

Chicago, we went directly to the American Shipbuilding dry dock where permanent repairs were made during that winter.

"After this experience I could agree with Captain Roy F. Woodward's reply when asked why he had stayed in shelter so long in Lily Pond up in the Keweenaw Waterway. His reply was: 'Last trip this ship went through all the contortions any ship could and still stay on top. From now on I sail in smooth water. There may be times when I am in when I should be out, but I will never be out when I should be in!'"

This storm had come close to claiming yet another victim. The ANNA C. MINCH, WILLIAM B. DAVOCK and two fish tugs were sunk with all hands. Several other ships were badly mauled by the storm and, of course, NOVADOC was totally wrecked and never was recovered. Considering her condition afterwards, the THOMAS F. COLE was indeed fortunate to have survived.

Recently, Al Miller produced a new book on the U.S. Steel fleet. From Tin Stackers we have the following on the beginning of the 1942 season for the COLE. "The 1942 season was far different from anything Pittsburgh sailors had ever experienced. Ore cargoes began moving in March... The rush to get steamers under way early that spring resulted in a rash of accidents related to poor sailing conditions and ice. THOMAS F. COLE lost a blade of its propeller on March 28 as it bucked heavy ice approaching the Detour fuel dock in the St. Mary's River. After receiving a new blade at the Soo, the COLE continued into Lake Superior. There Capt. M. H. MacBeth found himself in danger of being blown ashore on Whitefish Point. To escape, he had to batter the COLE into hard, blue ice up to two feet thick. Somewhere in the river or on Lake Superior - probably both - the COLE sustained extensive damage to the plates and frames in its bow, requiring the vessel to be dry-docked in Lorain."

The THOMAS F. COLE had new hopper side tanks installed in April, 1946. This changed her tonnage to 7682 Gross and 6454 Net. The next year saw the replacement of her boilers with two new Babcock and Wilcox coal-fired watertube boilers with a total heating surface of 9,884 square feet. The ship seems to have avoided trouble for several years and a new tank top was installed in 1957. However, later on that year she did have a couple of minor scrapes. From Lake Superior Shipwrecks by Dr. Julius F. Wolff, Jr., we have: "1957: Earlier in the season Pittsburgh Steamship's 589', 7,700 ton THOMAS F. COLE was ice damaged while dockside in Superior on April 22, and in midsummer on July 7 she collided with the Duluth - Superior Interstate Bridge, damage being minimal."

She went to the wall at the Mesabi Iron Ore Dock #W5 in Duluth for a long lay-up on June 22, 1960. She and several of her sisterships were in ordinary for a few years as the demand for iron ore was not great. THOMAS F. COLE was, however, fitted out again in the spring of 1964 and departed Duluth on April 14. It was to be a memorable year for her.

T.M.H.S. member Skip Gillham has provided us with log entries from the COLE. In 1964, returned to active service, she operated as usual until the early morning hours of November 12. She was anchored near the south end of Pipe Island in the lower St. Mary's River when the salt water vessel INVEREWE came out of the fog and rammed into the port bow of the COLE.

What follows is a logbook synopsis of the season of 1964 for the COLE. She cleared Duluth April 14 with ore for Gary, Indiana, and laid up at Lorain, Ohio, on November 15, with damage, alongside WILLIAM B. DICKSON. She carried 32 cargoes of which 25 were ore and 7 were stone. Loading ports were Duluth (24 ore), Calcite (5 stone), Port Dolomite (2 stone) and Superior (1 ore). Discharge ports were Gary (15 ore, 1 stone), South Chicago (5 ore, 1 stone), Lorain (3 ore, 2 stone), Conneaut (1 ore, 1 stone), Duluth (2 stone) and Cleveland (1 ore). She carried a total of 410,577 tons of cargo that season.

Log Notes:

May 30 - standing by yacht SEA JAY 33 miles, 238 degrees off Muskegon - latter taken in tow by U.S.C.G.

Oct. 26 - waiting (for) JAMES LAUGHLIN at Cleveland.

Nov. 12 - up St. Mary's River light for Duluth.

01:48 - 03:07 - anchored due to fog.

04:10 - Full Astern - danger signals.

04:12 - collision with S.S. INVEREWE, London, Eng. No damage/no casualties to INVEREWE. Severe damage to port bow of COLE. Damage checked / mainly above waterline area behind blind tanks bulkhead / some water slopping.

13:03 - hove up anchor.