

Portage Ship Canal Life-Saving Station assists with Keeper McCormick

Genevieve 1900 May 31

Shortly after midnight the surfman on patrol discovered this tug to be on fire about 1 mile N. of station. Crew turned out and boarded the vessel with fire buckets. Together with the crew of another steamer, the surfmen fought the flames for two hours, succeeding in saving the tug. (See letter of acknowledgment below.) USLSS Annual Report

HANCOCK, MICHIGAN, May 31, 1900. DEAR CAPTAIN. It affords me great pleasure to acknowledge the good service of yourself and crew in saving our tug, the *Genevieve*, while on fire on the night of May 30. The assistance rendered was the means of saving our property from more serious damage. We can but thank you for the great help rendered. Very truly, yours,
HINGSTON & WOODS, By JNO. T. REES, *Manager*.

To: Captain T. H. MCCORMICK, *Keeper Ship Canal Life-Saving Station*.

A A Carpenter. June 10, 1900.

Sounded a signal of distress about 1 mile S. of station. Surfmen boarded her at once. A gasket had blown out of her boiler and the escaping steam had scalded a fireman badly. Keeper (McCormick) hurriedly returned to the station for the proper medicines, which he applied to the injured man, and then the surfmen assisted to take him to the hospital at Hancock. (See letter of acknowledgment.) USLSS Annual Report

PORTERS CAMP, June 10, 1900. DEAR SIR. . We sincerely thank you and your men for the prompt answer to our call for assistance yesterday. The medical assistance which you administered to the scalded fireman of the tug *Carpenter* was, we have heard since, the right method under the circumstances.

Very respectfully,

Captain L. ROY AND CREW.

Captain G. LOYD AND CREW.

To: Captain T. H. MCCORMICK, *Keeper of the Ship Canal Life-Saving Station, Hancock, Michigan*.

Troy. 1900 June 20

Collided with a scow, staving a large hole in her bow and sinking. Surfmen assisted to shift the cargo of lumber from forward to the after part of the vessel, and then took the master ashore to get a diver. They assisted to repair the damaged bow, to pump her out, and to restow the cargo. The schooner was towed to a dock by a tug for further repairs. (See letter of acknowledgment.)
USLSS Annual Report

PORTAGE LAKE SHIP CANAL, *June 28, 1900*. DEAR SIR. . At 10 a. m., June 20, the schooner *Troy*, in tow of the steamer *Harvey J. Kendall*, after entering Portage Lake Canal, collided with a dump scow in tow of tug *H. A. Meldrum* and sank immediately. Captain Thomas McCormick of Ship Canal Life-Saving Station came at once and rendered all possible aid, helping the diver put the patch on the schooner's bow, and afterwards manning the pumps and pumping out the schooner.

I am very grateful indeed to Captain McCormick and his noble crew for the valuable aid which he rendered me in getting my vessel afloat. Yours, very truly,
GUS NELSON, *Master of Schooner Troy*.

To J. G. KIAH, *Superintendent of Tenth Life-Saving District, Harbor Beach, Michigan*.



Racine. 1900 June 26

Stranded 1/4 mile north of station at 1 a. m.

Station crew ran a line to some piles with the surfboat, and then, with a steamer's aid, floated her at 1:40 a. m. without damage. USLSS Annual Report

Thomas Gawn 1900 August 11

While being towed through the canal, towline parted and the vessel grounded on a bar. Surfmen ran a line to a tug, which soon pulled the schooner afloat. USLSS Annual Report.

Elfin Mere 1900 August 21

Stranded 1 mile N. of station. Surfmen pulled to the place, took soundings, and assisted a tug in floating the vessel. USLSS Annual Report

James O. Blaine 1900, October 2.

Schooner with load of lumber- 8 persons on board saved.

While towing through the canal behind the steamer Niko the schooner collided with a mud scow and had a hole stove in her bow. Station crew at once ran lines from her to the dock and made her fast; then covered the hole with a tarpaulin to keep her afloat. Upon the arrival of a diver, the surfmen assisted him to make temporary repairs so that the vessel might continue her passage. (See letter of acknowledgment.)

