

"I went up where the lifeboat was. No one was there and the lifeboat was swung over on the after end. But the front (of the boat) was still tied to the deck. I tried to untie it but it was too tight to release the lever. I took my knife and cut the rope to release the boat and I turned the davit out to let the lifeboat clear the side of the SCOTIADOC.

"When I tried to lower the lifeboat, it was too heavy to hold, so I had to let it go. It went down in the water and filled up. I went down the rope to the lifeboat and at that time, the third engineer came along. I threw him the painter and he took hold of it.

"At that time, the ones in the water were yelling for help. I took a rope from the lifeboat and went back and got four of them, one at a time. The last one I went back for - I couldn't get him. He let go of the log line and tried to swim to me. The current was too strong and he floated away, and there was nothing I could do. Of the four we saved, two were from the galley, the second cook and the porter. The other two were the watchmen, and the one that was lost was the night cook (who came) from the Soo.

"After we all got in the lifeboat, the third engineer let the painter go. Then he slid down the rope to the lifeboat with us. We pushed away from the ship. The only thing wrong with our lifeboat was that the plug didn't get put in. Other than that, she was in good shape. The sea was running about ten feet (high), and we got the water down, but then it would fill up again. The two women (in the boat) were more help than the two men. It was between one and two hours before we got out of the cold water.

"It was three or four days before I realized the danger we had been in. The two women (from the lifeboat) went to the hospital at Fort William. I went home, but did not go out (sailing) again till next spring."

We are very pleased to be able to present for our readers this first-hand account from a survivor of the SCOTIADOC sinking. Considering that the accident took place 44 years ago, we had not hoped to be able to make contact with anyone who could give us a personal recollection of the event. That this account should come from a member of the engine room crew, who often would find themselves in dire straits when a vessel sank quickly after an unexpected collision, makes it all the more interesting to read.

We extend our most sincere thanks to Sandy Sanderson for sharing with us his experiences when he was, so unexpectedly, forced from the warmth and security of the engine room of the SCOTIADOC into the frigid waters of Lake Superior as a result of an accident that never should have happened.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### AN IMPORTANT ANNIVERSARY OBSERVED

On October 15, 1967, the Chicago, Duluth & Georgian Bay Transit Company's 1914-built passenger steamer SOUTH AMERICAN sailed from Cleveland, beginning the last trip of the last of the traditional Great Lakes overnight passenger ships. The following day, this much loved steamer sailed for the last time from her owner's wharf at the foot of Woodward Avenue in Detroit, en route to Montreal. She had abandoned her usual upper lakes service that year in order to run excursions from Detroit to Montreal for Expo '67, and at the close of the season, she was sold to the Seafarers' International Union for proposed (but never realized) use as a training ship at Piney Point, Maryland. SOUTH AMERICAN's sale came about as a result of new Safety of Life at Sea fire regulations which were to come into effect in 1968; SOUTH AMERICAN did not, and could not reasonably have been altered to meet those regulations.

Your Editor was one of a number of lake shipping enthusiasts who made that last, sad and very wet (rain most of the way, with high winds and snow in the Seaway) trip on SOUTH AMERICAN. Since then, we have seen CANADIAN EM-