

# Why the Rockaway Life Savers Laugh at Themselves



MISS MARJORIE KASSEL AND HER COMPANIONS WHO WERE RESCUED FROM THE PRINCESS ANNE



THE LIFE SAVERS WHO RESCUED PASSENGERS FROM PRINCESS ANNE

## Rescue of the Princess Anne's People by the Police Pleases Them Mightily and Their Share in Work Was Not Small

By EUGENE K. CAMPBELL.

"W"AS IT NOT YOU who in effort and sacrifice saved the lives of the Princess Anne's people? The fact is that the Rockaway life savers are more than a little proud to have their names mentioned in the same breath as the police who rescued the Princess Anne's people.

And how the Rockaway life savers and the police worked together to save the lives of the Princess Anne's people. The life savers were the first to get the alarm and they were the first to get out to sea. The police were the first to get to the scene and they were the first to get the Princess Anne's people out of the water.



THE LIFE SAVERS GOING OUT TO PRINCESS ANNE IN THE DISTANCE



CAPT. J. W. MALLOCK AND LIEUT. H. DOBERT OF THE POLICE PATROL WHO RESCUED PASSENGERS OF THE PRINCESS ANNE

### Several Born on the Job.

Some of the men at the Rockaway stations were born on the job, either at Ansonia when there was no Ansonia, but just Station 92 hanging to the sand dunes; or at Station 92, which stands close by where the Naval Air Station now is, three miles from Rockaway Point, and which thirty years ago was a steam mill through which the water of the bay was pumped.

And so it was from this background of pride and tradition and history and devotion and service that the Rockaway life savers were born. They were born on the job, and they were born on the job.

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As the men, too, speak with understanding and wisdom, with philosophy. The pride of the Long Island Phispees and Pearalls and Abrams and Toobers and in fact and in no time very high.

Especially as they talked of the wreck of the Princess Anne and other wrecks. There was gleam of light from the inside and outside of the story of the 11th Princess Anne and of the rescue of her people; with the credit of which the cops walked away.

At 5 A. M. on February 6 Keeper Tooker of the Rockaway Point station came on the telephone and reported that the Princess Anne was ashore on Rockaway Point four miles west of his station. He knew she was the Princess Anne because she had been radioing, asking her position, for upward of an hour and a half. His station and Meade's had been sending it to her with the advice to send her anchors over and stand where she was until daylight.

However, other radio stations of various kinds were sending her advice of all sorts. It must have been pretty confusing for her.

Meade then, being senior to Tooker down at Station 92, near Rockaway Point, was promptly called on the telephone and as promptly mustered his men. Meade's station has on power boat, for it is directly on an ocean beach and you cannot send a power boat away through a surf. Not could he send his surf boat under man power away either. The tide, the highest in years and with a heavy northeast gale behind it, had piled the shore front high with all kinds and conditions of summer bungalows, hotels, morning picture palaces, ice cream parlors, billiard halls and sections of bulkhead and boardwalk. A battleship, let alone a surf boat, would have come to disaster in the crashing timber and seas. So Meade decided to go overland to Tooker's station and use the equipment there.

Coast Guard shore stations are seven miles apart. Ten minutes after Meade had received the alarm he and his men had started to Tooker on foot. They had put in the ten minutes telephoning to various stations, mostly for form's sake, for they knew no wheel could turn in the snow that lay over Rockaway that night. They knew everything there was to know about the snow when they arrived at Tooker's station. It took them four hours and a half to make the journey.

Now the station at lower Rockaway has a power boat, for it has the advantage of Jamaica Bay behind it with the inlet to the ocean three miles down. The boat is of the Beebe-McClellan self-bailing type. But Meade found it engaged—his words in heavy ice on the bay side with its crew struggling like leeches to send it away. He will write a report in which he will set forth that attempt to get it into open water was "impracticable."

As the station has an old fashioned, or "white ash," surf boat also Meade directed that that be used to reach the wreck. It was placed upon its wagon and a start made for that part of the beach abreast the wreck.

