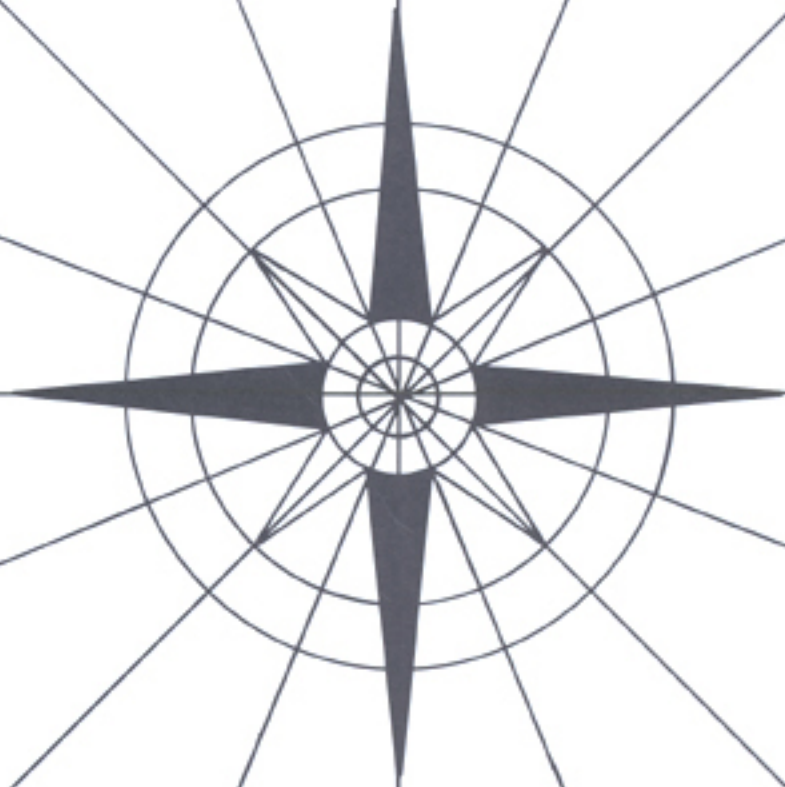


SUBMERGED CULTURAL RESOURCES ASSESSMENT

**GOLDEN GATE NATIONAL RECREATION AREA,
GULF OF THE FARALLONES
NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY
and
POINT REYES NATIONAL SEASHORE**



SUBMERGED CULTURAL RESOURCE ASSESSMENT

GOLDEN GATE NATIONAL RECREATION AREA

GULF OF THE FARALLONES NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY

and

POINT REYES NATIONAL SEASHORE

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Prepared for

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and

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SUBMERGED CULTURAL RESOURCES UNIT REPORT AND PUBLICATION SERIES

The Submerged Cultural Resources Unit (SCRU) was established in 1980 to conduct research on submerged cultural resources throughout the National Park System with an emphasis on historic shipwrecks. One of the unit's primary responsibilities is to disseminate the results of research to National Park Service managers, as well as the professional community, in a form that meets resource management needs and adds to our understanding of the resource base. A report series has been initiated in order to fulfill this responsibility. The following are the categories of reports that comprise this series.

Submerged Cultural Resources Assessment

First line document that consists of a brief literature search, an overview of the maritime history and the known or potential underwater sites in the park, and preliminary recommendations for long-term management. It is designed to have application to GMP/DCP's and to become a source document for a park's Submerged Cultural Resources Management Plan.

Submerged Cultural Resources Survey

Comprehensive examination of blocks of park lands for the purpose of locating and identifying as much of the submerged cultural resources base as possible. A comprehensive literature search would most likely be a part of the Phase I report but, in some cases, may be postponed until Phase II.

Phase I--Reconnaissance of target areas with remote sensing and visual survey techniques to establish location of any archeological sites or anomalous features that may suggest the presence of archeological sites.

Phase II--Evaluation of archeological sites or anomalous features derived from remote sensing instruments to confirm their nature and, if possible, their significance. This may involve exploratory removal of overburden.

Submerged Cultural Resources Study

A document that discusses, in detail, all known underwater archeological sites in a given park. This may involve test excavations. The intended audience is managerial and professional, not the general public.

Submerged Cultural Resources Site Report

Exhaustive documentation of one archeological site which may involve a partial or complete site excavation. The intended audience is primarily professional and incidentally managerial. Although the document may be useful to a park's

interpretive specialists because of its information content, it would probably not be suitable for general distribution to park visitors.

Submerged Cultural Resources Special Report Series

These may be in published or photocopy format. Included are special commentaries, papers on methodological or technical issues pertinent to underwater archeology, or any miscellaneous report that does not appropriately fit into one of the other categories.

Daniel J. Lenihan
Chief, SCRU
Santa Fe, New Mexico

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FOREWORD

This monograph by James Delgado and Stephen Haller is the first assessment level document in the submerged cultural resources series of publications produced by the National Park Service. It should prove to be a useful working model for land managing agencies on a Federal or State level that wish to generate straight forward statements on what is known about a particular resource base without intensive study and what options exist for exerting responsible stewardship over those resources.

It is the second report of the series that was conducted through the cooperation of the National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration and the National Park Service. Subsuming under one cover the submerged cultural resource management concerns of two different types of Federal marine protected areas in the same region is a good practice both in a scholarly and an economical sense. Shipwrecks from certain portions of Point Reyes National Seashore were intentionally not covered in this report because they are addressed elsewhere in the series, specifically in Number 1 edited by Larry Murphy. Delgado and Haller know their subject matter well and the reader will soon discover that besides an obvious competence the authors also bring an infectious enthusiasm to their writing.

Daniel J. Lenihan
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National Park Service

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Many individuals, most National Park Service (NPS) employees, worked to create the body of knowledge that is combined in this report. We cannot name them all, but we have not forgotten them or their contributions, and we here acknowledge and thank them, be they in the Maintenance Division, Ranger ranks, headquarters staff, a number of dedicated volunteers, or Park Police. A number of colleagues outside the NPS and NOAA helped with research; again, we cannot name them all but acknowledge the debt with gratitude. The staffs of the following institutions and organizations were particularly helpful: California Historical Society; Society of California Pioneers; California State Library; San Francisco History Room and Archives, San Francisco Public Library; National Maritime Museum, San Francisco; Espey, Huston, and Associates; Archeo-Tec, Inc.; San Francisco Cleanwater Program, California Academy of Sciences; Marin County Historical Society; Sausalito Historical Society; Mystic Seaport Museum; National Archives; Judicial, Fiscal, and Social Branch, Federal Archives Records Center, San Bruno; The Mariners' Museum; Drakes Navigators Guild, Miwok Archaeological Preserve of Marin; United States Sixth Army, San Francisciana, The Huntington Library; and San Francisco State University.

The manuscript was edited by Joy Waldron Murphy and J. Candace Clifford, and reviewed by Edwin C. Bearss, Larry Murphy, Daniel J. Lenihan, Miles Croom, and Nancy Stone. Despite their fine effort, any mistakes and omissions that remain are the sole responsibility of the authors.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is the first assessment-level publication in a series that documents the submerged cultural resources present within the boundaries of National Park Service areas, National Marine Sanctuaries, and other marine-protected areas. It was drafted in 1986 under a memorandum of understanding between the Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary and Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA).

The tidal and submerged lands within the two parks and marine sanctuary contain approximately 151 shipwrecks. Of these, research indicates 41 lie solely within the jurisdiction of the Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary, 78 lie solely within the jurisdiction of Golden Gate National Recreation Area, and 32 lie solely within the jurisdiction of Point Reyes National Seashore. Many of these shipwrecks are individually significant and potentially eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places; as a study collection, the group of shipwrecks is significant in documenting and assessing the progression of maritime development and activity associated with the port of San Francisco and its surrounding subports.

Maritime archeological research has been undertaken in the three areas. This includes discovery phase surveys, limited site excavation, and documentation of eight shipwrecks. The activity to date has resulted in the listing of three shipwreck sites on the National Register of Historic Places. Serious threats to shipwreck resources exist in the three areas, including National Register sites, including beachcombing, sport-diver collecting, professional salvage, and treasure-hunting.

This report lists the particulars of presumed "total loss" shipwrecks within the three areas, assesses research and management activities to date, discusses potential and actual threats to the resources, and recommends an extended program consisting of additional historical research, complete nondestructive archeological survey of the tidal and submerged lands, limited on-site archeological survey of selected shipwrecks, the preparation of National Register nominations, a comprehensive program of exhibits, displays, interpretive programs, and publications to enhance public appreciation of submerged cultural resources and their management and preservation, and the establishment of local in-house submerged-cultural-resource management teams and a conservation facility.

INTRODUCTION

Managers of National Park Service areas, and more recently of National Marine Sanctuaries, has increasingly found it necessary to inventory, document, protect, preserve, and interpret submerged cultural resources. A variety of submerged-cultural-resource surveys and vessel-specific archeological research projects have been accomplished by the National Park Service within the last decade, the most noteworthy being those of the National Park Service's Submerged Cultural Resource Unit, based in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

The National Park Service has worked cooperatively with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Marine Sanctuary Program in three separate instances. Currently, the National Park Service is working with the NOAA to develop cultural resource management guidelines for marine sanctuaries. The Service is also closely involved with NOAA in defining management and research strategies for the remains of USS Monitor, lying off the North Carolina coast.

In 1985, the National Park Service and NOAA cooperatively performed a submerged-cultural-resource assessment and survey of selected areas within the boundaries of Channel Islands National Park and Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary, California. The first major cooperative effort of the two agencies, however, occurred in 1982-1983, when the Submerged Cultural Resource Unit, Point Reyes National Seashore, Golden Gate National Recreation Area, the State of California, and NOAA conducted a Phase I Reconnaissance Submerged Cultural Resources Survey of portions of Point Reyes National Seashore and Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary, California.

The results of the survey were published in 1984. Included in the first volume was a chapter on "Losses of Major Vessels Within the Drakes Bay Survey Area," by David Buller and James Delgado. That section recounted the histories and shipwreck events of 15 vessels greater than 20 tons in waters from Double Point to Point Reyes (including all of Drakes Bay and the Point Reyes headland). Included in the two-volume report was a statement by SCRU Chief Daniel J. Lenihan regarding the Submerged Cultural Resource Unit Report and Publication Series, which listed various types of reports including a submerged cultural resources assessment. According to Lenihan, this type of report was a "first-line document that consists of a brief literature search, an overview of the maritime history and the known or potential underwater sites in the park, and preliminary recommendations for long-term management. Designed to have application for G[eneral]M[anagement]P[lan]s...to become a source document for the park's Submerged Cultural Resources Management Plan." The significance of the 15-vessel "sample" documented in the Reconnaissance Survey was a clear inspiration to complete the task through a Submerged Cultural Resources Assessment for the entire managed area of the Gulf of Farallones National Marine Sanctuary, which is contiguous with Point Reyes National Seashore.

