

MEN-AND-THE-SEA

TRUE STORIES OF BRAVE OLD DAYS

Gallant Deeds of By-Gone Years in The Walter Raleigh Coastland.



WRECK OF THE BRITISH VIRGINIA, MAY 2, 1900

The fourth disaster of the year in the vicinity of Cape Hatteras, within the scope of the operations of the Life-Saving Service and attended by loss of life, was the wreck of the British steamship Virginia, which stranded and broke up at once on the Outer Diamond Shoals, Wednesday afternoon, May 2, 1900.

The Virginia was a steel vessel of 2,314 tons burden bound from Daiquiri, Cuba, to Baltimore, Md., with a cargo of iron ore and was in charge of Captain Charles Samuels of London, England. Her crew, all told, comprised twenty-four men, and there was also on board one stowaway.

About two o'clock p.m., of the day of the wreck the captain, being aware that he was approaching the latitude of Cape Hatteras, caused the lead to be thrown, and finding no bottom at 50 fathoms, changed his course to northwest by west and proceeded on his way. The wind was light from the northwest and the sea was rather rough, while the weather was hazy, resembling a fog, and consequently objects were not visible at any considerable distance. For three hours and a half the lead was cast the steamer held her course, having neither seen nor heard any-

thing to indicate danger, when suddenly the cry of "breakers ahead" came from the lookout on the bow. The wheel was instantly thrown hard a-port, and the ship promptly responded, soon having the broken water on her port boom, but a few moments later she grounded heavily.

Captain Samuels had just returned to the deck from supper and believing that the vessel had struck only "a lump," he countermanded the order which had been given to reverse the engine and rang the bell "go ahead full speed." The ship had not stopped when this signal was given, and just as the engines started ahead she took the bottom again, more severely than before, and from that moment she could not be moved from her bed in either direction. Her location at this time, as afterwards ascertained, was on the southeast point of the dreaded Outer Diamond Shoals, nine nautical miles southeast by south from the Cape Hatteras Life-Saving Station and about the same distance east-south-east of the station at Creeds Hill. She immediately began to pound with great violence and to fill with water. The master knew pretty well where he was and being aware of the slues and gullies between the shoals, feared that the steamer might slip into deep water and sink at once. Therefore

he quickly ordered both anchors to be let go, and himself ran forward to superintend the operation, but before he could get back to the bridge the vessel broke in three pieces and sank to the rail, giving him barely time to leap for his life to the midship section. Without further ado he ordered the boats out and all hands to abandon ship. As the sequel proved, it would have been better otherwise, but the situation was alarming to the last degree and speedy action of some sort must have seemed imperative.

The crew hastily attempted to launch the two starboard boats, but they were both smashed to pieces—the large lifeboat in the water alongside, and the longboat at the davits. The men rushed to the port lifeboat, which was safely lowered away and manned by fifteen persons, Second Mate Moore in charge. Mr. Moore states that it was his purpose to return to the ship and stand by the master, but that it was impossible to do so, and therefore he ordered the oarsmen to pull away straight out for the open sea. The port longboat was now put into the water with seven men in it, but before it could be cleared from the ship's side it was rolled over, and six of its occupants were quickly drowned. Mate Wyness, who was in charge, was hauled back on board the steamer by means of a bowline thrown to him by one of the four men who still remained on the wreck, but had intended to go in the boat.

There were now five on board, and, as then seemed to them, in for worst plight than the boat's crew who had pushed out aimlessly and unprovisioned into the ocean—hardly more fortunate than their shipmates who had already perished. The steamer's hull was awash, and there was no better place of refuge than the main rigging, to which the survivors speedily betook themselves. All about them was the impenetrable haze or fog, while their eyes rested upon a most disheartening scene below. From the forecastle all the way to the stern the hull was submerged, except that the forecastle head stood eight or ten feet out of water. The vessel was broken athwartships into three pieces, and through the rents in its jagged sides the water hissed and foamed, and at intervals spouted upward in great volumes 15 or 20 feet high. Save the bit of the forecastle head, nothing showed above the sea but the two masts, the bridge and funnel, and a few feet of a flagstaff for aft. All this dreadful havoc had been wrought in little more than thirty minutes.

