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The San Francisco Call

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TWENTY-FOUR SEAMEN LOSE THEIR LIVES

Bark Atalanta Goes Ashore on the Coast of Oregon.

Of Her Crew but Three Survive After a Desperate Struggle in the Breakers.

PORTLAND, Or., Nov. 18.—The bark Atalanta, bound from Tacoma to South Africa, was wrecked upon Alseya beach early yesterday morning. Twenty-four of her crew of twenty-seven are missing, and the three men saved are certain that their comrades either perished in the breakers or are in imminent peril of their lives in the ruins of the vessel. The survivors reached shore only after a terrible experience.

When the Atalanta struck the bar her timbers at once gave way and the whole crew made a rush for the hatchway. They had hardly started when the vessel parted in the middle and the masts snapped like kindling wood. The breakers swept over the after decks and crashed through the cabin doors, and then the men, seeing that the ship was doomed, sought safety.

A number who were on deck started to launch a life boat, and while they were working with the davits a wave tore over the deck and filled the boat. It dropped into the surf and almost immediately filled with water. Five men were in it and all but two were washed overboard. These two had no oars and for hours they were buffeted about, powerless to choose their course. In one of the sudden springs they found their craft within arm's length of a third man, and at the risk of their own lives they pulled him out of the surf.

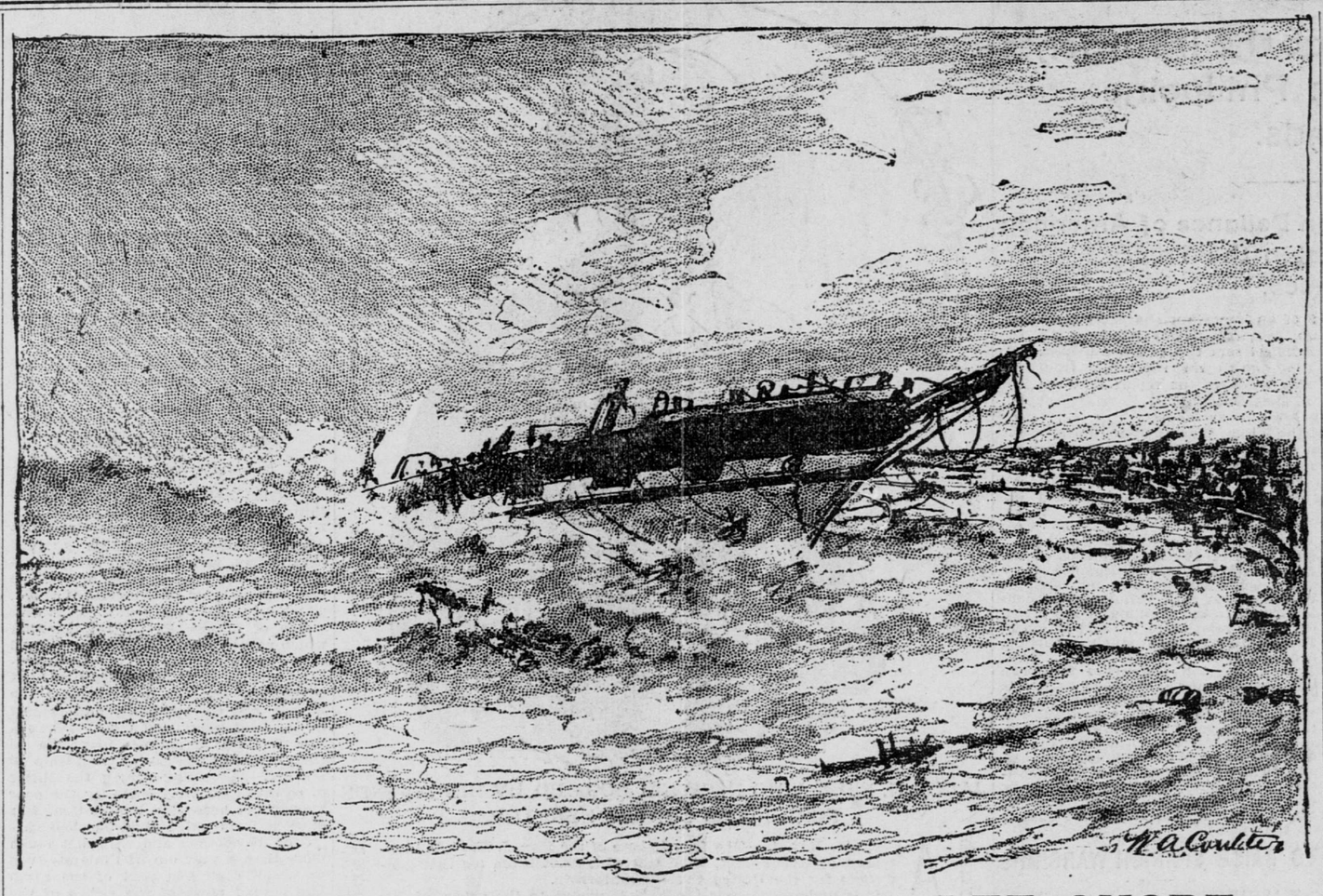
For another hour the men were rocked upon the breakers and then their boat was hoisted upon the crest of a great wave high and dry upon the beach. Two of them were completely exhausted, but the third still possessed a little strength, and he ran through the wild country until he found a farmer, whom he informed of the distress of his companions. Help was soon at hand and all the men were taken to farm houses and cared for. To-night one was unconscious, the others not in danger. No one seems to know to what farm house they were taken or anything about them further than that they are survivors of the wreck. The life saving crew is now looking for them.

