelled to and from the North Shore. Among the *North Shore's* first passengers therefore was ornithologist Harrison Lewis of Quebec. Appointed as Chief Migratory Bird Officer for Quebec and Ontario in November 1920, he made the first of many annual trips to the Canadian Labrador, as it was then called, on a mission to protect migratory birds and their eggs from poachers in 1921. Lewis mentioned both the *North Shore* and the *Aranmore* in his article "Notes on Some Labrador Birds," which appeared in "The Auk," the journal of the Audubon Society, in 1922: -

As a part of the enforcement of the Migratory Birds Convention Act by the Department of the Interior, Dominion of Canada, I visited the southern coast of the Labrador peninsula during the summer of 1921, travelling from the extreme western end of that coast to Blanc-Sablon, on the Straits of Belle Isle, inspecting and protecting the sea-bird colonies, and overseeing the work of the Dominion Bird Officers stationed throughout the region. Certain of the observations made on this journey appear to be sufficiently valuable to be worthy of record.

My itinerary was as follows: Leaving Quebec by the steamer *North Shore* on June 3, I entered Labrador, at the "point where the fiftieth parallel of latitude strikes the coast a short distance to the west of the Bay of Seven Islands" on the afternoon of June 4. I debarked at Mingan on June 6. Leaving there on June 13, I travelled, chiefly in small motorboats, and with frequent delays, to Blanc-Sablon, on the eastern boundary of the Dominion of Canada, where I arrived on July 12.

I returned in a motorboat as far as Harrington, sailed from Harrington on the steamer *Aranmore* on July 28, passed the southwestern boundary of Labrador on the night of July 29, and debarked at Quebec on July 31.

Lewis had left the *North Shore* only three days before she burned at

Quebec, and returned in the chartered *Aranmore*, now operating in her place. In all, the *North Shore* ended up out of service for two months of her first season.

In Audubon's Country

Interest in birds of the North Shore dated back as far as 1833, just as the *Royal William* was preparing to set off across the Atlantic. That summer, John James Audubon was sailing the Labrador coast with his son and a full crew of assistants in the 106-ton schooner *Ripley*, observing and recording the birds of the area in watercolours for his famous work "Birds of America." Departing Eastport, Maine, on June 6, Audubon had sailed to the coast by way of the Strait of Canso and the Magdalen Islands, arriving at Little Natashquan eleven days later to spend two months cruising the North Shore as far as the Strait of Belle Isle.

On August 8, while Audubon was finishing his summer's work on the North Shore, the *Royal William* arrived at Pictou, where she would stay for ten days before setting off for England. Audubon's *Ripley* left Bradore Bay on the 11th, and arrived at St George's, Newfoundland, on the 14th to spend a week. From St George's, Audubon sailed to Pictou to visit ornithologist Thomas McCulloch, arriving soon after the *Royal William* had departed. Audubon then sent the *Ripley* back to Eastport, which she reached on August 31, six days before the *Royal William* arrived in England. Audubon was well aware of the *Royal William*, as in late June he'd met Commander Henry Bayfield RN, surveying the North Shore in his schooner *Gulnare*, and the *Royal William* had been the vessel that towed the *Gulnare* from Quebec earlier that month.

Audubon's voyage to the Lower North Shore was in the public mind once more when the Clarke Steamship Co came into being, as Charles Wendell Townsend had published his book "In Audubon's Labrador" in 1918. In it, Townsend had written about his own voyage from Montreal three years earlier: -

The steamship *Cascapedia* took us down the great river St Lawrence the afternoon of June 24, 1915, under the care of Captain Hearn. He was an old friend, and as I sat next to him at table, I had the full benefit of his wise and witty sayings and sea tales and witty sayings...

The next morning we had a couple of hours ashore at Quebec, and, besides wandering about the old town, and revelling in the wonderful view from the Terrace, we enjoyed an impressive service in the dimly-lighted cathedral. Regular life on board the boat now began, and we found an interesting company, as is apt to be the case on out-of-the-way journeys. I particularly enjoyed long talks with Napoleon A Comeau, the veteran naturalist of Godbout, an authority on the life

history of our salmon and an ornithologist of no mean attainments...

It was a beautiful afternoon when we entered the wonderful Bay of Seven Islands. They were having a good season at the whale factory, but no whales were to be seen and we were too far to windward to perceive the usual evidence of them. At Clarke City Wharf - the port of the woodpulp factory eleven miles distant in the forest - we landed one of the Clarke brothers and listened to talk about the management of the men and the pulp production...

At the town of Seven Islands, a Hudson's Bay Company post, an Indian village and the seat of the Bishop of the Catholic missions of the coast, we ran aground attempting to reach the newly-built wharf. We backed out, anchored and waited a couple of hours for a higher tide...

At Ellis Bay, Anticosti, on the fourth morning of the voyage from Montreal, we landed the enterprising manager of the lumbering interests for M Menier, the feudal lord of this great island...

We were soon back on the Côte-Nord and dropped anchor from time to time off familiar places, to be met by fishing-boats for the exchange of passengers and commodities...

Mount St John stood up dark blue ... as we anchored that evening off the mouth of the St John River. Near at hand lay the *Wacouta*, James J Hill's white steam yacht, awaiting her owner at the salmon club.

We arrived at Esquimaux Point late on the evening of June 27th, and found our pilot of the trip, Captain A Edmond Joncas, and his schooner the *Sea Star*. M Johan Beetz, who had courteously invited me to pay him a visit at Piashte Bay, now officially known as Bay Johan Beetz - also came to meet us on the wharf.

The 804-ton *Wacouta* was a 243-foot iron steam yacht that Hill, the Canadian-born builder of the Great Northern Railway, had purchased in June 1900. He used her every summer to carry himself and friends from Montreal to his seven-bedroom salmon-fishing lodge at Rivière-St-Jean. In fact, she was almost as long as the *Cascapedia*. But Hill died in May 1916, and the yacht went to Europe in 1917.

Townsend made this voyage in the same year that Canada Steamship Lines had moved the *Cascapedia* from the Gaspé coast route to the North Shore, but he had already met Capt Hearn on a trip he made in Holliday Brothers' *Aranmore* in 1909. After leaving the *Cascapedia*, Townsend spent the summer of 1915 sailing along the coast from Point aux Esquimaux to Blanc-Sablon. There, on August 2, he boarded the 836-ton *Meigle*, a thirty-four year old mail boat that the Reid Newfoundland Railway had brought to the coast two years earlier. Inbound from Battle Harbour, Labrador, Townsend

sailed in her to St John's, from whence he returned Boston.

Townsend had been to both the Labrador coast and the North Shore before. His first voyage from St John's to Battle Harbour and up the Labrador coast to Nain had been made in 1906, after which he had published "Along the Labrador Coast." His second voyage, from Quebec to Natashquan, was the one he made in the *Aranmore* in 1909, and was followed by "A Labrador Spring." In 1912, he had travelled eighty miles up the Natashquan River, but his 1915 trip had been his first visit to the country Audubon had visited between Natashquan and the Strait of Belle Isle. Having used different steamer services in 1906 and 1909, he travelled both in 1915, but still had to make his own way along the "Audubon coast," which was not yet regularly served by steamer.

The names Townsend mentioned were household names to the Clarke brothers, one of whom Townsend reported disembarking at Clarke City:

Capt Hearn, with his knowledge of the North Shore, had left the *Aranmore* when she was sold to the government to replace Capt Lachance in the *Cascapedia*. When this ship left the St Lawrence in 1917, he had joined Gulf Pulp & Paper's little *Amherst*. Taking command of the icebreaker CGS *Montcalm* in March 1919, he brought back the *Mikula* in 1922 and even went back to his old command, the *Aranmore*, for a time. Thanks to the Clarkes, who knew Hearn from the *Aranmore* and the *Cascapedia*, the *Amherst* had provided a temporary home between commercial ships and government ones.

Napoléon Comeau had in 1909 published "Life and Sport on the North Shore of the Lower St Lawrence," a book that was reprinted in 1923 and 1954. Comeau had also been known to the Clarkes since they first arrived in the Gulf. After his death in 1923, a monument to him was erected at Godbout in 1927 and, as his ultimate recognition, the town of Baie Comeau would take his name in the 1930s.

Johan Beetz, a medical doctor from Belgium, left for Montreal in 1922, no doubt in a Clarke ship, and his former village of Piastre Bay, as it was then called, would soon be named Baie-Johan-Beetz in his honour.

And the 40-foot *Sea Star*, that veteran of the North Shore, had embarked Victor Huard and the Bishop of Chicoutimi at Pointe-aux-Esquimaux on July 19, 1895, for a rough overnight passage to Natashquan, twenty years before Townsend joined her.

A Tour of The North Shore

When the *North Shore* returned to service, all four of her lifeboats, two of which had previously been stowed on the after deckhouse, were now

located in her midship superstructure, giving her a more symmetrical appearance. A small derrick at the aft end of the midship cabin had also been removed and the boom reinstalled on the mainmast facing forward. And a rubbing strake or fender had been added to either side of her hull to protect her while berthing. As a result of remeasurement after these modifications, her gross tonnage increased from 811 to 880.

During that first season, the *North Shore* made a special tour of the Lower North Shore with invited delegates from both the Federal and Quebec Government's. "Canadian Railway & Marine World" recorded her return to service in its October edition: -

The passenger and cargo steamship *North Shore*, operated by Clarke Steamship Co, Quebec, which was gutted by fire a short time ago, has been reconstructed by Canadian Vickers Ltd to designs and specifications by Walter Lambert, naval architect, Montreal, the work being carried out under his supervision.

After its completion the owners gave a luncheon on board the ship at Quebec, among the guests being the Minister of Trade and Commerce, Sir George Foster, and Lady Foster, and Premier Taschereau, Quebec, after which the ship sailed for Gulf ports, Sir George and Lady Foster being among the passengers.

As a result of this tour, it was decided that Clarke should in future provide a dedicated fortnightly service as far as Bradore Bay, near Blanc-Sablon, a significant extension on earlier services that had served Natashquan and Harrington Harbour, but had only extended to Blanc-Sablon once a month, or even once a year.

Until now, the Lower North Shore beyond Harrington Harbour had been served primarily by trading schooners anchoring offshore, which is perhaps why steamers had not served this coast, as there were no docking facilities. Nevertheless, Clarke would serve these people well, and developed a policy of carrying the sick and the poor as well as missionaries free of charge. The extended service was to take effect in 1922, once another ship could be found to release the *Labrador* from the Gaspé coast service.

In its first season, Clarke was now operating three steamships, the *North Shore* to the North Coast every ten days, and the *Labrador* and the chartered *A Tremblay* in weekly freight service to the Gaspé coast, with the *Labrador* also carrying a few passengers. As well, the Gulf Pulp & Paper Co's *Amherst* carried occasional cargoes.

Canada Steamship Lines to Newfoundland

Meanwhile, Canada Steamship Lines, while no longer serving the North

Shore or Pictou, now ran a line between Montreal and St John's, Newfoundland, using freighters such as the 2,404-ton *Mapledawn* and the 2,085-ton *Winona*. This new scheduled freight service had replaced the old Black Diamond Line, which had lost its two Montreal-St John's passenger and cargo ships in 1914 and 1915, and whose business had been ceded to the Dominion Shipping Co Ltd in 1917. The first Canada Steamship Lines sailing was performed in July 1920 by the 1,269-ton *Corunna*, which was chartered from the Dominion Shipping Co. After this, CSL used its own ships on the St John's route.

By now, the Dominion Shipping Co was a large industrial carrier, chartering many ships for the Newfoundland and St Lawrence River coal and bulk trades. The St Lawrence Shipping Co, the Nova Scotia corporation that had owned the passenger ships, had been wound up in 1920. "Canadian Railway & Marine World" had discussed the Dominion Coal operation in June 1920 as follows: -

The Dominion Coal Co, operating the Black Diamond Steamship Line, is reported to have bought the s.s. *Daghild* from the British Ministry of Shipping. She was built at Sunderland, Eng, in 1916, and is screw driven by an engine of 570 hp. Her dimensions are, in length 455 ft, breadth 58.1 ft, depth 33.2 ft; tonnage, 7,978 gross, 4,862 net. She was owned formerly by Jenkins Bros, Cardiff, Wales, and, prior to the war, was chartered to the Dominion Coal Co, but was requisitioned by the Ministry of Shipping for war purposes.

The Dominion Coal Co's charters, unexpired at the commencement of the war, still hold good, and the balance of the charter terms will, it is said, be carried out by the steamships *Rose Castle*, *Kamouraska*, *Lord Strathcona*, *Wabana*, *Lingan* and *Hochelaga*. The first named ship is expected to arrive at Sydney, NS, during June, the others following at intervals.

The *Lord Strathcona* and *Lingan* have already been mentioned, but along with the 7,803-ton *Rose Castle* and the 4,903-ton *Kamouraska*, 4,804-ton *Wabana* and 4,681-ton *Hochelaga*, these were the stalwarts of the Dominion Coal fleet, returning season after season to trade in the St Lawrence. The *Kamouraska's* owners were the Sydney, Cape Breton & Montreal Steamship Co Ltd, in which Bowrings and other Liverpool owners had an interest along with Dominion Coal.

An unsuccessful attempt had been made to merge Canada Steamship Lines and the various Cape Breton coal and steel industries into one company in 1920. The British Empire Steel Corporation Ltd was to have included the Dominion Steel Corporation, subsidiary Dominion Coal, the Nova Scotia Steel & Coal Co Ltd, Canada Steamship Lines, Canada Foundries & Steel Forgings Ltd, the Maritime Nail Company, Collingwood Shipbuilding Co Ltd, Port Arthur Shipbuilding Co Ltd, Halifax Shipyards Ltd and the Davie Shipbuilding &

Repairing Co Ltd and their subsidiaries. In the UK, the conglomerate would have included Furness Withy, United Steel Companies of Great Britain, Vickers Ltd and William Beardmore & Co Ltd, all in shipping, shipbuilding or steel.

Had it gone ahead, this \$500 million merger, announced on May 2, 1920, would have been second only to that of United States Steel Corporation. But instead, having the ships that were needed, Canada Steamship Lines took the Montreal-St John's general cargo trade that had previously been served by the Black Diamond Line. By 1921, it was offering spring sailings with the *Winona*, on May 3 and May 23, and the *Mapledawn*, on May 15 and June 3. This was not before the latter had already performed a number of winter sailings from Saint John and two sailings from Montreal, on April 20 and May 4, under her old name of *Manola*, which had to be changed in order to avoid confusion with a new ship that was about to be introduced to St John's.

On June 11, two days after the *North Shore's* fire at Quebec, Canada Steamship Lines introduced the 5,070-ton passenger and cargo ship *Manoa* (ii) into service, reviving the old Black Diamond Line passenger service between Montreal, Charlottetown and St John's, as well as the Quebec Steamship Co's pre-1915 service between Montreal, Quebec and Gaspé. Because of the number of ports, the round voyage took 17 days. As "Canadian Railway & Marine World" announced that June: -

Canada Steamship Lines will place its twin-screw steamship *Manoa* in service this summer, between Montreal, Quebec, and Gaspé, Que, Charlottetown, PEI, and St John's, Nfld, making seven round trips of about a fortnight each, leaving Montreal June 11, and 28, July 15, Aug 2 and 19, and Sept 6 and 23... Her stateroom accommodation includes parlor rooms with baths en suite.

The route will be along the south shore of the St Lawrence, round the Gaspé peninsula, and Percé Rock, and thence via Charlottetown to St John's. The passenger rates will range as follows, according to accommodation, first-class fares including berths and meals. To Gaspé, one way, \$30 to \$70; steerage, \$20; no round trip fares to Gaspé. To Charlottetown, one way, \$45 to \$85; round trip, \$75 to \$150; steerage, one way, \$30. To St John's, one way, \$70 to \$100; round trip, \$125 to \$175; steerage, one way, \$40. There will be local rates between Gaspé and Charlottetown, Gaspé and St John's and Charlottetown and St John's. Children under 5, if occupying seats at table, will be charged 50c a meal, but no charge for passage or berth; children 5 years and under 12, half fare; and over 12 full fare. All fares exclusive of war tax.

The Quebec Steamship Co's second ship named after a mythical golden city in British Guiana, the *Manoa* was a former Hamburg-American

liner that had been taken as a war prize by the Americans. She could carry 100 passengers and ran briefly in the Quebec Steamship Co's West Indies trade, between December 1919 and April 1920, before moving to the Compagnie Canadienne Transatlantique Ltée for a new service between Montreal and Le Havre, with Saint John as winter port.

