

who could locate the wreck.

The handsome reward was collected three years later by W. W. Sparks, a Port Hope coal dealer who discovered the wreck two and a half miles from shore, midway between Newcastle and Port Hope, in July 1905. Sparks was sailing his schooner during a big swell on the lake when he hit an obstruction where none should have been. He noted the location and went back when the lake was calmer. With two small boats and a half-mile of lead-weighted rope stretched between them, he searched the area and found SIR WILFRID, sitting upright on the bottom. The spud tops were 12 feet under the lake's surface in calm water, and they were a danger to navigation. The wreck was buoyed.

Originally registered (C.112186) at Toronto in 1902, SIR WILFRID's registry was closed in 1905 after the wreck was located. Nothing was done to raise the sunken dredge in 1905. A salvage contract was let to The Reid Wrecking Company, of Sarnia, Ontario, but its 14 wrecking outfits were all employed in 1906 on other projects, and no work was begun on SIR WILFRID that year.

Digressing somewhat, we note that J. I. Tarte had fallen from grace with the Liberal government for conducting an anti-American tariff campaign while Sir Wilfrid Laurier was in England. He was sacked upon Laurier's return to Canada for breaking cabinet solidarity. By May of 1903, Tarte was part of the Conservative opposition in the House of Commons, earning himself the sobriquet "Judas Iscariot" Tarte. By 1906, Tarte was back in the good books of the reigning Liberal party, and he was being considered by the Minister of Marine and Fisheries for the job of Chairman of the Montreal Harbour Commission. Mr. Tarte died in December of 1907 at the age of 59.

In August of 1906, "The Port Hope Weekly Guardian" reported that the dredge, which had been held "until lately" by the insurance company with which the government had put the risk, had been acquired by the Polson Company, for a reasonable consideration. The September 1906 issue of "The Railway and Marine World" announced that "The St. Lawrence and Great Lakes Dredging and Wrecking Company has been incorporated under the Dominion Companies Act, with a capital of \$350,000 and office at Montreal, to own and operate tugs, dredges, wrecking plant, etc., and to amalgamate with or to acquire shares in companies having similar powers". The provisional directors were H. W. Prendergrast, of Montreal, and John E. Russell, W. J. McWhinney, E. P. Brown and J. F. Lennox, all of Toronto. It was stated that the company would acquire the dredge SIR WILFRID LAURIER (sic).

Also in 1906, Polson Iron Works launched its Hull 41, a new steam tug built to its own order. The date of her launch is unknown. Christened HERCULES, her dimensions were 100.0 feet x 23.1 feet x 11.6 feet, 234 Gross Tons and 137 Net. HERCULES carried a 65 n.h.p. steam engine built by the Polson firm. The tug was registered (C.122217) under Polson ownership at Toronto on October 27, 1906, and she ran her trials on Toronto Bay. HERCULES was a handsome tug with a big cabin on the main deck and a pilothouse and small texas cabin on the upper deck. There were three windows in the face of the pilothouse and a window and door on each side, although the house later was enlarged so that it was deep enough for two windows and a door in each side. There was a tall and heavy smokestack, with two short ventilators just ahead of it, but these ventilators later were lengthened considerably. There were two lifeboats, one set on each side of the boat deck under radial davits, and there were two short pipe masts, the fore rising just abaft the pilothouse and the main near the aft end of the boat deck. Early photos seem to show her painted a dark colour but, for most of her life, her hull and cabins were a less-than-stunning brownish green colour with brown trim.

In April 1907, Polson sent HERCULES to Newcastle, Ontario, to search for the sunken dredge. The wreck buoys had been lost to time and winter ice movements, but the shore markers remained. Under the command of Capt. James Shaw, formerly of the schooner MARIE ANNETTE, the big tug located the wreck after three days of searching. Capt. Shaw stated that pontoons would be