The whole blame for the wreck is lodged with the captain. He was too anxious to make a quick passage. All the way down the coast he raced with another sailing vessel against a terrific southwester. To make an advantageous tack he steered close into Cape Foulweather, and not seeing the light supposed his vessel to be far from the shore. Suddenly there was a crash and the vessel began to go to pieces.

According to best accounts twenty-four lives are the penalty for the captain's rashness.

Notification of the wreck was not sent to the life saving station twenty miles north of the bay for ten hours after the survivors reached shore. Then the apparatus could not be hauled down without horses, and by the time these were procured it was too late and too dark to render effective service. Captain Clark of the life-saving crew will make another attempt to reach the vessel in the morning. Every wave is assisting in the destruction of the bark.

Alseya Bay has no telegraph station and particulars are meager. Reports from stations to the north state that the Cape Foulweather light was concealed by a heavy fog when the wreck occurred.



DRIVEN TO DESTRUCTION ON A LEE SHORE.

The British Ship Atalanta, That Left Tacoma for Cape Town on the 12th Inst., Was Caught in the Southwester That Raged Along the Oregon Coast Last Wednesday and Went Ashore at Alseza Bay. She Was Dismasted and Broke in Two. The Heavy Rollers That Broke on the Sandspit and Over the Vessel Swept Her Decks Clear of Everything in a Few Minutes, and Out of a Crew of Twenty-Seven All Told Only Three Reached the Shore Alive.

DISASTER DUE TO THE CAPTAIN'S FOOLHARDINESS

Carelessness Cost the Lives of Himself and His Crew—Life-Savers Handicapped in Attempts to Reach the Wreck.

YAQUINA, Or., Nov. 18.—The ship Atalanta, 2800 tons burden, from Tacoma, with wheat for an African port, was wrecked off Alseya Bay early Thursday morning and now lies about a mile from shore in the midst of roaring breakers. She carried a crew of twenty-seven men, only three of whom survive, so far as known up to the present time.

The story as told by the survivors is that the wreck was due to the carelessness of the captain, who paid for his folly with his life, as none of the officers escaped. They were racing with another sailing boat and were keeping close in shore in order to get the advantage of the wind in tacking and to make a short cut to head off the other vessel. They were close in shore, and, not seeing the light at Cape Foulweather, steered ahead until they struck the reef about four miles below Alseya Bay and about a mile and a half from the shore, with such terrific force as to snap the masts off like toothpicks, carrying the rigging and everything with it.