SAULT STE. MARIE, MICHIGAN, October 26, 1900. DEAR SIR: I wish to express my gratitude to the captain and members of the Ship Canal Life-Saving Station for the timely assistance rendered to my consort, the schooner *James O. Blaine*, which struck a scow on the 24th in coming into the canal and knocked a hole in her bow. This caused her to leak badly, and without doubt she would have sunk in ten minutes but for the quick work of Captain McCormick and his crew, who succeeded in having a jacket over the hole before the water had a chance to rise in the vessel. They worked faithfully with our crew for five hours, until we had the hole patched so as to proceed. I consider that crew "Johnnies on the spot." Yours, very truly, THOMAS BEGGS, Master of Steamer *Niko*. USLSS Annual Report 1901.

Abyssinia. November 8, 1900.

LSS Keeper received a message which informed him that this schooner was dragging her anchors at Eagle Harbor, 30 miles E. of station, during a heavy NNE snowstorm.

Keeper took surfboat and beach apparatus to Eagle Harbor by special tram, a tug having refused to go on account of the gale, and boarded the schooner, whose master requested him to stand by throughout the night in order to render assistance in case she should continue to drag her anchors.

On the next morning, the wind having moderated, surfmen assisted the schooner's crew to bend the mainsail to the foremast, the foresail having blown away, and make other minor repairs. They helped to hoist the anchors and ran lines to a tug, which towed her out to a steamer that was towing her down the lake. (See letter of acknowledgment.)

EAGLE HARBOR, MICHIGAN, *November 9, 1900.* SIR: This is to certify that the Ship Canal life-saving crew gave me all the assistance that could be given in saving the schooner *Abyssinia*. They came off last night while the wind was blowing hard from the NNE and a big sea running. I will not forget the work which the life-saving crew did for me. Yours, truly, L. COLEMAN, *Master of the Schooner Abyssinia.* USLSS Annual Report 1901.

Harold. 1900 November 12

Lumber. 7 persons on board saved.

Towline parted and schooner stranded at the entrance to the canal. Station crew ran lines to a tug and steamer which hauled her off. USLSS Annual Report 1901

Bon Voyage 1901. May 10

Crew and Passengers. 4 lost lives. 31 saved.

On fire at 7.30 p. m., about 6 miles NW. of station. Surfmen immediately started for the scene in tow of a tug and, on arriving, found two tugs already there, but they were unable to extinguish the flames, which completely enveloped the steamer. The tugs had picked up from the water two persons, and surfmen transported thirty-one persons, who had swum from the burning vessel to the shore, about 75 yards distant, to the tugs, which took them to the station, where they were given dry clothing from the stores of the Women's National Relief Association and sheltered for the night.

The master reported that four passengers were missing, and surfmen and the tugs searched for them until after midnight. On the next two days surfmen searched for bodies and found three, which they turned over to the coroner. The fourth body was found on the 15th about 12 miles from the scene of disaster. Hebrew citizens of Hancock, Michigan, bestowed gold medals upon Keeper McCormick and each member of the life-saving crew for meritorious service in

this case. (See newspaper extract under caption "Letters of acknowledgment.")
USLSS Annual Report 1911.

The following is an extract from an item which appeared in the Daily Mining Gazette, of Houghton, Michigan, on October 27, 1901.

Hancock Hebrews award medals to Captain McCormick and his men for gallant conduct.

The Hebrews of Hancock have secured valuable gold medals and pins, suitably inscribed, which will be presented to Captain McCormick and the crew of the lifesaving station to-day. The medals are in the shape of a 6-pointed star, and are presented to the life-savers for their gallant conduct in recovering the bodies of the four Hebrews who were drowned on the steamer *Bon Voyage*, which burned off Red Ridge some few months ago, the conduct of the life-saving crew having been very gallant upon that occasion. They faced the danger of being wrecked in the storm, and only after a diligent and difficult search recovered the bodies of the four people. The large medal, which is about 2 inches long, will be presented to Captain McCormick. The following words are inscribed upon it: "From the Hebrews of Hancock; thankful for bravery."

Those presented to the crew are of the same design, but smaller.

It is not the intrinsic value which makes these medals worth having, but what they represent, and Captain McCormick and his men will long cherish the tokens.



FERN 1901 June 29.

Fred Stonehouse's Keweenaw Shipwrecks (USLSS Annual Report):

The Colorado wrecked on Sawtooth Reef 1898 was cause of this wreck. Fern was salvaging the Colorado when a sudden squall came up perishing the 5 crew leaving no one to report the tragedy. Diving gave information that tug was still anchored to the Colorado. LSS searched for bodies.

This squall capsized the sail yacht Marguerite. LSS discovered the hull on shore. The two man crew was first thought to be dead but later learned that they drifted and were picked up by a freighter.

Marguerite. 1901. June 29.

