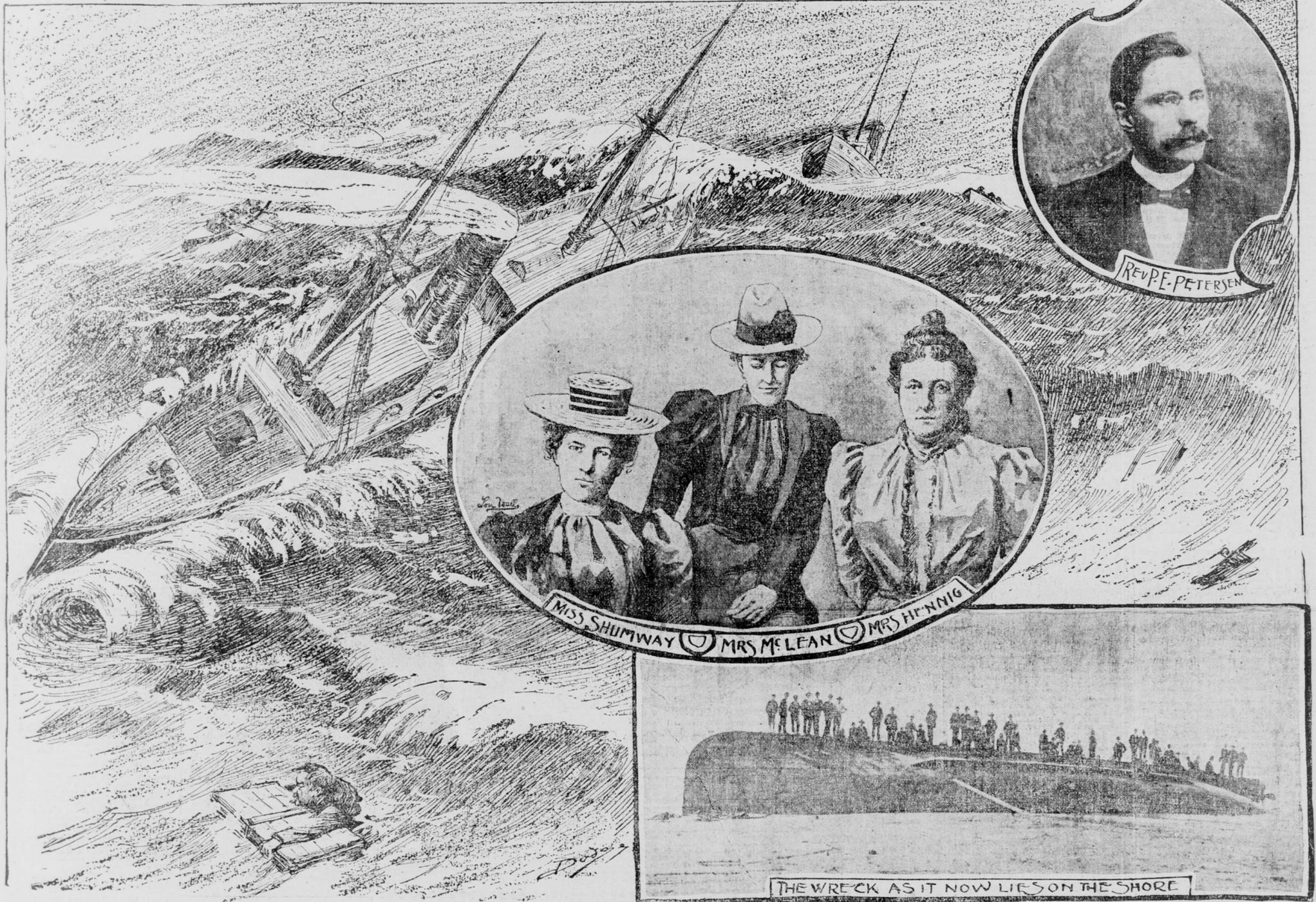


SAN FRANCISCO, SUNDAY, APRIL 16, 1899.

SAVED THE LIVES OF SHIPWRECKED SAILORS HEROISM OF THE THREE BRAVE CALIFORNIA WOMEN WHO DRAGGED THE EXHAUSTED MEN OUT OF THE KILLING BREAKERS



The steamer Chilkat was struck by a storm while going out of Eureka harbor and turned turtle. Of the few sailors and passengers who escaped the disaster three of them owed their lives to the heroic services of three women and a clergyman, who hastened to their assistance from the shore.

ON Tuesday, April 4, the steamer Chilkat was wrecked on Humboldt Bay and ten of those on board lost their lives. Some of those who were saved were picked up in small boats from steamers near by at the time. But there were three saved who owe their lives entirely to the bravery of three women and a man.