The men at that time were trying to launch a lifeboat, and two of them were carried over with it. They succeeded in rescuing one of their companions from the mass of wreckage and drowning sailors, but were soon swept away by the gale. They were tossed in the breakers for hours, half naked and nearly perishing, without oars. They were entirely at the mercy of the storm until it finally deposited them on the beach. One of them made his way to a cabin, and, awakening the occupants, started them in all directions for help, which it was impossible for them to give.

After they had arrived on the scene so thoroughly exhausted were the men that after twenty hours one of them had not yet recovered his physical and mental powers fully.

The people were very slow in notifying the life-saving station at South Beach, twenty miles away. The report did not reach Captain Clark until late in the evening.

Captain Clark immediately made every effort possible to reach the wreck and rescue any one who might yet be on the wreck or penned up in the forecastle, as supposed by the survivors. Having no horses, they depended on the neighboring farmers for assistance, and obtained one team and a saddle pony. The team was hitched to the surf boat wagon and the pony to the cannon, and with the crew and captain pushing with might and main they struggled down the beach toward the wreck, twenty miles away.

Flesh and blood were unequal to the task of transporting the heavy vehicles. After traversing about six miles, the horses gave up the struggle and then all forces were applied on the cannon and beach cart. They arrived at Alseya early in the morning and, hurrying to the wreck, found they were unable to do anything, as the ship was beyond the reach of their lines and their cannon was useless.

The ship had broken in two and the waves were dashing over her. Large pieces of her works were being carried away with each successive wave.

The beach is strewn with wreckage of all descriptions.

If the story of the rescued sailors is correct the officers of the bark were responsible for this awful disaster. It is to be hoped that when the apparatus of the life-saving crew arrives and they are able to reach the wreck they will find that some of the seamen have weathered it out until help arrived.

SCENE OF THE WRECK.

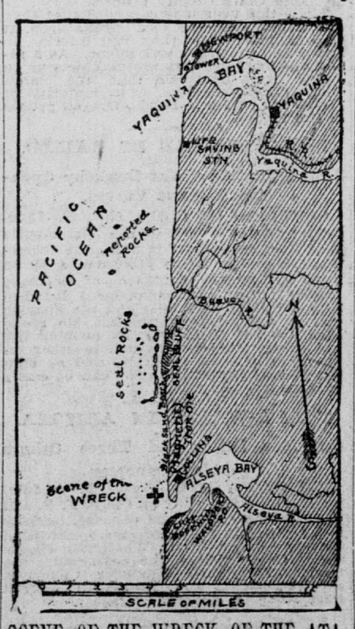
Alseya Bay and river are between Cape Perpetua and Yaquina Bay, being sixteen miles from Newport, which is on Yaquina Bay, and eight miles north from Cape Perpetua. The south head is an abrupt, long, rounding cliff of sandstone of less than 100 feet in height and covered with trees. The north point is broad, low and sandy, three-quarters of a mile long and covered with driftwood. The entrance to the river is one-quarter of a mile wide at the narrowest part. There is no well defined channel and the depth of water is from five to eight feet. A mile and a quarter inside the entrance the river expands into a bay about a mile wide and one and five-eighths miles long. It is filled with sand flats.

On the north side of Alseya Bay is the small town of Collins and on the south side is the town and Postoffice of Waldport. Broad off the mouth of the bay and eighteen miles from shore there is seventy fathoms of water on a sandy bottom.

A strong current, called the "Davidson inshore eddy current," sets into Alseya Bay. As an experiment the Dawn, a steam launch that used to run between Astoria and Ilwaco, was towed to near Cape Orford and there cast off. She then drifted northward in the current to the Alseya River, a distance of ninety-five miles.

