

It is evident that our original feature was not quite correct when we mentioned dates for ownership changes for the CALEDONIA as she joined and left the Boland fleet. The confusion arose over her acquisition by the Great Lakes Engineering Works, and the fact that other operators ran her after this. In fact, the steamer was enrolled at Detroit (permanent enrollment no. 12) on September 12, 1912, her owner being registered as the Great Lakes Engineering Works, of Ecorse, Michigan. The ownership of ITALIA was transferred to G.L.E.W. at the same time, and it seems evident that the ships were used as partial payment for several new steel-hulled freighters that G.L.E.W. built around this time for the Boland and Cornelius interests.

Great Lakes Engineering was too busy building ships and engines to have any interest in operating CALEDONIA and ITALIA, so the former was chartered out to other operators in the 1913, 1914 and 1915 seasons. It is thus that J. R. Davock & Company, of Cleveland, came to be shown as operator of CALEDONIA in the 1913 editions of the Lynn's and Beeson's vessel directories. Some sources say that ITALIA never ran under G.L.E.W. ownership, but the 1913 directories also show her as being operated by J. R. Davock & Company. It is known that ITALIA did not run after 1915, and she apparently lay idle until she was broken up around 1921.

A big change came for CALEDONIA in 1916. The "Buffalo Daily Courier" of May 20, 1916, carried a report from Port Arthur, Ontario, dated May 19th, to the effect that the Massey Steamship Company, of Duluth, had announced that same day that it had acquired the American steamers CALEDONIA and PANTHER, and that it planned to put CALEDONIA under Canadian registry and in Canadian lake service. In fact, it would appear that CALEDONIA did go over to Canadian registry but did not actually operate under the banner of the Massey Steamship Company. She was given Canadian Official Number 134518, her tonnage on the Canadian books was shown as 2167 Gross and 1293 Net, and she was registered to the Davidson & Smith Elevator Company, of Port Arthur. The 1916 Dominion List showed the owner as John R. Smith. The rename to (c) GALE STAPLES was registered on May 19, 1916.

Interestingly, CALEDONIA's United States documents were not surrendered to the Detroit Customs Office until December 20th, 1917, and the endorsement then placed on permanent enrollment no. 12 by T. H. Keane, Deputy Collector of Customs, read: "Sold Foreign. I am informed that this vessel was sold to Canadian parties over a year ago."

The information available concerning the actual ownership of GALE STAPLES under the Canadian flag is minimal. We do not have the 1917 Dominion List, and the STAPLES is not shown in the 1918 list because that was the record of vessels on the Canadian register as at 31st December, 1918, and, of course, the STAPLES had been wrecked and abandoned over two months earlier. That Captain R. D. Bassett had something to do with the STAPLES from 1916 to 1918 we, personally, have absolutely no doubt, but we cannot prove it via any official documents. He may simply have been an operating manager or agent for the ship, acting either in a personal capacity or via his unincorporated Bassett Steamship Company, of Toronto.

In any event, as our original feature described, the life of GALE STAPLES came to an end on October 1st, 1918, when she strayed off course in heavy weather on Lake Superior, whilst upbound with coal from Buffalo for Hancock, Michigan, and under the command of Capt. Robert Graham. (He was identified by the Dominion Wreck Commissioner in his annual report of casualties, but the owner of the ship was not!) In broad daylight, just past noon, the STAPLES ran up on the sandstone shoal abreast of the Au Sable Point Light.

The first and second assistants to the lightkeeper went to the scene of the wreck to find out if help was needed, and the lookout at the Coast Guard station at Grand Marais also spotted the ship in distress and dispatched a lifeboat. Captain Graham sent two women cooks ashore for safety, and sent