Because a small portion of Golden Gate National Recreation Area is also included in the boundaries of the National Marine Sanctuary, it was desirable to include the entire managed area of Golden Gate in this final report to link the three entities and provide a complete accounting of potential submerged cultural resources for an unbroken stretch of coastline from Point San Pedro in the south to Bodega Head in

the north. The area to be covered would also include a large shipwreck concentration at the entrance to San Francisco Bay, a significant collection of potential resources that could not be overlooked.

The body of the assessment that follows is a brief account of the particulars, career, and wreck event of some 136 shipwrecks within the project area, which included the sanctuary and two NPS areas. The 15 wrecks previously discussed in the Phase I Reconnaissance Report were not addressed in this report because they were adequately covered in the publication of the two-volume report of the 1982-1983 survey. Contextual information is included in the assessment to identify the geographic, historical, archeological, and management contexts of the wrecks discussed.

A number of shipwreck events listed in a variety of secondary histories were found to have been only partial losses or, in some cases, to simply not be verifiable through reliable sources. The wrecks listed in the assessment are verified to have occurred in the project area. It should be noted, however, that additional shipwreck events undoubtedly did take place within the project area but were not recorded, or their locations were not accurately plotted; accounts of such shipwrecks may surface through follow-up historical research following archeological survey. The limited archeological research conducted to date, the quantity or number and significant historical contexts of the various vessels, and the broad range of vessel types indicate that the project area contains a significant archeological study collection worthy of its nationally unique status within a National Marine Sanctuary and two units of the National Park system. The utmost caution in management and innovative archeological technique should be followed in order to protect, preserve, study, and interpret these shipwrecks for future generations.

GEOGRAPHICAL CONTEXT

Stephen A. Haller

Location

This report describes all of the known shipwrecks that occurred within the present boundaries of the Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary, the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, and Point Reyes National Seashore.

The Sanctuary includes waters adjacent to the coast between Bodega Head, south to Rocky Point (south of Stinson Beach), and offshore to the Farallon Islands, and encompasses approximately 948 square nautical miles. The coastal boundary follows the mean high tide line and the seaward limit of Point Reyes National Seashore. From Bodega Head to the Point Reyes headlands, the sanctuary extends six nautical miles offshore, includes the waters within 12 nautical miles of the Farallon Islands and Noonday Rock, as well as the area between the islands and the mainland from the Point Reyes headlands to Rocky Point; it also embraces Drakes, Bodega, Tomales, and Bolinas Bays, and Bolinas Lagoon.

The coastal boundary of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area follows a line one-quarter mile to seaward of the mean low-water line, beginning about one mile south of the northernmost point of the Stinson Beach sandspit, and continuing south to Point Bonita, then east to Point Cavallo, then north to the boundary of the city of Sausalito. South of the Golden Gate, the coastal boundary begins at the Hyde Street Pier, extends westward to Fort Point, and continues southward, until it ends at the San Mateo county line.

Environment

The study area is located on the middle part of the California coast, approximately between latitude 38° 18' N and 37° 40' N. Noted geographer George Davidson, in his work Pacific Coast Pilot..., describes the area:

The great indentation of the coast of California between Point San Pedros...and Point Reyes...has been very aptly described by one of the old Spanish navigators as the Gulf of the Farallones. This designation almost describes the islands that mark its western limit. The coast line in the deepest part of the gulf, where the mountains are nearly a thousand feet high, has been ruptured where the Golden Gate gives connection between the Pacific Ocean and the Bay of San Francisco.

The commerce of the world enters the Golden Gate, and the Bay of San Francisco affords the finest and most commodious harbor on the Pacific coast of the United States. From its discovery it has commanded the admiration of navigators, and since the wonderful rise of California has well sustained its reputation. Its geographical position, great area and depth of water, its noble entrance and bold shores; the Sacramento and San Joaquin and their tributaries draining the rich agricultural valley of California and the auriferous slopes of the Sierra Nevadas; the magic cities upon its shores, and the salubrity of its climate--all these conditions have conspired to make it emphatically the Port of the Pacific. [1]

The regional weather pattern is a Mediterranean climate, characterized by two seasons. A warm, dry season inland stretches from April to October, and is characterized near the coast by prevailing northwest winds that condense as they blow across cold offshore waters and so cause a belt of fog to form there and remain for days at a time. A season of more changeable weather begins around November and continues until April. During this period the temperature is generally colder, although still moderate, and rainstorms with southerly winds occur regularly, followed by periods of mild and sunny weather.

The California Current runs southward along the coast, carrying cold waters from Alaska into the area, in contrast to the warmer waters farther offshore. This contrast contributes greatly to the foggy conditions so characteristic of the region's summers. Water temperatures in the area typically range from 60 degrees Fahrenheit during the summer months, and 46 to 50 degrees in the winter.

The entire study area is thus subject to prevailing northwesterly winds that blow from the ocean toward the shore and greatly increase the hazard of navigation along the coast, because any vessel out of control will be blown toward the shore rather than out to sea. The coastline is equally exposed when winter storms blow in southerly winds, because (San Francisco Bay excepted) there are no safe deepwater anchorages protected from that direction within the study area. Shallow, restricted anchoring places for smaller craft are located at Bodega Bay, Tomales Bay, Drakes Bay, and Bolinas Bay.

Compounding the dangers of navigating this lee shore, with its scarcity of sheltered harbors, is the rocky nature of most of the shoreline. A vessel in distress is thus likely to be blown onto rocks and smashed in the long swells. Treacherous reefs stretch offshore at Duxbury Point, Bolinas, and off Point Reyes. Ten-Mile Beach at Point Reyes, Drakes Bay, Stinson Beach, Ocean Beach, and Doran Beach just south of Bodega Harbor are the only sizable gradual sandy areas on that rocky coast. Smaller beaches exist at Tennessee Cove and Rodeo Lagoon in Marin County and at Baker Beach in San Francisco. Even so, vessels stranded on those beaches are subject to tremendous pounding from the open Pacific swells.

Lying some 20 miles off the Golden Gate, the rocky Farallon Islands and their satellite Noonday Rock cause additional hazards to vessels travelling along the coast or attempting to approach the entrance to San Francisco Bay. The Golden Gate is guarded by a huge sandbar lying in a crescent offshore, facing a navigator with extremely difficult wave conditions, unpredictable currents, and areas of shoal water at the harbor entrance. Because of the vast expanse of San Francisco Bay and the amount of additional water from California's major rivers that empty into it, currents are greatly accelerated as they pass through the narrow harbor entrance. Especially hazardous conditions are created by counter currents and back eddies that form in the coves and bights on each side of the main channel.

The natural geographical features of the area gave it the potential of being the greatest port on America's Pacific shore. The growth of the area in the wake of the gold rush, the development of California's agriculture, and the expansion of the lumber industry fulfilled that potential. Natural resources in what was to become the Golden Gate National Recreation Area significantly affected the manner in which the vast maritime commerce of the San Francisco Bay Region developed. Before good roads connected the far-flung reaches of the Bay Area, sailing was the most efficient form of transportation between communities isolated from each other by hills and the Bay.

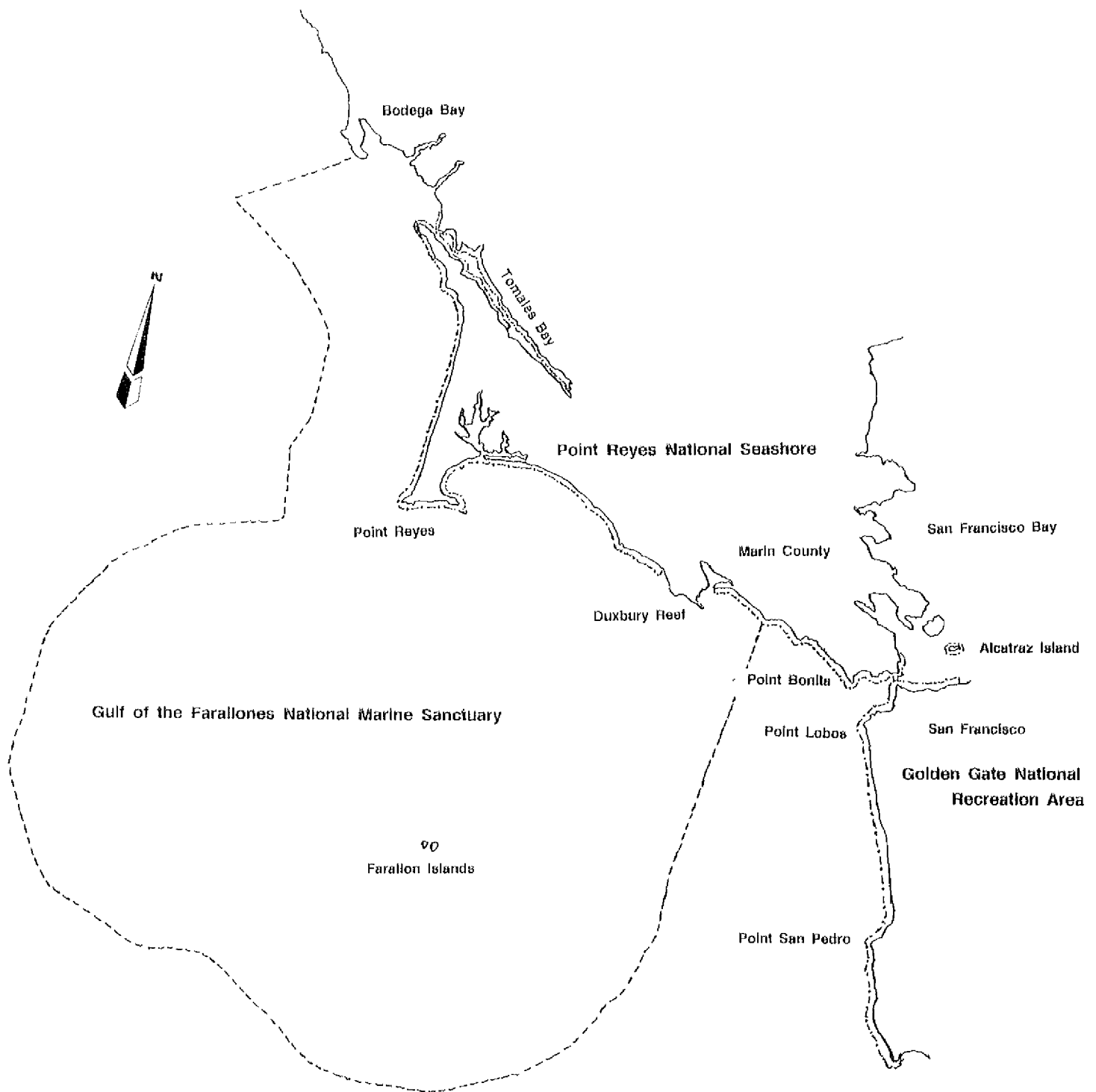
The earliest local source of building material was the forested slopes of Mount Tamalpais. Lumber from mills providing both cordwood for fuel and sawn wood for construction was shipped on small schooners from locations at Corte Madera on San Francisco Bay and in Bolinas Lagoon. Produce and dairy products to feed the region's growing population were shipped from Bolinas Bay and the Point Reyes area at Drakes Estero.