Just how the Atalanta got ashore at this particular place may never be fully known. She left Tacoma on November 12 and passed Cape Flattery the same day. Six days later she is wrecked about 400 miles from her starting point. "It was blowing a southwester on the Oregon coast last Wednesday," said an old coasting captain yesterday, "and judging by the seas outside it must have been a corked. The chances are that the Atalanta was caught in it and was driven back. Then the compasses may have been at fault and in a gale there the current runs as much as four or five miles an hour, and then the magnetic iron ore on the beach may have helped along, and the first thing those aboard knew the Atalanta was hard and fast on the sand spit that runs out from the north point of Alseya Bay."

The Atalanta was built in 1885 at Port Glasgow by R. Duncan & Co. She was 1693 tons net burden, 265.1 feet long, 39.7 feet broad and 23.4 feet deep. She was owned by N. Hill of Greenock. The insurance on both hull and cargo was placed in England. Captain McBride, who was in command of the Atalanta, took charge of her the day she was launched and was in command of her to the last. She was a painted port ship, very like the British ship Illawara that left here for Sydney a few days ago with a cargo of barley and flour.



SCENE OF THE WRECK OF THE ATALANTA ON THE OREGON COAST.

PARTIAL LIST OF THE MEN WHO LOST THEIR LIVES

TACOMA, Nov. 18.—The names of the Atalanta's entire crew are not obtainable, not having been filed with either Shipping Commissioner Steel or British Consul Alexander. The names of those who joined the ship here and signed before the British Consul are:

D. F. GREEN, able seaman, aged 31, Chapel place, Dublin.

J. WEBBER, able seaman, 132 Forty-second street, New York.

S. A. JACKSON, able seaman, Stockholm.

J. SMITH, Finsbury.

G. COVALIS, Callao.

J. TONES, Valparaiso.

N. SORENSEN, Bergen.

G. FRASER, 329 Monroe street, Philadelphia.

R. CODD, 74 Flanders street, Liverpool.

J. MARKS, Brightwood Addition, Indianapolis.

Captain Charles McBride, or "Prince Charles," as he was best known, was a great favorite among local marine men.

The ship Atalanta sailed on Saturday afternoon for Cape Town with 92,509 bushels of wheat. She was the last ship to start in the triple race to the Cape of Good Hope, to be participated in by the ships Earl of Dalhousie, Imberhorne and Atalanta. The latter was known in maritime circles as a crack clipper and breaker of passage records, having made many quick passages between London and India. Captain McBride confidently expected to win the race to Cape Town. The wager involved was the good-natured one of a champagne dinner at Cape Town, to be paid for by the ship making the longest passage.

The general opinion among shipping men here is that Captain McBride was caught in the heavy southwest gale after being given an offing by a tug outside of Cape Flattery. The weather came on thick and the ship picked up the southerly set of the Japan current running down the coast. This set, together with his lee drift, brought McBride into the breakers before he was aware of his position, there being no clear weather for an observation. This theory is made more plausible through the fact that the Atalanta was obliged to take anchorage in Clallam Bay, in the Straits of Fuca, on arriving there because of the heavy gale and nasty sea prevailing outside Cape Flattery. He was windbound there ten hours and then proceeded to sea.

BRITISH SKIPPER RAISES A BREEZE

Defies a Marshal of the Admiralty Court.

HIS CRAFT SEIZED FOR DEBT

HE TRIES TO PILOT HER OUT OF QUEENSTOWN.

Runs Aground but Floats Again. Is Chased by a Government Steam Pinnace, but Escapes.

Special Dispatch to The Call.

QUEENSTOWN, Nov. 18.—Something in the nature of a sensation has been caused here by the extraordinary conduct of Captain Johnson, commander of the British steamer Briarden, which arrived here on October 21 from New York extensively damaged by severe weather, during which she was almost submerged for ten days. Since that time the Briarden has been repairing for a passage west.

The Briarden was seized this morning by a marshal of the Admiralty Court for debt, and a bailiff was placed on board of her. The captain determined to defy the court and started for Delaware breakwater. But the pilot, who was on board, refused to navigate the ship out of the harbor, with the result that the captain attempted to do so and grounded the Briarden off Hall Bow Light. Two hours later she was floated off.