Capsized in squall on sawtooth reef near Eagle River. Two men drifted to mid lake and hauled onto the Yuma freighter. USLSS Annual Report.

Alexander Holley. 1901 Sept 17.

This barge was in tow of a steamer and parted her hawser during a heavy gale. After drifting for 60 miles her master anchored in a dangerous position to avoid stranding on Eagle Harbor Reef.

The LSS keeper was informed of the disaster and, after an unsuccessful effort to get the master of a large tugboat to tow the life boat to the scene, started with the station crew in the surfboat. After 5 hours of hard work in a high wind and very rough sea the life-saving crew reached the barge and took off her crew of 6 men and landed them at Eagle Harbor.

On the next day, the weather having moderated, the surfmen conveyed the crew back to the barge, which shortly afterwards proceeded to her destination in tow of a tugboat. USLSS Annual Report.

The Portage Ship Canal Station moved to the other side of the canal out by the lake in 1902. It's first location was $\frac{3}{4}$ mile south on west side of canal.

MAUTENEE. 1902. SEPT 10

PORTAGE, MICHIGAN, *September 11, 1902.*

SIR: On the night of September 10, when I was entering the Portage Ship Canal in a heavy WNW. gale, the stern of my ship struck the east breakwater a light, glancing blow, but went ahead and entered between the piers all right. As there were some mud scows lying in the channel, I was forced to put my helm hard over to clear them and, on so doing, struck the west pier just abreast the lighthouse. No sooner had I struck than the bell at the life-station rang out a general alarm, and in less than five minutes Keeper McCormick and his willing crew were alongside ready to render assistance. After examining the side where the vessel struck they informed me that no serious damage had been done and pulled away and secured a tugboat, which towed me to the harbor. I reported to Keeper McCormick that I had lost about 900 feet of hawser, and he willingly grappled for and recovered the line and put it aboard the *Mautenee*. I desire you to thank Keeper McCormick and his crew for the services which they rendered me.

Very truly, yours, ANDREW BIGGER, *Master American Schooner Mautenee.*

To: Mr. JEROME G. KIAH, *Superintendent Eleventh Life-Saving District, Harbor Beach, Michigan.* USLSS Annual Report

Wilbor schooner and barge Bliss. 1902 Sept 11

Were in tow of the steamer H. L. Wellington and the hawser parted in the heavy sea as they were entering the breakwater. The Bliss passed safely into the harbor and was taken in tow by a tug, which the keeper sent out to her, while the Wilbor stranded and then rolled over on her starboard side. Surfmen pulled to her and landed her crew of eight men at 8.30 a. m. They were further employed on the 13th and 14th instants in assisting to put steam pumps on board, running hawsers, assisting divers, and manning the pumps until the vessel was floated on the latter date. (See letter of acknowledgment.) USLSS Annual Report

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS, *September 23, 1902.*

SIR: This is to certify that Keeper McCormick and the life-saving crew at Portage, Michigan, rendered valuable assistance on the occasion of the disaster to the schooner *John B. Wilbor*, and materially aided our company in releasing the vessel from the beach.

Respectfully, yours, S. R. CHAMBERLAIN, *President Chamberlain Transportation Company.*

To: Mr. JEROME G. KIAH, *Superintendent Eleventh Life-Saving District, Harbor Beach, Michigan.*

Yakima. 1902. Sept 17

While pulling off the City of Rome it went aground. LSS pulled free. USLSS Annual Report.

Thomas Davidson 1903 August 27

Stranded during a fog, on Gratiot Point, 15 miles NE. of the station, at 12:30 a. m., and at 6 a. m. sounded her whistle for aid. A surfman reported the whistles and, the fog having lifted, the keeper with the marine glasses distinguished the smoke of a steamer, which, from its location, indicated her to be ashore.

After an ineffectual effort to procure a tug, the life-saving crew pulled to the vessel in the surfboat, and found her to be a craft of 2,226 tons, laden with iron ore, and fast aground. They assisted the crew to jettison 100 tons of cargo, after which the steamer succeeded in working herself afloat, having sustained no perceptible injury. (See letter of acknowledgment.)

MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN, *September 9, 1903.* DEAR SIR: The steamer *Thomas Davidson*, bound from Ashland to Cleveland with iron ore, stranded 5 miles west of Eagle River early the morning of August 27, the crew, assisted by the life-savers from Portage, throwing the cargo overboard until the steamer floated. One hundred tons was thus sacrificed. These men were the only help I had and I can highly recommend the captain and his crew.