Compagnie Canadienne Transatlantique was a joint venture between Canada Steamship Lines and Compagnie Générale Transatlantique that had been formed on April 12, 1919, with each partner contributing two passenger-cargo ships for the new route. But it only operated thirteen round voyages for passengers plus a number of trips by chartered cargo ships before closing down in January 1921. The *Manoa's* running mate in this service, the 4,508-ton *Kamarima*, was also originally intended for the Charlottetown and St John's service, but backed up as she was by cargo ships, the *Manoa* proved quite adequate for the role.

Except for the call at Gaspé, the *Manoa* took up where the Black Diamond Line's *Morwenna* had left off seven years earlier. By October, "Canadian Railway & Marine World" was reporting her acceptance on the St John's run: -

Canada Steamship Lines' s.s. *Manoa*, which was to have made her last trip of the season from Montreal to Newfoundland, made additional sailings, Oct 13 and 29, and will make a third additional sailing, Nov 17, in response to requests from Newfoundland residents. The usual calls were made at Gaspé, Que, and Charlottetown, PEI. It is stated that the *Manoa* will make a series of special winter cruises to the south.

A larger ship than the Black Diamond ships, but with roughly the same passenger capacity, she became the mainstay of the Montreal-St John's trade for the next five years. Whether the "special winter cruises" were meant to be run by Canada Steamship Lines or she was to be chartered to Furness Withy & Co is not clear. Canada Steamship Lines had sold its Quebec Steamship subsidiary, for whom the *Manoa* had first operated, two seasons earlier and was no longer involved in the southern trades. In any event a later report in "Canadian Railway & Marine World" seemed to indicate that the cruises never took place: -

Canada Steamship Lines' s.s. *Manoa*, which was operated between Montreal and St John's, Nfld, in 1921, is having her passenger accommodation increased in Europe, and it is expected that she will be ready to resume her service between those points about the middle of May.

That winter, meanwhile, Canada Steamship Lines continued to advertise various winter cargo sailings between Saint John, New Brunswick, and St John's.

Weekly Saguenay Cruises from Montreal

Another St Lawrence River cruise option, which Canada Steamship Lines had started the year before, was a 6-night Saguenay trip from Montreal, sailing every Saturday at 7 pm for Quebec, Chicoutimi, Tadoussac, Murray Bay, back to Quebec, and returning to Montreal at noon on Friday, for a round voyage of a little over 600 miles. Cruise fares on the 2,484-ton *Cape Eternity* began at \$75 from Montreal or \$55 for a shorter 4-day voyage from Quebec.

The *Cape Eternity* had been built in 1910 as R&O's US-flag steamer *Rochester*, to operate three times weekly between Niagara, Rochester and Ogdensburg, New York. In 1918, Canada Steamship Lines chartered her to American Express, who offered a program of summer cruises from Niagara to the Saguenay, a distance of 1,346 miles. From July 11 to 15, 1921, she was chartered by the Canadian Government for a cruise from the Welland Canal to Quebec and back to Montreal in order to examine the Great Lakes and St Lawrence route to the sea.

The 6-day Saguenay cruise was an addition to the *Saguenay's* twice-weekly scheduled sailings from Montreal, and was designed as a leisurely way of enjoying a week on the St Lawrence and Saguenay Rivers. The *Cape Eternity* would offer these cruises every summer until 1928.

Just as the four white bands of the Clarke ships began to appear in the St Lawrence, Canada Steamship Lines introduced new colours of its own. Prior to 1921, CSL ships trading in the St Lawrence had worn the dark red funnel and black top of both the Quebec Steamship Co and the Richelieu & Ontario Navigation Co. Now, though, a bright red funnel with a white band and black top, previously worn only by ships of the Northern Navigation Co on the Great Lakes, was adopted fleet-wide. This, together with the Quebec Steamship Co houseflag, formed the new Canada Steamship Lines identity. The new funnel colours were not unfamiliar in the St Lawrence, though, as they were identical to those worn by the Allan Line ships prior to their being acquired by Canadian Pacific in 1915.

Inter-Continental Transport Services Ltd

In May 1921, four months after the Compagnie Canadienne Transatlantique closed, Canada Steamship Lines announced the formation of another Transatlantic venture, Inter-Continental Transport Services Ltd, to operate cargo service between the St Lawrence and the ports of Hamburg, Rotterdam, Antwerp and Le Havre. London and Liverpool were later added as well.

Shares in the company were held not only by Canada Steamship Lines but also by a number of prominent Norwegian shipowners and "Canadian Marine & Railway World" carried the announcement in its May issue: -

Canada Steamship Lines has, according to a Montreal press dispatch made an arrangement with a Norwegian steamship company, under which a joint line of 12 steamships will be operated between Montreal and Liverpool, and Montreal, Havre and London, under the name of Intercontinental Transport Ltd [sic]. The steamships have, it is said, all been arranged for, and it is stated that they will be renamed after various counties in Ontario. Sailings will be provided out of Montreal weekly, the destination alternating between Liverpool and Havre-London. The first sailing is scheduled for May 14, by the s.s. *Porsanger*, which was built by Canadian Vickers Ltd, Montreal, in 1918, for Norwegian owners. Her dimensions are: length overall 394 ft, depth moulded 30 ft, dw tonnage 7,000, gross tonnage 4,670, load draft 24 ft.

The 4,363-ton *Porsanger* was in fact the first ocean-going vessel to have been completed by Canadian Vickers, and was chartered from Norway's Westfal-Larsen Line. CSL contributed the 5,796-ton *Essex County* (i), which had been working with the Compagnie Canadienne Transatlantique as the *Bilbster*, and the 4,399-ton *Welland County*, both of which it owned, but eventually the line would charter all its ships from Norway. Its ships loaded at Shed 19 on the outside of Victoria Pier while Canada Steamship Lines' St Lawrence and Saguenay ships loaded at Sheds 20-21-22 on the inside of the pier in the Market Basin, and Clarke was at Shed 23 behind them.

The best-known of the new line's ships was the Bergen Line's twin-funnelled 5,001-ton *Brant County* (i), a war prize taken on hire in 1921 that would see twenty-two years service before her loss in the Second World War. Ships were chartered from Mowinckels and a other Norwegian owners. With ships painted in the new CSL colours and named for Canadian counties, the service soon came to be known as the County Line.

Furness Bermuda Line to the St Lawrence

Two years after taking over the Quebec Steamship Co, Furness Withy & Co started a new series of cruises to the St Lawrence, using its 7,785-ton *Fort St George*. The series was announced in the "New York Times" on May 1, 1921, under the headline "To Take Canadian Cruise": -

The Furness Bermuda Line has announced summer cruises to the Evangeline country and old French Canada, which, it is said, will take its voyagers into a region little explored by American pleasure seekers.

The steamer *Fort St George* ... will inaugurate the cruising schedule

with her departure from New York on July 2. The itinerary includes visits at Halifax, a trip through the Cut of Canso and Northumberland Straits and an extensive cruise of the Saguenay River, returning later to Quebec.

The 430-passenger *Fort St George* performed four of these 12-day cruises from New York to Quebec, while a 5-day passage was also offered for Canadian passengers wishing to travel from Quebec to New York.

The *Fort St George* was the former Australian coastal liner *Wandilla*, which had been purchased from the Adelaide Steamship Co Ltd along with her sister ship *Willochra*, renamed *Fort Victoria*, in 1919 and 1920. A third ship of the class, the *Wiralda*, had been torpedoed in 1918.

Furness Bermuda Line's new St Lawrence cruises were in fact a revival of the New York-Halifax-Charlottetown-Quebec passenger service that had been operated by the *Trinidad* before the war, except that Prince Edward Island was no longer included.

A Naval Visitor - HMS "Raleigh"

As the Clarke Steamship Co was getting started, in September 1921 the Royal Navy's HMS *Raleigh*, brand-new flagship of the Commander in Chief, North America & West Indies Station, came north to visit Montreal and Quebec. The *Raleigh* was a "Hawkins" class light cruiser of 9,750 tons displacement, carrying seven 7½-inch guns on a hull with dimensions of 605 feet overall by 58 feet. Commissioned only six weeks earlier, on July 23, she had made a brief visit to her new base in Bermuda before leaving for Montreal on August 29.

Raleigh tied up at Montreal's Laurier Pier on September 3 for a two-week stay, eventually leaving for a daylight sail on September 17 to Quebec, where she remained alongside in the St Charles Basin for another eight days until September 26. Clarke's *Labrador* and *North Shore* must have looked insignificant as they steamed by the big cruiser, but she was of great interest to their passengers.

From Quebec, *Raleigh* followed the North Shore to Forteau Bay, on the Labrador side of the Strait of Belle Isle, for four days of recreation and salmon fishing before visiting St John's and Halifax and eventually returning to Bermuda. That winter, she would make a tour through the Panama Canal to Los Angeles, then visit the Royal Canadian Navy base at Esquimalt, spending New Year's Eve in Vancouver.

The plan for 1922 was that she would return to Bermuda, visit Washington for eight days over the Memorial Day weekend in late May, the largest British warship ever to do so, and then return to the St Lawrence for

most of July and into August.

Winter Service to the North Shore?

While it would be a few years yet before year-round service was opened to the North Shore, Arctic pioneer Capt Bernier tried in 1921 to get support for such a project, something that "Canadian Railway & Marine World" reported in October: -

Negotiations are proceeding with the Dominion Government for a grant towards the provision of a special winter steamship service to points along the north shore of the St. Lawrence River and Gulf. It is stated that the Government has offered to pay \$35,000 for the carriage of mails, for which it now pays \$42,000 for transportation overland by dog teams, but it is reported that a further \$20,000 is essential to assure the steamship service...

Capt J E Bernier, formerly of the Gulf of St Lawrence Shipping & Trading Co, is endeavoring to establish a winter steamship service from Murray Bay, Que, the terminus of the Quebec & Saguenay Ry, along the north shore to Clarke City, calling at Tadoussac, Godbout, Shelter Bay, Pointe des Monts, Franklin River, Bersimis, Trinity Bay and St Margarets Bay. It is proposed to buy the s.s. *Champlain* from the Dominion Government, or some other suitable icebreaking steamship, and to operate her under the management of The Quebec North Shore Service Registered.

The extra cost seems to have put a finish to this idea, possibly along with the memories of what had happened last time the government sold the *Champlain*. Instead, the *Champlain* became a tug for Sincennes-McNaughton, and had a long career on the Great Lakes before she was lost on the coast of Newfoundland in 1943.

That first winter of 1921-22, "Winter Moorings of Canadian Steamships" reported that the Clarke Steamship Co had three vessels laid up at Quebec: *Labrador*, *North Shore* and *A Tremblay*. But the following spring would see the arrival of yet another ship for the new fleet.

A Question of Subsidies at Quebec

On February 13, 1922, hardly a year after Gulf of St Lawrence Shipping had failed and Clarke had been granted its first Quebec subsidy, and before Clarke had acquired its third ship, an amusing exchange occurred in the Quebec Legislature. Arthur Sauvé, leader of the Conservative opposition, posed a question to Liberal Premier Louis-Alexandre Taschereau, who replied as follows: -

Mr Sauvé (Deux Montagnes);

1. Has a subsidy of \$25,000 been granted to the Clarke Steamship Co, for the transport of fish on the North and South Shore?
2. If so, under what conditions has this sum been granted to this company?
3. Have these conditions been fulfilled?
4. Have other requests been made for such subsidies?
5. If so, by whom and why were they not granted?

Honourable Mr Taschereau (Montmorency):

1. Yes.
2. Under a contract that contains all the conditions.
3. Yes.
4. Yes.
5. By Mr Bossé. Because the Government cannot subsidize all the companies. It has granted a subsidy to the company that seemed to offer the best service.

Mr Bossé had of course been one of the principals behind the failed Gulf of St Lawrence Shipping & Trading Co, and its general manager. Premier Taschereau himself was no stranger to the North Shore, having been a frequent visitor to the Moisie River, where he liked to go salmon fishing, and was familiar with the North Shore steamship service as the only way to get there.

Sauvé would continue to pose his questions, seemingly backed by Bossé, and the Quebec Government would continue to praise the services offered by the Clarke Steamship Co. Bossé was soon also joined by representatives from the Gaspé Coast Co Ltd, who asked the Quebec Board of Trade why they too should not be granted a subsidy, and were given the same answer for a service they had started to Gaspé.

The question of subsidies was always an interesting and often a thorny one for Clarke. Some were envious, others were critical, but without subsidies many of these services could not have been performed within any reasonable expectation. The \$25,000 a year was just the Quebec contribution. As it had traditionally been Ottawa that had awarded the postal contracts, the federal share, at \$80,000 for two ships, would be even higher.

Now though, Quebec had agreed to share the burden, with a view to supporting its fisheries and the settlements that depended on them. At the same time, Ottawa's subsidy for the Gaspé service would eventually be set at \$30,000 a year.

The "Gaspesia"

As the *North Shore* and *Labrador* were both needed to run a weekly service to the North Shore, a third ship had to be found for the Gaspé coast. Clarke had not purchased the *Shearwater* in 1921, but had negotiated an extension of the Gaspé coast service to Prince Edward Island, and for this it needed a larger ship. "Canadian Shipping & Marine Engineering News" reported in its issue of March 1922: -

The coasting trade down the lower St. Lawrence is receiving more attention than usual. The Clarke Steamship Co, which desires to open up and develop the lower St. Lawrence, is bringing over from England a new steamer to be added to its fleet, which will run from Quebec to all intermediate ports along the south shore to Gaspé. This company, comprising in its personnel the younger members of the Clarke family, well known in Toronto, and the Great Lakes shipping trade, have been for some years past studying the dormant resources of the lower St. Lawrence, on both the north shore to the Gulf, and the Gaspé Peninsula, and have gained considerable knowledge of a wealth of reserves which remain to be developed, and are determined to be the pioneers of this development. They are practical in their methods, and efficient in system, and are bound to meet with successful results. It will take some time, but before the passing of another decade the Clarke Brothers will be a recognized factor in the affairs of the port of Quebec.

With the help of the Bouchard brothers, the 1,014-ton *Gaspesia* was acquired in April of 1922. Meanwhile, anticipating the arrival of the third ship, the *Labrador* was transferred to Labrador Fisheries Ltd at 17 rue St-Jacques, Quebec, still with Clarke as managers, to open the new service between Quebec and Bradore Bay via way ports.

Clarke's third owned ship arrived Quebec at 12:20 am, just after midnight on Monday, May 8. The "Quebec Chronicle" welcomed her the next day under the heading "New Steamer is Acquisition": -

The steamer *Arbroath*, purchased in England by the Clarke Steamship Company for the North Shore Lower St Lawrence service has arrived at Quebec from London, and after being overhauled and repainted will be put in commission to sail on her next trip to Gaspé and Charlottetown, PEI, on May 23rd.

The steamer, which has been renamed the *Gaspesia*, is a splendid sailor with a speed of 12 knots per hour. It took her nearly fourteen days to come out owing to rough weather, but Captains Edouard and Francois Bouchard, who went to England to superintend the purchase and came out with the ship, report that she is a splendid sea boat. This was amply tested, they say, on the passage out with rough weather and high seas all the way, which she admirably stood.

The Clarke Steamship Company, of which Mr D A Clarke is president, is pleased with the new boat and has every confidence that she will be well suited for passenger and freight traffic in the Lower St Lawrence. She is just such a boat as the tourist traffic has been wishing for some years, and the accommodation offered by the new *Gaspesia* is such as to leave no room for fault-finding...

Her passenger accommodation is limited to 50 in first-class and 50 in the second. The dining room, situated on the upper deck, is spacious, light and in fine weather, the windows can be opened to give fresh air; besides, the ship is well and thoroughly ventilated. The smoker is cosy and spacious and passenger accommodation fraught with every convenience and comfort.

The *Gaspesia* will go into dockage for overhauling and repainting as well as new furnishings. When this is completed the vessel will be open to inspection by the public. The *Gaspesia*, when placed in commission, will have for her navigator Captain William Tremblay, formerly captain of the Government steamer *Loos*, who is a navigator of experience and chosen for his ability. The vessel carries a crew of 20 officers and men and burns 24 tons of coal per day while in operation.

The cost of acquiring the *Gaspesia*, which had been operating as the *Arbroath* on the east coast of the British Isles for the Dundee, Perth & London Shipping Co Ltd (DP&L) of Dundee, was \$251,000. For purposes of expediency, Edouard Bouchard, Clarke's Montreal agent handling the Gaspé service from Victoria Pier, became the *Gaspesia*'s first owner of record when she was acquired in 1922, but by 1923 she was re-registered with the South Shipping Co at Quebec. Bouchard, having once been master of the *Gaspésien* for Bouchard Brothers, leads one to wonder whether he may have influenced the choice of name for the new acquisition.