Keeper Meade, as he and his men waded through the snow drifts on their way to Station 92, had cheered himself with the thought that the United States Government, with its army and navy, had come to Rockaway when the war began, and in plotting his strategy had figured that one or the other crew would be certain to furnish him assistance not available in the Rockaway days of old.

But they explained that all their boats were out of commission and that even if they had been in service none of them was engaged sufficiently to take her through the ice just. The crew did better. Major Warren, in command at Fort Tilden, lent him four miles to land his boat wagon down.

However, a Government mule is a Government mule. The four mule team did very well while the going was good and the way kept to the military road which stretches west from the fort. But once off the solid grade the mules went belly deep in snow. Then after the manner of their kind they stood and ruminated on their Government. Meade coaxed, cajoled and swore a bit. Then he had them unhitched and sent Surfman Offen back to the fort with them.

Here he pays tribute and commendation to four newspaper reporters who, as he remarks, did not mention themselves in their newspapers afterward. They, with the boat crew, took hold where the mules left off and with main strength and determination hauled wagon and boat to a position off the wreck a mile and a half away. And there, with Surfmen Abrams, Rose, Schwab and the veteran Pearall, and Meade at the steering oar, the boat was launched at 4 P. M.

But the wind had hauled northwest and was blowing a living gale. The snow came down heavy and thick and the cross seas, caused by the confluence of ocean and bay tides thick with cakes and chunks of ice, hung the boat back on the beach like a

## Hereditary Modesty of Coast Guard Shines in Keeper's Report—What the Crews Faced on Blizzard Swept Beach

through the numbers of last and was simply one of the first, made one.

And finally, when he sends his report to headquarters, Keeper Meade will recommend that Surfman Willie Abrams, Isaac E. Henry and Chester H. Boyle be commended—they will not get any medals—for especially efficient work in a heavy sea and under very hazardous conditions.

He will say nothing, when his report goes in, of the fact that the Station 92 surf boat with Keeper Tooker at the steering oar, made the wreck on the morning of the time to take the last boat load of the Princess Anne's people away. The proper authorities will note all that. They understand boats and water and will grasp the significance of the fact that this surf boat ventured to be on the job just a steady behind the Patrol, which, as everybody who has ever seen her at anchor, is heavily engaged, has a steel hull and outwater, which would be bows against ice, and which, moreover, for all her firm and bulk, spent the preceding night in the shelter of Jamaica Bay under the lee of Rockaway Point. If it was humanly possible she would have gone before the tide. But it was not humanly possible, and for the surf boat it was not possible at all.

### Public Knows Little of Work.

However, as all lands and the seas at both the Rockaway stations agreed when they read the newspapers on Sunday morning, one doesn't work at the trade of surfman and life saver for credit and noise. The trade works every day in the year and the great hearted public knows very little about it.

There is not a night in bitterest January and February when its patrols are not out on the beaches. Nobody sees them but themselves. They make their seven mile marches night after night and most in the middle and punch each other's time clocks and go back over the marches. And whenever, in all the years they have been an institution, anything in the shape of a craft made by man has required their aid she has had it.

There are homes of ships beached in the sands and with shellfish keeping house in their cross timbers all along the Long Island shore which testify to the work of the surfmen through more than half a century. There are mounds in Long Island village cemeteries which testify to it, too. Sometimes with the bodies of surfmen under the headstones and quite as often with only the headstones there to record the names and ages, usually very young or surprisingly venerable, of surfmen who have gone their way to wrecks and never returned to their benches.

Pearalls and Henrys and Abrams and Van Nostrands and Veritys and Souders and Phispees and Hewletts and Rimebarts and Carnans and Toobers and Meades. They fall in with a highly modern steel hulled police boat to help them once in a while, but in the main they depend on the white ash power of their forefathers; keeping the trade in the circle of families which has maintained its traditions steadfast, and giving to it all that treasure of fidelity and devotion and courage which has made it what it is.

And so while it is meet and just and desirable that this should be written and run in due course in the papers, it is conceivable that some of the Carnans and Van Nostrands and Meades and so forth and so on may disapprove of it when they see it in print. For they have never worked for credit and their pride runs very high.