As the San Francisco Bay Region matured, maritime commerce grew correspondingly. The grain and lumber trades were in response to, and revolved around, the region's rich natural resources. Passenger routes developed along the coast and to points across the Pacific and around the world. These subjects are addressed in the Historical Overview section of this report.

NOTE

¹

George Davidson, Pacific Coast Pilot (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1889) p. 121.



HISTORICAL CONTEXTS OF VESSELS WRECKED IN THE PROJECT AREA

James P. Delgado

Introduction

The historical record indicates 151 vessels lost in the project area. The project area includes the coast and open waters from Bodega Head in the north to Point San Pedro in the south, the waters surrounding the Farallon Islands, the San Francisco Bay shoreline from Fort Mason to Fort Point, and the waters to one-fourth-mile offshore from Alcatraz Island. The activity of these vessels at the time of their loss clearly indicates the variety of maritime trade and commerce on this coast, and in particular it highlights the busy activities of the Port of San Francisco. From 1849 through the early decades of the twentieth century, San Francisco was the most important American port on the Pacific. The majority of its shipwrecks date from this period, although the chronological span of the wrecks runs from 1595, when the Spanish Manila galleon San Agustin was lost at Drakes Bay, to 1986, when the 70-foot fishing trawler Jack Jr. was hit and sank off Point Reyes.

Maritime Development on the Pacific Coast, 1542-1945

The Spanish conquest and settlement of Mexico in the first quarter of the sixteenth century opened the Pacific Ocean to Spain's mariners. By the mid-sixteenth century, voyages of exploration had probed northward along the California coast and west across the Pacific to the Orient. In 1542, an expedition led by Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo, a veteran of the Mexican conquest, "discovered" California's shores. Cabrillo was followed by other explorers, including Pedro de Unameno, who opened a trade route between the Philippines and Mexico in 1565, allowing Spain to finally realize Columbus' dream of a new trade route with the Indies. English freebooter Francis Drake challenged in 1579 the concept of the Pacific as a "Spanish lake" by making a bold piratical foray into the Pacific and landing and careening his ship, Golden Hind, on the California coast. The California shore was a frequent sight for the crews of the annual "Manila galleons" that sailed between Manila and Acapulco in Unameno's wake; a prominent landmark for voyagers was the Punta de los Tres Reyes (Point Reyes). It was to Point Reyes that one of the Manila captains, Sebastian Rodriguez Cermeno, was sent in 1595 to chart the coast for a suitable harbor. Cermeno lost his ship, San Agustin, when she dragged ashore in a gale while at anchor in Drakes Bay. Explorer Sebastian Vizcaino sailed up the California coast in 1602, landing at Monterey Bay and stopping briefly at Drakes to see what could be salvaged from San Agustin. His visit was the last in the region for more than a century.

The entrance to San Francisco Bay had eluded various explorers sailing along California's shores, largely because of the narrow harbor entrance at the Golden Gate, the masking influence of the east bay foothills in the background, and the redundant caution of the early mariners, who sailed well out to sea past the Farallones to avoid shipwreck. Ironically, the Bay was finally discovered by a land expedition in 1769. As part of a northward thrust during the initial effort to colonize California, troops under the command of Gaspar de Portola overshot their destination, Monterey, and stumbled onto San Francisco Bay. Other land

expeditions in 1770, 1772, 1774, and 1775 skirted the fringes of the bay and discovered the Golden Gate, and in August 1775, the first European vessel, a Spanish frigate named San Carlos, sailed through the Golden Gate and charted the bay's waters. The Spaniards considered the settlement and defense of the bay essential, and in 1776 they established a presidio and mission at the future site of San Francisco, as the northernmost limit of Spanish imperial expansion in North America. Soon supply ships began making irregular voyages to the Golden Gate.

The years of Spanish and Mexican hegemony in California (1769-1846) saw increasing numbers of vessels arriving on the California coast to engage in the sea-otter fur trade, smuggling, and the legal trade of China goods in exchange for California's abundant hides and tallow from the vast herds of cattle kept at various private ranchos. The booming nature of the hide trade gave rise to a new port in 1835, when naturalized Mexican citizen William A. Richardson, formerly a British mariner, founded the settlement of Yerba Buena on the San Francisco peninsula. Richardson's Yerba Buena was a small but busy hide-trading town, and had grown to a village of a few hundred by 1846, when war between the United States and Mexico commenced. Yerba Buena was an early American prize of the Mexican War, and in 1847 was renamed "San Francisco" by its Yankee military-appointed alcalde (mayor).

With the discovery of gold in California in 1848, the primacy of San Francisco as the principal port on the West Coast was confirmed, as thousands of vessels made their way to San Francisco as part of the Gold Rush. Because of the protection of the great inland harbor, the bay proved to be a relatively safe haven for the vessels. In addition, the great rivers that pierced California's interior drained into the bay, providing easy waterborne access to the Sierra foothills--and the gold "diggin's." In response to the Gold Rush traffic, San Francisco became a major metropolis, and as the principal port, it became the anchorage for hundreds of vessels and a way station for goods bound for the gold fields. The Pacific Coast, otherwise isolated from the rest of the world until the completion of the transcontinental railroad in 1869, depended on ships as the connecting link with civilization, bringing raw and manufactured goods, immigrants, and capital.

San Francisco in particular depended on shipborne goods as it grew rapidly in response to the Gold Rush. Lumber, bricks, food, machinery, and labor all came from the holds of vessels simply because San Francisco and the rest of California had only scarce agricultural and industrial output. Later, as industry and agriculture flourished elsewhere, the important role of maritime trade and commerce continued, but the role changed. The Pacific Coast was no longer just a consumer, but a productive partner. Reciprocal trade burgeoned with the establishment of lumber mills, farms, factories, and ranches. One of the initial maritime trades to develop in the aftermath of the Gold Rush was the active commerce resulting from the influx of goods from the Eastern seaboard and Europe to San Francisco, which subsequently shipped them to various smaller ports on the coast. Lumber, hay, grain, dairy products, produce, and meat were shipped up and down the coast, particularly to San Francisco. The rich groves of virgin redwood and Douglas fir along the coast sparked a busy lumber trade, supplying San Francisco and other growing urban areas on the West Coast, until the trade eventually expanded to meet the lumber needs of the world.

Throughout the active years of the lumber trade, ships were used for transport. The expense of constructing wagon roads and railroads to the forests was avoided by the cheaper and more expedient means of utilizing ships. At first, conditions were difficult. Ships built for other purposes were used, but eventually specialized coastal schooners were developed, propelled initially by sail and later by steam. The

schooners proved to be the backbone of West Coast shipping, many making the transition from lumber to general cargo. As old wooden ships were retired, new steel steamers were pressed into service by the same companies that had originally carried lumber. Hence, into the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s, new freighters carried on the tradition alongside a few hardy wooden veterans of days gone by. The freighters also ultimately replaced the large wood, iron, and steel sailing ships that had carried goods from Europe, South America, and the Orient in exchange for California products.

The transportation of people by sea to California peaked between 1848 and 1869 as the initial boom of Gold Rush migration continued. More than 500,000 persons were carried to and from San Francisco by the Panama steamers of the Pacific Mail Steamship Company and their competitors. Coastal steamers carried passengers from San Francisco to intermediate ports, such as San Diego, Santa Barbara, Monterey, Eureka, Portland, and Seattle, while smaller shallow-draft river steamers linked San Francisco with Sacramento and the other cities in California's heartland. The steam schooners developed in the 1880s for the lumber trade also carried passengers to and from the numerous small lumber mill towns and ports.

By the 1860s, the Pacific Mail, and soon thereafter other companies, began regular trans-Pacific service, opening San Francisco to trade and a massive influx of migration from Asia. As the transcontinental railroad and coastal railroads linked California and the Pacific Coast with the rest of the United States, the emphasis on passenger shipping shifted to the trans-Pacific routes and luxury recreational cruises, which continue to this day despite air travel.

Smaller craft also made important contributions. The bay and the waters of the Pacific were harvested for food, and large fleets of fishing vessels based at San Francisco, Monterey, and other ports soon became a frequent sight along the coast. From the junks of Chinese fishermen to the feluccas of Mediterranean immigrants, and finally to the Monterey boats and the trawlers of more modern times, fishing craft remained through the decades as important participants in the maritime industries of the San Francisco region.

The decline of Atlantic whaling grounds and the rise of San Francisco opened the Pacific Coast to America's whaling fleet, and by the 1880s San Francisco was the undisputed whaling capital of the United States. Dozens of whalers sailed and steamed from San Francisco each year for the North Pacific and Arctic whaling grounds. The last outpost of American whaling, a shoreside facility in Richmond, on San Francisco Bay, closed in the 1970s. Elsewhere on San Francisco Bay, small two-masted "scow schooners" were the workhorses of the bay, carrying oyster shells, hay, produce, and lumber to market from mudflat harbors and estuaries. Recreational craft boomed even in the difficult conditions of San Francisco Bay, and fleets of yachts appeared in the 1870s; today they are largely the masters of the bay.

Technology brought new fleets of vessels into service. The rich oil fields of California spawned many oil companies. The development of processing facilities on San Francisco Bay insured the harbor's continued use even though the other oil-rich harbors in Southern California ended San Francisco's primacy. Beginning in the 1920s, oil, gasoline, and kerosene tankers became increasingly numerous on the Pacific Coast as they made their way to and from San Francisco, San Pedro, and Ventura. As the need for larger cargoes increased, larger and more complex tankers were built, culminating in the supertankers of modern industry. Few of the older tankers are still in service. While older tankers were being replaced by more modern vessels, a revolution in cargo handling doomed the older bulk freighters.

Containerization spelled the end to San Francisco's active port and insured the success of Oakland. Now, tankers, container ships, yachts, and fishing boats, and an occasional visiting naval vessel are the usual denizens of San Francisco Bay's waters.

