

M2098

**SUMMARIES OF VESSEL CASUALTIES AND
VIOLATIONS OF LAWS, RULES, AND REGULATIONS
ON THE GREAT LAKES,
JANUARY 1911–JUNE 1937**

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INTRODUCTION

On the two rolls of this microfilm publication, M2098, are summaries of vessel casualties and violations of laws, rules, and regulations on the Great Lakes, January 1911–June 1937, reproduced from the miscellaneous annual reports of the Steamboat Inspection Service (1911–32) and its successors, the Bureau of Navigation and Steamboat Inspection (1932–36) and the Bureau of Marine Inspection and Navigation (1936–37). These records are part of Records of the Bureau of Marine Inspection and Navigation, Record Group (RG) 41.

BACKGROUND

Vessel inspections, first required by an act of July 7, 1838 (5 Stat. 304), were performed by engineers appointed by U.S. district court judges. The Steamboat Act of August 30, 1852 (10 Stat. 61), formally established the Steamboat Inspection Service in the Department of the Treasury and authorized the appointment of supervising steam vessel inspectors, who collectively constituted the Board of Supervising Inspectors. An act of February 28, 1871 (16 Stat. 458), authorized the appointment of a Supervising Inspector General for the Steamboat Inspection Service. The Steamboat Inspection Service was transferred to the Department of Commerce and Labor by an act of February 14, 1903 (32 Stat. 825), and to the Department of Commerce by an act of March 4, 1913 (37 Stat. 736). Pursuant to the Appropriation Act of June 30, 1932 (47 Stat. 415), the Steamboat Inspection Service and the Bureau of Navigation were consolidated in August 1932 under the title of Bureau of Navigation and Steamboat Inspection, but the records of the two agencies were not integrated until 1935. The Bureau of Navigation and Steamboat Inspection was later renamed the Bureau of Marine Inspection and Navigation by an act of May 27, 1936 (49 Stat. 1380). Functions relating to merchant vessel inspection and safety of life at sea were transferred to the U.S. Coast Guard by Executive Order 9083 (February 28, 1942).

RECORDS DESCRIPTION

The records consist of typescript summaries of vessel casualties and violations of laws, rules, and regulations on the Great Lakes, January 1911–June 1937, that were investigated by the local inspection boards of the Eighth and Ninth Supervising Districts of the Steamboat Inspection Service (1911–32) and its successors, the Bureau of Navigation and Steamboat Inspection (1932–36) and the Bureau of Marine Inspection and Navigation (1936–37). The reports are arranged by Federal fiscal year, then by supervising district, then by local board. Within each report, the summaries are arranged by date of casualty or violation. Reports for 1911 include some incidents that occurred in 1910 that were still being investigated during 1911. Two examples of these reports from the 1911 Annual Report, Local District of Cleveland, Ohio, Ninth Supervising District, will illustrate the kind of information they contain:

March 23 [1911]. While fishing steamer *Lillie and May* was returning from the fishing grounds, and when about a quarter of a mile outside the Cleveland

breakwater, Weston Heywood one of the fishermen, while standing on deck aft lost his balance, fell overboard and was drowned. It was blowing about 30 miles per hour from N.N.W., and a choppy sea running at the time of the accident. We investigated this case March 24th, and the evidence shows conclusively that every effort was made to rescue him.

June 24 [1911]. While maneuvering at the fork of the Cuyahoga River, the overhang of the steamer Crete's port quarter raked the upper works of the steamer John G. McCullough. Estimated damage to John G. McCullough \$1,500.

RELATED RECORDS

Summaries of investigations on the Great Lakes from other years will be found in the appendices to the *Proceedings of the [number] Annual Meeting of the Board of Supervising Inspectors of Steam Vessels* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1852–1894) and in the *Annual Report of the Supervising Inspector General, Steamboat Inspection Service, to the Secretary of the Treasury* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1895–1931). These titles may vary slightly over the years.

GENERAL REMARKS

The records were filmed in 1983 in response to a customer microfilming order, and the National Archives retained a copy for reference purposes. In 2006, this microfilm was assigned the number M2098 in order to be issued as an official National Archives Microfilm Publication. Some of the original project targets (information sheets) at the beginning of each roll and preceding each year have been retained.

ROLL LIST

ROLL	CONTENTS
1	January 1911 – June 1923
2	July 1923 – June 1937