Yours, truly, H. ORTING, *Master steamer Thomas Davidson.*

TO: JEROME G. KIAH, *Superintendent Eleventh Life-Saving District, Harbor Beach, Michigan.*

Matanzas. 1903 Sept 8

At 4.30 p. m., in response to a signal from the vessel, the keeper and crew launched the surfboat, boarded her, found that her rigging had been carried away and steering gear disabled, and at request of the master ran hawser to a tug, which towed her into the harbor. USLSS Annual Report

Matanzas. 1906 November 22 With Panama.

Barge broke free and anchored off shore. At day break a tug brought her into the canal but Matanza went aground. LSS got barge off bottom near pier and brought her to the Lily Pond. (USLSS Annual Report 1907)

LSS Patrol burnt Coston in answer to distress signal of vessel at entrance of breakwater. Surfmen launched surfboat and pulled out to barge in tow of the fish tug *Tramp*. Owing to fresh west wind and high sea the tug was unable to handle the barge, as she had swung around onto the breakwater and stranded. At master's request life-savers got another tug, and were employed three hours running lines to tugs. The barge had been in tow of the steamer *Panama*, which had lost her rudder and dropped the tow. (See letter of acknowledgment.)

To the EDITOR OF THE NEW YORK HERALD.

DULUTH, MINNESOTA, *November 27, 1906*. DEAR SIR: I take the liberty of writing you a few lines in regard to the life-saving crew of Portage station. On the morning of the 23d instant, at 4 o'clock, the barge *Matanzas* arrived at Portage in tow of the small fish tug *Tramp*. In trying to take the barge in, the tug did not have the necessary power to hold her up to the westward against the heavy sea and she took the bottom with her anchor down. We were immediately boarded by Keeper McCormick and his crew of surfmen. They turned to and rendered all the assistance possible. All that I have to say is that I found the whole crew, from Keeper McCormick down, experts at the business and I cheerfully and without solicitation commend the Portage life-savers as worthy of any consideration the Government or the superintendent of the eleventh district may see fit to offer.

Yours, truly, S. M. MURPHY, *Master, barge Matanzas*.

Captain JEROME G. KIAH,

Superintendent Eleventh Life-Saving District, Harbor Beach, Michigan.

Agnus Smith barge Sept 19, 1903 . Coffinberry steamer

At 3 a. m. the patrols, hearing a steamer blowing a signal of distress, fired Coston signals in answer, and then reported her to the station.

The keeper and crew launched the surfboat, and, proceeding to the place, found the steamer H. D. Coffinberry's, water-logged, lumber laden schooner barge *Angus Smith* in tow, and, at the request of the master, communicated with the barge.

She was not able to get into the harbor, and the steamer towed her in, the life-saving crew assisting to make her fast to the pier.

On the 20th and 21st instants, at the request of the master, who was unable to procure other help, the life-savers assisted to lighten the cargo of the barge in order that the pumps could be worked and, on the 22d reload her.

One of the crew of the barge, having lost his clothes, was furnished with wearing apparel from the supply of the Women's National Relief Association. (See letter of acknowledgment.)

LILY POND, MICHIGAN, *September 22, 1903*. This is to certify that I asked the assistance of the life-saving crew of the Portage Station to assist in putting back the deck load of lumber on the schooner *Angus Smith*, as the men ordered from Houghton would not or could not come. It being impossible to get sufficient men here, I had to resort to the kindness of the keeper of the station, and I am pleased to state that they helped me out in great shape, for which I am very thankful. Yours, respectfully,

WILLIAM FERGUSON, *Master of Steamer H. D. Coffinberry*.

To: Keeper THOMAS H. McCORMICK, *Portage Life-Saving Station*.

On 1906 October 27 near Redridge LSS pumped barge in tow of steamer Coffinberry and readjusted lumber cargo. USLSS Annual Report

Hutchinson, John November 30, 1903

Stranded during a thick snowstorm at Five Mile Point, 17 miles ENE. of the station; the keeper and crew launched the life-boat, and proceeded in tow of a tug to the vessel, arriving at 12.30 p. m. At the request of the master, who did not wish to abandon her, remained by the steamer. T

he next day the lifesavers assisted in clearing the vessel of ice and snow, and conveyed the master ashore to communicate with the owners,

At 2 a. m. on December 2, a high sea forcing an abandonment of the vessel, station-crew took 17 of the crew in the lifeboat, and towing the steamer's yawl boat with the remainder 6 men, landed them on shore, and as they were nearly frozen provided them with stimulants. The life-saving crew then returned to the station.