Maritime Trade Contexts for Vessels Wrecked in the Project Area

The various activities of the shipwrecked vessels in the project area are indicators of the variety of maritime trade and commerce on the Pacific Coast. The types and forms of these vessels demonstrate the range of naval architectural developments and the variety of marine engineering designs and propulsion systems. The categories or historical contexts for the vessels are as follows:

Voyages of Exploration and Settlement

*San Agustin, 1595

Hide and Tallow Trade

*Ayacucho, 1841

The California Gold Rush

Aberdeen, 1853
Caroline Amelia, 1850
Cornelius W. Lawrence, 1851
J. Sarkie, 1851
Java, 1850
Marshall, 1850
Mersey, 1850
Oxford, 1852

Petersburg, 1852
Robert Henderson, 1850
Samoset, 1852
Samuel S. Lewis, 1853
San Francisco, 1854
Tagus, 1851
Tennessee, 1853

General Coastal Trade, 1848-1939

Aberdeen, 1916
Albert, 1874
Anglo-American, 1861
*Annie, 1871
*Annie E. Smale, 1891
Beeswing, 1863
*Colonel Baker, 1913
Eliza P. Adams, 1860
Esperanza, 1892
Eureka, 1915
European, 1861
*Frances, 1879
H. Caroline, 1874
H. C. Almy, 1879
Henrietta, 1868

Isaac Reed, 1924
Joseph, 1880
*Lizzie Derby, 1891
Marin, 1861
Morning Light, 1868
Munleon, 1931
Parallel, 1887
R. D. Inman, 1909
Schah Jehan, 1867
Susanita, 1859
Shooting Star, 1861
Unnamed Scow
*Valentine Alviso, 1883
Western Shore, 1878

Pacific Coast Lumber Trade, 1850-1936

Aimer, 1871
Albion River, 1903
American Boy, 1890
Ann Perry, 1865
Bessie Everding, 1888
Coos Bay, 1927
Daisy Rowe, 1900
Drumburton, 1904
Dublin, 1882
Elko, 1881
Eureka, 1902
Fourth of July, 1878
George Louis, 1882
H. L. Rutgers, 1868
Hanalei, 1914
*Hartwood, 1929
J. E. Haskins, 1874
Jenny Ford, 1864
Josephine Wilcutt, 1872

King Philip, 1878
Louis, 1907
Melvina, 1868
*Nahumkeag, 1867
Neptune, 1900
Pet, 1888
Polaris, 1914
Pomo, 1913
Rachel, 1895
Samoa, 1913
Reporter, 1902
Two Brothers, 1883
Volunteer, 1906
W. H. Gawley, 1880
*William Ackmann, 1883
William F. Witzemann, 1907
William Frederick, 1887
William L. Beebe, 1884
Yosemite, 1926

Whaling

Atlantic, 1886

Fishing and Sealing

Acalin, 1934
Allesandro, 1874
Copper Queen, 1903
Corona, 1924
Eliza, 1871

H. L. Tiernan, 1882
San Domenico, 1940
*Shasta, 1936
Three Sisters, 1929

Transpacific Passenger and Cargo

City of New York, 1893
City of Rio de Janeiro, 1901

Kona, 1980

Coastal Passenger Trade

City of Chester, 1882
Granada, 1860
Helen W. Almy, 1899

Labouchere, 1866
Lucas, 1858
Prince Alfred, 1874

Tugs and Marine Salvage

Dolphin, 1890
Rescue, 1874

Samson, 1895

General Carrying Trade, 1854-1939

A. C. Dutton, 1953
Albert, 1919
Annie Sisie, 1871
Bremen, 1882
Brignardello, 1868
Champlain, 1875
Chateau Palmer, 1856
Claus Spreckels, 1888
Elizabeth, 1891
Erin's Star, 1880
F. W. Bailey, 1863
Francois Coppee, 1903
Franconia, 1881
Frank Jones, 1877
General Cushing, 1858

Gifford, 1903
Golden Fleece, 1854
Haddingtonshire, 1885
Hayes, 1869
Isaac Jeanes, 1876
Julia Castner, 1859
James Rolph, 1913
Jenny Lind, 1858
Lime Point, 1878
Noonday, 1863
Ohioan, 1937
Oliver Cutts, 1868
Sea Nymph, 1863
Warrior Queen, 1874
Zenobia, 1858

California Grain Trade

Lammermoor, 1882

Viscata, 1868

Petroleum Trade

Frank H. Buck, 1936
Lyman A. Stewart, 1922

Puerto Rican, 1985
*Richfield, 1930

Pilots and Aids to Navigation

Pathfinder, 1914

Naval and Military Activities

Benevolence, 1950
Henry Bergh, 1944
Novick, 1863

YF #734, 1945
YF #735, 1945
YFD #20, 1943

*Discussed previously in Submerged Cultural Resources Survey: Portions of Point Reyes National Seashore and Point Reyes-Farallon Islands National Marine Sanctuary, edited by Larry Murphy (Submerged Cultural Resources Unit, 1984).

Observations on the Significance of Vessels Wrecked in the Project Area

Historical contexts significant in the progression of United States, and specifically for Pacific Coast maritime history, have been identified for the majority of the vessels discussed in this report. The details of the careers and construction of many of these vessels indicate potential significance for most under the criteria of the National Register of Historic Places, should sufficient archeological integrity be present at the wreck site. While a more detailed discussion of significance will be found in the section of this report dealing with Management Recommendations, it is important to note that significance is more than the historical contexts and integrity of individual shipwreck sites; rather, the arrangement of the vessels in various contextual groups strongly underscores the significance of the 151 shipwrecks in the project area as a group of study collections. With several examples of certain types of vessels--vessels engaged in a specific historical event or trade, and vessels whose type developed through time--research questions could be developed for the study of several wrecks in order to better quantify the construction techniques and form of the American clipper ship. Possible study collections present in the project area include:

Gold Rush Wrecks: Cornelius W. Lawrence, Tennessee, Samuel S. Lewis, Caroline Amelia, Aberdeen, Marshall, Petersburg, Oxford, Tagus, Robert Henderson, Mersey, San Francisco.

Extreme and Medium Clipper Ships: San Francisco, Golden Fleece, Sea Nymph, Noonday, Frank Jones, King Philip.

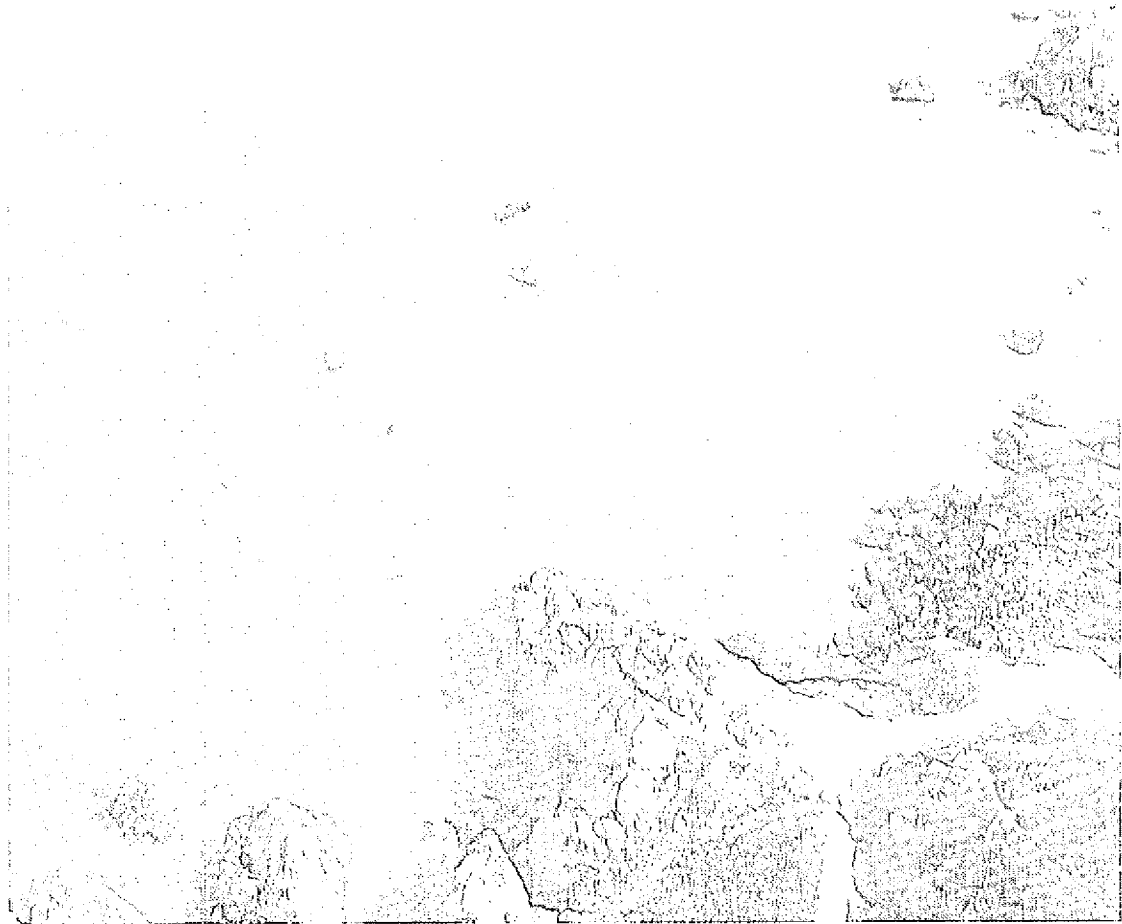
Early Screw Steamers: Samuel S. Lewis, Prince Alfred, Labouchere, Novick, City of Chester, City of Rio de Janeiro.

Development of the West Coast Steam Schooner: William Ackmann, Aberdeen, Pomo, Hartwood, Hanalei, Samoa, Yosemite.

Early Steam Tankers: Frank H. Buck, Lyman Stewart, Richfield.

Iron and Steel-Hulled Sailing Ships: Viscata, Lammermoor, Francois Coppee, Gifford, Drumburton, Haddingtonshire.

Early Twentieth Century Bulk Freighters: Ohioan, Munleon, Coos Bay.



Visible remains of Frank H. Buck and Lyman Stewart at Land's End, 1986. The triple expansion marine steam engine and rudder shaft of Buck lie directly off the point at the center of the photograph; Lyman Stewart's triple expansion engine lies perpendicular and to the right of Buck's. National Park Service photo by Richard Frear.

