

Portage Life Saving Station. Waldo rescue.

Locally at the Portage Life-Saving station, there were at least these men in 1913. John C. Alfsen, Paul Liedtke, Oscar Marshall, Thomas H. McCormick, John McDonaldl, David M. Small, Fred C. Sollman, and Collin L. Westtrope.

Of these men one that the author, Barb Koski knows is a local man is Oscar Marshall.. and it so happens he is an ancestor of her husband, Ozzie Koski. Oscar Marshall was the son of Peter and Mathilda Marshall of the Houghton Canal. He was one of 8 children. Born in 1882, he married Emma Koski of N. Superior Road. She was the daughter of Andrew and Wilhelmina Koski.

At age 31 Oscar Marshall was on the crew listed above to receive the Gold Lifesaving Medal Award of the US Life-Saving Service, Lighthouse Service, Revenue Cutter Service and Coast Guard. The date of the rescue was November 8, 1913 on the ship Waldo. A descendant of another member of the crew has donated the gold medal to the Marquette Maritime Museum in Marquette MI.

Daily Mining Gazette. 12 November 1913.

Capt. J. W. Duddleson and Rescued Crew of Steamer L. C. Waldo, Wrecked on Gull Rock Manitou Island Brought Safely to this Port.

The tug Charles Hebard brought to Houghton yesterday afternoon the rescued crew of the steamer L. C. Waldo, which was wrecked on Gull Rock, Manitou Island last Friday morning. The crew was taken off yesterday morning by the combined life saving crews of the Eagle Harbor and Portage Lake stations after having been without food for 90 hours, and for the same length of time in imminent danger of being washed into the raging lake.

Not a member of the crew or 22 men and 2 women was injured in any way and all recovered from the privations after a short stay in the hospital cabins of the tug Hebard. The member of the crew left last night for their homes.

Capt. Duddleson's Story.

Capt. Duddleson, master of the Waldo, whose home is Sault Ste. Marie, told the Gazette the story of the wreck shortly after his arrival in Houghton yesterday afternoon.

The Waldo, ore laden for Lake Erie, left Two Harbors, Wis. Thursday night. At 11:45 she encountered a heavy sea off Manitou Island and this sea struck with such force that it tore the pilot house away, tearing off nearly all of the forward upper works of the steamer. With this wreckage the compass went overboard.

Without his compass and with his steering gear badly damaged, Capt. Duddleson was compelled to head before the wind and he changed his course to south, southwest, judging that as he was somewhere near Manitou Island he could make the passage between Gull Rock and Keweenaw Point and get into shelter under Manitou. The waves had put out the electric lights in the forward house and the captain had to sail by a compass held on a stool of the light of a hand lantern. With these rude devices he was enabled to hold his course to within half a mile of his reckoning.

While on this course with the wind dead aft, Capt Duddleson said he could look back and see the big seas breaking over the stern of the steamer, leaving nothing of her in sight but the smokestack.

These waves soon washed away the greater portion of the after house, wrecking everything, destroying all the stores. The crew went forward and congregated in the windlass house. Here they remained huddled till rescued.

The engine room crew stuck by their posts till the steamer struck, and then they went forward to save themselves from the waves.

When the steamer struck she opened up amidships and it would have been impossible then for any member of the crew to get aft for food. They remained without food till rescued. The big seas washed over the stranded ship all day Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday. Till yesterday morning at 7 o'clock the storm began to abate and the life saving crews came in sight.

Praise for Life Savers

Capt. Tucker of the Eagle Harbor station left at midnight Monday for Manitou, having made an unsuccessful effort to get out to the wreck early Monday morning.

Capt. McCormick and the Portage Lake Life Saving crew started out by way of the entry but were picked up there by Capt. Bert Nelson of the Hebard, who carried the crew and towed the big power life boat north till 3 o'clock yesterday morning, when Keweenaw point was reached. Here they waited for daylight.

As soon as day broke Capt. McCormick and his crew got into their surfboat and made for the wreck. Almost at the same time the Eagle Harbor boat came into sight.