The survivors now turned their thoughts to some means of making a signal of distress. Night was close at hand, and they knew that they could not be discovered from the shore before morning, even if the weather should clear up, unless they could burn some sort of a night signal. They were aware that there were innumerable materials away forward in the forecastle head, but the sea was so high that nobody could go to the place even if when there the materials should be accessible. All they could do was to hold to their perilous place and almost despairingly hope that in some way relief might come, and thus they passed the tedious hours of the night. When morning broke they cast their eyes forward to the bridge, which was still above water, and believing that if they could reach it their safety would not be less, while they would have space to stretch their cramped limbs and move about, they determined to make the attempt. The plan devised was to rig a sort of boat-swin's chair on the mainstay by which they could slide down and lower themselves to the bridge—a contrivance similar to the breeches-buoy apparatus. This they succeeded in accomplishing with less difficulty than might be imagined, and all passed down without trouble except the captain, who was the last to make the venture, and was for some minutes suspended in mid-air by the fouling of the gear. Finally there proved to be no recourse but to cut the halyard, which was done, letting the "chair" slide down with great velocity some 35 or 40 feet. The captain was considerably bruised in making the passage, but all hands being at last where they could exercise themselves a bit, their spirits were somewhat revived.

Although it was now broad daylight, they could perceive no signs of land, and therefore knew that unless the hazy condition of the atmosphere should pass away they could not be seen and were obliged to endure another night on board the wreck. The master still had it in his mind to make the first possible feasible effort to reach the oil and turpentine stored in the forecastle head, and as the forenoon wore on and the tide fell, he concluded that as favorable an opportunity as they should ever have had arrived. Therefore, at very great personal danger, he jumped from the bridge and swam forward with all his power, beset by a strong current and with the sea continually breaking across the forewaist. However, he reached the goal, and encouraged by his success the chief mate followed. By the aid of a line thrown by the master, he succeeded also, and together the two men explored the dark repository of the treasure

Helps Dimes Drive



Miss North Carolina Long Ogburn of Smithfield—a Miss America contestant in the annual Atlantic City Pageant, makes one of the first contributions to the 1952 March of Dimes. The March of Dimes period has been doubled to include all January because of the record polio toll of the last four years.

upon which their lives seemed wholly to depend.

Throughout the entire day the haze continued, but when night came on, the two officers eagerly set fire to their signal. In the meantime, however, the tide had risen, as well as the wind and sea, so that only with the greatest difficulty could the blaze be kept up, often entirely extinguished by the waves that broke over the wreck. Frequent heavy showers also conspired with the sea to thwart the purpose of the careworn men, but nevertheless they kept their pitiful signal burning at every possible favorable interval during the night. Altogether they had used up by the time day dawned 30 gallons of oil and turpentine, although much of it, priceless as it was to them, was wasted by the action of the ruthless sea.

Two nights and one day had now passed without food, and under such a tension of excitement and apprehension as to seriously impair the resources of the strongest and bravest of men, and it was doubtful whether they could hold out much longer. But fortunately, although they did not know it, their forelorn signal had been seen by some of the crews of both life-saving stations, and also the Hatteras Station had responded with a red rocket, which, however, proved not to have been visible on the wreck. Indeed the light shown on the wreck was so dim at the stations that the keepers were by no means sure of its import. Lights are often seen in the vicinity of the shoals, borne sometimes upon vessels which, during the slues between the Inner and Outer summer, often pass through the Diamonds, and also upon fishing vessels which frequently anchor under the lee of shoals.