SUBMERGED CULTURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

James P. Delgado

Historical Research

Considerable historical research into shipwrecks located within the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, Point Reyes National Seashore, and the Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary has been conducted since 1978. The creation of park reference files for shipwrecks in GGNRA was accomplished in 1980, with files of primary and secondary source materials and photographs being maintained in the park historian's office at the GGNRA headquarters at Fort Mason, San Francisco. In the course of research, some vessels have been the focus of considerable research effort; not surprisingly, these are usually vessels that have been or are expected to be the focus of archeological documentation activity. The shipwrecks extensively researched to date have been SS Tennessee, King Philip, Neptune, City of New York, City of Rio de Janeiro, Frank H. Buck, Lyman Stewart, Samuel S. Lewis, San Agustin, Atlantic, C. W. Lawrence, Oxford, and Golden Fleece. Files for these shipwrecks in some cases include merchant-vessel documentation records, logbooks, passenger diaries and accounts, newspaper and official reports of the wreck event, plans, and photographs. Of particular note was the cataloguing of manuscript plans from the Union Iron Works collection at the National Maritime Museum, San Francisco, for the tankers Lyman Stewart and Frank H. Buck; the preparation of a master's thesis on the history and archeology of SS Tennessee; and the publication of articles pertaining to the history of C. W. Lawrence and Tennessee in the American Neptune. Historical accounts of some shipwrecks in GGNRA were published in 1983 in conjunction with the National Maritime Museum exhibit "Shipwrecks of the Golden Gate," and brief histories of three wrecks and a guide to visible shipwrecks in GGNRA were published in the Winter 1986 issue of The Park, the illustrated newsletter of the Golden Gate National Parks Association.

Archeological Research: SS Tennessee

Maritime archeological research in the region began in 1980 with the remains of SS Tennessee at Tennessee Cove in the Marin County portion of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area. In August 1980, GGNRA Park Archeologist Martin Mayer and GGNRA Park Historian James Delgado performed a walking survey of Tennessee Cove beach after a late summer storm. The crosstail from Tennessee's engine was located partially buried at the south end of the narrow 400-yard-long beach. Sand was hand-troweled away to expose the crosstail for photographs and measured drawings. On January 14, 1981, a survey of the beach was conducted with hand-held metal detectors. Two concentrations of buried metal objects in the immediate vicinity of the crosstail in the surf zone of the beach were noted and recorded.

Based on this work, the site was nominated to the National Register of Historic Places in February 1981. Subsequently "Shipwreck Site and Remains, SS Tennessee" was placed in the National Register on April 15, 1981. Following the listing of the property, several visits to monitor artifact exposure during seasonal winter-beach

erosion were made in 1981-1982. In early 1981 more than 400 artifacts were exposed on the beach following a major flooding episode that caused Tennessee Creek to wash much of the beach sand into the cove. In February 1981 a volunteer crew of archeologists from the College of Marin and the Miwok Archeological Preserve of Marin worked under National Park Service supervision to record and remove 230 loose artifacts from the exposed shingle substrata of the beach. The recovered artifacts were cleaned, catalogued, and placed in passive desalinization. Of the 230 artifacts recovered, 49 (23%) were determined to be from SS Tennessee, including nine wrought-iron drift bolts, 13 pieces of cast-iron treads and a walkway from the engine room, five parts of cast and wrought-iron machinery, 16 iron ship spikes, and nine brass boat nails.

On March 19, 1981, a winter storm stripped an additional area of the beach, exposing a deeper strata of shingle and revealing pockets of yellow metal sheathing nails, fragments of copper sheathing, brass spikes, brass wood screws, glass and ceramic fragments, and iron drifts. An additional 40 items were recovered; after analysis, 35 were determined to be from Tennessee. These artifacts included a Spanish silver onereale piece of 1788, fragments of two separate "cathedral" glass bottles, fragments of a fluted glass bottle, the base of a dark green liquor bottle, a shard of crockery, riveted iron plating, and a curved iron artifact marked "-----Chemical Soot Remover." To further test the shingle substrata of the beach, five 1-meter-square units were hand-excavated along the limits of the exposed shingle. The overburden of sand and loose shingle was hand-troweled to a depth of 20-30 cm. to reach a hard-packed stratum of sterile gravel. A number of small artifacts was recovered; more than 100 sheathing nails, fragments of brass spikes, and many small (less than 2 cm.) fragments of copper sheathing were excavated.

Four additional artifacts were disclosed by winter-beach erosion in 1981. On March 20, 1981, a large wrought-iron shaft was observed lying in the surf perpendicular to the shoreline. A cast-iron crank was attached to the shaft end closest to the shore. The 10-inch-diameter shaft was approximately 18 feet long; the offshore end was buried in sand and the actual end could not accurately be discerned beyond 16 feet. A one-and-one-half-inch diameter bolt was observed near the offshore end of the shaft. A comparison of the shaft with engine-room drawings of SS Tennessee helped identify the artifact as a paddle-wheel shaft from the wreck.

Erosion of the beach by Tennessee Creek also exposed a 3-by-5-foot piece of double-riveted iron plate one-and-one-half inches thick with torn and buckled edges. The plate may be from Tennessee's boilers or from her freshwater tanks. The plating was removed from the beach and placed in passive desalinization at the National Maritime Museum, San Francisco. Two smaller brass items were also recovered near the crosstail at the same time. One object is small and flanged with a threaded socket at one end; two rivets hold fragments of thin brass plating. The item appears to be a flanged mount for a brass instrument. The second object, a highly eroded piece of brass plating pierced with numerous one-fourth-inch diameter holes, is either from a "rose" from Tennessee's sea-water intakes or part of a bilge-pump strainer.

Archeological work in the cove initially centered on locating the main cluster of wreckage associated with SS Tennessee. A preliminary survey of the cove with a handheld proton-precession magnetometer located a series of anomalies near the surf line that apparently represent Tennessee wreckage, which spreads out into the cove to approximately 300 yards offshore. Dives made to assess the anomalies concluded without a visual sighting of cultural material; the remains of the ship are apparently buried beneath a sand overburden. It is believed that at certain periods the sand overburden is partially eroded, perhaps during the summer months when the beach

is heavily built up by accretion of sand from the cove. At least one sport diver has mentioned swimming through an area of large metal objects, pipes, and shafts in the cove. Unfortunately, the cove is a small opening on a steep rocky coastline open to the Pacific swell, and is an extremely high-energy environment. Underwater activity to date has been rare and limited.

To aid in the research of Tennessee, a non-profit organization, the SS Tennessee Archaeological Project, Inc., was organized by volunteers led by archaeology student Robert L. Bennett of San Rafael. Incorporated in 1982, the Tennessee Project performed several functions: organizing volunteer survey efforts at the site, conducting a successful public relations campaign which included public lectures, drafting a research design to guide future archeological work, and generating sufficient funds through private donations, grants, and sales of project T-shirts to fund historical research. The Tennessee Project terminated in 1987.

Environmentally Exposed Shipwreck Remains: Rodeo Lagoon, Neptune, Pomo, and King Philip/Reporter

In late December 1982, the remains of a wooden vessel were exposed by storm-induced winter-beach erosion at the base of the cliffs at Fort Funston, south of Ocean Beach in Golden Gate National Recreation Area. The remains present at the site consisted of one large piece of hull structure, 48.5 feet long and 7.6 feet wide, which represented a starboard portion of the hull running from midships aft to the stern. This portion included the hull from the turn of the bilge to a point just below the sheerstrake; the remains of a hold-beam-shelf were noted near the aftermost end. The vessel was iron-fastened and constructed of Douglas fir.

On December 26 and 27, 1982, the hull portion, which was partially filled with wave-washed boulders and shingle, was hand-excavated by Historian Delgado and volunteer archeologists Greg Brown, Rebecca LaFontaine, and Robert Bennett, to expose the ceiling planking. The hull was divided into 10-foot-square units and mapped; a photographic mosaic of the hull was also prepared. A clinch-bolt and treenail were removed for analysis, as well as timber samples from the outer hull planking, frames, and ceiling. After the photographic and measured documentation was completed on December 27, the hull was filled with boulders and sand to rebury it on site. Subsequently, a landslide buried the remains deeply under sand from the cliffs above.

Analysis of remains determined the vessel to have been about 100 by 30 feet, two-masted, of Pacific coast construction and late nineteenth century origin. Historical accounts indicated two vessels lost in the area; one of those, the two-masted schooner Neptune, was ultimately determined to be the source of the vessel remains. Neptune, built in 1882 at Eureka, California, was 106 by 30 by 8.6 feet, a near match for the estimated dimensions of the hull associated with the vessel remains. The remains were designated California Archeological Site CA-SFr-107H; a project report was prepared and published in 1983, and a revised version of the report was published in Historical Archaeology, Volume 20, in 1986.

A winter storm in March 1983 uncovered the partial remains of another wooden vessel on the sand spit of Rodeo Lagoon in the Marin headlands of Golden Gate National Recreation Area. A piece of oak sternson (approximately 36 inches by 36 inches with an attached fragment of inner sternpost and fragments of outer hull planking, with brass fastenings and stubs of copper sheathing nails) was in the process of being stripped by park visitors when a park maintenance worker removed the piece to safekeeping in the Marin Headlands Maintenance Yard. The piece was

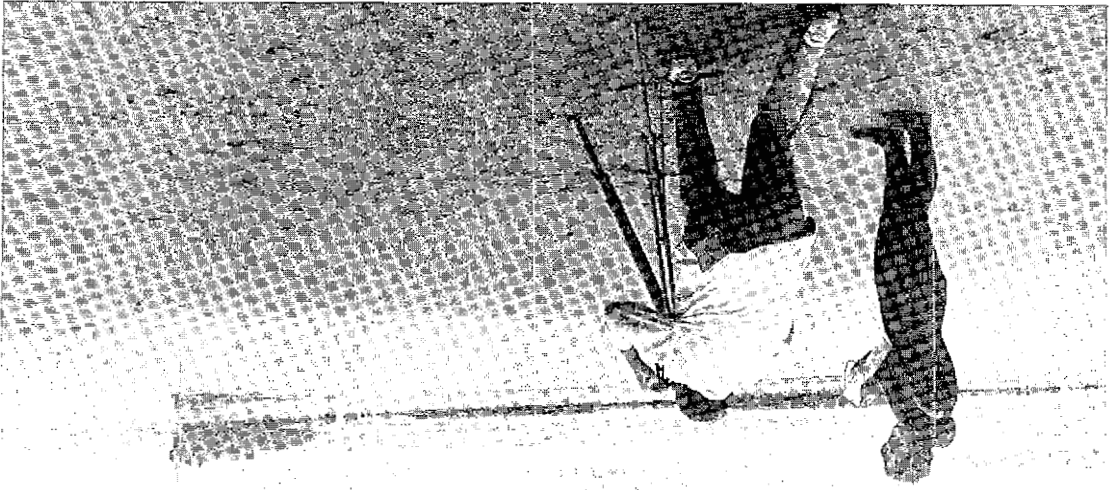
documented, and measured drawings were prepared by GGNRA Archeologist Martin Mayer and Historian James Delgado on March 4, 1983. The piece was determined to be from an early-to-mid-nineteenth century shipwreck less than 130 feet in length. It was removed from the Marin Headlands and is now in curatorial storage at the National Maritime Museum, San Francisco.