On the 3rd and 4th the keeper and crew assisted to run lines to tugs and to jettison part of the cargo of flaxseed. A NE. gale with thick snowstorm on the afternoon of the latter day forced them to return to the harbor for shelter. During the night the storm and sea forced the vessel off of the rocks, and she was found the next morning lying to her anchor, afloat, and was towed into the harbor. (See letter of acknowledgment.)

LILY POND, MICHIGAN, *December 5, 1903*. DEAR SIR: Through you I wish to thank the life-saving crew and Captain McCormick for the services they rendered us while we were on the rocks off Five Mile Point. They worked like Trojans, were kind and

courteous, and I cannot say too much when I say that our entire crew felt safe in their care.

I remain, yours, respectfully, JOHN H. SMITH, *Master Steamer J. T. Hutchinson.*
TO: JEROME G. KIAH, *Superintendent Eleventh Life-Saving District, Harbor Beach, Michigan.* USLSS Annual Report .

Hutchinson sank August 26, 1905 near Ontonagon towing the Caledonia. Crew got on barge.

Jeremiah Godfrey. 1904. October 11.

At 12.15 p. m., while entering the canal in tow of a steamer, this schooner parted her lines and collided with the pier. Surfmen warped her clear of the pier, then into the harbor. USLSS Annual Report.

Moravia. 1905. November 4

Schooner.

This vessel having been in collision with another craft while passing through the canal was boarded by the Life-Savers, who ran her lines to a wharf and warped her into the harbor, where repairs were made. USLSS Annual Report.

Mary 2 gas launch. 1905 November 10.

Machinery disabled. Towed her to entry with lifeboat. USLSS Annual Report

Crete. 1905 November 13

Grounded. Took off crew and assisted in getting her off. USLSS Annual Report.

Orinoco. 1905 November 20

At 5 in the evening the life-saving crew proceeded to the assistance of this vessel, which had grounded at the entrance of the canal. At the request of the master the surfmen ran out her hawser and secured it to the shore, when she floated off by her own power. USLSS Annual Report.

Uranus. 1906. May 25

During dense fog and fresh NE winds this vessel, bound from Duluth to Chicago laden with iron ore, ran ashore on Eagle River Reef, 22 miles from the station at 1 in the morning.

The keeper upon being informed of the casualty proceeded to the scene in tow of a tug, arriving alongside the wreck at 6 pm. The master decided that if the life-savers would stand by him he would not abandon the ship. The surfmen rendered all service possible, landed dispatches and forwarded them to the owners, then upon the arrival of the tugs, ran lines, jettisoned a part of the cargo, when on the 29th at 2 pm she floated into deep water. USLSS Annual Report.

***Pasadena*, 1906 October 8**

Wreck of the schooner barge

The *Pasadena* was a 2,076 ton vessel, seventeen years old and valued at \$30,000. She hailed from Cleveland, Ohio. She was wrecked 1 mile northeast of the Portage life-saving station, on Lake Superior, about 6 p. m. of October 8, 1906, while on her way with a \$12,000 cargo of coal from Ashtabula, Ohio, to Superior, Wisconsin, in tow of the steamer *Gladstone*. The disaster resulted in the total destruction of the barge and the loss of her cargo, also the loss of 2 of her crew of 10 persons.

All went well with the 2 vessels until they had accomplished three-fourths of their 800 mile voyage, when on the evening of the day mentioned they ran into a 60-mile gale of rain and sleet, which compelled them to seek a shelter. As they were off the Keweenaw Peninsula when the storm bore down upon them the *Gladstone* made for the Portage Ship Canal, which bisects the peninsula, in the hope of finding a haven in Lily Pond—1 mile inside the canal entrance.

The northern end of the Portage ship canal is protected by 2 breakwaters starting from the land some 3,000 feet apart, extending thence into the lake at right angles to the beach several hundred feet, then converging to within 500 feet of each other 2,000 feet from the shore. As the *Gladstone*, approached this gap her captain realized that it would be impossible to hold the tow up sufficiently to get it safely inside, and blew a distress signal, which was repeated by the donkey engine on the *Pasadena*. The last-named vessel also burned a flare-up Tight, then cut the towline and threw over her anchors in the hope of averting a collision with the east breakwater.