In the meanwhile the Admiralty Court officials communicated with the admiral in charge of this station and the latter sent a steam pinnace to intercept the Briarden. The pinnace met the Briarden as the latter was passing out of Queenstown harbor at full speed and ordered her to stop. The captain of the steamer paid no attention to the summons, but continued on his way to sea as fast as the engines of the Briarden could drive her, with the little pinnace in hot pursuit. The chase was watched by excited crowds ashore. Off Spike Island the Briarden had completely outdistanced the pinnace and the latter gave up the pursuit.

FIRST PENSIONER OF THE RECENT WAR

Artilleryman Gates Gets $17 a Month for the Loss of a Lip.

WASHINGTON, Nov. 18.—Commissioner Evans of the pension office notified Secretary Alger to-day that Jesse T. Gates, of the Second United States Artillery, who lost part of his upper lip in the West Indian campaign, had been awarded the first pension on account of the Spanish war.

The President and the Secretary of War each took an interest in this case. Gates called on them in person soon after the close of the campaign and convinced them of the merits of his case. Gates will receive $17 a month, and, this being inadequate, a private pension bill increasing the pension, will probably be introduced in Congress.

Claims on account of the Spanish war are now coming in rapidly. The total on file up to date is 1947 for war service and 178 for naval service, exclusive of the claims of the battleship Maine victims.

Pay for Cuban Soldiers.

NEW YORK, Nov. 18.—A Herald dispatch from Havana says: The Cuban army will receive one year's pay on December 10. Notes for the balance due will be issued, and the troops will then be disbanded. This information comes from an officer of General Garcia's personal staff, on whose word implicit confidence can be placed. From what source the money will come cannot be learned, but that the United States has guaranteed the loan is almost certain.

GIVE VENT TO THEIR HATRED OF AMERICANS

Spanish Volunteers Parade in Havana, Shouting Insults to Their Conquerors.

Special Cable to The Call and the New York Herald. Copyrighted, 1898, by James Gordon Bennett.

HAVANA, Cuba, via Key West, Fla., Nov. 18.—Last night's procession in honor of St. Christopher, the patron saint of Havana, gave the Spanish volunteers an opportunity to give vent to an expression of their hatred of Americans. Late in the evening there gathered in the vicinity of the palace of the captain general several regiments of volunteers to take part in the procession.

After their dismissal from duty many bands of these paraded, giving vent to the cries, "Death to Americans," and "Viva Espana." Bystanders were insulted and jostled about and the slightest offensive incident would have been the signal for some outbreak. As it was, with many Cubans in the vicinity who had come in from their camp at Marianao, a collision was averted only by a miracle, it seemed.

REBELS BANDING ON URUGUAY'S FRONTIER

Former President Herrera Planning to Seize the Reins of Government.

Special Cable to The Call and the New York Herald. Copyrighted, 1898, by James Gordon Bennett.

MONTEVIDEO, Uruguay, Nov. 18.—The Government has been informed that revolutionary bands are forming on the frontier and that they will soon invade the country. No details of their numbers or movements have been ascertained yet, but it is believed that former President Herrera is planning to seize the government. All preparations are being made to resist.

Extension of the O. R. and N.

PORTLAND, Nov. 18.—The O. R. & N. has let the contract for building 140 miles of railway from Wallula Junction up the Snake River to Lewiston, Idaho. Seims & Coykendahl are the contractors, and grading is now being actively pushed both east and west from Riparia.

KEELEY OF MOTOR FAME IS NO MORE

Died at His Home of Pneumonia.

WAS ILL LESS THAN A WEEK

SECRET OF HIS ALLEGED NEW FORCE DIES WITH HIM.

Had Constructed and Discarded More Than a Hundred Models in His Expensive but Futile Experiments.

Special Dispatch to The Call.

PHILADELPHIA, Nov. 18.—John W. Keeley, the inventor of the Keeley motor, died to-day at his home in this city from pneumonia. He was taken ill on Saturday last and continued to grow steadily worse until his death. Mr. Keeley was 61 years of age and leaves a widow.

