

MEN-AND-THE-SEA

TRUE STORIES OF BRAVE OLD DAYS

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



BARK: OLIVE THURLOW

The American barkentine Olive Thurlow was wrecked on December 5, 1902, in Lookout Bight, coast of North Carolina, and one man lost his life from the terrible blow inflicted upon his head by the mizzenmast, which gave way and fell to the deck soon after the vessel entered the breakers. The rest of the crew were saved.

The Thurlow was of 660 tons burden, 26 years old, and heavily laden with several hundred thousand feet of southern pine lumber, a portion of which was carried on deck. She was bound from Charleston, South Carolina, to New York City, in command of Captain J. O. Hayes, and carried a crew of seven men all told. When as far on her way as Bodie Island she ran into a gale from the north veering to the eastward, and at about 4:00 in the morning of December 1st, the master, deeming it no longer advisable to breast the storm attempted to put his vessel before the wind. In order that no mistake should be made at the helm he himself took the wheel, and while he was trying to adjust the tiller ropes one of his feet was caught between the tiller and the quadrant and jammed with such violence as to break his leg just above the ankle. The vessel was got around without further mishap and headed to the southward which

course she maintained until 8:00 on the night of December 3, when she dropped her anchor in 7 and 1/2 fathoms of water about 21 and 1/2 miles northeasterly from the Cape Lookout Life-Saving Station. The weather was then thick and rainy with a moderate gale from the southward.

On the morning of the 4th the Captain, who had now been suffering intensely for three days with a broken leg, naturally desired to get ashore where he could receive surgical attention, and he therefore ordered a distress signal to be set in the rigging. "Two minutes later" as he says in his testimony, he saw the answering pennant of the life saving station, "and twenty minutes later the life savers were aboard." He was taken ashore, whence he was sent to Beaufort without delay, and in closing his affidavit regarding the disaster he states that he "received all possible attention and was under many obligations to the keeper and crew."

Before leaving the vessel, Keeper Gaskill informed Captain Hayes that a very severe gale was imminent from the southwest, that the vessel was in a perilous position, and therefore he wished to be allowed to take her to a good anchorage in comparatively smooth water. This request the captain refused on the ground that she would not "head in and could not be put

THE LADIES OF BELHAVEN'S FAMOUS "COUNTRY CLUB"



BELHAVEN is noted for several unique clubs. There is none grander nor finer than the "Country Club," a group of womenfolks of the rural section of the community, who banded together 38 years ago for mutual helpfulness, back in the days before good roads, and telephones came to aid people who lived in lonely places. The club has met regularly every month, with perhaps an exception because of the flu epidemic in 1918. Last week at the home of Mrs. Sarah Latham in Belhaven the club observed its 38th birthday. Here is a picture of the members and guests who attended. In the front center are Mrs. Fred Latham and Mrs. Eva Way, only living original members of the club and who have been President and Secretary respectively since its organization. Others in this group are: Mrs. Scott Hackett, Mrs. Ben Harris, Mrs. Hubert Watson, Mrs. Virginia Cox, Mrs. Mary Agnes Harris, Mrs. Sarah Latham, Miss Helene Tolan. Guest visitors were: Mrs. Teen Baker, Mrs. Jane Dilday, Mrs. Lucy Smith, Mrs. Catherine Wilkinson, Mrs. Phrociné Tunstall, Mrs. Sadie Calfee, Mrs. Eva Blount, Mrs. Jane Tilson and Mrs. H. F. Noble.

in stays"—that is, that the movement suggested could not be made. The keeper, however, had not the slightest doubt of its feasibility and furthermore, it appears that the tug Atlantic went alongside the Thurlow and proposed to tow her to safe water and convey the master to Beaufort because Captain Hayes would not agree to the terms offered. When the keeper left the vessel she was riding to only 25 or 30 fathoms of chain, and although this was subsequently increased to 50 fathoms on one anchor, the second mate in his testimony asserts the wreck to have been due to the fact that more scope was not given.