Separated from the barge, the *Gladstone* continued on into the canal without mishap, but her less fortunate tow was swept with dragging anchors helplessly before the gale, and shortly struck the breakwater, staving in her bow. Through the hole caused by the collision the water rushed, a veritable flood, tearing off the vessel's hatches and making a clean sweep of every movable object on her decks, and in an incredibly short time she began to break up.

Indeed, her crew barely had time to put on life-preservers before they found themselves struggling for their lives in the water, surrounded by thrashing debris. Eight of the seamen reached the shore on pieces of wreckage and were dragged from the water by persons who had come to the beach with lanterns. Two, however—whose names are given as Fred Campbell and Oscar Holm—lost their lives, whether by drowning or from injury sustained when the vessel went to pieces will never be known.

The *Gladstone* and her tow were discovered by the life-saving crew while she was standing in for shelter. Keeper McCormick suspected they would get into trouble when they should attempt to pass through the gap, and accordingly made ready to go out in the station lifeboat should disaster overtake either of them. He did not have long to wait, for soon the blasts of the vessels' whistles and the flare-up from the *Pasadena* told him that his apprehension was well founded.

The keeper reasoned that the barge would let go her anchors, which would, he hoped, hold her long enough for the lifeboat to get to her, or that, in the event she should drag, the anchors might nevertheless retard her progress to leeward sufficiently to permit the lifeboat to overtake her and rescue her crew as the gale carried her along. He was also of the opinion that she was deeply loaded, which, owing to the flatness of the beach, would keep her from taking bottom close enough inshore to "render effective the use of the beach apparatus. His judgment appears to have been well taken in this regard, as it seems highly probable that he could have accomplished a rescue in the manner he contemplated had the barge not struck the breakwater.

Having made preparations for the seemingly inevitable, the lifesaving crew started up the canal under full sail. When near the canal entrance the current and sea swept them back almost to their starting point, and they were able to regain the lost ground only by the assistance of some persons on the west pier, who towed them along by the boat's painter. From the canal entrance they started for the breakwater gap on tack, which they reached after making three legs. As they got into the gap and rose on a high sea they caught for an instant a glimmering light off to starboard, which they took to belong to the *Pasadena*. For five minutes the keeper held the boat in to the place where the light was seen, when word was passed to him that the lookout in the bow had caught a glimpse of a light straight ahead. The boat therefore made for the second light, but in the darkness it brought up against the breakwater, throwing every one of the crew forward, and causing the surfman who was tending the main sheet to lose his hold, the sheet unreeving. Out of necessity the boat was put before the gale until the sheet could be removed and everything made shipshape.

While the crew were employed getting things back in place their boat was allowed to drift to leeward 3 or 4 miles. They managed to work their way back again into the neighborhood of the east breakwater, but only to meet

with another serious mishap. This time their tiller was carried away and they were forced on the beach, landing within 100 feet of the place where the survivors of the *Pasadena* had drifted in.

Upon learning from persons on the shore how the disaster to the barge had terminated Keeper McCormick detailed a part of his crew to keep a lookout along the beach for the two men known to be missing. He then returned to the station, where he found the 8 survivors, who were being cared for by members of the crews of vessels that had found refuge from the storm in Lily Pond.

The failure of the life-saving crew to render assistance in this case was due solely to conditions over which they had no control, namely, the severity of the storm, the darkness of the night, and the rapidity with which the *Pasadena* broke up. It would seem from the testimony of the witnesses at the investigation that the barge struck the breakwater somewhere near the time the lifeboat passed through the gap on its way to the rescue. If this conclusion is correct, the station crew were within a short distance of the doomed ship while it still held together, but the night prevented their knowing it. Her lights were seen but for one brief moment—when the lifeboat was tossed up on the crest of a sea while clearing the breakwater. The second light seen by the life-savers, and which lured them against the breakwater with such disastrous consequences, proved to be the storm signal light on the flagstaff near the life-saving station. The failure of the boat's crew to identify it was an excusable error in the circumstances. However barren of results was their night's work, they nevertheless did their full duty at the imminent risk of their lives. The following extract from a letter addressed to the superintendent of the Twelfth life-saving district by the master of one of the vessels that sheltered in Lily Pond is an expression of the opinion generally held by the local press and public regarding the conduct of the station crew on this occasion:

I was sheltered in Lily Pond at the time, and with my chief engineer was first on the scene, excepting the life-saving crew. I watched their efforts to get out of the piers in the face of a 50-mile gale and terrific sea, and can truthfully say that never did men work harder or display a better knowledge of their business. Had the barge held together ten minutes longer (I do not think she lasted more than half an hour) the life-saving crew could, I believe, have taken every man off. My mate and chief engineer will bear me out in all I say, as we were all on the beach and helped drag those poor fellows out of the surf and get them to the life-saving station. USLSS Annual Report.