The winter storms of 1982-1983 also exposed eight pieces of wreckage from the wooden steam schooner Pomo at Drakes Beach and on Limantour Spit, both places on the shores of Drakes Bay in Point Reyes National Seashore. A team led by Historian James Delgado, composed of Archeologist Martin T. Mayer and volunteer archeologists Greg Brown and Rebecca LaFontaine, plotted the locations of the vessel remains and prepared measured drawings of a portion of starboard bow structure on March 14, 1983. Four pieces of wreckage were decking, two with associated carling and coamings; the others were portions of the hull. The drawings and a brief report of the beach work done with Pomo's remains was published in 1984 in the final report on the Phase 1 and 2 Reconnaissance of Drakes Bay.

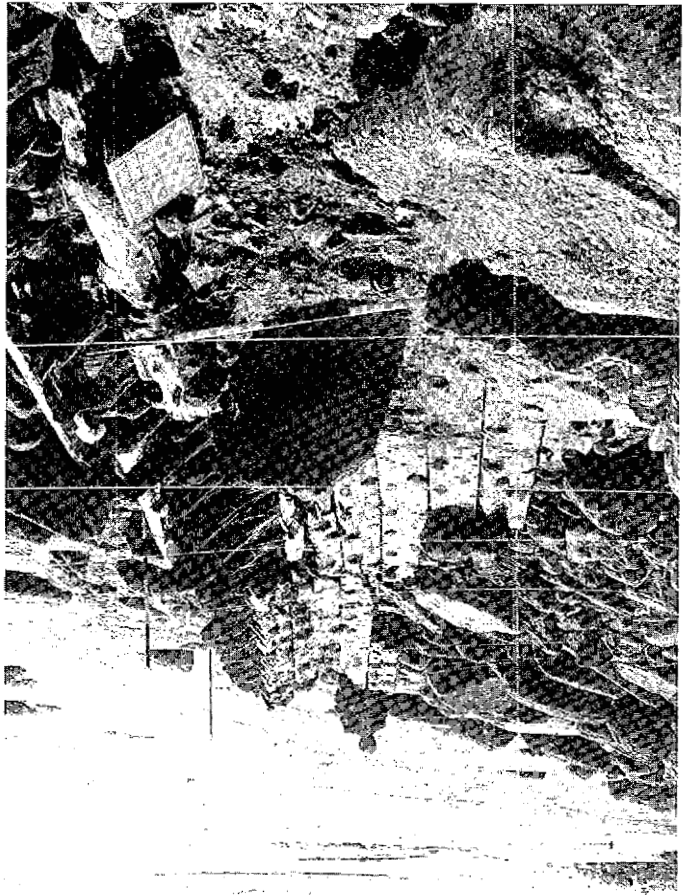
In 1982 a resident of San Francisco's western shore notified GGNRA park staff that the remains of a wooden vessel were exposed at the foot of Ortega Street on Ocean Beach. Investigation of the site in 1982 provided no results; only 3 inches of frame ends and a stem post were visible. Winter beach erosion in early 1983 exposed more of the bow and stern structure, however. The exposed remains were mapped in March 1983 by a team led by Delgado and Mayer that included volunteers Greg Brown, Rebecca LaFontaine, Robert Bennett, and Raymond Aker. Detailed measured drawings of the vessel's scantily exposed bow and stern were prepared, and the vessel was identified by size and location as the 1856 medium clipper King Philip, wrecked at the site in 1878. Timber samples taken in 1983 helped confirm the identification of the vessel, which was probed with a water-jet lance. The team encountered shingle, some apparent ballast, and the buried port and starboard portions of the hull midships. As a result of the probing, it was determined that from 40 to 50 percent of King Philip's intact hull lay buried on the beach.

The vessel remains were buried by summer beach accretion in 1983 but were exposed again, this time to a greater extent, in April and May of 1984, allowing for diver access to the bow and the sternpost, which still held the gudgeons and dumb-chalders for the rudder. The entire outline of the hull was exposed, and documentation of the wreck's upper portions proceeded photographically and through measured drawings. A magnetometer survey of the hull and wreck area indicated a considerable buried mass of wreckage near King Philip's bow. In addition, intrusive wire rigging, a lead soil pipe, small bobstays with deadeyes and hemp rigging still attached, and Douglas fir timbers with iron drifts indicated that a second wreck lay adjacent to and partially inside King Philip. The second vessel was determined to be the 1875 schooner Reporter, wrecked at the same site in 1902.

The remains of King Philip have not been sufficiently exposed since 1984 to allow further documentation. A preliminary site report was prepared in 1985 and published in Historical Archaeology Special Publication No. 4, Proceedings of the 16th Annual Conference on Underwater Archaeology held in Boston, Massachusetts, in 1985. The wrecks of King Philip and Reporter were nominated to the National Register of Historic Places in late 1985; the sites were placed in the National Register at a national level of significance on May 11, 1986. King Philip's substantially intact remains comprise the only known remains of an American medium clipper ship, and are the most intact known remains of any wooden shipwreck on the California coast.



Left: Remains of *Neptune*
exposed by winter storms at
Fort Funston, December 1983.
National Park Service photo by
James P. Delgado.
Below: The exposed hull of
King Philip on Ocean Beach,
1984. National Park Service
photo by Richard Frear.



Drakes Bay Remote Sensing Survey, Reconnaissance, and Inventory

In 1982 and 1983 the first major submerged-cultural-resource management activities on the Pacific Coast commenced with a joint project of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the National Park Service to survey portions of the Point Reyes-Farallon Islands National Marine Sanctuary and Point Reyes National Seashore for underwater cultural material. The project was directed in all phases by Daniel J. Lenihan, chief of NPS's Submerged Cultural Resource Unit, with interagency coordination provided by Western Regional Archeologist Roger Kelly. The project was manned by personnel from SCRUC, Point Reyes National Seashore, Golden Gate National Recreation Area, the U.S. Coast Guard and United States Geological Survey, as well as volunteers, private consulting archeologists, and technicians.

Project work was accomplished in three phases: The first ran from August 23 to September 5, 1982; the second from October 4 to 14, 1982; and the third from September 7 to 14, 1983. Data collecting by proton-precession magnetometer, side-scan sonar, and sub-bottom profiler survey was accomplished. A total of 2.5 square miles was covered by magnetometer, and 49 clusters of anomalies were identified for priority test excavation. Ten square miles of side-scan sonar coverage was obtained, along with 30 linear miles of sub-bottom profiler survey. Diver assessment of many anomalies disclosed no visible cultural materials.

The remains of five shipwrecked vessels were disclosed, including two that were protruding above the water surface. The steam schooners Shasta, Pomo, and Hartwood were located, as was the freighter Munleon and the tanker Richfield. Pomo's triple-expansion steam engine and Shasta's boilers are visible at low tide in Drakes Bay. The third field session in 1983 mapped the wreckage scatter of Munleon, as well as a schooner landing in Drakes Estero. Six anomaly clusters were re-investigated with negative findings, and brief reconnaissance dives were made on Pomo, which disclosed some intact, wooden hull structure beneath the engine, and on Richfield, which was found to be scattered along a rock reef in dark, fast waters.

The Drakes Bay project engendered a considerable media response, particularly with the ongoing possibility of discovering the remains of the 1595 Spanish Manila galleon San Agustin. The survey boats were visited in action by the press, who obtained underwater footage of Munleon for press and broadcast. Through this coverage, the public gained a better understanding and appreciation of the region's submerged cultural resources. The successful interagency project was completed, and planning for future phases of work, including test excavation, was begun. Project reports, one edited by Larry Murphy and the other by Toni Carrell (both of the NPS Submerged Cultural Resource Unit, which documented the shipwrecks in Drakes Bay and along the Point Reyes headlands), discussed the methodology of the project and the results of the three field seasons.

Ocean Beach Remote-Sensing Survey

A cooperative project between the GGNRA and the Nautical Heritage Museum of Dana Point, California, in October 1983 resulted in the survey of tide and submerged lands along a one-fourth-mile section of the southern end of Ocean Beach. The Nautical Heritage Museum provided GGNRA with a \$2,400 donation to conduct a historical study and an archeological survey to document the operational history and to locate the remains of the 1848 U.S. revenue cutter C. W. Lawrence. The survey, which was conducted between October 26-28, 1983, was undertaken by

NPS SCRUI archeologist Larry Murphy, GGNRA Park Historian James Delgado, GGNRA Park Archeologist Martin Mayer, NPS Western Regional Archeologist Roger Kelly, volunteers Fred Boeck and Larry Tew, and a crew and vessel from the U.S. Coast Guard's 12th District.

Thick fog and heavy seas breaking in the shallow survey area sharply curtailed the survey activities; nonetheless, a series of anomalies were plotted that may represent the 1894 wreck of the three-masted lumber schooner William L. Beebe. Magnetometer traverses on the beach located a number of anomalies of undetermined origin that could possibly be wreckage from any one of the three vessels wrecked in the area: Lawrence, William L. Beebe, or the two-masted schooner Aimer, wrecked in 1871. Considerable historical research was undertaken for the project and was incorporated in the final report published in February 1984. As noted earlier, the history of Lawrence was revised and published in the scholarly journal American Neptune in 1986.

In September and October, 1987, a 2,770-foot section of Ocean Beach, running from the foot of Noriega to the foot of Rivera Street, was surveyed by a team of archeologists from Espey, Huston & Associates under contract to the City of San Francisco Clean Water Program and by permit from the National Park Service. The survey, using a proton precession magnetometer, was of a section of beach that will be affected by construction of a seawall to protect the Great Highway and the sewer buried beneath it.

Under the supervision of EH&A archeologist Robert Gearhart, a magnetic contour map of the beach, generated on EH&A's Intergraph computer system, delineated areas of known or potential shipwreck scatter, including the wrecks of King Philip and Reporter. Two additional areas delineated may represent wreckage from Aberdeen (1916) and Atlantic (1886). In April 1988, the EH&A archeologists conducted additional surveys and limited test excavation at the supposed Atlantic site, exposing and documenting a fragment of a copper-sheathed ship's keel tentatively identified as being from the wreck of Atlantic.