With Desmond president of the Clarke Steamship Co, Frank president of the North Shipping Co, Walter president of the South Shipping Co and Wilfrid president of Labrador Fisheries, all four brothers were now firmly involved in the new shipping operation. The new ship's master, Capt Tremblay, was a native of the north shore Charlevoix County town of St-Joseph-de-la-Rive.

The *Gaspesia* had been built in 1909 by AG "Neptun" of Rostock, as the Baltic trader *Alexandra* for the Riga-Lübecker Dampfschiffahrts Gesellschaft of Lübeck, a company that was founded in 1837 and through its managers F H Bertling is still active today. The *Alexandra* had been built for the two-night crossing between Lübeck and Riga, Latvia, a route that is still operated by passenger and cargo ships today, and one that is prone to winter ice conditions.

Like the County Line's *Brant County*, built in the same yard ten years

later, and Canada Steamship Lines' *Manoa*, the *Gaspesia* too was a war reparations ship. Between December 1915 and November 1918, she served the German Navy as the auxiliary *Alexandra*, manned by a crew of 72. At first, she had served as a decoy ship against British submarines, for which she had been equipped with four hidden 3½-inch fast-firing guns and two machine guns, and, later in the war, as a harbour defence vessel.

She had become DP&L's *Arbroath* in June 1920, replacing a ship of the same name that had been built in 1890. However, she herself was replaced by a new ship, the 1,491-ton *London* (iv) of 1922, which is how she became available for purchase by Clarke. Although the first DP&L ship to join the Clarke fleet, she would not be the last. Several DP&L ships would be chartered by Clarke in future years and, for a time, the two companies would come to operate a joint service to Newfoundland.

Measuring 215 feet overall by 32 feet and eventually refitted by Clarke to carry 136 passengers, of whom 47 had berths, the *Gaspesia* could also carry up to 1,200 tons of cargo. Three two-ton derricks over two hatches fore and aft gave access to 53,773 cubic feet of dry cargo space and 2,200 cubic feet of refrigerated capacity. Her 1,000 horsepower steam reciprocating engine by her builders gave her a maximum speed of 12½ knots, while at service speed of 10½ knots she burned about 20 tons of coal a day.

While the derivation of her name was obvious, an earlier *Gaspesia*, a 3,861-ton ocean steamer, had attempted an unsuccessful Transatlantic service between Paspébiac, a "year-round port" on the Gaspé Peninsula, and Milford Haven, Wales, for the Canadian Steamship Company. After spending 75 days jammed in pack ice in the Gulf of St Lawrence upon departing Paspébiac in February 1899, she had been salvaged, towed to Newfoundland, bought and sold by J A Farquhar & Co of Halifax and the service closed. However, this precedent was long enough ago that it did not stop Clarke from using the name. This latest acquisition would have a long career with her new owners.

The *Gaspesia*'s public rooms included a smoking room, behind the chart house on Bridge Deck, and a dining saloon in the forward end of the accommodation on the Upper Deck. Her passenger cabins numbered ten on the Main Deck and five on the Upper Deck, in two-berth, three-berth and four-berth configurations. Cabin number 11 became the Purser's Office, thereby reducing capacity to 45 berthed passengers. While the Upper Deck was renamed Promenade Deck, the Main Deck kept its name and the former chart house was converted into the captain's cabin. Most of these changes were made in August and September 1922, when she spent some time at Canadian Vickers.

To the Gaspé Coast and Prince Edward Island

The *Gaspesia* first entered service on May 23, 1922, on a schedule that called for her to leave Montreals Victoria Pier every second Tuesday at 4 pm for the Gaspé coast and Prince Edward Island. The Tuesday sailing dates followed the practice of the *Percésien* in 1915, while 4 pm was when the Quebec Steamship Co's *Campana* and *Cascapedia* had sailed. The South Shipping Co operated the Gaspé coast and Gulf service, and the *Gaspesia's* departures were listed in the Clarke Steamship Co's main sailing schedule, along with those of the *North Shore* and *Labrador*. For the season ending December 4, 1922, Clarke received a subsidy of \$22,500 for the Montreal to Paspébiac portion of the *Gaspesia's* route.

When the *Gaspesia* arrived there were improvements all round. Although Gaspé lost its call every 17 days by the *Manoa*, it now had fortnightly passenger service from Montreal and Quebec with a ship three times the size of the *Labrador*. Prince Edward Island, for its part, had a choice between two set-day fortnightly services with the *Gaspesia* and the *Manoa* instead of just one sailing every 17 days. St John's also benefited from the *Manoa's* new fortnightly schedule. Meanwhile, the *Labrador* was now able to join the *North Shore* in service to that coast.

Victoria Pier, where the *Gaspesia* loaded in Montreal, was a modern facility. Its clock tower memorial to sailors lost in the war had been inaugurated in 1919 by the Prince of Wales, later to be King Edward VIII. Clarke's Montreal sailings would depart from Victoria Pier for as long as they carried passengers, and its nearby neighbours included Canada Steamship Lines, particularly its Saguenay steamers, plus a number of other coastal operators.

Although Victoria Pier had only been opened quite recently, the lower level Shed 23 that Clarke used and Canada Steamship Lines' Sheds 20-21-22 were temporary structures that had to be dismantled every winter and stored in Sheds 18 and 19, where the County Line ships called, then re-assembled each spring. The reason for this was that the ice usually rose above the lower level wharves during the winter.

Like all the ships she followed, the *Gaspesia* served numerous ports in the Gaspé Peninsula, from Les Méchins, Cap Chat, Ste-Anne-des-Monts, Rivière-à-la-Martre, Marsoui, Rivière-à-Claude, Mont-Louis, St-Antoine, Madeleine, Grande-Vallée, Petite-Vallée, Pointe-à-la-Frégate, Cloridorme, St-Yvon, Grand Etang, Anse-à-Valleau, Pointe-Jaune, Rivière-au-Renard, Anse-au-Griffon, Anse-à-Louise, Grand-Grève, Douglastown, Gaspé, Mal-Bay, Percé, Anse-du-Cap, Grande-Rivière, Chandler, Newport and Port Daniel to Paspébiac.

Like the *Percésien* before her, the *Gaspesia* terminated her Gaspé voyage at Paspébiac, but unlike the *Percésien*, she did not steam the extra four miles to New Carlisle. It was in New Carlisle that René Lévesque, later to be premier of Quebec, spent his childhood. On the day he was born, in

Campbellton, New Brunswick, August 24, 1922, the *Gaspesia* was on her way back from Gaspé to Quebec and Montreal in the course of her seventh voyage for Clarke.

Paspébiac and the Cod Fishery

Paspébiac was best known as the base of the Jersey-based fisheries firm of C Robin Collas Co Ltd. Consolidated in 1910 with A G Jones & Co Ltd and the Atlantic Fish Companies Ltd, the company was now known as Robin Jones & Whitman Ltd. Incorporated in 1766, the firm's history was briefly summarized in J M Clarke's "Sketches of Gaspé": -

It was not until after the fall of Quebec that capitalists from the Channel Islands became interested in this Gaspé fishing, and among the first of these were members of the Robin family of Jersey. The Robins were established on Bay Chaleur in 1764, and probably on Cape Breton as early, doing business in the latter place under the firm name of Philip Robin & Co, and in the former at Paspébiac, as Charles Robin & Co, Philip and Charles being brothers.

When Charles Robin came to Gaspé the fishing was scattered in small establishments and without organization. Though his purpose was to seek locations for new establishments on the capital he represented, yet the outcome was the development of a concern with interests so wide upon the coast and influences so commanding upon the greater part of the fishing industry as to practically consolidate and control the entire business without serious competition for nearly a century and to set the pace for all future undertakings along this line.

The firm name has changed with time, but till 1886 it was Charles Robin & Co, then took the form C Robin & Co Ltd. A few years later Collas & Co amalgamated with the old firm and the title became The Charles Robin Collas Co Ltd. Up to this time the capital of the business was all in Jersey, and the entire transaction of the fishing was carried out in accordance with orders from across the sea.

In 1904 Collas & Whitman of Halifax entered the company, and the business is now C Robin Collas Co Ltd., with headquarters at Halifax. Today with the main establishment at the historic location, Paspébiac, the company controls twenty-eight fishing stations all along the shores of Gaspé from Bay Chaleur to well up the mouth of the St Lawrence and on the north shore of the river and the Labrador.

During the 19th Century, the Robins had established a number of stations on the North Shore and began to operate their own schooners between Gaspé and the North Shore. This service was formalized in 1919 with a Canadian Government subsidy of \$1,000 per season to the now Robin,

Jones & Whitman Ltd to operate twice-monthly schooner sailings between Gaspé and the North Shore. A further \$500 was paid by the Post Office for carrying the mails.

For this, the firm used the 97-ton *Uruguay*, an 83-foot two-masted schooner built at La Have, Nova Scotia, in 1895 and acquired in 1903, on a route from Gaspé to Anticosti, Rivière-au-Tonnerre, Mingan, Pointe-aux-Esquimaux and Natashquan and back via wayports. A much larger Robin Jones & Whitman schooner, the 364-ton three-masted *Percé*, completed in 1916, was sunk in the First World War while carrying salt cod to Santos. Intercepted off Brazil on January 24, 1917, by the German raider *Seeadler*, the *Percé*'s captain and his new wife, crew, and even the ship's dog, had been removed before she was sunk by gunfire. The *Percé* and *Uruguay* were part of a fleet of over a hundred vessels that had been owned by the various Robin companies, more than a third of which were built in Paspébiac. Apart from the *Percé*, the largest of these was the 352-ton barque *Seaflower*, named after the 41-ton brig that had brought Charles Robin to Paspébiac in 1766, and the fourth of the name to be owned by the Robins. This vessel, built at Paspébiac, was in the Robin fleet between 1875 and 1885.

A similar, but smaller, operation was run by Le Boutillier Brothers Co Ltd, founded in Jersey in 1838 and also run from Paspébiac, although headquartered in Quebec. The Le Boutillier Brothers had originally worked for Charles Robin and now also had installations at Malbaie and Bonaventure Island in the Gaspé and Rivière-au-Tonnerre and Magpie on the North Shore. Like the Robins, they employed hundreds of Gaspésians in the North Shore fishery each summer, advancing provisions in return for their output of dried salted cod, which they then exported across the Atlantic to Spain, Portugal and Italy and south to the West Indies and Brazil. Both firms were started by Jerseymen who spoke French and English but were, for the most part, Anglicans rather than Roman Catholic. Both had also undergone a change in ownership in 1886 after their backers, the Commercial Bank of Jersey, failed.

Robin Jones & Whitman finally took over Le Boutillier Brothers in 1924, a year after the *Gaspesia* entered service, and the combined firm developed its retail activities, selling everything from pins to anchors, in addition to the fisheries. As well as in Gaspé, it had branches around the Gulf of St Lawrence, in Caraquet, New Brunswick, and Cheticamp, Nova Scotia, for example, as well as on the North Shore, although some of the North Shore stations were later sold to the Hudson's Bay Co.

The Gaspé Coast

The Gaspé coastline that the *Gaspesia* served was vividly described by a later Quebec Minister of Fish and Game, writing in the guidebook of L'Association des Hôteliers de la Gaspésie: -

The visitor cannot fully appreciate the scenic beauty of the Province of Quebec unless he visits the Gaspé Peninsula.

He who loves nature will be thrilled at the sight of the massive cliffs of rugged rock rising to towering heights from the depths of the mighty Gulf of St Lawrence; at their base, in well sheltered coves, snuggle small villages, dotted with modest but colourful homes of the fishermen, whose boats lie at anchor, leisurely bowing and bobbing in the gentle wash of the sea. The sun strikes the scene with a brilliant light and brings into relief the quiet, majestic beauty of the north shore of the Gaspé Coast.

The tourist will turn with reluctance from this imposing scenery to make his way to the Bay of Gaspé, where he will gaze with amazement at the tremendous size of this natural seaport. Gaspé is an historical spot as it is here that Jacques Cartier landed in 1534.

Further on, after wending his way through a series of barachois and hamlets, he will gasp at the breathtaking sight of the world-famous Percé Rock. In the distance is Bonaventure Island, a great bird sanctuary.

After leaving Percé the scene changes. The long and sandy beaches of Baie-des-Chaleurs invite the traveller to a well-deserved relaxation.

A first-class return in the *Gaspesia* on the 616-nautical mile route from Montreal to Gaspé was \$49, and from Quebec, a distance of 477 miles, \$38, plus tax. On the *Cascapedia* ten years earlier, the fares had been \$32.65 from Montreal and \$25.90 from Quebec. First-class fares included meals and berth, but steerage class fares for passage only were also offered.

From the Gaspé Peninsula, the *Gaspesia* proceeded 185 miles to Prince Edward Island, where she called at Summerside and then steamed forty-eight miles to Charlottetown, picking up where the Quebec Steamship Co and the *Cascapedia* had left off five years earlier. The *Gaspesia* turned at Charlottetown, however, as a new steamship service was already planned from Charlottetown to Pictou. The Hochelaga Shipping & Towing Co Ltd bought the 628-ton *Hochelaga*, a clipper-bowed former Hapsburg yacht, from the Canadian Government and began service in 1923. Anyone intending to travel to Nova Scotia had to disembark from the *Gaspesia* at Charlottetown and take the *Hochelaga* to Pictou before making the overland rail journey to Halifax.

Clarke scheduled the *Gaspesia* for thirteen voyages in 1922, with her last sailing from Montreal on November 7. In the summer time she berthed not far from Canada Steamship Lines' *Saguenay*, which sailed from Victoria Pier at 7:15 pm every Tuesday, also the *Gaspesia*'s sailing day, fifteen

minutes after the Quebec night boat, as well as on Fridays. But while the *Gaspesia* operated from May through November, the Saguenay and the night boat sailings ran only from June through mid-September, after which they either carried freight or went into lay-up at Sorel.

Gaspé Coast Steamers

Three other lines had been advertising sailings to the Gaspé coast in 1921, before the arrival of the *Gaspesia*, but the *Manoa* withdrew her Gaspé calls with the arrival of the *Gaspesia*.

The Gaspé Line, or Compagnie Gaspé Côtier, offered its 1,141-ton *Brumath* for passengers and cargo, and even chartered the *A Tremblay* from time to time when Clarke was not using her. The *Brumath* was one of five wooden twin-screw steamers ordered during the First World War for France. Completed at Trois Rivières in 1919, the Gaspé Line had added some passenger accommodation in 1921. The August 1921 issue of "Canadian Railway & Marine World" reported as follows: -

The Gaspé Coast Co Ltd is reported to be under organization, with office in Merger Bldg, Quebec, Que, to take over the s.s. *Brumath*, and operate her between Montreal and Quebec, and a number of small ports on the Gaspé coast below Matane. The *Brumath* is one of the five full powered wooden barges built by Three Rivers Shipyards Ltd, Three Rivers, Que, last year, for the French Government, and, as mentioned in "Canadian Railway and Marine World" for July, she was sold recently to Capt Jos Rioux, Gaspé County, Que, for \$34,750. It is stated that this ship, which was built originally to carry freight only, has been fitted with passenger accommodation for 21 first class, and from 50 to 60 second-class passengers. She took her first cargo at Montreal, at the end of June.

For this service, the Gaspé Line was paid a subsidy of \$7,500 for the 1922 season. On October 11, the *Brumath* ran aground on Bouchard Island, below Verchères, while inward bound for Montreal, but was refloated with no damage.

Meanwhile J G Brock & Company, one-time Montreal agent for the Quebec Steamship Co, was offering the 209-ton coaster *Gaspé Trader*. There was still a choice of ships to the Gaspé coast, even if it was also served by rail.

Prince Edward Island

Although the *Manoa* no longer called at Gaspé, the *Gaspesia* competed with her to Charlottetown. But, other than the similarity in their German

fittings and furnishings, the services offered by the two war prizes did not have a lot in common. The *Gaspesia's* extended voyage by way of Gaspé ports took five days from Montreal to Charlottetown, while the *Manoa* arrived in three nights non-stop before continuing on to St John's.

The Plant Line's former connection to Boston was now gone and although the Furness Bermuda Line now ran between New York, Halifax and Quebec, they bypassed Charlottetown, sailing straight through the Northumberland Strait and past Percé Rock and Gaspé and not stopping until Quebec.