The Life-Saving station kept a strict watch on the Thurlow from the time she anchored until her fate was sealed. As soon as her crew was convinced that she was certain to strand they fired two Coston signals, which Surfman Yeomans, on the north patrol answered instantly. The life-savers got out their beach apparatus cart quickly, and since they knew that the beach was in a very bad condition for traveling, they divided the heavy load by placing a part of it in the driving cart. Then they set out with both vehicles on their toilsome journey of two and a half miles through the soft wet sand, with the wind blowing at the rate of 70 or 80 miles an hour, and, notwithstanding all the difficulties, reached the necessary position opposite the wreck within an hour from the burning of the distress signal on board.

All Men In The Rigging
The doomed vessel was then lying broadside to the beach about 450 yards distance, and the sea was making a clean breach over her. All the men had taken to the lee mizzen rigging, and the business of Keeper Gaskill was to cast a shot line as nearly as possible into their hands. The wreck was gradually working to the westward and therefore the sand anchor had to be moved some 50 yards from the position first selected. Then the Lyle gun was fired with a 6-ounce charge of powder and a No. 7 line. The projectile fell 15 or 25 feet short, however, and a second shot was no more successful, but the third with a No. 9 line and a 6-ounce charge, landed fairly in the midst of the sailors in the mizzen breaking off about 20 feet above the deck, crushing the skull of the steward, John Chalky, and seriously injuring two other men. Chalky's body fell overboard, while the others landed on the top of the house—men, mast, topmast, and rigging tangled together.

The vessel began to break up within half an hour after she struck, and disintegrated rapidly. First the fore-to-mast fell, then the forward house and deck load went overboard, then the bow and the stern were torn off, the general ruin being finally completed by the falling of all the masts with a crash audible far along the shore. The top of the afterhouse, or cabin, was the only place of refuge, and lying there the five sailors struggled for their lives, with only a precarious handhold on the skylight coamings. Meantime, the life-savers quickly fired another line which fell almost into the hands of the shipwrecked men, who as quickly as they could, pulled off the whip line and made fast the tail block to the stump of the mizzenmast, but, while the surfmen were engaged in sending off the hawser, a heavy sea tore off the top of the cabin on which the sailors were gathered and carried them with it into the breakers. A Terrifying Trip
The passage of these unfortun-

ate men to the beach was a frightful spectacle, even to the surf-shore people to whom shipwreck in its most harrowing form is no novelty. Lying flat upon the top of the cabin they thrust their arms through the windows of the skylight and desperately hung on. Two were sorely injured and the other three assisted them as best they could.

"At times," says the keeper, "all must have been ten feet under the water," when their grasp would almost fail, and even when they rose to the surface the break of the waves would nearly smother them again. At last one lost his hold and seemed sure to drown, but the life-savers went far out into the surf in spite of the wreckage and deadly undertow and saved him—luckily themselves escaping great injury or death which was liable to follow a single blow from the heavy timbers thrust to and fro with terrific force. "The rescued man" says the keeper, "was more dead than alive when taken from the water." The other four still held on and as soon as they were near enough the surfmen again went out into the breakers and dragged the poor fellows to the beach. The second mate who was badly hurt by the falling mizzenmast, and a sailor who had flesh wounds and severe bruises, could not stand, and had to be carried to the station in a wagon. The three others were practically helpless, but though bruised and sore were not wounded. None of the five could have held out much longer, nor any have saved themselves had they lost their places on the piece of wreckage which sustained them. All were at once taken to the station, where they were stripped of their wet clothing, wrapped in blankets, furnished with proper stimulants, and placed in bed. After two days they were sent to Beaufort.

It is much to be regretted that Keeper Gaskill was not allowed to shift the Thurlow to a better anchorage, since it appears in the testimony that the schooner Warren Adams safely rode out the gale in a berth selected by him. The thanks of the Service are due to the Keeper and two assistants of the Point Lookout light-house and to several fishermen, for their voluntary and efficient aid in rescuing the shipwrecked men. The following letter was received from the latter by the General Superintendent:

Cape Lookout, N. C.
December 7, 1902.
"We, the crew of the barkentine Olive Thurlow, which went ashore December 5, at 4 a. m., and became a total wreck in Lookout Bay, we wish to thank Captain Gaskill and his crew, of Cape Lookout life saving station, for the timely assistance and care received at their hands.