The results of the EH&A surveys suggested that the construction of the seawall would not impact any of the shipwreck sites identified in the magnetic survey. A report on the EH&A survey and excavation was published in July 1988.

Interpretation

The interpretation of shipwrecks in the Gulf of the Farallones was enhanced in 1983 with the installation of a temporary exhibit, "Shipwrecks of the Golden Gate," at the National Maritime Museum, San Francisco. The exhibit, which opened in June and ran through the end of the year, was enthusiastically received by the public. A guide to the exhibit, Shipwrecks of the Golden Gate, was published by the National Maritime Museum Association along with a souvenir postcard of the exhibit's advertising poster. As part of the exhibit effort, three historic views of the shipwrecks of Gifford, Frank Jones, and the ferry El Capitan were published by the Golden Gate National Parks Association, along with a reprint of surviving passenger Fred Stocking's account of the wreck of SS Tennessee.

A cooperative effort with the Nautical Heritage Museum at Dana Point, California, in 1983 resulted in a grant of funds to archeologically survey a portion of Ocean Beach for the remains of the U.S. revenue cutter C. W. Lawrence. Considerable historical research into Lawrence's career and characteristics, as well as her wreck, were incorporated by the museum into a video documentary of the construction of

Californian, a tall-ship training vessel and replica of Lawrence. An exhibit on Lawrence travels with the modern-day ship Californian, and those interpretive materials enhance public awareness of Lawrence wherever Californian calls on her voyages.

With the installation of permanent park wayside exhibits at Point Reyes National Seashore and Golden Gate National Recreation Area in 1984, 1985, and 1986, shipwreck events in both parks were interpreted further. Specific shipwrecks noted in the waysides were Munleon, Frank H. Buck, Lyman Stewart, Ohioan, and Tennessee. An exhibit of shipwreck events, including a model of the wreck of the four-masted schooner Annie Smale, was installed at the Point Reyes Light Visitor Center at Point Reyes National Seashore; likewise, an exhibit of shipwrecks, including a map showing visible shipwrecks, was installed at the Cliff House Visitor Center at Golden Gate National Recreation Area. Fort Point National Historic Site, a unit of Golden Gate National Recreation Area, received new exhibits in 1986; among them was a room devoted to aids to navigation and shipwrecks at Fort Point. One panel specifically interprets the shipwrecks, the maritime museum resources of the GGNRA, and the active submerged-cultural-resource program of the park. A temporary exhibit on the wreck of SS Tennessee and the archeological work on her remains (once on display at the Marin Headlands Visitor Center of GGNRA) is currently in the process of being mounted as a permanent exhibit.

Interpretive walks in GGNRA also focus the public's attention on the shipwrecks within the park. A "Landslides and Shipwrecks" walk is offered by the rangers in GGNRA's Ocean District, which follows a historic railroad alignment along San Francisco's Lands End. The rangers discuss the wrecks of Ohioan, Frank H. Buck, Lyman Stewart, and Coos Bay. A Tennessee Valley/Tennessee Cove walk, offered by rangers and volunteers-in-park in GGNRA's Marin Headlands District, interprets the history, wreck, and archeology of SS Tennessee. Interpretation of the wrecks through the local media has also proved particularly effective: news stories, including national coverage, have been aired and published on Drakes Bay wrecks, highlighting San Agustin, Tennessee, King Philip, Frank H. Buck, Lyman Stewart, Pomo, City of Rio de Janeiro, and Neptune. San Francisco educational television station KTEH-54 aired a one-hour special featuring park staff discussing King Philip, Frank H. Buck, and Lyman Stewart, and radio station KCBS-74 has aired two hour-long call-in talk shows with park staff discussing shipwrecks and maritime archeology in the Gulf of the Farallones.

Collections Management

Artifact collections in the National Maritime Museum, San Francisco, relate to shipwrecks within the boundaries of Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary, Golden Gate National Recreation Area, and Point Reyes National Seashore. The artifacts include items salvaged from the ships at the time of their wrecks as well as items recovered in later years by sport divers or from archeological research. The nameboard of the steam schooner Aberdeen, which wrecked on Ocean Beach in 1916, is on display at the National Maritime Museum building at the foot of Polk Street. The museum collection includes items salvaged at the time of the shipwreck events: brass letters from the stern of Frank H. Buck, a brass gimbeled oil lamp and a taffrail log from Ohioan, a life-ring and door lock from the captain's cabin of City of Rio de Janeiro, and the captain's sextant case from the 1886 wreck of Atlantic. Plans for the engines of City of Rio de Janeiro as well as rigging specifications for the schooner Reporter are located in the museum's historic documents collection; original oil paintings of the wrecks of City of Chester and King Philip are in the museum's fine arts collection.

Artifacts recovered in later years from shipwrecks in the study area include the bell of the clipper ship Noonday, a sheave and deadeye from City of New York, engine-room brass machinery parts and copper steam pipe from Ohioan, and archeologically recovered artifacts from Tennessee, Neptune, Reporter, and King Philip. The most notable artifacts in the latter group are the bobstays of Reporter and a section of boilerplate from Tennessee. Unfortunately, conservation of most of these artifacts has not taken place; passive desalinization of the Reporter and Tennessee artifacts is an ongoing preservation activity at the museum's Collections Management facility at Building 315, Fort Mason.

Other San Francisco Bay Area institutions and museums possess artifacts relating to the shipwrecks of the region. The Bolinas Town Hall in Bolinas, California, displays the nameboards of Munleon, Hanalei, and R. D. Inman. A life-ring and debris from the 1891 wreck of Elizabeth at Slide Ranch is in the collections of the Sausalito Historical Society. Artifacts including Ming porcelain from the wreck of San Agustin, discovered during excavation of prehistoric archeological sites on Drakes Bay, are curated in the collections of the Treganza Museum of Anthropology at San Francisco State University and the Lowie Museum of Anthropology at the University of California, Berkeley. The Bancroft Library at the University of California, Berkeley, holds in its collection, among other things, a manuscript chart of regional shipwrecks drawn up by former United States Coast and Geodetic Survey chief George Davidson, circa 1890, as well as an original watercolor of the wreck of Viscata and albumen prints, carte-de-visites, and stereopticon views of the wrecks of Oliver Cutts and other shipwrecks.

VESSEL LOSSES, POINT SAN PEDRO TO POINT LOBOS

James P. Delgado

The area between Point Lobos and Point Pedro is one of the highest zones of shipwreck concentration. Numerous maritime accidents have occurred here, including 28 "total losses" that left shipwreck sites in the material record between 1851 and 1926.

Aberdeen, 1916
Aimer, 1871
Ann Perry, 1865
Atlantic, 1886
Beeswing, 1863
Bessie Everding, 1888
Brignardello, 1868
Cornelius W. Lawrence, 1851
Drumburton, 1904
Dublin, 1882
Eliza, 1871
Eureka, 1902
F. W. Bailey, 1863
Gifford, 1903
J. Sarkie, 1851
James Rolph, 1913
Julia Castner, 1859
Josephine Wilcutt, 1872
King Philip, 1878
Neptune, 1900
Ohioan, 1936
Parallel, 1887
Reporter, 1902
Robert Henderson, 1850
W. H. Gawley, 1880
William L. Beebe, 1884
William Frederick, 1887
Yosemite, 1926

Aberdeen

The 499-ton steam schooner Aberdeen was built at Aberdeen, Washington, in 1899 by J. Lindstrom. A single-ended steam schooner, Aberdeen was 169.8 feet long, with a 34.2-foot beam and an 11.8-foot depth of hold. [1] Aberdeen was powered by a 425-horsepower compound engine. Built for the Pacific Lumber Company, Aberdeen carried passengers and up to 500,000 board feet of lumber on her coastwise voyages. [2] Aberdeen's lumber-trade career ended in 1911 when she was sold to Fred Linderman of San Francisco. In conjunction with Linderman's steam schooner Signal, Aberdeen hauled barges of garbage from Oakland out the Golden Gate and dumped the loads off the Farallons. [3] The service was controversial because garbage occasionally floated ashore to litter San Francisco and San Mateo County beaches.

Alternately running three times a week to dump their loads 25 miles off the Golden Gate, Aberdeen and Signal operated without incident until 1913, when heavy seas on the bar claimed Signal and several of her crew. Unfortunately for Linderman, Aberdeen later shared Signal's fate. On January 23, 1916, while nearing the Golden Gate after dumping her load of garbage, Aberdeen encountered rough seas that capsized and broke up the ship. Several of the crew, including Capt. Knudson, were lost. [4] Within a few days, most of Aberdeen's shattered hull came ashore along a 3-mile stretch of Ocean Beach. Her timbers attracted curious onlookers before disappearing beneath the sand.

NOTES

1

United States Department of Commerce, Thirty-Eighth Annual List of Merchant Vessels of the United States... (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1906) p. 175. (Cited hereafter as Merchant Vessels of the United States.)

2

John Lyman, "Pacific Coast Wooden Steam Schooners, 1884-1924," The Marine Digest, May 8, 1943, p. 1.

3

Jack McNairn and Jerry MacMullen, Ships of the Redwood Coast (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1949) p. 68.

4

Op. cit., Lyman, pp. 68, and San Francisco Chronicle, January 24-30, 1916.



Wreckage from the steam schooner Aberdeen washed ashore on Ocean Beach after the vessel wrecked on the San Francisco Bar, 1916. San Francisco Maritime NHP photo by Walter Scott.

Aimer

The two-masted schooner Aimer, built at Coos Bay, Oregon, in or around 1870, was a small coasting vessel registered at 96.25 tons. [1] Aimer was one of a large number of small two-masted schooners in the Pacific Coast lumber trade, carrying lumber and occasionally general cargo from small logging ports to San Francisco. On Monday, June 26, 1871, Aimer arrived off San Francisco with 140 tons of coal, 35,000 board feet of lumber, and some cordwood from Coos Bay. [2]

A dense fog and strong southerly current caused Aimer's master to miss his bearings while the schooner drifted past the Golden Gate. Mistaking a light from Ocean-Side House (a structure located at what is now the intersection of Vicente Street and the Great Highway) for the light at Point Bonita, the northern head of the harbor entrance, the captain tacked for what he thought was the Golden Gate. Aimer was sailed into the breakers. The anchors were let go but failed to hold, and Aimer soon went up on the beach, where she filled with water. The position of the beached vessel was given as "on the beach abreast of the Ocean-Side House." [3]

The chances of getting her off were slight. The cargo was lost, and though "the rigging and sails will probably be saved...the vessel will go to pieces, as the sea is making a great breach in her." [4] Amazingly, the wreck held together sufficiently to be pulled free of the beach by tugs six weeks later, on August 9, 1871. The damage to Aimer was substantial though, as beachcombers had joined the surf in stripping the schooner of her mainmast, bowsprit, two deck beams, and part of the mainrail and bulwarks. [5] Unfortunately, in the rescue attempt the hawsers attached to the water-logged hulk parted, and Aimer once again went ashore, broadside, where she was abandoned.