The *Gaspesia's* first-class fare to Charlottetown was \$37, or \$70 for the 11-day round voyage from Montreal, and \$60 from Quebec. These fares compared with the *Cascapedia's* 1915 round voyage fares of \$44.65 from Montreal and \$40.85 from Quebec. Clarke's fares, about half more than the old Quebec Steamship Co fares, were still competitive with the *Manoa*, at \$50 one-way and \$90 round trip, double what the *Cascapedia* had charged.

As successors to the old Quebec Steamship Co, the more established firm of Carvell Brothers now represented Canada Steamship Lines, so Clarke appointed Bruce Stewart & Co Ltd, a manufacturer of fishing boat engines with a wharf in Charlottetown, as its Prince Edward Island agent.

After dropping the Gaspé calls, Canada Steamship Lines' *Manoa* had been able to change her schedule to fortnightly fixed day of the week departures. These left Montreal every other Saturday at 4 pm for Charlottetown and St John's, with a return from St John's on the following Saturday. Calling at Charlottetown each way, she arrived at the other end of the line on Thursday, a 5-night voyage each way. CSL also sold these voyages as a 12-day cruise, from \$90 inside or \$135 in an outside cabin, describing it in its tourist brochure as follows: -

A cruise in cool latitudes on the 6,000-ton (ocean type) s.s. *Manoa*. In this 12-day sea trip on the placid waters of the St Lawrence River and Gulf, you will find all the fascination of an ocean voyage - without any of the monotony and discomfort of a sea trip. A Boat Trip of 2,000 miles through the lower St Lawrence and Gulf of St Lawrence from Montreal to St John's, Newfoundland, and return.

In 1922, the Gulf of St Lawrence cruises featured in a new brochure entitled "Two Wonderful Cruises" that also included the weekly Saguenay cruise of the *Cape Eternity*. The *Manoa's* voyage in particular served as a demonstration of the kind of cruise that would soon be offered, with improvements, by the Clarke Steamship Co.

Although the *Gaspesia* and *Manoa* were the only two passenger ships serving Charlottetown from Montreal, their schedules were not co-ordinated. Both sailed fortnightly, with the *Manoa* leaving on Saturday, three days

before the *Gaspesia's* Tuesday sailing. Then there was an eleven-day gap before the next sailing. The two ships even overlapped in Montreal as the *Gaspesia* returned to port while the *Manoa* was still loading for her next sailing.

Weekly to the North Shore

When the *Gaspesia* arrived, Clarke transferred the *Labrador* to the North Shore to inaugurate its new Quebec to Bradore Bay service, while the *North Shore* continued on the Quebec to Natashquan run, with a call at Anticosti en route.

The existing mail contract was ended and under date of April 7, 1922, two new ten-year contracts went into effect, to last until close of navigation in 1931. The first called for a weekly service between Quebec and Natashquan, now that two ships were available, with alternate trips extending to Harrington Harbour and Bradore Bay, and the second called for service between "Quebec or Montreal and Gaspé and ports on the South Shore of the Gulf." The capacities of the ships were stated at first to be 50 first and 50 third-class passengers for each of the *North Shore* and *Gaspesia* and 36 passengers, unspecified as to class, for the *Labrador*. First-class passengers were provided with berths while third-class passengers, or steerage, were called deck passengers.

Robert Parsons described the North Shore contract in some detail in his article "The Clarke Steamship Company: St Lawrence River Mail," which appeared in the journal of the Postal History Society of Canada in June 1991:

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The new contract, to run for ten years, was for a much-expanded service. It provided for one round trip each week from Quebec to Natashquan, calling each way at Godbout, Franquelin River, Trinity Bay, Egg Island, Pentecost, Clarke City, Seven Islands, Rivière-aux-Graines, Sheldrake, Thunder River, Magpie, St John River, Longue-Pointe, Mingan, Esquimaux Point, Piastre Bay and Natashquan, extending every alternate trip to Harrington and Bras d'Or Bay, calling at way ports, and calling one way at the Island of Anticosti (Ellis Bay) on those trips that terminated at Natashquan.

Two vessels provided the service, the steamer *North Shore* on the shorter haul to Natashquan, and the *Labrador* on the longer route to Bras d'Or Bay. In extending the service to Bras d'Or Bay it was hoped to divert trade which had been going to Newfoundland. Concurrent with the service provided by the Clarke Steamship Company, the Post Office had contracts with various individuals to carry the mails on shorter connecting routes. The major ones included: Esquimaux Point & Natashquan, Harrington Harbour & Natashquan and Harrington &

Lourdes de Blanc-Sablon.

Parsons used the term Bras d'Or Bay for what is more generally known as Bradore Bay, the real Bras d'Or Bay being located in Cape Breton Island. Baie de Bradore is a more recent usage, but its name under the French regime had actually been Baie de Phélypeaux. Meanwhile, the area's lack of harbours was pointed out by Cléophas Belvin in his book "The Forgotten Labrador: Kegashka to Blanc-Sablon": -

Most of the ports lacked adequate docking facilities such as wharves and storage sheds. Therefore, the steamship usually anchored offshore, and passengers, freight and mail were offloaded in slings onto local vessels anchored nearby. Accidents were not uncommon, and on many occasions cargo was dumped into the sea.

The first-class return fare in the *North Shore* from Quebec to Natashquan, a round voyage of six days, was \$53.75, while the 725-mile trip from Quebec to Bradore Bay in the *Labrador* was \$75 for a 10-day round voyage. Each ship scheduled sixteen voyages for 1922, with the first departure from Quebec by the *Labrador* on April 11, followed by the *North Shore* on April 25, and a sailing every Tuesday thereafter. The season was to close with a final 1922 voyage by the *North Shore* on November 21.

The North Shore service now sailed from Quebec every Tuesday at 9 am, serving no fewer than thirty locales, consisting of pulpwood ports, native villages, trading posts and fishing settlements, known in French as Franquelin, Godbout, Baie-Trinité, Ile aux Oeufs, Pentecôte, Shelter Bay, Clarke City, Sept-Iles, Rivière aux Graines, Sheldrake, Rivière-au-Tonnerre, Magpie, Rivière-St-Jean, Longue Pointe, Mingan, Pointe-aux-Esquimaux, Baie-Johan-Beetz, Aguanish and Natashquan. Nearly every one of these way ports was located at or near the mouth of a river, many of them salmon streams with falls. The main exceptions were Clarke City and Sept-Iles, on the Bay of Sept-Iles, and of course the island of Ile aux Oeufs. At Natashquan, the *North Shore* turned round, at what had been the end of the line for earlier services. She also called at Anticosti between her calls at Mingan and Pointe-aux-Esquimaux, soon to be called Havre-St-Pierre.

The 9 am sailing time pre-dated Huard's 1897 voyage in the *Otter*, and had been observed by Canada Steamship Lines' *Laurentian*. This gave the ships and their passengers a full day on the St Lawrence after leaving Quebec. Sailing times changed slightly over the years but Montreal departures were late afternoon or evening, while sailings from Quebec usually took place first thing in the morning.

Edgar Rochette, in his "Notes sur le Côte-Nord" divided the North Shore of the 1920s into three zones, of which the Clarke Steamship Co served the second and third: -

To undertake a general study of the North Shore, from any point of view, I find it useful to divide it into three distinct zones: the first, from Tadoussac to Betsiamis; the second, from Betsiamis to Sept-Iles; and the third from Sept-Iles to the eastern extremity, that is the limits of the Canadian Labrador at Blanc-Sablon.

Agriculture and industry dominate the first zone; forestry and fisheries are not excluded, but agriculture is the occupation of the greatest number and provides the major part of their incomes.

In the second zone, that from Betsiamis to Sept-Iles, the forest industry predominates, and one can call this the industrial region of the North Shore; there is also a little cultivation; a large number of people dedicate themselves to fishing and hunting, but at the bottom line it is forestry that predominates.

In the third zone, from Sept-Iles to Blanc-Sablon, we meet no one other than fishermen and hunters by trade. Fishing and hunting are the only occupations and form the sole source of income. The forests there are still virgin and the enormous hydro power untapped.

Betsiamis, mentioned by Rochette, also rendered Betsiamites, is probably better known as Bersimis, the largest centre of native population on the coast. With a population of 600 to 700 by summer, this fluctuated widely with the amount of wood to be harvested. Bersimis and Sept-Iles both had Montagnais reservations, and a local agent representing Ottawa, as did Mingan further downstream.

The Europeans consisted of two Hudson's Bay Co employees, three Eudist missionaries and one or two officers of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, plus the requisite number of woodsmen, which could be in the hundreds depending on how many thousand cords of pulpwood were to be shipped out. Being between Tadoussac and the North Shore, however, Bersimis was not served by Clarke, whose usual first call was at Franquelin or Godbout. Instead, Bersimis was usually served from Rimouski.

In Rochette's third zone, Sept-Iles and beyond, only Pointe-aux-Esquimaux and Natashquan had had steamer service for any length of time, while Harrington Harbour had been added in more recent years. Meanwhile, a boundary dispute between Canada and Newfoundland, then separate countries, was being fought over the exact location of the Labrador border with Quebec.

The Extension to Bradore Bay

When Capt Joseph Brie brought the *Labrador* onto the route in 1922, regularly scheduled steamship service was now offered, for the first time,

below Harrington Harbour to Tête-à-la-Baleine, Mutton Bay, La Tabatière, St-Augustin, Vieux-Fort, Bonne-Espérance and Bradore Bay. Five years later, the service was extended the final four miles to Blanc-Sablon, at the Labrador border. Many of these settlements had been founded in the 16th and 17th centuries as French military outposts or Basque fishing stations. One difficulty for travellers, however, was that the *Labrador* called at these ports outbound only, meaning that those heading for Quebec had to travel to the end of the line before the ship turned back towards Quebec again.

Up until then, other than occasional calls, once a month or even once a season by steamers under their mail contracts, the only means of regular communication had been by schooner. And even though the *Labrador* made only fortnightly voyages to the Lower North Shore, weekly mail service was made possible by local contractors coming to Natashquan in a boat every other week to meet the *North Shore* and deliver the mails back along the coast as far as Blanc-Sablon.

Of great assistance to Clarke in extending steamship service to the Strait of Belle Isle was Louis T Blais. With the loss of the last Blais trading schooner, he used Clarke ships to ply his trade, exchanging inward products for seal pelts and dried codfish. Working with credit supplied by the Clarkes over the next several years, Blais would help Wilfrid Clarke build up the business of Labrador Fisheries, with stores at Sept-Iles, Rivière-au-Tonnerre, Pointe-aux-Esquimaux, Longue Pointe de Mingan and Mutton Bay.

This extension came in good time, for on April 2, 1922, just nine days before the *Labrador* left Quebec on her maiden sailing to Bradore Bay, Capt James Joy, marine superintendent of Job Brothers & Co of St John's, made a statement to the Privy Council in London. Job Brothers ships served Labrador, as well as the "Canadian Labrador," including Blanc-Sablon and Baie-Trinité, where they had premises, and Harrington Harbour, which was largely populated by Newfoundlanders. Capt Joy's statement said: -

There was no proper mail or passenger service on the Canadian side, and no mail steamer calling there, and for the whole 300 miles east of Natashquan the people had to put up with as their sole means of communication, open boats or skiffs, which carried both mails and passengers, while Newfoundland provided steamers for this purpose. The only evidence of jurisdiction I ever saw or heard of, on the Canadian area, was the fishery officer who made a visit there once each summer or sometimes twice, in a revenue cruiser, and being a doctor, gave a little attention to the medical needs of the people.

I carried on a fishery business at Salmon River, Canadian Labrador, near Blanc-Sablon, from 1861 until 1905, and am quite satisfied that the Canadian people residing along that coast never got the consideration or care that Newfoundland gave her people east of the Boundary line. There were no authorities to enforce the law and the

collection of debts was impossible. Nearly all the mail and passenger traffic was done by way of Newfoundland, there were hardly any school facilities provided, and except for the officer on the revenue cruiser there was no medical care at all given to the people east of Natashquan, a stretch of coast 300 miles long.

The interior of Canadian Labrador was just as unexplored as that of Newfoundland Labrador, all the people were fishermen and never went inland any farther than was necessary to hunt for their subsistence. They were supplied with the necessaries of life by traders like myself and their Government showed no interest in them whatever. The only people who carried on the fisheries in a large way were from Newfoundland, and but for them the people would have fared badly.

I have kept in pretty close touch with this region since I gave up active business there, visiting it nearly every year, and I believe that, in the main, conditions are much the same there now as they were then. I know that they have no regular steamer service like the Newfoundlanders have and that most of their trade is done via the West Coast of Newfoundland, because of the facilities the weekly mail boat there gives them, and I know that last Fall there was a great outcry in the newspapers about distress on that part of the Labrador coast and that the Quebec Government had to send a steamer with supplies to feed the people, just as the Newfoundland Government sometimes has to send supplies for its people east of the boundary.

The Canadian and Newfoundland governments had referred their dispute over the Labrador boundary to the Privy Council, the highest court in the British Empire, in 1907. And although it would be another five years before a decision was made "In The Matter of the Boundary Between the Dominion of Canada and the Colony of Newfoundland in the Labrador Peninsula," it was fitting and about time that a Canadian ship, one appropriately named *Labrador*, had begun regular steamship service to the Lower North Shore. Of course, steamships had been serving Labrador ports from St John's for forty years so part of the reason for the service extension was to divert trade that had been going to Newfoundland to the merchants of Quebec.

As it happens, one of the few accounts we have of travelling in the *Labrador* appeared in the May 1922 issue of the "American Journal of Nursing," just as she started her run to the Lower North Shore. Josephine Lewis, a registered nurse from Rome, Georgia, travelled in her to the North Shore to work for the summer at one of the Grenfell Missions, and wrote as follows: -

We sailed from Quebec on the *Labrador*, which is about one hundred and twelve feet long and twenty-six feet wide. She has space for fifteen first-class passengers, while there were thirty on board.

We managed to crawl down the gangway which literally stood upon end, as it was low tide. When we reached the deck we found a poor fisherman's wife sitting on a pile of rough lumber with five children about her and an infant one month old in her arms.

The dimensions she reported were not too far wrong, but her words give us a good idea of the first impression on boarding such a small ship.

Typical press reports like these, that appeared in the "Quebec Telegraph" on June 7, 1922, became the norm: -

The Clarke steamship *North Shore* left yesterday for the North Shore with forty-five passengers and a heavy cargo for the ports touched at. Mr Frank Clarke, president of the Clarke Steamship Company, who saw the ship leave, said that the mills were in full operation. In three weeks, 5,000 tons of pulp have been despatched to England.

Mr Clarke declared that he looked with confidence to the future. With the recent addition of the *Gaspesia*, plying between Montreal, Quebec, Gaspé and Prince Edward Island, a long-felt want has been filled. The other two steamers, the *North Shore* and the *Labrador*, are rendering valuable service in the Gulf.

Frank Clarke was of course president of the North Shipping Co, owners of the *North Shore*, and his interest in the welfare of both the Clarke Steamship Co and the Gulf Pulp & Paper Co is quite evident from this quotation. A second mention on the same page recorded the *Gaspesia* calling at Quebec on one of her first voyages, but with her reported passenger capacity differing from other reports: -

The s.s. *Gaspesia* arrived at Quebec from Montreal at eight o'clock this morning, and entered the basin at eleven o'clock, docking at Shed 14. The *Gaspesia* carries 20 first class and 25 second class passengers. She was scheduled to leave at four o'clock this afternoon on her second voyage to the Gaspé coast and Charlottetown.

With the *Gaspesia*, *North Shore* and *Labrador* all now in service, Clarke served a myriad of ports in the Gulf and River St Lawrence and finally offered the kind of service that the Gulf of St Lawrence Shipping & Trading Co had promised but failed to deliver.

A Visit From a British Shipbroker

Early in Clarke's second season, as the *Gaspesia* was inaugurating her new service to Prince Edward Island and the *Labrador* was beginning hers to

Bradore Bay, the Clarke Steamship Co received a visit from Mr A R Braine of London shipbrokers Tatham Bromage & Co, who handled the Gulf Pulp & Paper Co's exports and had also developed the Anglo-Newfoundland Development Co's shipping requirements from Botwood. Braine was quoted in the "Quebec Telegraph" that June 17 as follows: -

Already we have shipped a number of cargoes of pulp and deals to Great Britain, and so far as I can see the movement will prove a very extensive one before the season is over. As you may be aware, we handle all the pulp output of the Clarke City organization. In addition to that we are the chartering agents for the Amalgamated Press in London, the biggest organization of its kind in the world, which absorbs an enormous amount of pulp. We are also closely interested in the pulp and paper industry in Newfoundland and before I return home I intend to take a trip over there to see this property.