Nevertheless, Keeper Etheridge was suspicious of trouble, and at daylight turned his telescope toward the point where the signal had been seen. The weather was still a little thick, but at seven a.m. it lighted up, and the telescope then revealed the funnel and masts of the wreck. Etheridge knew them all. His many years' experience told him well enough what his eyes could not see. He quickly ordered out the Monomoy surfboat, called up Keeper Styron, of Creeds Hill Station, and requested him to start at once for the Outer Diamond, as the Hatteras crew were about to do. The boats of both stations got away at the same time, and as soon as they cleared the beach made sail.

The wind was now blowing a gale from northward, and the sea was running high, but there was no faint heart among the life-savers, although all knew full well the peril of their undertaking. By nine o'clock the five wretched men on the wreck made out the two gleaming sails of the two surfboats, but they could scarcely believe their own eyes, for they had little confidence that any men would venture out to the Diamond Shoals in such weather as then prevailed. But there were the lifeboats—help was coming at last. For forty-two hours the poor fellows had endured hunger and thirst, and contemplated without sign of weakness almost certain death, but now that deliverance was at hand they gave way to tears—the brave man's last tribute to joy as well as to sorrow.

The Creeds Hill boat arrived first at a point within about a quarter of a mile of the wreck, but seeing the tremendous sea running over the treacherous shoals, and realizing the perils that an attempt to rescue would surely involve, Keeper Styron wisely decided to wait for his mates to come up. The Hatteras boat was soon on hand, sail was taken in, and the two keepers conferred a few moments regarding the best plan of action, deciding, in order to minimize the danger of disaster to either boat, that the Hatteras crew should take the three men from the bridge, and the Creeds Hill crew the captain and the mate from the bow. The breakers were so heavy that the boats could not cross the shoals, and therefore they proceeded under oars around the southwest point of the Outer Diamond, and each approached its appointed place as near as the

keepers deemed it prudent to venture. Both were masters of surfmanship, and by their skillful and judicious maneuvering soon had the grateful survivors safely in their boats according to the plan agreed upon, without the most trivial mishap. Sail was then made, and both boats started for home, where they arrived at about five p.m., having performed one of the most noteworthy rescues ever effected in the vicinity of stormy Cape Hatteras.

The fact that the shipwrecked men were not relieved for a period of forty-two hours would seem, in view of the testimony as above narrated, to need no comment in the way of explanation. To have attempted such a feat during the second night, when the uncertain light was seen which raised a bare suspicion of a disaster, would have been, as one of the most competent witnesses declares, simply foolhardy, and without justification of the dangers involved. Until morning, when the telescope revealed the unmistakable evidences of a wreck, no time was lost that would have in any way hastened relief, and after the wreck was made out not a moment was wasted in reaching her and taking off the survivors. It is a clear case of extremely creditable work.

Had the entire ships' company remained on board none would have perished. Happily the fifteen men who put to sea in the port lifeboat were sighted and picked up twenty-four hours after they went afloat by the steamer El Paso, bound from New York to New Orleans, where they were landed and properly cared for by the British consul. When taken on board the El Paso they had been without food or water for twenty-four hours, and were nearly worn out by constant bailing of the leaking boat and their arduous labor at the oars. The six men who perished were First Engineer T. S. Walley, Stewart S. Peck, Seaman Cook and Olsen, and Firemen Hoolman and Wegan.

The following letter was handed to the keeper of the Hatteras Station by Captain Samuels: "Cape Hatteras Life-Saving Station, May 5, 1900.

"We, the survivors of the British steamship, Virginia, wish to express our gratitude to the crews of the Cape Hatteras and the Creeds Hill Life-Saving Station for rescuing us under most dangerous circumstances to themselves.

"The vessel was nearly awash, being broken into three pieces, as her jagged sides made it dangerous for the boats to approach in such a heavy sea as was running at the time of our rescue.

"We were nearly exhausted, having been exposed for forty-two hours without subsistence, and cannot thank the life-saving crews sufficiently for their bravery in boarding the vessel. Since our rescue we have been treated most kindly, and clothed.