Samuel Foster. 1906. October 9

Fred Stonehouse's Keweenaw Shipwrecks. (Journal of Portage LSS)

Finished work on the Pasadena and got call on Oct 9th that the Barth had lost the tow line to the Samuel Foster and Wayne and they were probably somewhere west of station.

LSS hired a team {horses} to pull beach apparatus to travel overland for 16 miles finding nothing. Keeper learned that barges were high and dry and crews safe. The crew returned to station.. had been working on Pasadena and this for 36 hours. Foster was near Misery Bay, and Wayne at Redridge. Barges were recovered and restored.

Allegheny. October 27, 1906.

Schooner-barge. West of Entry. Keeper McCormick received telephone message that a schooner -barge had parted her towline and was in distress about 17 miles west of station. Keeper McCormick telegraphed for a tug which towed the surfboat, and the crew reached Houghton.

There the equipment was loaded on special train and taken to the point where it was expected the barge would come ashore. Yes it was at expected location anchored out 2.5 miles out. No sign of distress. Crew stayed on beach in case.

Next day the lake had moderated and LSS rowed out to the vessel to check on condition. Tug Rogers towed both the barge and LSS back to the canal.

In 1913 storm she was lost at Vermillion Point Lake Superior. (Journal of Portage LSS October 27, 28, 1906).

Gas Launch. 1906 October 31

Fred Stonehouse Keweenaw Shipwrecks: The day tower watchman spotted a gas launch in distress near the east breakwater. Using the surfboat the LSS rowed out and discovered the launch had been holed and was on the bottom with waves washing over. Working from the breakwater they were able to heave it up and then tow it to the station. Journal of the Portage Station.

Stewart. 1906. November 30

In a westerly gale and high sea, this steamer, bound from Duluth for Cleveland with iron ore, stranded 1 mile NW. of station. Life-savers in surfboat went immediately to her assistance, but before any aid could be given the seas lifted steamer clear. USLSS Annual Report.

John Harder. 1906 December 6 Helped shift cargo. USLSS Annual Report.

Louisiana. 1907 November 10 Freed her. USLSS Annual Report.

Muskegon. 1908 August 23.

Stranded 7 miles SE. of station, and her master telephoned the news to the keeper. Station crew, in surfboat, proceeded to the steamer in tow of a tug. They took soundings around the steamer, ran lines to the tugs, and assisted in shifting her cargo. After 7 hours work the Muskegon was floated, undamaged. USLSS Annual Report

D. L. Hebard. 1908, September 11.

Discovered by the patrol at 3 a. m. stranded 1 mile NE. of the station. The station crew put off to the steamer in the surfboat, took soundings around the vessel, and carried out an anchor and cable to haul her afloat, but their efforts were not successful.

Keeper went ashore and telephoned for a tug. Surfmen took soundings to enable the tug to approach the steamer, and ran a hawser between them. The vessel was soon floated, suffering no damage. USLSS Annual Report.

Daniel B Meacham 1908 October 24-27 Forest fire smoke created condition of not being able to see location.

News received by telephone that a steamer was ashore 12 miles NE of the station. Power lifeboat proceeded to the scene. At the master's request, messages were carried ashore for a wrecking outfit. As the sea was increasing, and it was thought she would have to be abandoned, the power lifeboat landed the crew of 20.

The following morning, the sea having moderated, the crew was taken aboard the vessel. The station crew stood by the steamer, rendering valuable assistance with the lifeboat until the 27th, when she was hauled afloat. USLSS Annual Report.

Pathfinder (steamer) and tow Dagamore. 1909 August 9-11...

This steamer and her tow stranded on Eagle River Reef, 21 miles northeast of station, and both were badly damaged.

Life-saving crew went to the scene in power lifeboat, but could render no assistance, as a wrecking outfit had taken charge.

On the 11th the 2 vessels were floated and towed into the harbor. Service crew assisted by running lines, transporting of master of barge to shore and back, and by going 5 miles out into the lake with a message to the steamer D. O. Mills. USLSS Annual Report.

Circle. Tug. 1910. May 17-21.

Ran on rocks 34 miles northeast of station on the 17th. At 8 p. m. of the 18th power lifeboat started to give assistance in company with a wrecking outfit. The weather coming up very bad, shelter was sought in Eagle Harbor until 6 a. m. of the 19th.