Tathams had many contacts in Canada and indeed, Braine, who as a youth had pored over manifests of sailing ships loaded at the port of Quebec, knew Desmond Clarke from his days at Gulf Pulp & Paper. In the spring of 1922, he had thus decided to renew the relationship by calling on him in his new role in Quebec. Within three years, he would be entrusted to handle the order for Clarke's first new ship.

The "Fort Hamilton" Cruises the St Lawrence

The *Fort St George's* 1921 cruise program proved so successful that in 1922 these cruises were taken over by the *Fort Hamilton*, the former *Bermudian* of the Quebec Steamship Co. To fill its four "12-day Canadian Cruises" in July and August, the Furness Bermuda Line placed the following advertisement in the "Atlantic Monthly" and other American magazines in early 1922: -

New York-Halifax-Quebec. The Palatial Twin-Screw s.s. *Fort Hamilton* will make 3 unusually attractive yachting cruises (no freight).

Sailing from New York July 22 and August 5-19. Stopping one day (each way) at Halifax - two days at Quebec. Sailing through the Gut of Canso and Northumberland Straits, the broad St Lawrence, up the Saguenay River and thence on to Quebec.

Magnificent scenery, smooth water, cool weather. The ship has spacious promenade decks, and all deck games, many rooms with bath, finest cuisine, etc. Orchestra for dancing.

These cruises, leaving a stifling New York behind for cooler climes in the middle of the hot, humid summer, proved very popular. So much so, that within a year, on July 7, 1923, the "New York Times" would be reporting as

follows: -

Two liners, taking out nearly 1,000 passengers, leave at eleven o'clock this morning from the Furness Bermuda Line pier at the foot of West Fifty-Fifth Street; the *Fort Hamilton*, with 500 tourists bound for a twelve-day cruise to Quebec, and the *Fort St George*, carrying more than 400 for Bermuda.

After not seeing any port other than New York or Bermuda during her first years, the *Fort Hamilton*, the last of the Quebec Steamship Co passenger ships, now became a familiar sight in the port where she had been owned for so many years but only seen once, during the war. She performed three or four St Lawrence cruises each summer for four years, from 1922 through 1925. Eventually, however, she would be sold, leaving New York on April 24, 1926 with 200 passengers for Trieste, where she would henceforth operate as the Cosulich Line's *Stella d'Italia*.

HMS "Raleigh" Returns

HMS *Raleigh* returned in 1922, as planned. After her Memorial Day visit to Washington, she left the US naval base at Norfolk on June 8, en route to Bar Harbor, Sydney and Charlottetown, where she arrived on June 24 for a five-night stay. During her stay at Charlottetown, the *Gaspesia*, newest addition to the Clarke fleet, called in during the course of her third round voyage from Montreal.

HMS *Raleigh* left Charlottetown for Montreal on June 29 and arrived there, in company with the cruiser HMS *Constance*, at 9:30 am on July 3. Less than ten months after her last visit, *Raleigh* was once again berthed at Laurier Pier. Laurier Pier was not far downriver from Victoria Pier, and, just as she had been at Charlottetown, the *Gaspesia* was soon in port with her again, this time loading for her fourth voyage to Gaspé and Charlottetown, set to depart on July 4.

The trio of HMS *Raleigh*, *Constance* and *Calcutta*, another cruiser, left Montreal at 6 am on July 11 for a daytime passage downriver, reaching Quebec at 5 pm. Clarke's *Labrador* had left Quebec that same morning at 9 am, bound for the Gulf. HMS *Raleigh* tied up again in the St Charles River Basin while the other ships went to anchor in the river. During this eight-day visit the *North Shore* made one turnaround at Quebec, departing for the North Shore on July 18. The Royal Navy squadron then departed Quebec at 0800 the next morning, just as the *Gaspesia* was arriving inbound from Montreal, on her fifth voyage to Gaspé and Charlottetown. A news wire from Quebec reported on the naval movements on July 19: -

The North Atlantic Squadron, under flagship of Sir William C Pakenham, left here this morning. The flagship *Raleigh* proceeded to

Murray Bay, where she will remain a few days, while its cruisers *Constance* and *Calcutta* sailed for Gaspé and Tadoussac, respectively. All three vessels are expected to reach Halifax on Monday next, after which they will return to Bermuda.

That night, as HMS *Raleigh* lay at anchor off Murray Bay and HMS *Calcutta* at Tadoussac, the *Gaspesia* passed them downbound. Two days later, the inbound *Labrador* passed Tadoussac and then Murray Bay on her seventh return voyage from the North Shore. HMS *Raleigh*'s stay at Murray Bay lasted five days before she departed at 6 pm on July 24 for Dalhousie, New Brunswick, then Bay of Islands, later known as Corner Brook, and Hawke's Bay, Newfoundland. During her three weeks in the river between Montreal, Quebec and Murray Bay, Clarke passengers had had many opportunities to see this British "man of war," as the newspapers had taken to calling her.

The Wreck of HMS "Raleigh"

On August 1, as the *Gaspesia* was due to leave Montreal on her sixth voyage, came news that the Gaspé Line's *Brumath*, now in her second season, had burned at Port Daniel, on the Gaspé peninsula, the day before after a deck cargo of gasoline had caught fire. While not happy news for her owners, her fifty passengers and crew were saved and the loss meant one less competitor for the *Gaspesia*. But a week later, a much worse tragedy befell the British flagship visiting the St Lawrence.

As the *Labrador* left Quebec on the morning of August 8, at the start of her ninth voyage to the Strait of Belle Isle, HMS *Raleigh* weighed anchor at Hawke's Bay, Newfoundland, leaving at 9:30 am for much the same destination. By the time the *Labrador* was nearing the mouth of the Saguenay, HMS *Raleigh* was crossing the Strait. However, running into thick fog about six hours into the voyage, *Raleigh* came to grief near the Clarke ship's final destination. At 3:39 pm, to the complete surprise of her officers and crew, she ran hard aground only two hundred yards off Point Amour. Commander in Chief Pakenham having departed, *Raleigh* had been en route to Forteau Bay, a dozen miles east of the Quebec border, in order for her officers and crew to have a few days of recreation and salmon fishing. Instead, eleven crew members were lost when they abandoned their almost-new ship. In her second message, the ship reported as follows the day following the grounding: -

Raleigh struck four pm yesterday, Tuesday, during dense fog, quarter mile west of Point Amour light while bound for Forteau. Crew of 700 all ashore except so far as known 11 missing. Ship laying easily about 200 yards from shore. Her bow feet under water and her stern few feet above. Extent of damage to bottom unknown. Apparently in no danger. Crew quartered ashore, bringing provisions from ship. Wireless service

giving good assistance.

What was not known then was that HMS *Raleigh* had a 360-foot gash in her hull and was a total loss. Although the Admiralty investigated all means of salvaging this valuable member of the fleet, in the end they had to abandon her to the Labrador coast. Her wreck, near the 109-foot Point Amour light, a structure completed by François Baby in 1857, and the tallest in Atlantic Canada, would eventually become a tourist attraction for passengers passing through the Strait of Belle Isle on Clarke ships.

This was not the first Royal Navy ship to be lost on Point Amour. Thirty-three years earlier, on September 16, 1889, the gunboat HMS *Lily*, also on a visit from Bermuda, left Brig Bay, Newfoundland to cross the Strait to Forteau Bay. Then too, the weather had been foggy, but aggravated by smoke from a forest fire, when at 6 pm *Lily* had run hard aground on Point Amour. In her case, seven men were lost, again while abandoning ship, and she had broken her back. Since being assigned to the Bermuda station in January 1888, the *Lily* had visited the Gulf of St Lawrence quite frequently.

Bishop Ross and the Ursuline Sisters At Gaspé

While the locals at Point Amour busied themselves providing food and shelter for the 700 crew of the *Raleigh*, and the Royal Navy assessed its situation, Clarke's *Gaspesia* made a special call at Rimouski, on the other side of the Gulf.

Rimouski was not a usual call, but she was there to embark two Ursuline sisters and Monseigneur Francois-Xavier Ross, first Bishop of the newly-established Diocese of Gaspé, on their way to Gaspé to seek out a site for a new French-speaking school. This opening of this new normal school in 1924 would lead to a new Jesuit seminary, opened in 1925, a French-speaking hospital, l'Hôtel Dieu, in 1926, and an agricultural school at Percé, in 1930.

Bishop Ross and the Ursulines attracted a great deal of interest when the *Gaspesia* arrived on August 10, signaling as it did the beginning of an improvement in Gaspé's educational facilities. Ten years later, Gaspé would honour the bishop by giving his name to a new double bascule bridge built across the harbour mouth.

More Questions in Quebec

On December 26, 1922, after Clarke had completed its second season on the St Lawrence, Arthur Sauvé posed another of his questions in the Quebec Legislature. Edouard Perrault, the Minister for Colonization, Mines and Fisheries and member for La Malbaie, this time responded: -

I must inform the leader of the opposition that the company is offering an excellent shipping service to the North Shore and the South Shore, as much for freight as for passengers. This service has considerably helped the development of these regions. The Clarke company has done much for the population of these regions and has rendered significant services.

Now that Clarke had three ships in service, Quebec was evidently quite happy with its decision two years earlier to join Ottawa in subsidizing the shipping service to the Gulf of St Lawrence.

Clarke Services in 1923

The 1923 season began with a report in the "Quebec Telegraph" on March 21 headed "Clarke Ships Are Ready for Season": -

The Clarke Steamship Company, agents for the North Shipping Company and the South Shipping Company, which operate the regular mail lines between Quebec, Godbout, Seven Islands, Natashquan, Harrington and Bradore, and between Montreal, Ste-Anne-des-Monts, Magdalen River, Mont-Louis, Fox River and Gaspé, respectively, when seen by a "Telegraph" representative today, informed him that their boats are now ready for the coming season's operation, and are awaiting the first touch of spring weather to release them from their winter quarters in the Louise Basin, as they have been overhauled and are now ready to put to sea.

The steamer *North Shore* and the *Labrador*, operated by the North Shipping Company, will, as in the past, sail on a regular schedule, carrying mails, passengers and freight to North Shore points. In view of the ice conditions which prevail in the month of April of the North Shore of the Gulf and River St Lawrence, where the "batture" ice often extends two or three miles out from the shore, it is thought that the s.s. *Labrador* will be the first boat to leave, as being the smaller of the two, she can be more easily navigated in the ice bound area and "nose" her way further in to the batture ice. Her agents are planning to have her leave Quebec as soon as reports are received from the various points on the coastline that local conditions permit the safe landing of passengers, mails and freight.

As regards the South Shore service, the s.s. *Gaspesia*'s movements are dependent on the condition of the channel between Quebec and Montreal, from which latter port she plies to all points on the Gaspé coast. Another factor is the breaking up of ice in the Gaspé Basin, but the moment conditions warrant, she will start her regular schedule from Montreal and Quebec.

The Clarke Steamship Company are also working on one or two very attractive tourist schedules for the mid-summer months. These special trips would be, if carried out, additional to the regular sailings, and would provide delightful sea trips, with stops at various points of interest.

Evidently it was a difficult spring, as Fournier's *Guide*, which was supposed to leave Quebec for the North Shore on March 30, was delayed. A report in the "Quebec Telegraph" on Tuesday April 3 said "Saturday May See *Guide* Sail": -

The sailing of the s.s. *Guide* which had been delayed from last week, is expected to occur on Saturday next. This depends, however, on the weather conditions existing at the proposed time of departure, according to officials of the Bras d'Or Co, agents of the steamer.

As far as ice conditions are concerned, the *Guide* will not experience much trouble in getting into the outer portion of the river, as the work of cutting away the enormous volume of ice surrounding the ship was started this morning. On the other hand Captain Fournier remarked to the "Telegraph" this morning that the sailing of the *Guide* will be largely influenced by general weather conditions.

The steamer is carrying a capacity freight which consists of 200 tons of general merchandise. There are at present 23 passengers booked for North Shore points. The *Guide* will sail from Shed 19 and will call at several points on the North Shore to land her freight and passengers. She is expected to be away about seven days, and thereafter will make three trips a month.

The *Labrador* finally managed to get away on April 10, followed by the *Guide*. The "Quebec Telegraph" carried the story on the same day under the heading "River Resumes Its Coastwise Trade Again - *Labrador* and *Guide* Sailed For North Shore Points With Heavy Cargoes This Morning - Relieve Beleaguered Coast Settlements": -

The North Shore coastal service was officially opened this morning, when the s.s. *Labrador*, of the Clarke Trading Co Ltd [sic], sailed from Shed 19 in the Inner Louise Basin, with mails, passengers and freight.

The *Labrador* made the run under a full head of steam to the outer river at four o'clock this morning, followed one hour later by the s.s. *Guide* of the Bras d'Or Bay Co, with passengers and cargo.

The *Labrador* and *Guide* carried large general cargoes of foodstuffs, which are consigned to various points along the North Shore, and which are being most eagerly looked for by the inhabitants, who have

not been blessed with an over-supply of rations during the past winter months.

The supplies which are now on the way to the different ports of call of the two steamers consist of carcasses of beef, canned goods, butter, flour, potatoes, corn, oats, hay, medicines and numerous other commodities...

It was reported this morning that the *Labrador* and *Guide* passed l'Islet at 11 am, and were proceeding at a good rate of speed.

As these two former fleetmates carried out their first voyages of the 1923 season, with the *Labrador* also carrying mail, the *North Shore* left two days later, assigned to carry the lumberjacks who had spent the winter at Clarke City and Shelter Bay back to their homes on the South Shore. The "Quebec Daily Telegraph" reported on this in its April 12 issue under the heading "Lumberjacks Are Awaiting Ships": -

The s.s. *North Shore* of the Clarke Trading Co [sic] sailed this morning at eight o'clock for North Shore points. When the steamer reached Clarke City on the North Shore, she will take on board the lumbermen who have been employed in the camps during the winter season, and who are now awaiting their opportunity to return to their homes. The large majority of the men, it is understood, live on the South Shore. It is expected that the s.s. *North Shore* will transport about two hundred of the men from Clarke City to Ste-Anne-des-Monts on the South Shore.

If conditions are satisfactory, the agents of the steamer will issue instructions for her to proceed back to Shelter Bay, a short distance from Clarke City, and there take aboard a further number of the men for Tadoussac or Rimouski. The latter trips have not as yet been decided upon, but if navigating conditions remain favourable, the expectations are that the steamer will make several trips from the North Shore to the South Shore in this capacity. In all, it is thought that the steamer will transport in the vicinity of 600 men or more, who have finished their winter labours, and who are now looking forward to joining their families after such a prolonged absence in the woods.

The *North Shore* is expected to return to Quebec some time next week, perhaps about Tuesday, but in view of the uncertainties as regards her movements within the next few days, nothing definite can be stated in this respect. However, as soon as she returns to port she will be then ready to maintain her regular service on the North Shore, while her consort, the *Labrador*, which steamer inaugurated the service, will also be kept up to her scheduled runs on the same itinerary.

This cross-river work was just temporary but it did presage an activity into which Clarke would enter a few years later. By mid-April the "Quebec Telegraph" was carrying advertisements confirming that the *North Shore* would follow the *Labrador* into regular service : -

North Shore Service. The s.s. *North Shore* will leave for all North Shore points, Thursday morning, the 19th, at 9 o'clock. Freight will be received at Shed 14, commencing Wednesday morning, 18th. Apply the Clarke Steamship Co Ltd, agents, 17 St James St.

This activity was captured by the "Quebec Telegraph" under its "Coastal Movements" report on April 18: -

The s.s. *Tremblay* is taking freight for Ste Anne de Monts, Grand-Grève on the South Shore, and will sail from Shed 19 tomorrow morning.

The s.s. *Guide* is now loading at Shed 19 for the North Shore.

The s.s. *North Shore* is receiving freight today for North Shore points, and will sail tomorrow morning at nine o'clock, from Shed 14.

The earlier mention of "tourist schedules" for mid-summer indicated Clarke's interest in offering cruises on the Gulf of St Lawrence. But for now the company concentrated on its regular services, as there was competition out there looking for the business too.

Bird-Watchers in the Gulf

Not long after the season opened, Harrison Lewis became a Clarke passenger once more, this time proceeding to the coast, in what seems to have been the *North Shore*, for a much longer stay. In his next article "Notes on Birds of the Labrador Peninsula in 1923," published in "The Auk" in 1925, he included some interesting observations on spring conditions that year: -

Leaving Quebec on May 1, 1923, I debarked at Esquimaux Point on the southern shore of the Labrador Peninsula, on May 4. On September 14, I embarked again on the steamer at Esquimaux Point and on September 16 arrived at Quebec. Much of the summer was spent in cruising along the coast in a motorboat...

