

SIR THOMAS SHAUGHNESSY'S LONG SEASONS

Our Ship of the Month No. 232 in the December issue was the steamer SIR THOMAS SHAUGHNESSY, best known for the many years in which she operated for the Mohawk Navigation Company Ltd., of Montreal. This ship must surely have set a record for so often being the first out in the spring and one of the last lakers running late in the autumn. We touched briefly on the SHAUGHNESSY's early and late operations in our feature, but we have found much more on this subject in looking through the newspaper clippings of our late T.M.H.S. member, Ivan S. Brookes, of Hamilton. Unfortunately, most of Ivan's clippings are not fully dated, nor are their sources identified.

Beginning in 1941, we have an item entitled "Last Ship Loading". It continued: "At midnight tonight, the last insurance on lake vessels sailing the Great Lakes expires, and it is expected that only one ship will clear the lake head today in time to take advantage of insurance for the trip from the head to Georgian Bay ports. She is the SIR THOMAS SHAUGHNESSY, one of the Mohawk Navigation Co. vessels, and well known as one of the ships that sails very late in the season.

"Crew of the SHAUGHNESSY, while loading the vessel with grain, said they had encountered some bad weather on their way up the lakes to the head, and the steamer was forced to shelter for a while at Marquette..."

Another article appeared just a day or two later. "Closing Friday: The navigation season at the Sault Ste. Marie Canals is expected to end tomorrow with the passing down of the SHAUGHNESSY." The clipping did not include mention of whether the SHAUGHNESSY encountered any adverse weather or ice conditions on her downward trip, as often proved to be the case.

Late in December of 1942, under the heading "Wind Up Busy Season", it was reported: "Winding up one of the busiest shipping seasons in many years, the last vessel to depart from the lakehead was the SIR THOMAS SHAUGHNESSY, with a cargo of flax for Superior, Wis. The SHAUGHNESSY will return to the lakehead, where she will winter along with 23 other ships."

In a "Winter Waterfront With Roy" column that appeared on January 21, 1944, in "The Evening Telegram", Toronto, it was reported: "Repairs Progressing. Dominion Bridge Co. is getting well ahead with its big job of repair and overhaul on the freighter W. J. (sic) SHAUGHNESSY, at the Toronto Turning Basin." Ivan indexed this article as SIR THOMAS SHAUGHNESSY. In our Ship of the Month feature for "Scanner", however, we noted that the SHAUGHNESSY was first ship out of Owen Sound in the spring of 1944, and this information came from an article which appeared in "The Globe and Mail", Toronto, on Tuesday, March 27, 1945. Commenting on the opening of navigation at Owen Sound that year, it mentioned that SHAUGHNESSY had been "first out last year".

We have clippings that show the "thorough overhaul and multitudinous repairs" that the Dominion Bridge Company, in its first-ever marine repair contract, did to Mohawks' CAPTAIN C. D. SECORD in the Toronto Ship Channel over the winter of 1942-1943. That the same company worked on the SHAUGHNESSY at Toronto (and not Owen Sound) over the winter of 1943-1944 seems confirmed by the same 1945 "Globe and Mail" report that mentioned the boat opening Owen Sound the previous year. Almost hidden below a picture of Capt. A. J. Irwin (sic) was the comment that he "had the SHAUGHNESSY docked in Toronto a year ago for repairs". Problem solved.

Capt. John Tackaberry has told us that up until about 1943, the SHAUGHNESSY was commanded by Capt. Angus Mackay, of Owen Sound. He was a brother of Capt. Norman Mackay who was lost in the 1936 sinking of HIBOU, and another brother, John, was master of MANASOO when she was lost in 1928, although John Mackay survived that disaster.

The next master of the SHAUGHNESSY, and the one to which the 1945 clipping referred, was Capt. Albert J. Irvine, who had been in the "Red Barges" for some years. After his years in the SHAUGHNESSY, he went on to command GOLDEN