The crew then helped place pumps and run lines to the wreck. At 11 a. m. they had to seek shelter again on account of bad weather, taking along the crews of the wreckers and the steamer.

At 5 a.m. of the 20th returned to wreck and started pumps. She was floated at 11 a. m. and towed to Eagle Harbor.

A surfman went down in a diving suit and fastened patches over the holes in her bottom. The power lifeboat then towed her to Portage, arriving at 8 a. m. of the 21st.

CIRCLE. SEPT 15, 1911.

PORTAGE LAKE SHIP CANAL,
BRANCH ENGINEER OFFICE, UNITED STATES ARMY,
Houghton, Mich., October 11, 1911.

DEAR SIR: You have undoubtedly been informed of our second mishap with the U. S. tug *Circle*, which was run into and sunk at the upper end of Lily Pond by the steamer *Martin Mullen* September 15.

I wish to take this opportunity to thank Capt. Thomas McCormick and crew, of the Portage Life-Saving Station, for the very efficient and valuable assistance rendered by them, both at the time of the sinking of the tug and when she was raised. Their services were highly appreciated by this department, and especially by myself. With best wishes, I am,

Very respectfully, GEORGE H. BANKS, *Junior Engineer.*

To: Capt. J. G. KIAH, *Superintendent Eleventh Life-Saving District, Harbor Beach, MI*

USLSS Annual Report



Moreland. 1910 October 18

The largest loss of property in a single instance, namely, \$445,000, was occasioned by the destruction on October 18, 1910, of the 7,514-ton ore-carrying steamer *William C. Moreland*, near the Portage station, on Lake Superior.

October 18.—The 7,514-ton steamer *William C. Moreland*, of Cleveland, Ohio, got off her course in smoky weather while en route from Superior, Wis., to Ashtabula, Ohio, with a cargo of iron ore, and stranded on Eagle River Reef, Lake Superior, 21 miles northeast of the Portage (Mich.) station and a mile off shore. The master landed in the ship's yawl, and at 11:30 p. m. news of the stranding was telephoned to the station named. The life-saving crew arrived alongside in the 34-foot power lifeboat after a three-hour run. They stood by until noon of the 19th (word of the stranding having in the meantime been sent to the owners), when the sea became so rough that it was necessary to land the steamer's crew. On the first trip ashore 12 were taken off and on the second 13, comprising the entire company.

On the 20th, the sea being less rough, the station crew put 10 of the ship's men aboard the vessel. While the service boat was on its way back to the shore the *Moreland* broke in two. The life-savers headed about and rescued all the sailors. The steamer and her cargo were totally lost.

In performing the services here described the service crew was continuously on duty for 36 hours, their clothing drenched constantly by boarding seas, and their lives at times in great danger. USLSS Annual Report 1911

Manistique. 1911 September 2.

USLSS Annual report: ¼ mile from station. Casualty within scope of Life-Saving is topic title listing the Manistique. . but no write up.

Fred Stonehouse Keweenaw Shipwrecks: The Reid wrecking tug Manistique was briefly stranded but LSS crew assisted in getting her off. (She was one of the tugs working on the Maplehurst in 1922)

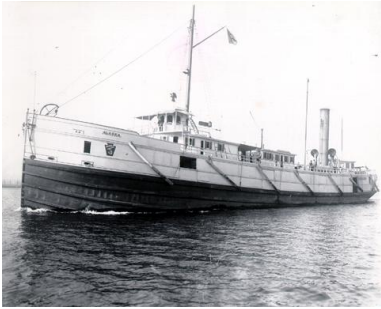
Exile. 1911. September 27

Fred Stonehouse Keweenaw Shipwrecks: Small schooner barge downbound to Big Bay with lumber was briefly aground near Upper Entry. The life-savers assisted in freeing her.

Annual Report: Casualties within scope of Life-Saving topic has listed the Exile and says that supplies from the Blue Anchor were furnished to 7 men.

Alaska. 1912 August 18

Wooden Steamer. Off Upper Entry. LSS crew rendered aid to stranded steamer 3 miles north of entry. (USLSS Annual Report 1913)



Livingston. 1912, Sept 13

Stranded 5 miles NE of Upper Entry. Portage Life Savers assisted in freeing her.
USLSS Annual Report 1913.

Waldo.. the Gold Medal Rescue November 11, 1913.. see a separate topic on this rescue.