

Unfortunately, as a consequence of the effects of the Great Depression, Sin-Mac Lines Ltd. soon ran into serious financial difficulties and by the early 1930s the company was in the hands of the Montreal Trust Company, although R. A. Campbell continued as general manager. In May of 1935, control of the company passed to the Simard family, of Sorel, Quebec, and under Campbell's guidance, the firm was reorganized as Sincennes McNaughton Tugs Ltd., Montreal. Later, the company was broken up into two parts, namely Sincennes McNaughton Lines Ltd., Montreal, and the United Towing and Salvage Company Ltd., Port Arthur.

It was to United Towing and Salvage that NEEBING (II) eventually was transferred, but throughout this entire final period of her life, the Dominion List continued to show her owner as Sin-Mac Lines Ltd.

NEEBING (II) continued in service for United Towing and Salvage until her end came on Friday, September 24th, 1937. At the time of her tragic loss, NEEBING was under charter to the Lake Sulphite Company, which was building a new town at Red Rock, Ontario, on the west shore of Nipigon Bay, and about six miles south of the village of Nipigon. NEEBING was carrying a cargo of gravel from Paradise Island to Red Rock, and she had in tow the composite-hulled barge COTEAU, (a) BELLE (C.96868), 157.6 x 27.0 x 11.0, 445 Gross and 411 Net, which had been built in 1897 at Toronto and rebuilt in 1909 at Kingston. COTEAU also was loaded with gravel.

Whilst the tow was attempting to negotiate the Nipigon Strait in very heavy weather, the NEEBING was overcome and was swamped by the seas. She foundered quickly and her boiler was reported to have exploded, no doubt as the cold water filled the boiler room. According to James M. Kidd's notes, the "Archives Casualty List" showed that the accident occurred 800 feet off Eagle's Nest Point. There has been some suggestion that the heavy crane on NEEBING's deck, which substantially altered her centre of gravity, may have contributed to her being overcome by the seas, whereas the more easily-riding COTEAU survived.

The steamer foundered so quickly that five members of NEEBING's crew, including Captain A. L. Carney, were lost. Nine others survived, either through making their way ashore safely or being picked up by a small rowboat manoeuvred to their aid by Capt. Emil Konderka of the COTEAU. Some three hours after the sinking of NEEBING, the COTEAU was taken in tow by the United Towing and Salvage tug STRATHMORE, which took her to her original destination of Red Rock.

A few days after the accident, dragging operations recovered the body of one of NEEBING's lost crew, and the ship herself was found in some 108 feet of water, about a quarter of a mile from the northwest tip of Moss Island. Due to her age and small size, it was not deemed economical to attempt to raise NEEBING, and as far as we know, no efforts ever were made in that direction.

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**Ed. Note:** Our thanks to the T.M.H.S. secretary for his efforts in assembling much of the material for this feature. The notes of the late T.M.H.S. treasurer, Jim Kidd, were of much assistance. Also acknowledged are the following publications:

- The Wishbone Fleet, a history of the Hall shipping operations, by T.M.H.S. member Daniel C. McCormick, 1972.
- Lake Superior Shipwrecks by Dr. Julius F. Wolff, Jr., the second expanded edition published 1990 by Lake Superior Port Cities Inc.
- The Canals of Canada, 1934 edition (our copy used aboard ASSINIBOIA by the late C.P.R. commodore, Capt. James McCannell), published by the King's Printer, Ottawa, by authority of the Minister of Railways and Canals.
- Freshwater Whales, a history of the American Ship Building Co., by Dr. Richard J. Wright, 1969, The Kent State University Press.