

wires to Sault Ste. Marie to ask for the assistance of tugs. On the morning of October 2nd, four seamen were taken off and, with the weather worsening, the rest of the crew went off in the Coast Guard lifeboat about 5:00 p.m. One of the steamer's own lifeboats was washed off and came ashore very close to the lighthouse.

The G-tug ILLINOIS and lightering barge RELIANCE arrived at the wreck from Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, on October 4th, and work began on taking the coal cargo out of the STAPLES. Some 1,600 tons of coal were recovered. The logbook of the lighthouse keeper recorded the fact that on October 6th, the steamer's upper cabin was gone, and that she appeared to have broken in two. His note for the 7th indicated that the tug and lighter abandoned the STAPLES at 6:00 p.m., and proceeded up the lake. The representative of the insurers of the ship had been taken out to the wreck on the 7th by the Coast Guard, and he ordered salvage efforts abandoned, owing to the condition of the hull. The last record of the lightkeeper, dated October 13th, noted that in deteriorated weather conditions with a northwesterly gale blowing, the seas were running over the ship and the wreck was being moved in across the shoal, toward the shore.

In the November article, we mentioned that there had been a report that the hull of GALE STAPLES eventually was pulled off the shoal and was taken to the Soo for the removal of the rest of the cargo, but that we had been unable to find anything to confirm that suggestion, and that we very much doubted that the hull of the STAPLES ever left Au Sable Point. We now have confirmation of the finality of the break-up of the wreck on the shoal by way of a description of the wreck of the STAPLES, as contained in Submerged Cultural Resources Study, Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore, by T.M.H.S. member C. Patrick Labadie, Southwest Cultural Resources Center Professional Papers No. 22, Santa Fe, New Mexico, 1989.

The boilers of the STAPLES can be found five-eighths of a mile from shore in 15 feet of water, on a compass bearing of 345 degrees from the Au Sable Point lighthouse. The propeller with stern tube, tail shaft, wooden rudder and an anchor, all lie near the boilers, as well as a piece of the side of a wooden ship, about 60 feet long. The boilers exactly match those of the STAPLES in dimensions, although no builder's marks can be seen. The propeller is a four-bladed screw made by the Sherriffs Manufacturing Company, of Milwaukee; three of the blades have been broken off, and they also lie nearby. Apart from a field of small debris, mostly consisting of machinery parts, fastenings, lifeboat davits and a capstan, no other major remains of the STAPLES lie on the reef itself.

Large sections of the hull, however, now lie right in on the shore, on both sides of Au Sable Point, and the majority of the hull is believed to lie to the east of the reef. Some of the pieces of the hull have been clearly visible above water and have been photographed, and despite the presence in the area of debris from the wreck of the 1887-built Gilchrist steamer SITKA, which went to pieces on the reef after grounding on October 4, 1904, the sections of hull from GALE STAPLES can be identified positively because of some unusual construction details.

Not all of the remains of GALE STAPLES still lie at Au Sable Point. During the late 1930s and continuing as late as 1940, metal wreckage from both the STAPLES and the SITKA was hauled out on shore and sold for scrap in Munising, Michigan.

More about the story of WILLIAM B. MORLEY / CALEDONIA / GALE STAPLES may eventually be turned up, but we think that, for now, we have told our readers just about everything now known about the ship and her remains. She had an interesting life, and one that was fairly long for a wooden-hulled steamer of her vintage, and particularly for one that hauled iron ore, as did the