

HEROIC EFFORTS OF COL. SAM JOHNSON SAVES MEMBERS OF WRECKED CREW FROM DEATH

Dared Dangers of Precipitous Cliff and Smashing Waves---Barkentine a Total Wreck---The Captain Blames Towboat Men.

(Mail Special to The Advertiser)
HILO, November 11.—Sliding down a three-hundred foot cliff, almost sheer, with great waves thundering at its base, catching a rope thrown from the stern of a pounding barkentine and tying it to a knob of rock and then standing by for more than an hour, dragging nine men from what would have been, but for him, death from drowning, are the feats credited to Colonel Sam Johnson, the hero of the KLIKITAT wreck on the Honolii shore near Hilo on Saturday last. Colonel Johnson's feat was heroic in every way and is the talk of this city. He was assisted in his rescue work by a part-Hawaiian boy, who followed where he led and who took the half-drowned sailors to a point of safety after Johnson had passed them up out of the swirling water.

First Mate Aronson tells a story corroborating that of the captain. He adds that after being left by the Keauhou, which returned to port, an attempt was made to back down towards Puna under the fore and aft sails and the lower topsail, but this failed, and when standing to the northward again, the wind failed and the doomed barkentine was washed on the rocks.

In the meantime distress signals had been set, and the steamers Waiiele and Keauhou had rushed to the scene, but they could not come near the stranded vessel. A line was cast ashore, and this was caught by Colonel Sam Johnson who had rushed to the scene in his automobile.

Memorable Feats.



COL. SAM JOHNSON.

The wreck of the KLIKITAT, off Honolii, created tremendous excitement last Saturday afternoon. The tragic event brought forth deeds of heroism like those generally only heard of in book lore, and, while the vessel was a complete loss, no lives were sacrificed.

The vessel left early in the afternoon, returning empty for the Season. She was towed out of the harbor by the Keauhou, which left her, whereafter she drifted ashore a little after four o'clock on the Hilo side of Honolii.

The Captain's Tale.

"We started out a little after one o'clock," said Captain Nelson, when seen the following morning. "The Keauhou had us in tow. I told my first mate, Mr. Aronson, to set the fore and aft sails and to let down the lower topsail so that we would be prepared in case of accident. My orders were obeyed.

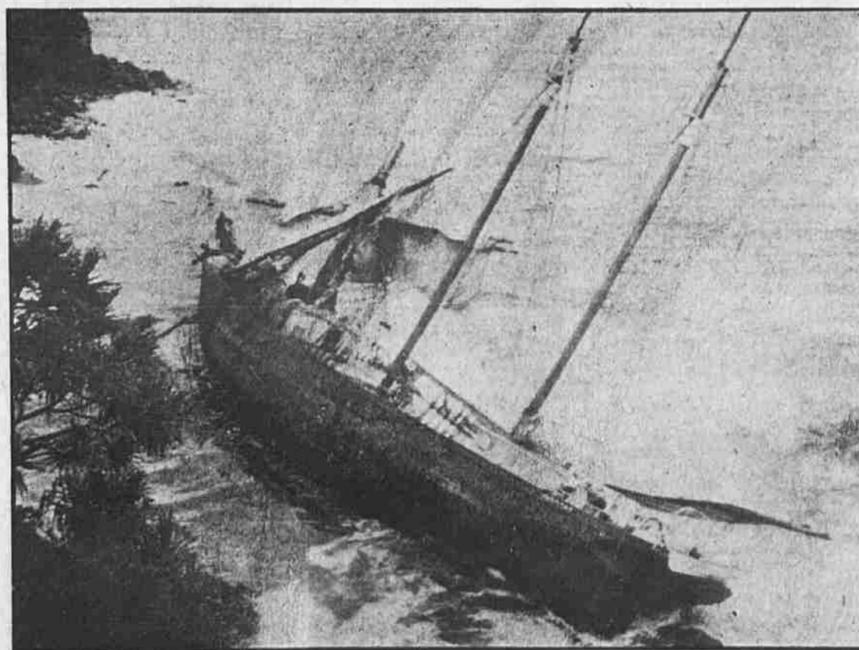
"When we had passed the whistling *****

Snapshots of the Latest Hawaiian Wreck



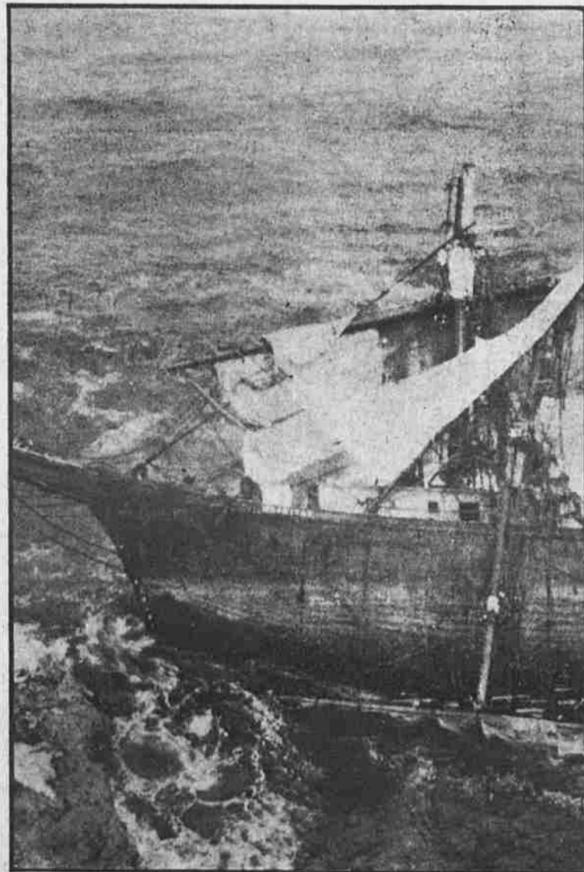
BARKENTINE KLIKITAT, POUNDING ON HONOLII COAST.

