

ing if they had reached their destination, so the men of the ALTADOC stood watch in turn all night and kept an oil barrel filled with wood burning so that the adventurers might find their way back if they could not make their way out. Rockets were also sent up. On the following night, this was repeated. They were rescued the next day..."

Young Orval Gonyou had quite a time of it, and several of the press reports began their accounts with headlines such as "Boy Stuck to Post..." or "Crew of ALTADOC Praise Boy". One article was headed "Port Colborne Boy In Engine Room When Crash Came". It then went on as follows.

"With only eight months of sailing experience, Orval Gonyou, 16-year-old oiler of the ill-fated and now crewless ALTADOC, proved himself well worthy of the title Seaman. Orval tells of his experiences in very few and modest words, putting all the glory on someone else.

"We left the Soo on Tuesday (December 6) and lay behind Whitefish Point for some time. When the storm had somewhat abated, we left Whitefish Point and were in Lake Superior about six hours when we were hit by the blizzard. The ship weathered the storm for a long time, but the rudder broke about five hours (sic.) before we finally went aground on Keweenaw Point. (Most of the reports have specified the exact time of the grounding as 6:10 a.m. on the 8th.) We hit the reef bow on, and they rang full ahead and the ship was run up with her bow and stern on the reef.

"At the time that the crash came, I was on duty," continued Orval. "I called the chief engineer as soon as we went aground and then the three of us, chief, second and I, pulled the fires from under the boilers, the fireman on duty (James Graham) being injured. The engineroom is a total wreck and I lost everything that I owned except a pair of trousers, wearing other men's clothing when we were taken off the wreck," declared the youthful hero.

"The first load of eleven (men) was successfully taken off the wrecked steamer Sunday (the 11th) afternoon at 2:30 by a U.S. coast guard boat. When the boat was returning at 4:30 with its final load of seven, it became stuck in the ice, the cutter CRAWFORD rescuing the craft and those aboard from their predicament.

"By other members of the crew, it is stated that the young oiler is as plucky a youth as there is on the lakes. When told to leave the engineroom, Orval stuck to his post. When asked if he was going to sail again next season, he replied emphatically that he was - but on a different ship but with the same officers." Another small report stated that "Mr. Orval Gonyou, of the ALTADOC... arrived home Tuesday evening" (Dec. 13).

Robert Currie stated that "Gonyou was in the engineroom when the crash came. With him were Roy Hardman, second engineer, of Wiarton, and Jack Nichols, first engineer, of Port Colborne. As soon as we struck, the three of them pulled the fires and prevented an (boiler) explosion. They wanted the kid to leave, but he refused to be separated from the second engineer and said 'I'll stay as long as you do.'"

Interestingly, a December 9th report from Calumet stated that radio reports indicated that the steamers G. J. GRAMMER and PRINDOC, both light and bound for Fort William for grain cargoes, were riding out the storm on Lake Superior, somewhere between Keweenaw Point and Passage Island. We had not previously been aware that her almost exact sistership PRINDOC (I), (a) GILCHRIST (13), (b) LUPUS (26), was only a few miles away when ALTADOC was in her agony on the Keweenaw.

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Ed. Note: We hope that our readers find this additional material on the loss of ALTADOC to be as interesting as do we. We have done our best to excerpt the details from the various clippings in as meaningful a manner as possible and we apologize if any of the items seem to be out of order or difficult to follow. We must remember that we are dealing with a wide