"At the time of the casualty, six p.m. of the 2nd instant, the state of the weather rendered it impossible for the ship to be sighted. On the 3rd instant the haze that settled over the shoals rendered it equally impossible to sight the ship, as I have discovered since being ashore; the night being clear, my distress signals, which gave a flame of fully six feet, were sighted at nine p.m. On the fourth the ship was sighted at seven-thirty a.m., and we on the wreck saw the lifeboats at ten-thirty and were rescued at eleven-thirty a.m.

"Charles Samuels, Master.
"Thos. A. Wyness, First Officer.
"Arthur Simmonds, Second Engineer.
"Geo. Mictleber, Third Engineer.
"Martin Rasmusin, Seaman."

HIGH TIDES ON FISHING GROUNDS

Oregon Inlet for January

Low Tides Between Hours Shown	A.M.	P.M.
Thursday	10 6:05	6:20
Friday	11 6:45	7:01
Saturday	12 7:23	7:40
Sunday	13 7:59	8:17
Monday	14 8:34	8:52
Tuesday	15 9:08	9:29
Wednesday	16 9:42	10:05
Thursday	17 10:19	10:48
Friday	18 10:59	11:35
Saturday	19 11:46	
Sunday	20 0:28	12:41
Monday	21 1:29	1:44
Tuesday	22 2:36	2:52
Wednesday	23 3:41	4:00
Thursday	24 4:43	5:04
Friday	25 5:42	6:02
Saturday	26 6:37	6:57
Sunday	27 7:29	7:51
Monday	28 8:19	8:42
Tuesday	29 9:08	9:32
Wednesday	30 9:56	10:23
Thursday	31 10:44	11:16

BELHAVEN GIRL TO WED NORFOLK MAN SUNDAY

Announcement is made of the engagement and approaching marriage of Miss Cora Elizabeth Logan of West Belhaven, to James Harrison, Jr. of Norfolk, the wedding to be a candlelight ceremony in the West Belhaven Christian Church at 5 p.m. Sunday, January 20. Rev. Herman Shavender, pastor, officiating. The bride-elect is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Willie Logan. Mr. Harrison is the son of Mr. and Mrs. James Harrison of Norfolk, and the couple will reside in Norfolk where Mr. Harrison is employed.

FAIRFIELD PERSONALS

Mr. Lindsey Sadler was a visitor in Belhaven Wednesday.
Miss Joyce Mooney of Henderson spent the weekend with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Dallas Mooney.
Mrs. R. L. Mann, Richard and Betty were visitors in Columbia Saturday.
Eugene Midyette of Raleigh spent the weekend with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Franklin Midyette.
Guy R. Cutrell was a visitor in Belhaven Wednesday.
H. L. Sadler leaves this week for induction in the U. S. Army.
The Junior class of Fairfield High School sponsored a dance at the school Friday night. A good time was reported by all attending.

Dickie Newmans and Victor Jennette were visitors here Saturday night.
Mr. and Mrs. Carlyle Jones attended the dance at Belhaven Friday night.
Rev. Oscar Edmonds and D. M. Lewis held short services at the Fairfield School Wednesday.
Mr. Langston Smith was a Swan Quarter visitor Wednesday. The Methodist Church Jan. 20, 1952
Rev. David M. Lewis, pastor Fairfield Methodist Church: Mr. Henry Leigh Ballance, Church School Supt. SS at 10:00 a.m. Classes for all age groups. Everyone

BAPTIST CHURCH SERVICES FOR SUNDAY, JAN. 20

O. S. Edmonds, Pastor
Rose Bay—Sunday School 10:00 a. m., E. E. Hodges, Supt. Morning worship 11:00 a. m.
Sladesville—Afternoon preaching Service 3:00 p.m.
Swan Quarter—Training Union 6:30 p. m. Mrs. M. L. Carawan, Director.
Evening worship service 7:30 p. m.
Woman's Missionary Society of the Swan Quarter Church will meet Monday Jan. 21st. 7:30 p. m. in the home of Mrs. M. L. Carawan.
Mid-week prayer meetings Fairfield Wednesday 7:30 p. m., Swan Quarter, Friday, 7:30.