"We would also state that if the vessel had held together a little longer all would have been saved in the breeches buoy, but a mizzenmast broke, killing the steward and injuring two others, after their line had been made fast to it, for which they are in no wise to blame.
A. Curtain, Second Mate
F. Finch, Seaman
J. Johnson, Seaman
G. Burgensen, Seaman."
The General Superintendent of Life-Saving Service, Washington, D. C.

SIDNEY PERSONALS

Since we had an all night and all day rain Saturday night and Sunday the roads from Sidney to Yeatesville and Sidney to Ransom-

OUT FOR SENATE



MALCOLM C. PAUL, 40 year old Washington, N. C., attorney, announces he will run for the State Senate, Second District, seeking elective office for the first time in his career.

Mr. Paul, born on a farm near Belhaven in Bath Township, attended Pantego High School, and in 1925 graduated from Wake Forest College with an LLB degree. He came back to Beaufort County to set up practice in Washington.

He joined the Naval Reserves in July, 1942; went into service October 1. Serving as communications officer for a seaplane base, Lt. Comdr. Paul saw action in the battle of Leyte in the Philippine Islands, serving 14 months in that area. Discharged in January, 1946, he returned to Washington to resume his law practice, continuing as County prosecutor and Assistant to the District solicitor until early in 1947 when he became County attorney. He has been chairman of the Beaufort County Democratic Executive Committee since 1946, and is now serving as chairman of the Welfare Board.

Mr. Paul married the former Hulda Winfield of Pantego. They have one son, Charles Winfield, age four. An Episcopalian, Mr. Paul is active in his church. He is a Mason, an Elk, a Redman, a Legionnaire, a Kiwanian, and in college was a member of The Golden Bough.

The Second Senatorial District is made up of seven counties, Beaufort, Hyde, Pamlico, Martin, Dare, Washington, and Tyrrell. The district is allowed two senators each legislature, and Mr. Paul is seeking one of these two seats.

ville, both under construction, are impassable until fair weather and warm sunshine dries up some of the water and mud.

Sgt. L. F. Fox of Camp Le Jeune and Shady Banks, Mrs. Paul Asby of Washington, Mrs. Icelene Williams and Mrs. Aurilio Aranda of New Lork visited the Satterthwaites here Sunday. They also visited the C. E. Ross family at Ransomville. Mesdames Aranda and Williams were called to Wharton and Washington on account of the illness and death of their father, the late A. O. Manning.

Mrs. Musa Burbage of Ransomville spent some time the past week with Mr. and Mrs. Ottis Burbage and family.

Mr. and Mrs. O. E. Burbage of Washington spent the week end of last week with their respective parents, Mr. and Mrs. Ottis Burbage and family of Sidney and Mr. and Mrs. E. G. Roper and family at Ransomville.

PROGRESS ON NEW HOME FOR HYDE'S 83-YR. OLD LODGE

Masons Raising Fund For New Building at Swan Quarter; Silver Tea March 1

Aided by the loyal efforts of the Eastern Star, members of Swan Quarter's 83 year old Masonic Lodge No. 294, progress is being made on the campaign for funds for a new lodge hall. Already materials are being assembled as donations come in, and work continues. The Eastern Star will hold a Silver Tea at the Agricultural Building March 1, W. J. Lupton, Lodge Secretary, said today. The campaign is only about a month old.

Heading the building committee is W. I. Cochran, Chairman, and assisting him are Bonner Lee, Joe L. Swindell, W. G. Cahoon, and H. C. Boomer. M. H. Swindell, treasurer of the Lodge is chairman of the finance committee, and other members are J. C. Williams and Mr. Lupton.

Jos. Williams is Master of the Lodge; Bill Pruden, Farm Agent who is removing to Plymouth, has just resigned as Senior Warden, leaving that post open; and R. G. Baum is Junior Warden.

The Lodge, which was formed in 1869, has between 60 and 70 members. Other Masonic Lodges in Hyde are at Lake Landing and Fairfield.

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