This photograph was taken early Sunday morning by a representative of The Advertiser. Note the distress signal.



WRECK OF THE KLIKITAT

This photo, and the one showing the tangled wreckage of the foremast, were taken Sunday afternoon for The Advertiser, by D. S. Bowman of Hilo.



BOW OF THE WRECKED KLIKITAT.

buoy, the steamer let go the tow line without giving any signal. At least, the steamer gave only one whistle, and that is no signal, if her captain is a licensed man, for the signal to let go the line is three whistles.

The mate sang out to me that they had let go the line, and asked if he should pull it in. "To hell with the line, get canvas on the ship." So we tried to make a tack down towards the eastward, but we couldn't do it, and in the meantime the line was dragging."

Captain Nelson did not want to speak of the actual striking of the vessel, stating that he had left the handling of the affair with Hackfeld & Co.

Credit to Johnson.

"But you should mention Colonel Sam Johnson," he said. "He was the one who saved the crew. He was the one who hauled the line, although the seas were breaking over him. He is a brave man.

"I didn't want to go ashore. I stayed on board. I wanted to go down with my ship. I stayed on board until eleven o'clock that night. Then some of the men came out and tied me and kidnaped me, yet, kidnaped me, for otherwise they wouldn't have got me ashore.

"The vessel belongs to Pope and Talbot. I don't think she is insured, but I don't know. This is my first trip as her master, but I have been the master of vessels for the past sixteen years, both coasting and foreign."

The daring and feats of strength exhibited by Johnson will probably be remembered long after the name of the KLIKITAT is forgotten. Those who witnessed his actions speak thereof in terms of the greatest admiration. How he gained the bottom of the cliff was a wonder in itself. He made fast the line, and as the men came in hand over hand from the ship, he stood out in the breakers, continually buried under the great combers, and assisted the exhausted sailors to safety. Once a burly sailor was on the point of giving up as the combers smothered him during his laborious progress along the line. Those on shore saw Johnson and a native boy fight their way out along the line to the man. Then all three were buried under tons of swirling water, and it looked as if they were gone. The wave rushed on, and Johnson was seen holding the line with one hand as the man with the other. Thus was the entire crew brought to safety—except the captain.

No Grandstand Play.

A plain man of the sea is Captain Nelson. There are no melodramatics about him. When he said he wanted to go down with his ship, it was no play to the gallery. For as night wore on and the great combers washed over the vessel which was grinding away to her destruction on the rocks, the captain stood to his command. He meant what he said, to follow the example of coast-

less other plain heroes of the sea, to go down with his ship. But Captain Nelson and friends who would not see him waste his life thus uselessly. Among them were the master of the schooner Okanogan, which was then in port; Mate Aronson and the sailors of the wrecked ship. By eleven o'clock they had got on another line to the vessel, but several of them managed to get out on the KLIKITAT. Here they overpowered the exhausted captain and dragged him ashore by main force.

What Johnson Did.

Sam Johnson did not wish to talk about his action, but an eyewitness told the story.

At the time the barkentine was lying in much the same position as that she was in just after she struck. She lay at the foot of an almost perpendicular bluff on a shelf of jagged rock, her stern being within fifteen feet of the lower edge of the rock, at low tide. The rope which was thrown ashore, was, however, tied to a knob of rock some fifty feet from the stern, which loomed up above the rock.

Johnson came to the scene shortly after the vessel struck. There were a number of people on the top of the bluff, but they could not make their way down. On the poop of the vessel, just below, were half a score of men begging and praying for some one to come down and take a line. Johnson climbed down. That was the worst

time, and that, after the vessel had struck he appeared with a Winchester rifle and a revolver and threatened to commit suicide. They took the weapons from him and threw them overboard, but, after all the sailors had gone ashore, he refused all requests to leave the vessel, and went below in the cabin.

The Anchor Useless.

Considerable comment was made over the fact that, as the vessel lay on the rocks, the port anchor could be seen still hanging from the cathead. The question was asked by many mouths: why had not the captain tried to save his ship by letting go his anchor? The captain explained that he let go his starboard anchor, but just then the wind, which was huffing, threw his sail back, and under the pressure the vessel dragged her anchor. It was then too late to do anything with the port anchor.

A Complete Loss.

Shortly after the vessel struck, the foremast went down, and soon the bottom began to open up in several places. The following day, Sunday, the vessel was wrenched like a basket every time a wave heeled her over on the rocks, it being possible to see almost to the starboard strake. Through the day the captain and his men worked on the vessel, for shortly after the vessel struck, the sea began to go down. They

Would Commit Suicide.

Some of the sailors are reported to have told some exciting tales, after they got ashore. They said that the captain was very much excited at the



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managed to save sextants, chronometers and some personal effects. The following night the dissolution of the vessel began in earnest, and Monday she was a complete wreck. She was purchased, as she lay, first by Johnson for \$100 and from him, immediately after, by the Volcano Stables for \$110, and a crew of men was placed to work immediately to salvage such things as sails, tackle and running gear, a boat and so forth. Johnson presented the members of the crew with his ten dollars profit.

SOMETHING FOR MOTHERS.

This is the season of the year when mothers feel very much concerned over the frequent colds contracted by their children, and have abundant reason for it as every cold weakens the lungs, lowers the vitality and paves the way for the more serious diseases that so often follow. Chamberlain's Cough Remedy is famous for its cures, and is pleasant and safe to take. For sale by Benson, Smith & Co., Ltd., agents for Hawaii. Advt.

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