is invited to attend these services. Preaching by Dr. F. S. Love, District Supt.
The First Quarterly conference will be conducted by Dr. F. S. Love District Supt. Everyone is invited to come and hear this distinguished preacher. Before coming to the district, he was District Supt. of the Raleigh District and was in charge of Lake Junaluska expansion program for several years.
Soule Methodist Church: Mrs. Mildred Askew, Church School Supt. Classes for all age groups. Everyone is invited to attend these services. Preaching by pastor at 7:00 p.m.

Chicago Philadelphia Gloucester Miami
Philadelphia Baltimore

EDERER, Inc.

Unity & Elizabeth Sts., Frankford, Philadelphia, Pa.

Netting-Rope-Twine

FISHING SUPPLIES

Distributors of "AMCO" and "American Superior" Pure Manila Rope

NORTH CAROLINA REPRESENTATIVES
JONES WHOLESALE CO. T. S. WHITE, Jr.
Manteo Hertford, N. C.
HOOPER BROS. A. S. AUSTIN
Stumpy Point Hatteras

ESTABLISHED 1867 Phone LOMBARD 3-9618

WE INVITE YOUR SHIPMENTS

ON OUR RECORD — NEARLY
85 YEARS FAIR DEALING
With North Carolina Fishermen

C. E. WARNER CO.

8 DOCK ST. FISH MARKET
PHILADELPHIA 6, PA.

PHONE LOMBARD 3-1812

Highest Market Prices

PROMPT RETURNS — FOR ALL
NORTH CAROLINA SEAFOOD

HUFF FISH CO.

WHOLESALE DEALERS
15 DOCK STREET FISH MARKET
PHILADELPHIA 6, PA.
64 YEARS OF SERVICE

SEABOARD FISH CO.

Wholesale Commission Dealers
in All Kinds of
FISH — SHRIMP — CRABS
CLAMS — ETC.
ROCK - FLOUNDERS
A SPECIALTY

Section V
WHOLESALE FISH MARKET
BALTIMORE 2, MD.
Consignments Solicited Daily Returns

PHONE DIGBY 9-1030

CALEB HALEY & CO., INC.

14 FULTON FISH MARKET,
NEW YORK 38, N. Y.

All North Carolina Fish in Season
BILL SMITH, President

WHOLESALE DEALERS
ROCK-FLOUNDERS-SHAD

Shrimp, Soft Crabs, Crab Meat

Tags or Stencils Mailed on Request
92 YEARS IN BUSINESS

Chesebro, Robbins & Graham, Inc.

Established 1887
The Fish Clearing House
of America

Producers and Distributors of
All Varieties of Fish, Including

ROCK, FLOUNDERS, SHAD, TROUT
BLUES, BUTTERFISH, SPOTS,
SHRIMP, MULLET, Etc.

1-2-3 Fulton Fish Market, New York 7,
Telephones Beekman 3-3122; 3, 4, 5 & 6

DAY PHONES NIGHT PHONES
LO 3-1234-5 LI 8-6810
LO 3-5465 GR 4-4771

REPUBLIC FISH CO.

RECEIVERS & SHIPPERS OF
ALL FRESH FISH
ROCK - FLOUNDERS - SHAD

11-12 DOCK ST. FISH MARKET PHILA. 6, PA.

PHONE RES. PHONE
LO 3-0710-0711 LI 9-1747
WA 4-5363

Atlantic Fish Market INC.

WHOLESALE
ROCK-FLOUNDERS-SHAD
SCALLOPS FILLETS

17-18-19-21 Dock Street Fish Market
PHILADELPHIA 6, PA.