

"Capt. Roen wanted the salvage job of the SINALOA very much, but so did the Canadians, Earl McQueen and Tom Reid, both of whom had made names for themselves in ship salvaging. However, when we learned that the Canadians were trying to get the job, we got off a telegram of protest to the Secretary of Commerce and also enlisted the aid of Senator Wiley on our behalf, as Lake Michigan is the one of the Great Lakes where Canadians are not permitted to engage in salvage operations if American concerns are competent and available to do the work. Roen Steamship Company got the job November 30, 1940, under a "no cure - no pay" contract for \$57,000 if raised and delivered to the shipyard at Manitowoc, or in lieu thereof, the Owners could turn over the vessel to Roen Steamship Company in full payment.

"As soon as the contract was signed, Capt. Roen commenced preparing the (barge and former Detroit River carferry -Ed.) TRANSPORT for the job, as her large flat deck and heavy cranes would be of great value. Wrecking gear, including large steam pumps, diving equipment, timbers and extra men and supplies were quickly assembled and put on the TRANSPORT's deck, and on the morning of December 2, 1940, the tug JOHN ROEN, with the TRANSPORT in tow, departed Sturgeon Bay.

"When the equipment got to Sac Bay, the forward deck of the SINALOA was submerged. The TRANSPORT and steam tug were able to get between the SINALOA and shore. The TRANSPORT tied up to the SINALOA, and removed the SINALOA's self-unloading boom, which was in the way for digging out of her cargo hold, and the crew of the TRANSPORT took the hatch covers off the SINALOA. In the meantime, Capt. Roen had sent for the Str. FRED W. GREEN (a 1918-built World War One 'laker', [a] CRAYCROFT [27] -Ed.), Capt. Ole Jacobsen in charge, which soon arrived, tied up on the outboard side of the wreck, and using her clamshell buckets, dug as much sand out of the SINALOA as she could without herself getting on the bottom. This was perhaps 2,000 tons, and was (taken out) for the purpose of lightening the stranded vessel.

"Since several of the SINALOA's forward hatches were submerged, Capt. Roen had Matt Overvog, an excellent carpenter as well as sailor, take measurements for construction of wooden cofferdams which were needed to put around those hatch openings which were submerged. Cap sent Matt on the TRANSPORT over to Escanaba with the steam tug to get the cofferdams built, but when they got over to Escanaba, Matt had lost the paper with the dimensions on it so they had to send him back on the steam tug to take the measurements over again.

"In the meantime, Roen Steamship engineers were busy on the SINALOA. There was no water in her boiler room, and they soon got the boilers going to provide steam for the large steam wrecking pumps. When the TRANSPORT got back with the cofferdams, they were fastened to the submerged forward deck of the SINALOA, using divers. Then the pumps were set up and started. Since the GREEN had taken off about 2,000 tons of the 6,000 ton cargo, the TRANSPORT also unloaded some of it. The part she unloaded she threw into the water. The part the GREEN unloaded, she brought to Sturgeon Bay and unloaded on the quarry dock, along with the SINALOA's boom, which she had taken off the TRANSPORT.

"The bow of the SINALOA came up after the boilers got going good (sic), and the steam tug (JOHN ROEN) and JOHN ROEN JR. pulled her off the strand. By that time, there was a good deal of ice around her. Something almost immediately went wrong with the boilers on the SINALOA, so the steam tug had to go alongside and hook into the pumps' steam lines to provide steam until the SINALOA's boilers were again in operation.

"They got most of the water out of the SINALOA and she proceeded for Sturgeon Bay in tow of the JOHN ROEN and JOHN ROEN JR., with the TRANSPORT trailing behind the SINALOA. The tugs accidentally ran the SINALOA on a sand bar which is a little north of the old stone quarry at Sturgeon Bay. More sand was taken out of the SINALOA with the TRANSPORT in order to get her up to the quarry dock.