The weather on this coast was unusually cool during May and June 1923. No large quantities of ice were encountered on the voyage from Quebec to Esquimaux Point, May 1-4, but later in the month easterly winds drove great quantities of heavy drift ice onto the coast in the Mingan Islands region, filling all the harbors, and extending so far seaward that practically no open water could be seen from shore. The

harbor at Esquimaux Point did not become fully open until May 24.

In discussing one of the twenty-nine species of gulls, terns, teals, cormorants, sanderlings, ducks, hawks, eagles, loons, geese, sparrows and other birds he recorded that summer, Lewis also mentioned the landing of a number of nuthatches on board Clarke's *Labrador*: -

Mr Allen L Moses told me that several birds of this species came aboard the s.s. *Labrador* on August 18, between Mutton Bay and Bonne-Espérance. In view of these and previous observations, it would appear that the Red-breasted Nuthatch is a regular and not uncommon summer resident in the southern part of the Labrador peninsula.

Moses, a fellow ornithologist who came from Grand Manan, New Brunswick, had joined Lewis at Harrington Harbour on June 9.

The year 1923 seems to have been a busy one for ornithologists on Clarke ships as its third ship was mentioned in "The Auk," this time by John B Demille in his article "Birds of Gaspé County, Quebec," published in 1926. Demille stayed in the Gaspé Peninsula from September 22, 1923, until mid-August 1924 and mentioned a sighting on the day of his arrival: -

Myrtle Warbler. Several of this species, together with Uncos and a single Brown Creeper, reported by Keays alighting on the rigging of the s.s. *Gaspesia* during a heavy fog off Ste-Anne-des-Monts, Sept 22.

The warblers were just one of the no fewer than a hundred and sixty-five species spotted by Demille during his months in the Gaspé. While there, he travelled in the *Gaspesia* from Ste-Anne-des-Monts to Port Daniel and back, with stops of several days each at Rivière Madeleine, Gaspé Basin and Percé.

Service to New York and Baltimore?

The Clarke Steamship Co had soon become part of the Gulf of St Lawrence scene and the next two or three years would pass with some measure of success and without major incident. The *North Shore* and *Labrador* were now running weekly from Quebec to the North Shore and the Canadian Labrador and the *Gaspesia* fortnightly from Montreal and Quebec to the Gaspé coast and Prince Edward Island.

Indicative of the Clarkes' interest in developing their young company, an interesting item appeared in the American "Shipper & Carrier" magazine in 1923, mootng a possible expansion southward: -

Reports from Quebec state that there is a movement afoot to establish a regular freight service between the St Lawrence River and New York

and Baltimore. As soon as general business conditions permit the Clarke Steamship Company has practically decided to establish a tri-monthly service.

That nothing ever came of this report is not surprising when one considers what actually occurred next. Instead of New York and Baltimore, Clarke's attention turned to Newfoundland.

Extension to Newfoundland

The *Gaspesia's* first season had been so successful that the annual report of the Department of Trade & Commerce in 1923 commented positively on her introduction: -

I am able to report the excellent service provided last year by the s.s. *Gaspesia*. This steamer, purchased early last year by the contractors, the Clarke Steamship Co of Quebec, is most excellently adapted in every respect to the route. This vessel has a carrying capacity of 1200 tons and passenger accommodation for fifty first-class and fifty-six steerage. The speed of the *Gaspesia* - 12½ knots - permitted last year of extending the service, without additional subsidy, to Prince Edward Island.

On May 4, 1923, the *Gaspesia* sailed for Gaspé and on May 15 for both Gaspé and Prince Edward Island. On June 16, however, the first sod was turned on a new newsprint mill being built at Corner Brook, Newfoundland, then a village of some 250 people on the island's west coast, and men began flocking there for work, on one occasion a thousand in one week. Later that year, Clarke sent the *Gaspesia* beyond Gaspé and Prince Edward Island with cargo for Port aux Basques, the Newfoundland terminus of the Cabot Strait ferry service. There, traffic was onforwarded by the Newfoundland Railway for the new paper mill project, which was being built by the British firm of Armstrong Whitworth & Co Ltd, which was also known for its shipbuilding. To start with, the mill's operator, the Newfoundland Power & Paper Co Ltd, had been backed by the Reid Newfoundland Co, which held much of the land in the area. That season, the *Gaspesia* was the last steamship to arrive at Montreal, on December 3, departing the next day for Quebec.

This expansion into the 43,000 square mile island of Newfoundland, still a British colony, soon replaced the calls in the Canadian province of Prince Edward Island. Within two years of opening its doors, Clarke was operating beyond the borders of Canada. Although the first cargoes were delivered to rail at Port aux Basques, an expensive process, when a cargo receiving dock was completed at Corner Brook in 1924 the *Gaspesia* began to sail direct.

Corner Brook was 735 nautical miles from Montreal, but because she

also called in the Gaspé the *Gaspesia* covered 790 miles. As well as Corner Brook, the *Gaspesia* began to serve the Bay of Islands outports of Curling and Humbermouth. A typical sailing card for the period, such as this one from Quebec in early 1925, advertised sailings for both the Gaspé coast and Newfoundland: -

s.s. *Gaspesia* departs at noon Thursday, April 30, for all Gaspé ports as far as Gaspé Basin, and from there to Corner Brook, Curling and Humbermouth, Newfoundland. Freight will be received at Shed 14 Thursday morning, April 30.

A contemporary town guide to Newfoundland was also soon touting Corner Brook by saying that "Clarke Steamship tourist boats come here each week summertime and fall. Scenery here and nearby is magnificent."

In 1924, the Canadian Government Merchant Marine Ltd (CGMM) began monthly service from Montreal to Corner Brook with the 1,789-ton *Canadian Sapper*, with departures scheduled for May 17 and June 19. It owned sixty-three ships of between 2,800 and 10,500 tons deadweight, all built in Canada between 1919 and 1922, and already operated a fortnightly service between Montreal, Charlottetown and St John's. R B Teakle, general manager of the CGMM, which was treated as a division of Canadian National Railways, was a native of Quebec who had spent many years with the Allan Line.

Formed in 1918, the CGMM was involved in overseas trade, which then of course included Newfoundland. It must have been galling for the Clarkes to see the CGMM competing to Newfoundland, especially as Sir George Foster, talking about the shipping business in the House of Commons in 1917, had said that "conditions make it impossible for Canada at the present to engage in the business."

Between June 1923 and March 1925, Tatham Bromage & Co, who had called on Desmond at Quebec in the spring of 1922, were also very busy. As shipbrokers, they had been engaged by Armstrong Whitworth to charter thirty-three vessels, bringing 88,000 tons of cement, steel, machinery and stores into Corner Brook for construction of docks to handle the mill's exports. All of this activity was of course familiar to the Clarkes as they had opened their own pulp mill at Clarke City fifteen years earlier.

Elsewhere, Canada Steamship Lines and A H Murray & Co Ltd of St John's, through the Murray Transport Co Ltd, each offered Montreal-Prince Edward Island-St John's services, while the Newfoundland Shipping & Trading Co Ltd operated to St John's only. The Montreal loading agent for the Murray service was Thos Harling & Son, who had previously managed the Gulf of St Lawrence Shipping & Trading Co.

Another St John's company, A E Hickman Co Ltd, in addition to owning

a fleet of schooners engaged in the salt fish export trade, operated a steamship agency. Formerly representing Nova Scotia Steamships' *Cascapedia* and *Lady of Gaspé*, it now acted for the Province Line's 1,092-ton *Belvernon* and 544-ton *Yankton* on the route between Boston, Halifax and St John's. Ironically, both of these ships had come from different Great White Fleets. The *Belvernon*, a Norwegian ship, had operated under charter to the United Fruit Co, whose ships traded as the Great White Fleet, while the *Yankton* was a former yacht and gunboat that had participated in the US Navy's "Great White Fleet" round-the-world cruise between December 1907 and February 1909.

On March 3, 1923, the *Belvernon* had rescued the crew of A E Hickman's 119-ton schooner *James O'Neil* when it was crushed in ice off St Pierre and when she arrived at Boston reported ice damage of her own. Hickman would later represent Farquhar Steamships and then operate its own chartered ships between Montreal and St John's for a time. Much later, it would become a customer of the Clarke Steamship Co and eventually a minority shareholder in one of the Clarke companies serving Newfoundland.

An unusual cruise was announced in April of 1923 when the Hudson Bay Tourist Syndicate, located in the Canadian Pacific Railway Building in Winnipeg, advertised Canadian Pacific's 9,720-ton *Montreal*, another ex-Hamburg-American liner usually engaged on the Montreal-Liverpool run, for a 30-day cruise from Montreal to Quebec, St John's, Indian Harbour in Labrador and Port Nelson and Churchill in Hudson Bay. Departing Montreal on August 1, this "Cruise of a Lifetime Across Hudson Bay" at an all-inclusive fare of \$450 would allow one to "spend the long warm August days exploring the Mediterranean of Canada." Construction of the Hudson Bay Railway having been suspended five years earlier, there was now great controversy over whether Port Nelson or Churchill should be its ultimate terminal. While this cruise was ultimately cancelled, the railway to Churchill would be completed six years later.

In 1923, Canada Steamship Lines lost \$25,000 on its Newfoundland service but in 1924, as well as the *Manoa*, it ran the *Winona* to St John's, giving it a weekly cargo service and fortnightly passenger service. At the end of that summer, however, the *Manoa* was replaced by the 2,816-ton Norwegian-flag cargo ship *Lisgar County*, brought in from the County Line to serve St John's, while the *Winona* ran a separate service to Charlottetown. CSL also maintained a winter service from Saint John, New Brunswick, where it had used the *Mapledawn* in 1922. After her last Newfoundland sailings in 1923, however, the *Mapledawn* had been sent to the Great Lakes, where she was lengthened.

A H Murray, meanwhile, had the 1,738-ton British-flag *Ceuta*, an ex-German war prize built in 1912, and Newfoundland Shipping & Trading the 2,255-ton *Mons*, an old-timer dating from 1890. In September 1924, the *Ceuta* was advertised for a special voyage from Montreal to Corner Brook by

the Newfoundland Power & Paper Co, from offices on the ninth floor of the Drummond Building in Montreal.

The *Gaspesia* no longer called at Prince Edward Island, although she would eventually return to that province, and later would even re-open the old route to Pictou. By streamlining her itinerary now, however, she could offer regular service to the west coast of Newfoundland until other ships could be obtained, while still maintaining her fortnightly schedule from Montreal. While the *Gaspesia* continued to serve Gaspé, Canada Steamship Lines and others now continued to serve Prince Edward Island.

With the extension to Newfoundland, Clarke saw the need for more ships. That it had expanded in this direction was not surprising, seeing as the family had links with the forest products industry in both Quebec and Newfoundland. And by opening service to Corner Brook, the Clarke Steamship Co was not only able to supply that burgeoning paper mill community, but also put itself in a position to serve the Anglo-Newfoundland Development Co by forwarding shipments to Grand Falls over the Newfoundland Railway from Corner Brook.

Events at Quebec in 1924

In 1924 that great Quebec landmark the Chateau Frontenac finally attained its present prominence, when its imposing central tower was opened. Since that time, the view of Quebec from the St Lawrence River has been nothing if not dramatic. One of the river's visitors that same year was also most noteworthy.

Before the season had even started, however, on March 4, opposition leader Sauvé was once again posing questions, this time about whether there had been any complaints about transport services "like that of the Clarke company that receives a subsidy." Government minister Perrault once again came to Clarke's defence: -

No, no complaint has been brought against the transport system, and in particular against the service of the Clarke company. To the contrary, I have received only letters of congratulation regarding the service offered by this company, among others from Mgr Leventoux, Bishop of the North Shore. This company has organized, with the support of the government, which has given it a grant of \$25,000, while the federal government has given it \$80,000, a shipping service to the North Shore and the South Shore. Thanks to this company, the North Shore is provided with an excellent service, with which all the population shows itself more and more satisfied. This service allows fishermen to ship their fish to Montreal. Furthermore, the government has been congratulated many times for having granted subsidies to this company to allow them to extend this system.

After questions having to do with fisheries policy, Perrault, in referring to the service offered by Clarke, chose to add that "the company is not making any profit at the moment with this service, but everyone is satisfied."

Less than three weeks later, on March 22, 1924, The Clarke Steamship Company Limited, the second company of that name, was incorporated, with Desmond Clarke and Wilfrid Clarke as corporate members and Frank M Stanton as secretary-treasurer. With an issued stock of 250 shares of \$100 each, the new company had a capitalization of just \$25,000. At the same time, the original company of that name became The Clarke Company Limited, the same name as had been used by the UK publishing company, but then it faded from view. The 1924 season began five days later, on March 27, when the *Gaspesia* sailed from Quebec for the North Shore.

That summer, from August 19 through September 2, 1924, passengers arriving or departing Quebec in the *North Shore*, *Gaspesia* and *Labrador* were treated to another great spectacle in the river itself. For two weeks, the Royal Navy's 42,100-ton battlecruiser HMS *Hood* lay at anchor as part of her World Cruise of 1923-24. This voyage, which had left Plymouth on November 19, 1923, had called at Sierra Leone, South Africa, Zanzibar, Ceylon, Malaya, Singapore, Australia, New Zealand, Hawaii, Victoria, Vancouver and San Francisco before transiting the Panama Canal for Kingston, Jamaica, Halifax and finally Quebec. The visit of the Royal Navy's greatest warship took some of the attention away from the unfortunate loss of HMS *Raleigh* two years earlier.

At the end of her visit, HMS *Hood* departed Quebec for Newfoundland, where she anchored in Topsail Bay, about ten miles from St John's. There she stayed from September 6 to 21 before returning to Plymouth, where she arrived on the 28th.

Meanwhile, a typical advertisement for this period appeared in the "Quebec Telegraph" on September 10, 1924: -

s.s. *North Shore*. Sails Tuesday, Sept 16th, at 9 am ... for all points North Shore, up to Natashquan, stopping at Anticosti. Freight will be received at Shed 14 Saturday, the 13th up to noon and Monday, 15th, up to noon.

s.s. *Gaspesia*. Sails Wednesday, Sept 17th, at 4 pm for all points of Gaspé and Baie-des-Chaleurs, as far as Paspébiac. Freight will be received at Shed 14 up to noon, sailing date.

Apply: The Clarke Steamship Company Limited, Agents. 17 St James Street.

At the same time the *Labrador* was now trading from Quebec as far as

Bradore Bay. On September 18, the "Quebec Telegraph" carried news of a special voyage by this ship, headed "Convent And Hospital For Clarke City": -

After years of negotiations and pourparlers to arrange for the operation of a convent and a hospital for Clarke City on the North Shore, Hon Cyrille Delage, Superintendent of Public Instruction, announced today that seven sisters belonging to the Franciscan Order had left for the north shore on board the s.s. *Labrador* to take over their duties as teachers and nurses...

Four of the nuns who left today will teach French and English and three of them will be in charge of the Clarke City Hospital.

Further east on the north shore, at Pointe-aux-Esquimaux, the Sisters of Charity organized last year a school of pedagogy, which will allow teachers to be trained on the spot in the future.

In return for their contributions to society and the development of the communities that Clarke ships served, such passengers were typically carried free of charge. A month later, on October 18, the "Quebec Telegraph" carried another typical sailing card for the this ship: -

s.s. *Labrador* will leave at 9 am October 21 for all North Shore ports to Bradore Bay. Freight will be received at Shed 14, Saturday the 18th until noon Monday the 20th. Apply to: The Clarke Steamship Co Limited, Agents

While she had been serving the lower coast as far as Bradore Bay since she entered the North Shore service, this service was soon extended the last few miles to the Labrador border at Blanc-Sablon.

The 1925 Season Starts

In its North Shore service, Clarke now offered regular weekly service between April 1 and December 1 from Quebec to Godbout, Sept-Iles and Natashquan via intermediate ports. "Le Devoir" of March 24, 1925, carried the opening announcement for the new season: -

s.s. *Gaspesia* will depart from Quebec, Wednesday March 25, for all ports on the North Shore as far as Point aux Esquimaux, ice and weather permitting. Freight will be received at Shed 19 from Tuesday the 24th. The Clarke Steamship Co Ltd, agents, 17 rue St-Jacques.

