

To the Honourable,
The Commissioner of Public Works,
Ottawa, Ont.

Dear Sir,—We are informed that the government contemplate deepening the Galops rapids on the southerly side of the river. Should this be done, we think it will prove to be an irretrievable mistake, as it will necessarily leave a wall on either side of the proposed channel varying from five to seven feet high, full of sharp, scraggy rocks protruding, and a wind across the river either way would drift a tow of crafts against this scraggy wall and sink them; furthermore, the cutting of this channel would lower the water above from one to one and a half feet.

Now, there is already a channel on the north side of the river 400 feet wide and 13 feet deep, and the only obstruction in this channel is a large rock about ten feet in diameter and six or seven feet under water. To take out this rock would not disturb the depth of the channel above, and we trust that instead of cutting a channel on the south side of the river, the government will have this large rock removed and thereby furnish a good channel which crafts can navigate with safety.

Your obedient servants,
D. D. Calvin, J. A. Breck, Capt. S. Anderson, John Donnelly, Joseph Murray, John Gaskin, Folger Bros., A. Gunn, Hugh Scott, Montreal Forwarding Co. (Limited), James Stewart, agent; St. Lawrence & Chicago Forwarding Co., John McFarlane, agent, D. Macphie, manager; Montreal Transportation Co., Hugh McLennan, president.

P.S.—We would beg to refer you to Thomas Keefer's report on this subject whilst Hamilton Merritt was chief commissioner about the year 1841 or 1842.

Here are some other letters :

Kingston, November 1, 1880.

To the Honourable,
The Minister of Public Works,
Ottawa, Ont.

Sir, I have been a pilot on the River St. Lawrence ever since the year 1828, and I know what I am saying when I state that if the channel is made in the Galops rapids where your chain tug is now at work, it will certainly lower the water above. Even now the small amount of work they have done is decidedly noticeable and detrimental. To use a homely illustration, it has the same effect on a stream that the taking away of a mill dam would have. Now, instead of making a new channel where your men are working, if you let the chain tug take away the big rock that obstructs the present channel we could then take down ten or eleven barges instead of four as at present, it has been stated that the chain tug cannot be placed at the rock, but I would agree to place her there myself, and could furnish a guarantee that I am able to do what I say.

Yours truly,
(Sgd.) JOHN SUGHRUE,
Master Steamer 'Chieftain.'

I also have been a pilot on the St. Lawrence for thirty years, and concur in the within.

Yours truly,
(Sgd.) CAPT. S. ANDERSON,
Master Steamer 'Hiram Calvin.'
St. Catharines, June 1, 1881.

To the Hon. Sir Charles Tupper,
Minister of Railways and Canals.

Dear Sir,—After a long and careful consideration of the contemplated removal of the rock

that obstructs navigation at the Galops rapids in the St. Lawrence river, I feel confident that if the work of removal be successfully accomplished, that the desired results will not be obtained, for the very reason, that in removing the obstruction out of the river, it will give the water a free course to run off that much faster, and as a natural consequence lower the river at the head of the rapids in proportion to the obstruction removed, and in place of eight or nine feet of water (as the case may be) at the entrance of the canal, as at present you will find that it will be reduced in proportion to the channel that you make for the escape of the water, I have, I believe, matured a plan which, if carried out, will give the desired depth of water on the rapids, and at the same time give you, from eighteen inches to two feet more in the head of the canal than you have at the present time—I should take pleasure in coming to Ottawa free of charge and explain to you my plan, if you think it worthy of consideration, which if adopted would I am certain produce the desired results, and at less than half the cost of removing the rock, which if successfully accomplished will not remove the evil complained of. All that I require is that if you adopt my scheme that you will give me the preference of doing the work.

I have the honour to be,
Your obedient servant,
(Sgd.) ELI HIGGINS.

Kingston, August 15, 1884.

To the Minister of Public Works,

Dear Sir,—Our oldest tug captain has made a representation to me in such emphatic terms that I consider it my duty to communicate his opinion to you. What I refer to is the blasting forming a new channel in the Galops rapids. He says they are making a new channel the last six years in a place where the volume of water naturally does not run, and never can be made a successful channel to run down with a tow of barges. Some four years ago the writer addressed a letter to the same effect, a short time after the work was begun, but no notice was taken of the matter. Engineers may be all very well in their way, but we would suggest that pilots and parties who know about the river and its currents should have been consulted. This morning the matter was again pressed upon me, as the pilots say that during low water this new current is going to draw off some of the water from the natural channel and make it unnavigable for large tows. This letter is not sent in a fault-finding spirit, but with the best intentions. The new channel when finished can never be used for a tow of barges, as the current does not enter straight at the upper ends, and barges will tail down on the port side before they can be entered. Six barges now in the natural channel, but four barges cannot be taken down the new when finished. It will be a great calamity if you destroy this channel.

Yours truly,
(Sgd.) P. R. HENDERSON.

There is here letter after letter to the hon. minister protesting against this channel being made where it was, not only for the reason that it would be impossible for vessels to navigate it safely, but also because it was making a cut by which the waters of the St. Lawrence above would be greatly reduced in depth. I suppose that may have been one of the reasons which influenced the hon. minister in office at that