The waves were still running mountain high and the lifeboats were in danger of smashing against the steel side of the Waldo. But all of the crew was gotten off safely. They had to jump from the Waldo's deck in the lifeboats that were dancing on the immense waves and every man that jumped took his life in his hands.

Included in the crew were Mrs. Rice, wife of the steward, and it came to jumping over the side of the big boat into the little life boats they were afraid and it was necessary for the men of the crew to pick them up and throw them down to the arms of the waiting life savers.

Waldo a Complete Wreck

While Capt. Duddleson is not willing to admit it, the Waldo seems to be a complete wreck. She is broken in two and all of her upper works are washed away. There may be a chance to get her off the rocks and into shallow water this fall but it would require a long period of calm weather, such another job as the Moreland wrecking operation of two years ago which was unsuccessful.

The Waldo is owned in Detroit. She is 452 feet long, 18 feet wide, and 28 feet deep, built in Detroit in 1898. Capt. Duddleson has been her master since she was launched.

Every member of the crew praises the work of Capt. McCormick and Capt. Tucker and their life saving crews. They all say that it was the dangerous sort of an attempt to come up to the Waldo in the terrific sea that was running and they praise the coolness and skill of the life savers in getting the crew into the lifeboats without a mishap.

When the Gazette reporter visited the Hotel Knauf yesterday they crowded around him and importuned him to praise the lifesavers. The wreck left the members of the crew from captain to porter with nothing but the clothes they stood in. In fact the crew reached Houghton clad in a general deviation of what clothing could be salvaged after the waves washed the cabins away, some of the men being poorly clad for such weather when the storm struck the steamer.

November 13, 1913 Daily Mining Gazette. Capt. Duddleson Abandons His Purpose to Visit His Wrecked Steamer but Will Remain in Houghton to Confer with Insurance Men.

Capt. J. W. Duddleson master of the steamer L. C. Waldo, wrecked on Manitou Island off Keweenaw point last Friday morning, who with his crew reached Houghton in safety Tuesday afternoon, yesterday announced that the Waldo had been abandoned to the underwriters. Capt. Duddleson's intention on Tuesday was to return to the Waldo yesterday in the hope of finding

her in condition to be saved. He gave up that hope yesterday, on reflection.

Capt. Duddleson says that he has been sailing since 1874 and that this was his first experience in abandoning a steamer, though like all other veteran masters he has been in many storms. He characterizes the storm that cost him the Waldo as the worst he ever experienced in his nearly 40 years of sailing. He will remain in Houghton for a few days for possible conferences with agents of the underwriters.

In the Book Went Missing by Frederick Stonehouse, he states: The 451 foot steamer L. C. Waldo was down bound with iron ore from Two Harbors Minnesota on November 11 when she was plummeted by the booming waves. One rouge wave swept away her pilothouse in a splintering crash of wood. Capt. Duddleson, his mate, and the wheelsman only saved themselves from being swept overboard by diving down the stairs to the master's cabin in the deck below. Running to the emergency steering station in the stern, her captain tried to bring her around Keweenaw Point using a lifeboat compass illuminated by the flickering light of an oil lantern. He smashed in to Gull Rock Island just at the peninsula's tip. Broken in two and with cold dead engines, the ship was an inert beast and her crew knew they would soon join her in the hereafter. They were dead men living. There was no hope for them. If the ship didn't break up under their feet, they would freeze to death! The men of the old Life-Saving Service thought better. Living their motto Regulations say we have to go out. They say nothing about coming back, two life saving crews headed into the wild lake, braving 20 foot waves and 60 mile an hour winds. Shortly after dawn on November 11, motor lifeboats from Eagle Harbor 30 miles distant from the wreck and Portage 80 miles away reached the Waldo wreck simultaneously. The cold was so severe when the lifesavers return to their station with the Waldo crew, they were frozen to the thwarts and family members had to chop them free of the ice! The rescue was so extraordinary both station crews were awarded Gold Life-Saving Medals, only the second such double awards in the 44 history of the USLSS. (Started in 1869).