The *Labrador* then departed for the North Shore on April 10 and the Montreal season opening for the Gaspé service was announced four days later, in the April 14 edition of "The Gazette": -

s.s. *North Shore* will sail from Victoria Pier, Tuesday April 21st at 4:00 pm. Weather and ice conditions permitting. This steamer will call at all Gaspé and Baie-des-Chaleurs ports, with exception of Douglastown, Grand-Grève and Gaspé Basin, as ice conditions in Gaspé Bay prevent calling at these three ports. The Clarke Steamship Co Ltd, agents. Victoria Pier.

This was neither ships usual route, in fact quite the opposite, but in the early part of the season ships substituted for one another as ice allowed and as cargo required when they came out of winter lay-up. It was unusual to see the *North Shore* at Montreal, as she usually turned at Quebec, but she sometimes began the Montreal to Gaspé service while the *Gaspesia*, a better ship in ice, worked the North Shore service until the ice cleared. In fact, however, the 1925 Montreal season did not begin until May 2, when the *Gaspesia* finally arrived, about two weeks later than in 1924, departing again on May 4.

Clarke ships soon developed a reputation for being the first to leave Quebec - the *Labrador* on March 15, 1922, for example, and April 10, 1923, and the *Gaspesia* on March 27, 1924, and March 25, 1925. They were also usually the last to tie up at the end of the season, the *Gaspesia* on December 27, 1923, and again on December 15, 1924. Clarke ships were soon known for trying to get the longest season they could.

Pointe-aux-Esquimaux becomes Havre-St-Pierre

Because it had always gone by that name, Pointe-aux-Esquimaux was still being named as the *Gaspesia's* ultimate destination. This locale had been the seat of the Diocese of the Gulf of St Lawrence since 1917, after a fire destroyed the cathedral and bishop's residence at Sept-Iles in 1915. However, on the appointment of a new bishop, it took the new name of Havre-St-Pierre on May 1, 1924. Clarke's schedules and announcements soon came to reflect this change. Louis Garneau talked about the locale in his "Dog Sled to Airplane": -

Havre-St-Pierre, so aptly named, has been endowed by nature with all the properties of a good natural harbour. A boat may enter or leave, either to the east or to the west, without the slightest difficulty. The largest ocean-going vessels can manoeuvre at ease in this inland sea, allowing tourists to admire the most picturesque and grandiose of Laurentian panoramas formed by the long chain of the Mingan Islands stretching over a distance of twenty miles. One can understand that it is quite an event in the village when one of these huge vessels is sighted gracefully entering the harbour through the narrow passage between the Mingan Islands and the mainland.

It was here at Havre-St-Pierre that the Eudist missionaries built their

St-Jean-Eudes Hospital, the most important hospital on the North Shore when it opened in 1927. And as reflected in Garnier's prose, Havre-St-Pierre, while already an important call for Clarke ships, would soon become an interesting port for tourists as well.

Planning For the Future

With this expansion to Newfoundland, Clarke assessed alternatives for expanding its fleet in order to serve this new business. Corner Brook was being built as a "garden city" and Clarke wanted the ship to match. For this, it examined both acquisitions and newbuildings. Desmond Clarke and his wife Aline crossed from New York in Cunard Line's 52,226-ton *Berengaria*, arriving in Southampton on February 13, 1925, and heading for London to visit Tatham Bromage & Co.

On April 3, 1925, the resultant news appeared in "The Gazette" of Montreal, under the headline "Steamship Service to Newfoundland: Clarke Co. Having New Vessel Built for Passengers and Freight": -

There will be a direct steamship passenger and freight service this summer between the ports of Montreal, Quebec and Newfoundland, the first of its kind to be inaugurated from St Lawrence ports.

The company sponsoring this latest important move in local shipping circles is the Clarke Steamship Company Limited, and is the outcome of the recent trip to England by Mr Desmond A Clarke, president of the company, and Frank W Clarke, manager of the Gulf Pulp & Paper Company

The management, through Mr Desmond Clarke, recently completed arrangements on the other side to have a steamer built by a large shipbuilding firm.

One hundred first class passengers will find accommodation ... She will also accommodate eighty second-class passengers, and will carry a large cargo of freight. Her length will be 300 feet.

Barely four years since its founding, Clarke had placed this order for its first new ship through Tatham Bromage, which just the month previous had sent the last ship to Corner Brook for the port construction project there. On April 8, five days after the news broke, Desmond and Aline left Southampton in the 46,439-ton White Star liner *Olympic*, landing at New York on April 15.

Three weeks after the announcement, the Quebec Government followed Ottawa's lead and separated its support for the Gaspé service from that for the North Shore. On April 25, it granted Clarke a ten-year contract, with an annual subsidy of \$30,000, to terminate with the close of navigation

in 1934, to support the *Gaspesia* and such other ships as Clarke might use to serve Gaspé. This sum equalled the separate subsidies paid that Ottawa had paid in 1922 to both Clarke and the now defunct Gaspé Line. With Quebec's contribution to the North Shore subsidy remaining at \$25,000, this new arrangement would last for many years, and indicated the importance of the Gaspé service to Clarke, as well as the governments involved.

The "Colima" and "Nayarit"

With the order for its new ship now placed, Clarke had also made arrangements to acquire two more ships for the 1925 season, one of which was to be assigned to Newfoundland. The capacity of the original fleet had been stretched to the limit, and a search for additional tonnage had produced two suitable candidates. The 1,393-ton *Colima* and 1,461-ton *Nayarit* were taken on bareboat charter from Cayzer Irvine & Co Ltd of London and registered in Montreal to The Clan Line Steamers Ltd, whose fleet Cayzer Irvine managed. The bareboat charter was a form of lease whereby the Clan Line owned the ships but Clarke provided the crew and paid for all stores, supplies and fuel.

The *Colima* and *Nayarit* had been built as "Flower" class anti-submarine corvettes of the "Anchusa" type, two of thirty-three of this type that had been built for the Royal Navy during the First World War. They had been commissioned as HMS *Polyanthus* and HMS *Ivy* respectively in 1917 and 1918. Completed as Q-ships, they were armed warships disguised as merchantmen, and hence their hulls and structures had been built along commercial rather than naval lines. Ironically, this was the same role that the *Gaspesia* had played for the Germans, as their *Alexandra* in 1916.

Six "Anchusas" had been converted post-war to coastal passenger and cargo ships for the Compania Naviera de los Estados de Mexico SA, or the Mexican States Line, of Mazatlan, a subsidiary of the Clan Line. Capable of carrying 100 first- and 50 second-class passengers, the others were the *Chiapas*, *Chihuahua*, *Gerrero* and *Oaxaca*. The *Nayarit* had arrived in Mexico as the *Sinaloa*, but had been renamed *Nayarit* in 1922 when another ship, introduced by the Clan Line in 1923, took the name *Sinaloa* (ii).

The *Colima* and *Nayarit* took on Clarke colours and were managed like the rest of the fleet from Clarke's Quebec headquarters. Clarke ships so far had been registered at Quebec, but these two became the first to use Montreal as port of registry. They were in the St Lawrence well in time for the 1925 season, the *Colima* receiving her health inspection at Quebec on May 11, along with the *Gaspesia* and *North Shore*, and the *Nayarit* the next day at Montreal.

Only six weeks earlier, on April 1, a report of the *Nayarit*'s last Mexican voyage before her delivery to Quebec and Montreal had appeared in the

"Oakland Tribune" under the headline "Mexican Ship is Greeted by Bands at Various Ports - *Nayarit*, after long tie-up at Alameda, is back in service again": -

Bands greeted the Mexican passenger and freight carrier *Nayarit* at every port she visited on her trip down the Mexican coast and back. The Mexican States Line steamer was on her first trip for a year, having been laid up at Alameda pending negotiations for her sale to various parties. She brought a full cargo of coffee, tomatoes, hides and other Latin American cargo and several passengers from Mexico. She is commanded by Capt Ricardo Orduna, former first officer of the SINALOA [ii], who received a radio commendation from the ship's owners when he completed loading of cargo in San Jose del Cabo in forty-four hours, which was scheduled to consume almost twice that time... On its departure Thursday the *Nayarit* will continue on through the canal and up the east coast to Quebec and Canadian ports.

After lying in the mud flats of San Francisco for more than a year her return to service was brief, to say the least, as this turned out to be her farewell voyage before she left San Francisco on April 2 for Quebec and Montreal. Rather than selling them, however, Cayzer Irvine had found other employment for the *Nayarit* and *Colima*.

A couple of years later, Cayzer Irvine would be appointed to manage the newsprint carriers of the International Power & Paper Company of Newfoundland Ltd, the affiliate of the International Paper Company that would take over Newfoundland Power & Paper's Corner Brook mill in 1927. The mill's two ships, the 5,758-ton *Humber Arm* (i) and 5,767-ton *Corner Brook* (i), were delivered in July and September 1925, not long after the *Colima* and *Nayarit* arrived. Armstrong Whitworth, owners of the Newfoundland Power & Paper Co, had built the paper ships in its own shipyard on the Tyne.

Although they wore Clarke colours, the *Colima* and *Nayarit* kept their Mexican names, partly because they were not owned by Clarke and partly because it was felt that their presence might be temporary. There were slight differences between the two, as the *Colima* had a longer forward well deck while the *Nayarit* had a larger wheelhouse and bridge structure, giving her a higher gross tonnage.

The *Colima* had been built by Lobnitz & Co Ltd of Renfrew, Scotland, and the *Nayarit* by the Blyth Shipbuilding & Dry Dock Co Ltd. They measured 262 feet overall by 35 feet and were powered by single-screw 2,500 horsepower reciprocating engines, *Colima*'s by her builders and *Nayarit*'s by Richardson Westgarth & Co Ltd of Hartlepool. Each was capable of speeds of up to 16 knots and in service with Clarke they could accommodate about 80 passengers each.

The Mexican States Line had begun service in October 1921 under a concession from the Mexican Government that paid a subsidy of 0.40 pesos per gross registered ton per 1,000 miles on coastal traffic, based on ships' log reports submitted to the Ministry of Communications. Under the presidency of Thomas Barr of the Clan Line and managed by Capt James Irvine, an American, the line ran weekly down the West Coast from San Francisco and Los Angeles to Mexican ports and Central America as far south as Corinto, Nicaragua. One route went south to Central America while the other served the ports in Baja California. The line's general agents were the well-known Williams Dimond & Company in San Francisco, and its Los Angeles agents McCormick & McPherson.

The ships had been Mexican-crewed except for British supervision in the engine room and had been advertised as "carrying US Mail to Mexico and Central America" and, in those days before air conditioning, as having an "electric fan in every room." The Mexican States Line's own brochure had called them the "speediest ships in this service," and described them as: -

Elegant new steel steamers, especially equipped for the tropics. Passed highest grade for passenger service by British board of trade and United States hull and machinery inspectors. Also classed A-1 by Lloyd's.

Each ship is equipped with American bar (Old Style), library, dance floor, piano, phonograph and amusements. Electric reading lamp in each berth. Special attention paid to cuisine and cleanliness.

The "Old Style" bar of course meant that it served alcohol, which was also an attraction on Clarke ships in these days of American Prohibition. The ships had been named for the Pacific states of Mexico, that of Colima including the port city and resort of Manzanillo, and that of Nayarit, lying on the Tropic of Cancer directly to the north of Puerto Vallarta, including the fishing port and beach town of San Blas. "Terry's Guide to Mexico," published in 1922, described them as follows: -

The Mexican States Line (Compania Naviera de los Estados de Mexico SA) operates a frequent service (excellent, big fast ships of modern construction) with passenger accommodations, comforts, food, amusements etc equal to those of trans-Atlantic liners.

Whether they were that good or not, the "Oakland Tribune" reported the *Colima* anchoring outside Los Angeles on November 24, 1922, as she was carrying explosives loaded at San Francisco for Mexico, with her passengers and cargo having to be lightered from the shore. The April 1923 issue of "Pacific Ports" reported the *Colima* having arrived with a full cargo of 12,000 sacks of coffee, the first of that season's crop from Central America and Mexico in January. In May, the *Nayarit*, advertised as having "steamer accommodations the best - excellent table," carried a delegation of forty-five

Guatemalan businessmen to Salina Cruz on their way to Mexico City and by the 20th she was unloading 200 tons of cargo at Oakland. A couple of months later, the *Colima* welcomed the American photographer Edward Weston, son Chandler and Tina Modotti, who embarked in Los Angeles on July 29 for Manzanillo, where they arrived August 4.

It had been planned to extend the line north to Vancouver, but in 1923 it suffered its biggest disruption, a Mexican merchant marine strike that saw all six of its ships laid up in San Francisco from September until November. After the strike had followed a two-month seizure of the *Oaxaca* by General Estrada during a Mexican uprising and she was not seen in California between November 23, 1923, and February 12, 1924. In November 1925, the Mexican States Line also dropped its calls in Central America in favour of concentrating on Mexico. Although there were reports in 1924 and again in 1926 that two or three large passenger and cargo ships would replace the smaller units, this never happened and the line was maintained for a few more years before finally going out of business in 1929.

Bird Sanctuaries and Sightings at Clarke City

Harrison Lewis was appointed Dominion Wildlife Officer in 1925 and on his annual return to the North Shore that year, he had additional duties. His mission this time was to open ten migratory bird sanctuaries along the Lower North Shore in order to protect seabirds, by reducing the threats to their existence and allowing their population to grow.

On the day he arrived at Clarke City in 1925, probably in the *North Shore* again, he sighted a transient Iceland Gull, A report of which appeared in his "Notes on Birds of the Labrador Peninsula in 1925 and 1926," published in "The Auk" in 1927: -

About noon on May 4, 1925, a fine, sunny day, I stood on the end of Clarke City pier, in the Bay of Seven Islands, and with x6 binoculars, studied carefully an adult, pearly-mantled, white-winged Gull, which was a few yards distant from me, and below the level of my eye. I had sufficient time to study it well, and by turns I saw it flying, swimming, and standing at rest on a floating ice-cake. I could see no dark mark of any kind on its wings. Finally, as if intentionally to provide me with a direct comparison, an adult Herring Gull alighted on the ice cake and stood there about a foot distant from the white-winged Gull. I was unable to distinguish any difference in the sizes of the two birds. As a result of these observations, made under extraordinary and almost perfect conditions, I feel justified as recording the white-winged Gull as an Iceland Gull; in fact, I cannot do otherwise, unless I deny the deliberate and considered evidence of my sight.

On the same day, he sighted a Purple Finch while still at the pier and

four Golden-Crowned Kinglets and a Brown Creeper in the woods near Clarke City, probably after riding the Gulf Pulp & Paper Railway inland.

Lewis carried out his local duties in a boat called the *Perroquet*, named after one of the islands off the North Shore, but travelled to and from the area by ship. He had become quite familiar with the Clarke ships since his first voyage in the *North Shore* in 1921 and both he and his refuge wardens had become familiar faces on Clarke ships. Lewis would eventually become the first head of today's Canadian Wildlife Service when that organization was formed in 1947.

The "Colima" Cruises to Gaspé

At the time of their acquisition, early reports in Quebec had indicated that both Clan Line ships were intended to serve Newfoundland, but they would actually serve different Clarke routes to Newfoundland, the North Shore and the Gaspé coast. Of the two, the *Colima* remained with Clarke just one season, long enough to allow the company to complete its new ship for the following season. She spent some time in 1925 on the North Shore run, but also sailed to Gaspé. We have an idea of her activity with Clarke from an advertisement that appeared in Quebec's "Le Soleil" on August 15, just five days before this departure, under the title "Picturesque Gaspé - A Marvellous Cruise": -

Forget the worries of your daily life. Embark on an unforgettable sea voyage to the mouth of the St Lawrence and along the Gaspé coast, redolent with historic memories, as attractive as that of Normandie and whose solemn grandeur will give you a new vigour.

The luxurious *Colima* departs from Quebec at noon (summer time) Thursday, August 20.

You can't take a better holiday than this. Outbound and returning, your ship calls at the Gaspé Peninsula's most interesting spots: - Ste-Anne-des-Monts - Mont-Louis - Rivière Madeleine - Rivière aux Renards. Round Cap des Rosiers. The shoreline of the Gaspé Basin, excursion sites, pretty fishing hamlets, mills of the Canadian pulp industry.

The theme of pulp in a cruise advertisement was an interesting one, a sort of introduction to industrial tourism. The fare for the Gaspé cruise in "the luxurious *Colima*" was \$55 round trip from Shed 14 in Quebec.

