

Mr. Palmer recalls that some 400 feet of cable, at a wide angle from her side, were laid out from the PHELAN's bow to an anchorage atop the high bank ashore. This cable anchor consisted of a deep hole cut into the top of the bank and cribbed with railroad ties, with the 1½-inch steel cable brought in and weighted down with several large boulders. Palmer, however, tells us that "for me, the big star in the whole show was the old (wrecker) CORNWALL. With her huge sidewheels and two smokestacks, she was quite a sight arriving from downriver pulling a couple of scows".

In our feature, we mentioned that the wet grain from the PHELAN was "pumped" into the attending barges, but Mr. Palmer takes issue with this. He recalls that the grain was clam-shelled up out of the wreck using CORNWALL's big crane, and was dumped into the barges which were lashed in turn along the outer side of the PHELAN. This fact also tends to confirm Palmer's belief that PHELAN was closer than 400 feet offshore. The river was very narrow at the wreck site, and if she had been that far out, the movements of CORNWALL, the tugs and scows around the wreck would certainly have impeded downbound traffic, and Palmer definitely recalls that the lightering activities did take place on the outer rather than the near side of the wreck.

"Why they didn't take all the grain out of the boat is a mystery to me. The grain was wet, there's no doubt about that, and the stink was getting stronger and stronger as each day passed. But that would hardly have been sufficient excuse to leave 10,000 bushels of it still in the holds. When the barges were filled, CORNWALL pulled them the half mile or so down to the lock of the Cardinal Canal, and then up and away to Kingston.

"It could be that Donnelly had other commitments to take care of and was anxious to get this job over with. I recall that the CORNWALL never came back, and that the two tugboats began trying to pull the PHELAN off pretty soon. It's my remembrance that the better part of three days was spent in the futile effort, one tug pulling and the other working on the PHELAN's outer side, to work the wreck off upstream, against the current. After that, Donnelly pulled out, leaving the PHELAN to her lonely fate.

"Then my brother and I had to return to the U.S. of A. to get back to school. We were mighty surprised, the next summer, to find the PHELAN gone. Asking around, we soon learned that another wrecking company (John E. Russell, out of Toronto - Ed.) had taken over in the late fall and pulled the PHELAN downstream, apparently as easy as you please, off the shoal. Now why didn't Donnelly think of that?"

As an interesting aside to the story, William Palmer recalls that only the most powerful steamers (such as WINONA, GLENAFTON and the RAPIDS passenger steamers) were able to steam upbound in the outside passage past Iroquois Point. In August of 1921, the old package freighter CITY OF HAMILTON (the former Anchor Line "triplet" JAPAN) tried it whilst running up light. She didn't make it and grounded in almost the same spot as the PHELAN. Again, Donnelly was called to the scene and he tried to pull her off with his tug FRONTENAC. Once more, he tried to pull upstream instead of down, and all he managed to accomplish was to capsize FRONTENAC over on to her starboard side on the shoal. She and CITY OF HAMILTON were still lying there when Palmer had to leave to go back to school at the end of summer.

We have enjoyed being able to bring this additional information to our readers, and we extend our most sincere thanks to Messrs Palmer and Labadie for making it available to us.

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To close out his issue, we should like, once again, to remind members that we would appreciate receiving their membership renewals, and to thank those who already have renewed.

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