

roller boat was once more taken in tow, and in a few minutes was back at her old moorings in the Polson slip."

Frederick Augustus Knapp declared that he was delighted with the trial trip. The Toronto "Evening News" of Thursday, October 28th, 1897, reported that "Knapp's roller boat was taken out on the bay yesterday afternoon and given another trial. Since the first trip, double the number of flanges and paddles had been put on the boat. The CRUISER, with a large party of ladies and gentlemen on board, steamed out, but got stuck in the mud in the channel. The roller boat was taken out into the bay and rolled eastward. One of the rudders was put into operation and the crew was able to steer the boat in any direction they pleased."

The same article indicated that Mr. Knapp was thinking of selling his ROLLER BOAT and then building a second one, 250 feet in length and 50 feet in diameter, and taking that boat to the Atlantic Ocean.

The "Owen Sound Sun" of November 2nd, 1897, even had a comment concerning the ROLLER BOAT, and it came from no less an authority than the eminent Captain John Simpson, who knew a thing or two about ships and their construction. The article was headed "Doesn't Think Much of It - Capt. John Simpson Expresses an Opinion on Knapp's Roller Boat".

It continued: "In a conversation the other day, Capt. Simpson, the well-known shipbuilder, told the 'Sun' that in his opinion, the Knapp Roller Boat which has been built at the Polson yards, Toronto, and about which so much has appeared in the papers, will never be a practical success. Capt. Simpson says that he was through the boat from stem to stern (if such nautical phrases can be applied to the huge cylinder) and while it may be possible that she will roll and perhaps develop a good speed, the invention is extremely unlikely to be utilized for practical purposes. In the first place, Capt. Simpson cannot see how any accommodation could possibly be made for either freight or passengers. There is no place where a person can stand excepting on the platform on which the engines are placed and, as the ends of the cylinder are open, everyone inside is exposed to the inclemencies of the weather.

"'Then,' added the Captain, 'what would happen if such a vessel while crossing the Atlantic or any other large body of water, got caught in such a storm as often blows up? A single wave would sweep through her and send her to the bottom in a second. Anyone who has traversed the high seas knows what the waves are sometimes like. Why, they are sometimes almost too much for the big liners having very much provision for shedding water. I have seen a wave come right over the stern of a vessel and sweep her from end to end. No, I haven't a very high opinion of Mr. Knapp's Roller Boat."

Neither did the "Scientific American", which published several articles about the ROLLER BOAT during the autumn of 1897. Its criticisms centred mainly on considerations of wind and water resistance, and the conclusion of its November 13th article was that the ROLLER BOAT's trial trips "did not give any reason to expect that the marine greyhounds of the future will move over instead of through the sea".

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There, for want of space, we must leave the ROLLER BOAT story until next month. And if you think this part of the story of Knapp's boat has been enigmatic, wait until you see what happened to her after 1897...

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