

the second would be fired up if necessary. The report also indicated that, once at Prescott, ROLLER BOAT would be readied for use as a passenger ferry between Prescott and Ogdensburg. To prepare her for this trade, the two engines would be replaced by one powerful engine to be located in the centre of the vessel's length, and the wooden flange/paddles would be replaced by "steel strips" running the full length of the hull. (The "Ogdensburg Journal" pooh-poohed this suggestion "because Captain Lyons has the license for the ferry and, for the present at least, will prefer to continue to use his own boats in the service. It is more likely that Mr. Knapp will place his celebrated boat in the Canada coasting trade between Prescott and Brockville...")

The various Toronto newspapers carried reports the next day, Friday, June 9, and Saturday, June 10, confirming that ROLLER BOAT had indeed cleared the Polson slip at 7:20 a.m. on the 9th, bound for Prescott. Her progress, however, was painfully slow, and the reports indicated that it took her two hours to cross the Bay to the Eastern Gap, as Knapp let the other three men in his crew get accustomed to the boat. Full speed reportedly was ordered once the boat had cleared the gap, but when she was observed by the Niagara excursion steamer GARDEN CITY at 11:30 a.m., ROLLER BOAT was still only two miles past the Island breakwater. "The Evening News" concluded that "it was not at all likely that a new record for the trip down the lake would be established", and that "whether the boat reaches there (Prescott) or not is a question".

That turned out to be a very good question, indeed, for ROLLER BOAT had not travelled very far down the lake before trouble was encountered! "The Mail and Empire" of Tuesday, June 13th, reported: "Knapp's roller boat, which left Toronto last Friday, is ashore two miles west of here (Bowmanville, Ontario, from where the story originated). They have sent to Prescott for a tug to tow them to that place, and expect to get away tomorrow."

"The Evening News" carried a somewhat different version of the events in its edition of Wednesday, June 14, running an article datelined Kingston, June 14. "Mr. F. A. Knapp, inventor of the Knapp roller ship, arrived here by the Grand Trunk Railway express from Bowmanville, where his boat now lies. A large crowd of people was disappointed on the non-arrival of this famous construction. Mr. Knapp tells a somewhat thrilling story of his trip from Toronto. His story in substance is as follows:

"The roller left Toronto... on Friday morning, having on board the owner, F. A. Knapp, Mr. G. A. Farini (financial backer of Knapp), (Engineer) Charles E. Robertson, Montreal, and Fireman Holderness.

"It was not the intention of the inventor to make any trial of speed, but simply to bring the boat to Prescott to have her practically rebuilt. Only one engine was used on the way down, as the corresponding engine at the port end had been disconnected. All went well until the boat came opposite Frenchman's Bay, about nine miles west of Whitby, when it was found that the papier-mache used as an outside covering on the double-flanged wheels (causing the rotation of the hull) had given out. This occasioned much delay and loss of steam, so much so that the coal gave out and the boat was for the time helpless. To make matters worse, a gale from the north sprang up and drifted the boat seven miles (out) from the north shore. Seeing that he was likely to drift to the American side of the lake, Mr. Knapp cast anchor, but the force of the wind was such that the anchor dragged.

"Then Mr. Knapp and Mr. Farini (aerialist, adventurer, and investor in peculiar inventions) decided to row ashore for help. After three hours on a turbulent sea, they reached the little village of Frenchman's Bay and thence down to Pickering, three miles north. Here they managed to arrange for a steam launch and a barge of coal. The roller was discovered 15 miles out on the lake on Saturday morning, the engineer and fireman sticking manfully by