These four people have just made statements of what happened on that morning when they snatched three lives from the jaws of death. These have become part of the lighthouse records and will be sent to Washington at the next session of Congress with a request that life-saving medals be awarded.

Those who will most likely receive these medals are Rev. P. E. Petersen, Mrs. McLean, Mrs. R. E. Hennig and Miss Shumway. That all deserve the medals there can be no doubt, particularly Miss Shumway, who waded far out into the raging surf and was beaten about by the breakers in the effort to save a drowning man. In the end both she and her charge were rescued by the others.

Rev. P. E. Petersen is pastor of the Scandinavian M. E. Church of Eureka. Following is his statement about the saving of the seamen from the wreck of the Chilkat:

Stories of the Life-Savers.

"I had come to the life-saving station on the morning of the 4th of April for the purpose of visiting some of the surfmen with whom I was acquainted. I went to the station looking to see the steamers North Fork and Chilkat cross out to sea. I saw the Chilkat struck by a heavy breaker and heard a number of whistles, but could not positively say how many. Saw the vessel turning apparently out of her course, and then heard Surfman Swanson say, 'There's something wrong.' 'Whereupon I asked, 'What will you do if there is something wrong?' 'Ring the alarm bell,' he said, and he almost immediately ran downstairs for that purpose, meeting the keeper on the way to the bell and reporting the accident to him.

"Surfman McLean, who was near, heard the report and reached the look-

out almost as soon as the keeper. The keeper, upon seeing the condition of the wreck, then on her beam ends, ordered the lifeboat run out and made ready while he himself started for the lighthouse.

"I saw the lifeboat run out by the crew, who started to launch her upon the return of the keeper from the lighthouse. I then ran for the ocean beach, where, soon after my arrival I was joined by Mrs. McLean and Miss Shumway and a little later by Mrs. Hennig. We patrolled the beach for some distance abreast of where we saw the wreck out in the breakers.

"Wreckage soon began to make its appearance, some life preservers and a metallic lifeboat coming in first. We looked into the boat and found it empty.

"Mrs. Hennig then called our atten-

tion to a man apparently sitting on some wreckage and we all ran toward him. I reached him first, by which time he was lying down, having apparently given up all efforts to help himself. I took hold of him and dragged him some distance on his back in the water. The women ran to help me put him on his feet and in this position we carried him to the shore. From cold and exhaustion he was unable to use his legs.

"By this time we discovered a second man coming in on some wreckage and I immediately turned to meet him, leaving the women to conduct the first man to dry land. This man was a passenger named Mr. Mooser of Oakland. The second man to whose assistance I was now going was Peter Johnson, the first officer. He was very much exhausted and when I reached him he had very

little wreckage to support him. His head and shoulders only were above water. I took hold of him and was joined immediately by Mrs. Hennig. We dragged him toward the shore.

"In the meantime Mrs. McLean and Miss Shumway had conducted their man some distance above the water line and taken off his life preserver. Then Miss Shumway returned to our assistance while Mrs. McLean continued with Mr. Mooser, supporting and guiding him above high water to the dry sand.

"Miss Shumway now joined us and helped us for some distance, when she discovered a third man coming in through the surf. She immediately struck out to his assistance, saying, 'You stay with this man. I'll go and help the other man out there.'

"Mrs. Hennig and myself took Mr.

Johnson to the shore while Miss Shumway waded out into the surf, which was at this time very rough.

"We had our man on the beach just above the water line and on turning we saw Miss Shumway had been knocked off her feet by wreckage. She had gone to the assistance of Fireman Hansen further out into the surf than we had ventured.

"I ran to her assistance, and on reaching her found that she had taken hold of the man and was trying to keep him from sliding off the wreckage on which he was lying.

"I then took hold of the man with her and being soon joined by Mrs. McLean we altogether brought the half-drowned man to the shore. "Immediately upon the discovery of the first man Mrs. McLean had sent her little girl Alta to the station for brandy

and a line. Soon after all three men were landed I saw Mrs. McLean start with Mr. Mooser across the sand hills toward the life-saving station, a distance of about a mile. Miss Shumway and myself followed as soon as we had convinced ourselves that no more men were in sight as far as we could see.

"Thinking that the condition of the two men remaining on the beach required immediate attention, I assisted them on their feet and started also to lead them toward the life-saving station. Being very large men and very weak, I had to support them nearly all the way and made but slow progress through the sandhills.

"Not very far from the beach we met little Alta McLean returning with a bottle of brandy. I gave the men some. Although they objected to it at first, they were considerably revived by it.

"Once more we began our journey toward the station, and were soon met by Mrs. Nelson, wife of Surfman Norman Nelson, who had procured the rope and was on her way to the beach. She joined us in helping the men toward the station.

