

One of the Great Lakes' 1,000-footers sustained relatively serious damage in a mid-July accident at the Soo. Shortly before 3:00 a.m. on Monday, July 13, the Interlake Steamship Company's 1977-built MESABI MINER was upbound in Little Rapids Cut. Whilst passing the downbound KINSMAN INDEPENDENT, she failed to make the Bayfield Turn and struck the rockpile in the lower Soo Harbour. The MINER managed to free herself and then tied up at the old Carbide Dock, where she underwent Coast Guard inspection. It was found that she had sustained extensive damage, including a gash almost thirty feet long on the bottom of her port bow. The ship had to discontinue her upbound voyage and, during the afternoon of the 13th, she was turned around in the Soo harbour and then proceeded downbound, en route to the Bay Shipbuilding yard at Sturgeon Bay for the necessary repairs.

Two groundings took place in the St. Clair River this spring. On April 12th, the Columbia Transportation self-unloader RESERVE lost steering whilst downbound, loaded, just below the Polysar plant at Sarnia. She grounded on a sandbar off the foot of Moak Street, Port Huron, and the tugs SUPERIOR, LOUISIANA, NORTH CAROLINA, BARBARA ANDRIE, TUG MALCOLM and DONALD C. HANNAH participated in efforts to free the steamer. On April 13, part of RESERVE's cargo was offloaded into her fleetmate WOLVERINE, and once RESERVE was refloated, the cargo was put back into her at the Seaway Terminal wharf. The ship went on her way on April 14, no serious damage being reported. Then, on April 26, the American Steamship Company's H. LEE WHITE, also downbound and loaded, lost steering, allegedly due to electrical problems, whilst in the vicinity of the Stag Island Middle Light shortly after noon. She veered to the U.S. side of the channel and nosed very close to shore at the foot of Cuttle Road, Marysville. TUG MALCOLM and SUPERIOR attended, and the WHITE was released in the small hours of April 27. She was allowed to resume her voyage when inspection revealed no significant damage.

At least two saltwater vessels have suffered groundings on the lakes during 1992. During the evening of May 22nd, the German freighter CPC HOLLANDIA lost power whilst upbound in the American Narrows section of the the Upper St. Lawrence River. The ship, carrying a cargo of steel coils from Miami to Detroit, ran onto a granite slab on the edge of Wellesley Island. There was no serious damage and the vessel was released the following morning after ballast was pumped out of her forward end. In the first week of July, the Fednav Group salty FEDERAL ST. CLAIR called at Toronto, bound up into the lakes. She had grounded on June 29 east of Cornwall, and after leaving Toronto, she went to the shipyard at Port Weller for drydocking and repairs.

July was not a good month for the Ontario Northland Transportation Commission's ferry service between Tobermory and South Baymouth. At the busiest time of the season, the second ferry on the route, NINDAWAYMA, (a) MONTE CRUCETA (76), (b) MONTE CASTILLO (78), (c) MANX VIKING (87), (d) MANX (87), (e) ONTARIO NO. 1 (II)(89), suffered a machinery breakdown on July 11th, and then on July 18 sustained a cracked cylinder head whilst on a northbound trip. She unloaded at South Baymouth, went to anchor in the bay to clear the dock, and eventually returned empty to Tobermory. The offending cylinder head was pulled and sent to Toronto for repairs, but NINDAWAYMA was out of service until early August, curtailing high season passenger movements.

For fifteen years, we have watched the meanderings around the lower lakes of the tank barge and former steamer CAPE TRANSPORT, (a) NORTHCLIFFE HALL (I)(61), which was sold out of the Hall fleet in 1977. Readers may be aware that recently, she has been lying at ADM's Windsor Grain Terminal, but they may not know that she is working. She regularly receives shipments of vegetable oil, the interesting part being that this oil is delivered by Pioneer Shipping's straight-deck bulk carrier SENNEVILLE. Last autumn, James Richardson & Sons Ltd. received a contract to supply this oil, and they made watertight SENNEVILLE's No. 1 hold and installed pumps so that she could unload into CAPE TRANSPORT. Of course, this hold must be washed out thoroughly after the oil has been unloaded before grain can be carried in it.