He was a native of this city. His education was meager and at an early age he became a carpenter, following that trade until 1872.

It was in that year that he announced the discovery of a new force by which motive power would be revolutionized. Following this he constructed what has become known as the Keeley motor. On November 10, 1874, he gave its first public exhibition before a number of capitalists and scientists, who advanced $100,000 to enable him to perfect his discovery and apply the principle. Since then large sums of money have been expended on experiments without any practical public results.

Between 1874 and 1891 Keeley constructed and discarded 129 different models. In the first model he employed water as a generator, but later the experiments were made with what he called a "liberator," a machine equipped with a large number of tuning forks, which, he claimed, disintegrated the air and released a powerful etheric force.

In 1888 he was for a time confined in jail for contempt of court for refusing to disclose the secret by which he produced many remarkable effects in the presence of experts, but until his death the secret was known only to himself. Among those interested in his scientific efforts was Mrs. Bloomfield Moore, the well-known society woman, who advanced sums of money to Keeley for the purpose of his invention.

SIBERIA MAY BE A RIVAL TO KLONDIKE

Route of the Proposed Railway Reported Extremely Rich in Gold Fields.

VANCOUVER, B. C., Nov. 18.—Count John Thun of Austria, who has arrived here from Japan, came across Asia over the route of the Trans-Siberian Railroad. He left Moscow last May.

For some two hundred versts beyond Irkutsk the journey was full of great peril and required nine days and nights of hard traveling, a greater part of the time afoot, to go the distance.

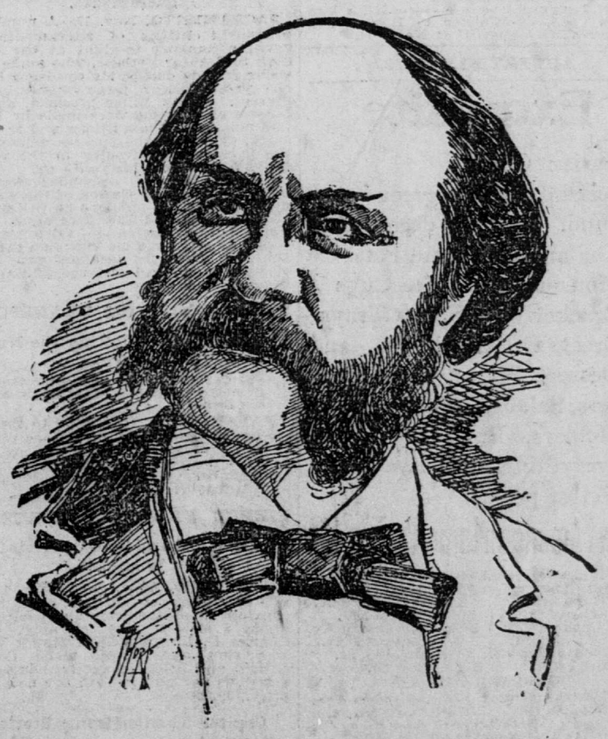
Work upon this part of the road had been well advanced a year or so ago, but an era of unprecedented storms set in and embankments and bridges to the value of about 4,300,000 roubles were washed away. The work of restoring them during the past summer was greatly interfered with by swarms of insects and other pests which made it impossible for the men to work.

Count Thun says it is intensely cold all along the line of the road, and for the most part a barren and utterly desolate country.

A region some 200 versts in extent in each direction north of Manchuria in China is undoubtedly full of almost inexhaustible gold fields, but the extreme cold will not permit them to be worked for more than three months in the year. The road will, he thinks, be completed in about two years' time, and will be valuable chiefly in the movement of soldiers.

Interpreters in Fear of Highbinders.

FRESNO, Nov. 18.—At the preliminary examination of Ah Tie, accused of the murder of Ah Hack, it was found to be impossible to proceed on account of the fear of the Chinese interpreters. All dreaded the highbinders and were afraid to act. It was found necessary to clear the room several times of the crowd of Chinese, and the case finally went over.



JOHN W. KEELEY.