"We finally reached the station, where we were met by Mrs. Phelps, who showed us into the kitchen, where active steps had been taken for the care of the shipwrecked men. We stayed at the station assisting Mrs. Phelps and Mrs. Swanson in taking the wet clothing off the men and wrapping them in warm blankets after which Mrs. McLean and myself returned to the ocean beach, where we learned from Mrs. Hennig that no more bodies had come ashore.

Mrs. McLean's statement is as follows:

"I have heard read the Rev. Mr. Petersen's statement and concur with all he said up to the time I started with Mr. Mooser to the station. I soon met my daughter, Alta, with the brandy, of which I gave Mr. Mooser a drink. Although the brandy seemed to revive him somewhat he was very weak, staggering continually and falling several times. The last time he fell it was only with the greatest of exertion on my part that I succeeded in getting him on his feet.

"Just outside the station gate I met Mrs. Swanson, wife of Surfman Swanson. I took Mrs. Nelson's place by First Officer Johnson's side, while Mrs. Nelson hurried to the beach with the rope. The rest of my experience is the same as related by Mr. Petersen in his statement.

Mrs. Lillian Shumway and Mrs. R. E. Hennig signed statements that concur with Rev. Mr. Petersen's.

In the written report of D. E. Hughes, assistant engineer, in local charge of improvement work at the entrance to Humboldt Bay, he says: "Those who rescued the three men on North Spit ventured so far out that they seemed to me considerably knocked about by seas and wreckage."

ELLEN M. HENROTIN WRITES ABOUT THE WOMEN'S CLUBS OF CALIFORNIA.

Mrs. Ellen Henrotin of Chicago, so well known as the organizer of the Woman's Congress which was held in conjunction with the World's Fair in Chicago, was in San Francisco last week. She is on her way to attend the Parliament of Women, to be held at Salt Lake City.

I DO not think there is any stronger movement in the organizing of women here than there is elsewhere. I am not sure but what the old New England States are in the lead. Massachusetts, for its size, has the largest number of club women of any State. Pennsylvania has almost as many. The clubs are mostly in the hands of American women and are most flourishing where the population is not too largely foreign.

Indeed it is true that women, club women, and a woman not a club woman is almost an unknown accident now, are surely solving a great many problems. We are doing it, though, in such a quiet way that no one knows much about it. A woman earning her own living and the wife of a millionaire may be going about the same work together. Catholic or Protestant or Jewish women may be all working together. Any one can see the results.

and being interested in club affairs. It broadens her and widens her sympathies, and that is what women need. But particularly in the West that is not what the clubs were formed for. They were formed for the good of the community.

I have been often touched by letters from small clubs out here in the districts away from the railroads. In districts which are settled by small ranchers, where the man does the outside work and his wife does the work in the house, and they bring up their families to work with them. They are the typical California country people, and they are the ones California will hear from some day.

I have in mind one club just now because I have been corresponding with its president. It has fifteen members and all ranchers' wives. Some have to go a good many miles to the club, but they feel that the club is a great deal to them. They take the smaller children to the club meeting and they discuss all sorts of subjects. They recount their experiences in contrivances to save work in rearing children, in sewing, in butter making, in caring for fruit, raising chickens and vegetables. They have the reports from mothers'

meetings all over the world and know what other women are doing in the lines that interest them.

Discussing such topics occupies one half of the time, the other half is given over to study. This particular club is studying the history of the United States and reading American literature. It is almost the only social life those women have. Before the club was formed months and months would go by and those women would not be off their ranch nor have an idea beyond their daily routine work. Such dead level monotony and grind drives the farmer's wife crazy.

We interest ourselves in everything which affects women. The servant girl problem, the girls in stores and their employers, the jails, the reformatories, all art and the appearance and condition of the city.

I have been exceedingly interested in the California Club here in San Francisco. It is sure to become a great factor in the civic life here. I wish I had more time to become better acquainted with its workings, but I know what lines they are working on. They are going about their work very slowly and conservatively and very quietly, but so much the more surely. It is a large club already, although only a year

old, and has so many strong, active workers. The work is so well organized that every separate worker has the influence and moral support of the whole 600 members and so can accomplish just so much the more.

Influence? Well, when it is really understood that the women of the whole United States are organizing and educating themselves and standing as one woman for what we want, I think we can accomplish anything we set about. We will have to stick to our own natural life work. We do not want to do men's work nor to interfere with them. We have our own work, and it has gone undone long enough. England, Germany, Russia, France, Holland, Italy, Australia, every country in the Caucasian world has felt this woman's club movement.

The Red Cross was one of the first women's clubs to make itself felt. Florence Nightingale began the work and see what it has grown to! When women organize as we are doing and take in the homes of all the world we can do anything we set out to do. We have only begun to organize and to realize our force for good. If we keep within our own sphere of usefulness we can accomplish anything.