The summer of 1925 thus saw the *Colima* joining the *Gaspesia* on the run to Gaspé and the Baie-des-Chaleurs, with Clarke advertising a sailing every Wednesday from Montreal's Victoria Pier and every Thursday from Quebec. This was a big step up from the fortnightly sailings the *Gaspesia* had been offering up to now.

The Newfoundland Service

The *Gaspesia* began the Newfoundland season, advertising a voyage in the "Gaspé and Newfoundland Service" that she had opened, sailing from Montreal at 4 pm on Wednesday, April 29, 1925. When the *Nayarit* arrived two weeks later, however, she took up the service, sailing with a full cargo that was recorded by L C Tombs in his article "The Port of Montreal," published by McGill University Economic Studies in 1926: -

s.s. *Nayarit*, May 14, 1925, to Corner Brook, Newfoundland: 83 pieces and boxes structural iron and bolts; 203 bales hay; 50 barrels flour; 60 pieces settlers effects; 1 auto; 2 pine doors; 1 box glass; 5 rolls linoleum; 18 cases electric apparatus; 11 drums asphalt; 1 case CI valve; 1 carton sulphuric acid; 1 package aluminum fittings; 1 box marble; 305 cases condensed milk; 1 barrel copper; 1 case brass tubing; 33 steel plates; 10 boxes glass lamp shades; 3 boxes pipe fittings; 1 box brass valves; 6 cases warehouse scales; 1 box hardware; 10 bundles tubing; 22 bundles steel hoops; 1 case extinguishers; 10 barrels flour; 200 bags hydraulic lime, etc.

The *Nayarit* took up the scheduled service to Newfoundland, sailing again on May 27, 1925, in fortnightly service from Montreal and Quebec to Corner Brook and ports in the Bay of Islands and calling at all points between Ste-Anne-des-Monts and Gaspé en route. First-class return fare was \$95, while one-way was \$50, including meals and accommodation, and one-way second class was \$17, without meals.

The "Western Star," published at that time in the neighbouring town of Curling, carried news of the service's calls in Newfoundland under the heading "The Clarke Steamship Service - Between Corner Brook, Curling and Montreal": -

The fortnightly steamship service inaugurated by the Clarke Steamship Company between Bay of Islands ports and Montreal should prove very convenient to both the business and the travelling public. The new steamer *Nayarit* is fitted with comfortable cabins, luxurious lounge rooms and excellent deck accommodation for passengers.

The placing of Curling on her schedule of regular ports of call will enable quick despatch of freight from Montreal to here without transshipment. At Curling, the *Nayarit* will dock at Boland's Wharf. At Corner Brook extension of dock facilities has been provided for the accommodation of the service, and a warehouse is now nearing completion. The rails have been laid on the pier to enable the handling of freight direct from the ship to railway cars.

The trip from Montreal to Corner Brook occupies about four days. On the inward trip, the ship goes direct to Corner Brook, from there she will come to Curling, and return to Corner Brook, from where she will sail outward after arrival of Wednesday's No 1 express, fortnightly.

On August 25, Desmond Clarke hosted a banquet aboard the *Nayarit* at Corner Brook to celebrate the official opening of the Corner Brook mill. The September 2, 1925, edition of "The Western Star" carried an article describing this event: -

The banquet was served in the dining salon of the ship. While the dinner was progressing Capt Boucher moved his ship from the pier, and proceeded on a cruise of the Bay of Islands. The guests enjoyed to the utmost the excursion. The weatherman favoured them with a nice summer night, one of those nights that are so beautiful on our West Coast.

The music for the occasion was rendered by the Tanguay Orchestra of Quebec City. The music effect on the water was charming. As the ship passed the docks of the NP&P Co the coloured lights which formed part of the decoration for the occasion of the opening of the Mill gave splendid effect. We could also hear the sound of the captivating waltz that was enjoyed by some 600 people or more, most of them employees of the NP&P Co.

To Mr Desmond Clarke the party extended hearty thanks for the very enjoyable excursion, and wished his Company the best of success for their direct service between Montreal and the Bay of Islands.

Clarke's Newfoundland advertisements in 1925 were inviting: - "A wonderful opportunity of travelling to Canada by direct route along the most picturesque coast. Excellent service, good cooking," later amended to "Ideal cruise on a luxuriously appointed ship. Beautiful scenery." And "good cooking" became "excellent cooking," presumably after a comment by someone from head office.

J A Farquhar & Company

A note in the September 2 issue of "The Western Star" added that "the s.s. *Nayarit* sailed for Montreal on Wednesday evening. She had a large passenger list." It also mentioned that: -

Farquhar and Company's new purchase, the s.s. *Skipper*, arrived from Halifax via ports, on Monday evening. The ship was formerly the German steamer *Lena*, and was built at Stettin in 1910. She has accommodation for several passengers. She has a gross tonnage of 691 tons."

Company founder Capt James Farquhar was a Nova Scotian who had been a diver, salvage master, deckhand and shipmaster in his time. He had gone to sea in sail and served in the famous Black Ball Line square-riggers before becoming a master in steam with the Quebec Steamship Co in the *Alhambra* and *Canima*, sailing between New York, Halifax and St John's for the Cromwell Line, and unfortunately had also been master of the *Canima* when she went aground in Placentia Bay, Newfoundland, on September 6, 1883. Later, working with Halifax owners Pickford & Black, he had become a shipowner in his own right, buying and building ships for the Newfoundland trade, and forming Farquhar Steamships Ltd.

Farquhar had become the first to offer a regular steamship service to the west coast of Newfoundland, from Halifax, when in 1884 he introduced the 451-ton HARLAW, a ship he acquired with the backing of Pickford & Black. Between 1892 and 1910, Pickford & Black had been paid annual subsidies of \$2,000 to \$4,000 for this service, while from 1911 to 1924 annual payments of \$5,000 to \$10,000 were made to J A Farquhar & Co.

One of his more recent ships, the 729-ton *Sable I*, which he had built in 1914, was also ice-strengthened for the annual seal hunt in the Gulf of St Lawrence. She had taken the first large shipment of Canadian whisky, 1,000 cases of Canadian Club, to St Pierre in July 1922 during the height of American Prohibition. Such cargoes found their way south from St Pierre to the United States in the ubiquitous "rum-runners," many of which were built in Nova Scotia. One or two of these would later find their way into service with Clarke.

With the arrival of the unsubsidized *Skipper* in 1925, the *Sable I* began sailing from Boston to Halifax, St John's and North Sydney, Nova Scotia, a round voyage of 12 days. At Halifax, she connected with Canadian National's "Ocean Limited" from Montreal, for passengers travelling to St John's, and on her return from St John's she connected with the Montreal express train at North Sydney. Farquhar's brochure stated that "passengers who purchase round trip tickets (one continuous voyage) may live on board the steamer for the entire cruise." Fares for this voyage, a longer version of the old Plant Line cruise from Boston to the Maritimes, started at \$98.

As the *Sable I* had been designed for the Newfoundland west coast trade, she proved to be too small for the demands of the international route from Boston. So while Desmond Clarke was hosting his party on board the *Nayarit* at Corner Brook, Farquhar Steamships was in the midst of acquiring the 1,712-ton Newcastle-built passenger and cargo ship *Hethpool*, able to carry 60 first-class and 50 second-class passengers and 1,300 tons of cargo. This ship he acquired from the Tyne-Tees Steam Shipping Co Ltd of Newcastle, which had run her from that port across the North Sea to Continental ports. Farquhar renamed her *Farnorth* in recognition of both his family and her trade.

The *Farnorth* arrived at Halifax on September 15, 1925, and, with the help of a French subsidy, extended the Boston-Halifax-St John's route to include the islands of St Pierre et Miquelon. In this service, she displaced the little 215-ton French steamer *Pro Patria* (ii), which had been running fortnightly from North Sydney, and from Halifax by winter, and would leave St Pierre for good in July 1928. Meanwhile, the *Sable I* was sold to the Bras d'Or Bay Navigation Co Ltd, who intended to put her to work on the St Lawrence River between Quebec and Anticosti.

The Approach to Corner Brook

The west coast of Newfoundland is a most scenic area, and one that is abundantly suitable for cruising. In the early days, the *Gaspesia* and the *Nayarit* sailed into Corner Brook, but newer and larger ships would follow. In "Ports of Pine," a book that was written for Clarke cruise passengers, Alice Sharples described a typical morning approach through the Bay of Islands into Corner Brook: -

The approach to Newfoundland, through the dramatic scenery of the Bay of Islands, is grand opera! ...

As we cruise slowly up the Bay, the mountains rise on either side, richly wooded with pine and fir - streaked with occasional stark patches of granite, in the curious blueish grey tone which is typical of Newfoundland: it is the hue of the beautiful Labradorite stone that is mined here and in Labrador. Not only is the coastline of the Bay mountainous but, as its name implies, a series of densely wooded islands compose in swiftly changing pictures with the sharp silhouettes of the shore. The sea is roseate in the soft light of early morning, as peak after peak, and island upon island unfold before us, against the glowing loveliness of the eastern sky; it is a stirring introduction.

Here and there we glimpse a fishing stage, or "tilts," or a small sawmill and a pile of timber; but, for the most part, we are alone with the mountains and the sea. Leaving the outer reaches, we enter the Bay proper. The port of Corner Brook, tucked away in the "corner" of the fjord, is built on the opposite slopes of the "brook," actually a small river which runs about nine miles inland...

The new company town, which dates from 1923, has been built on the old "treaty shore" where the French had fishing rights. Corner Brook is now the most important community in the Bay of Islands, which includes thirteen settlements, scattered at intervals around the body of water...

Impressions crowd in upon you as the ship docks and you go ashore.

First, the air - it has a dry, heady quality that is keen and bracing. You recall all you have heard about the invigorating Newfoundland climate, and probably feel that it has not been overrated as you set out with zest for your morning adventure.

Aside from the natural attractions, there was the Glynn Mill Inn, the company hotel built by Armstrong Whitworth and named for Sir Glynn West, the company's chairman. Here, passengers could come to buy local handicrafts, enjoy a meal of Newfoundland codfish or attend a Saturday night dance if the ship was in port on a weekend. Eighty years later, Corner Brook was considered of sufficient interest for Cunard Line to send two of its largest and most famous ships there on cruises between New York and Quebec.

Newfoundland Canada Traders and Others

On May 12, 1925, coinciding with the introduction of the *Nayarit* to the Corner Brook trade, some Halifax businessmen formed a company called Newfoundland Canada Traders Ltd. The new company placed into service the 636-ton coaster *Newton Bay*, trading between Halifax, Charlottetown, North Sydney, St John's, Burin, Grand Bank, Fortune, Port aux Basques, Sandy Point and Bay of Islands. On Sunday, January 10, 1926, at the end of Gulf of St Lawrence open water and during her first season, the *Newton Bay* was reported arriving at the Bay of Islands and being escorted by the newsprint carrier *Humber Arm* into Curling, where she unloaded a large cargo from Halifax. The *Newton Bay* was sold to Furness Withy in 1929, and renamed *Longbird*, to work in connection with the building of its Castle Harbour Hotel in Bermuda.

By now, the Canadian Government Merchant Marine was also advertising calls at Prince Edward Island with its *Canadian Sapper* on its own service between Montreal and Corner Brook. The CGMM had begun to sell off its ships in 1923, however, and in 1928 the *Canadian Sapper* would go to Canadian National Steamships, who renamed her *Connector* for use as a feeder ship between Jamaica and British Honduras. In 1932-33, six more CGMM ships would be sold to Aristotle Onassis, forming the beginnings of his shipping empire, while the last ten were not sold until 1936. At its end, this ill-starred venture into government-owned shipping had accumulated losses totalling \$82 million.

Meanwhile, the St John's lines began the 1925 season advertising new ships. Canada Steamship Lines had the 3,044-ton *Airedale*, a British ship built in 1899, while A H Murray had the 1,267-ton *Hillbrook*, another Britisher but dating to 1919. Competition must have been intense as both ships were advertised to sail from Montreal on May 1st. The *Airedale* made her Prince Edward Island call at Charlottetown, while the *Hillbrook* called at Summerside, both to pick up produce en route.

Further upstream, the Ellis Shipping Co announced on July 1, 1925, that it was replacing its *Gaspé Trader* on the Gaspé and Baie-des-Chaleurs route with a larger vessel. The 509-ton *Gaspé County*, built in Denmark in 1919 for Norwegian owners, had become the German *Tondern* in 1923 and was purchased to replace her. Like her predecessor a twin-screw motorship, the *Gaspé County* would now offer more capacity and extra competition to the *Gaspesia*, and would trade as far as Bathurst, Dalhousie and Campbellton in New Brunswick, loading at Shed 2 on the Ellis company's pier at 1400 Ottawa Street on the Lachine Canal. The *Gaspé Trader*, meanwhile, was renamed *Chicoutimi County* to trade to the Saguenay River.

Thos Harling & Son

Harling, which had managed the Gulf of St Lawrence Shipping & Trading Co Ltd and now acted as agents for A H Murray, was Montreal's biggest shipping agent, and, largely because of its Dominion Coal charters, had handled 119 vessels, a number of which were motor vessels, in 1923.

But the firm found itself in trouble when in 1925 the Lord Strathcona Steamship Co ran out of both cash and credit and failed to deliver the *Lord Strathcona* to Dominion Coal for her usual summer season. The Dominion Coal Co in turn took an injunction on the ship that prevented her from trading elsewhere.

The result was that Thos Harling & Son went bankrupt, and the Lord Strathcona Steamship Co became a subsidiary of the Dominion Coal Co in 1925. Although Harling contested Dominion Coal's injunction, in *Lord Strathcona Steamship Co vs Dominion Coal Co*, it lost its appeal in 1926.

Harling would then incorporate Thos Harling & Son Ltd and remain active for a few more years, especially after 1929 in the Hudson Bay trades, but the company's real influence had now passed. Meanwhile, a new agency, the Montreal Shipping Co Ltd opened in April 1925 to take advantage of the firm's decline.

The Clarke Services in 1925

By the end of 1925, Clarke was operating five passenger and cargo ships in the Gulf of St Lawrence. These ranged from the new "luxuriously appointed" *Nayarit* and *Colima*, through the "freight and passenger steamer" *Gaspesia*, all three over 1,000 tons, to the "coastal vessel and mail steamer" *North Shore* and the "little freighter" *Labrador*, to use its own descriptions. Sailings left Quebec for the North Shore every Tuesday and the South Shore every Thursday (Wednesdays from Montreal). One minor disruption occurred to the *Labrador* late in the season when she was immobilized at Sept-Iles on October 25, with a wire wrapped around her screw. However, this was

cleared by a diver with wire rope cutting machinery and she was soon able to proceed on her voyage down the North Shore.

As it expanded, the company moved in 1925 from 17 rue St-Jacques to a new head office in the Banque Canadienne Nationale building at 71 rue St-Pierre. Continuing close ties, the Gulf Pulp & Paper Co under Frank Clarke also moved to the same address. Edgar Rochette commented upon the state of shipping services in the St Lawrence at this time in his "Notes sur la Côte-Nord": -

If, strictly speaking, the coast does not yet have roads, let alone a highway system, not enough can be said in the meantime about its shipping services.

When one thinks about the state of navigation to Labrador twenty-five years ago, and one sees today the steamships of all types that run along the coast through most of the year, one foresees the brightest future for our coastal fisheries, and for commerce in general, favoured by a fast and low cost system of passenger and cargo shipping services.

The Government's attention should be drawn first to the numerous benefits that North Shore inhabitants have received from the Clarke brothers' company since the superb ships of the Clarke Steamship Co Ltd have come to our river waters.

While the *Gaspesia*, *Colima* and *Nayarit* steamed the extra 139 nautical miles upriver to Victoria Pier in Montreal, the *North Shore* and *Labrador* turned at Quebec, the traditional loading port for the North Shore, to fulfill Clarke's government contract.

In Quebec, the company dock was at Shed 14, on the Crosswall Pier, in the outer tidal section of the Princess Louise Basin. As usual, the Montreal sailings left the evening before, steaming overnight to Quebec, where they would arrive in the morning, ready to complete loading and take on more passengers. Connections were made at Montreal and Quebec with all the railways and with Canada Steamship Lines to Kingston, Toronto and Niagara, while at Gaspé and Paspébiac connections could be made with the Atlantic, Quebec & Western Railway and at Corner Brook with the Newfoundland Railway.

Five years after opening, the company had expanded into Newfoundland and was advertising its Gulf of St Lawrence cruises from Montreal and Quebec to Newfoundland, the North Shore, the Gaspé coast and Baie-des-Chaleurs in widely circulated brochures . And the company's first new ship was now under construction in England.