NOTES

1

Op. cit., Merchant Vessels of the United States (1871) p. 10.

2

San Francisco Daily Alta California, June 28, 1871.

3

Ibid.

4

Ibid. June 29, 1871.

5

Ibid. August 10, 1871.

Ann Perry

The bark Ann Perry was an early participant in the Pacific Coast lumber trade, arriving at San Francisco for the first time on November 30, 1850, with 276,000 board feet of lumber from Port Madison, Washington. [1] Apart from this, the early history and particulars of Ann Perry were not located. On January 3, 1865, Ann Perry arrived off the Golden Gate laden with 300,000 board feet of lumber and 250 sacks of potatoes from Puget Sound. She did not enter the Gate "...owing to the fog and want of a fair breeze...and lay off the bar for the night." During the evening the seas became rough, and Ann Perry dragged in to the beach, grounding a "few hundred yards" south of Cliff House. [2]

The wreck broke up in the surf almost immediately, drowning Capt. Trask and three of his crew. The vessel was described a week later:

It lies high and dry on the beach....The hull seems to have broken entirely up, and the stout masts were snapped in pieces, and her timbers torn and splintered....The bulk of the lumber lies in a single pile, upon the wreck of the hull, fragments of the masts, the capstan, and other heavy articles, lying on top of all. A portion of the lumber, and large pieces of the deck and sides of the vessel, were carried by the waves further in shore and scattered on the beach.... [3]

Local residents scavenged what they could from the wreck. A gang of Chinese laborers hired by Ann Perry's owner, Capt. Chase of San Francisco, saved what they could of the cargo and "timbers of the wreck, and in a few days the last trace of the vessel and cargo will have disappeared." The sacks of potatoes, buried beneath the lumber, were sold for \$60 to Capt. Junius Foster, proprietor of Cliff House. [4]

NOTES

¹ Louis J. Rasmussen, San Francisco Ship Passenger Lists (Colma, California: San Francisco Historic Records, 1965) Vol. 1, p. 7.

² San Francisco Daily Alta California, January 5, 1865.

³ Ibid., January 9, 1865.

⁴ Ibid.

Atlantic

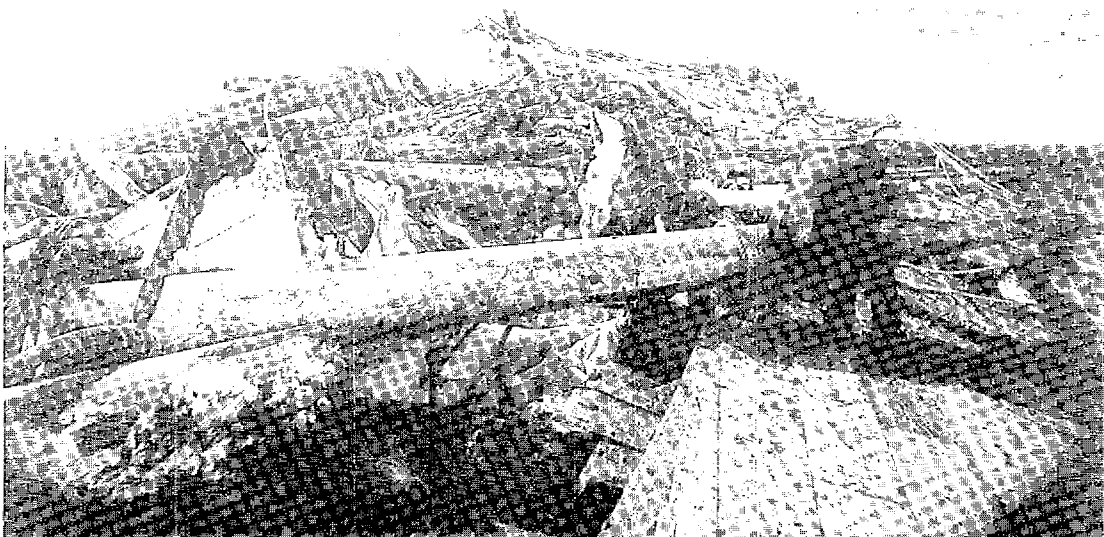
The 366 57/95-ton bark Atlantic was built at New Bedford, Massachusetts, in 1851. Built for the whaling trade, Atlantic was 116.10 feet long, with a 26.3-foot beam and a 13.1-foot depth of hold and was built with two decks, a square stern, and a billett-head. [1] The bark sailed from New Bedford on October 31, 1851, for the Atlantic whaling grounds. She was gone until July 17, 1854, when she returned with 1,097 barrels of sperm whale oil, 196 barrels of whale oil, and 600 lbs. of whalebone. [2] Atlantic again sailed from New Bedford on October 14, 1854, for the Pacific Ocean whaling grounds. She did not return until five years later, on May 28, 1859, with 1,170 barrels of sperm-oil. [3] On May 1, 1860, she again cleared for the Pacific, remaining until May 4, 1864, when she returned with 211 barrels of sperm-oil and 10 barrels of whale-oil. [4]

Sold to new owners, William R. and Joseph Wing, Atlantic did not sail again until the Civil War ended. [5] As large numbers of American merchant vessels were being swept from the seas by Confederate raiders, and a number of whalers were burnt in the North Pacific by the Confederate raider Shenandoah, Atlantic's 18-month lay-up was a wise decision. Between 1865 and 1881, she made five extended whaling voyages from New Bedford. [6] Beginning in 1881, she began to sail out of San Francisco, which had become the principal whaling port in the United States with the decline of the Atlantic whale fishery and the rise of the North Pacific and Arctic fisheries. [7] For the next five years Atlantic made short voyages of less than a year's duration.

Arriving at San Francisco on November 16, 1886, with 600 barrels of oil and 11,000 lbs. of whalebone, Atlantic was readied for her next year at sea. [8] One month later, on December 16, she cleared San Francisco for the last time. After being towed out the Golden Gate, Atlantic anchored off the bar when the wind died. Caught in a heavy swell, the ship began to drift toward shore. Capt. Warren weighed anchor and tried to work Atlantic off. When that failed, both anchors were dropped but they failed to hold and Atlantic went ashore on Ocean Beach about 1,000 yards south of the exposed remains of King Philip, which had been lost under similar circumstances in 1878. [9]

Atlantic's hull was in poor condition, and she quickly disintegrated in the surf. Her bow was torn off, drowning many of the sailors asleep in the forecabin, and the hull was crushed, casting the remainder of the crew into the surf. Entangled in loose rigging and surrounded by floating debris, many crew members were "beaten and bruised" and held under the surface. Of the 43 men on board, only 11 survived, including Capt. Warren. [10] The wreck of Atlantic was the worst maritime disaster on Ocean Beach.

News of the wreck attracted a crowd of more than 50,000 who flocked to the beach and collected souvenirs; "nothing that was portable escaped the collectors--ropes, pieces of sail, pulleys, handspikes and tackle of all descriptions were carried away." [11] Because of allegations that the ship was unseaworthy, and because of the high loss of life, an investigation was held that found Atlantic unsound and stated Capt.



A tangled mass of wreckage marks the remains of the whaling bark Atlantic on Ocean Beach, 1886. Courtesy of San Francisco Maritime NHP.

Warren had not exercised proper judgement, either in casting off from his tug inside the bar or in not alerting the sleeping men in the forecabin before Atlantic went into the breakers. Atlantic's owner, William R. Wing, and Capt. Warren were censured and indicted for manslaughter in the deaths of the seamen. [12] Atlantic's battered remains, spread out over a mile on the beach, quickly disappeared beneath surf and sand, leaving no trace of the "Atlantic Horror." Archeological research in 1987 relocated the wreck site and excavated and documented an isolated fragment of the ship's keel.

NOTES

- 1 Record of American and Foreign Shipping... (New York: American Shipmasters' Association, 1886) p. 182, and Ship Registers of New Bedford, Massachusetts... (Boston: Survey of Federal Archives, 1940) p. 22.
- 2 Alexander Starbuck, History of the American Whale Fishery, From Its Earliest Inception to the Year 1876. (Reprint edition New York: Sentry Press, 1964) Vol. 2, pp. 470-471.
- 3 Ibid., pp. 512-513.
- 4 Ibid., pp. 574-575.
- 5 Ibid., pp. 602-603 and Ship Registers of New Bedford... p. 23.
- 6 Ibid., pp. 624-625, 642-643, 654-655, and Reginald B. Hegarty, Returns of Whaling Vessels Sailing from American Ports. (New Bedford, Massachusetts: Old Dartmouth Historical Society, 1959) pp. 3, 9.
- 7 Op. cit., Hegarty, p. 12.
- 8 Ibid., pp. 14, 15, 17, 19, 20.
- 9 San Francisco Examiner, December 18, 1886. San Francisco Call, December 18, 1886.
- 10 San Francisco Call, December 18, 1886.
- 11 Ibid., San Francisco Examiner, December 19, and 20, 1886.
- 12 San Francisco Call, December 22, 23, 24, and 25, 1886; San Francisco Examiner, December 24, 1886; and San Francisco Call, January 16, 1887.

Beeswing

The schooner Beeswing was owned and operated by San Francisco mariners and merchants Robert Young and Thomas McRea, and it carried a variety of merchandise between Monterey and San Francisco. [1] On February 5, 1863, for example, she arrived at San Francisco 38 hours out of Monterey with 100 barrels of oil, 40 steer hides, 120 trees, four boxes of cheese, and five boxes of merchandise. [2] Loading a return cargo for Monterey, Beeswing cleared San Francisco a few days later for Monterey. On the return voyage, Beeswing was caught in gale force winds off the San Francisco Bar. The bark Ork from Humboldt reported that it had seen an unidentified schooner founder on the bar and that Ork had sailed through flotsam that included cases and cans of oil and camphene and boxes of candles. [3]

News of a wreck off Point San Pedro with survivors clinging to the hull in the heavy surf resulted in the dispatch of the tug Monitor. Steaming eight miles south of Point Lobos, the crew of Monitor saw the wreck of Beeswing ashore near Mussel Rock, broke and wedged into the rocks. She was "badly broken up; her pumps being forced up, her masts and bulwarks gone, and her ribs sticking out from the deck." [4] There were no survivors among the 11 persons on board. Those killed in the wreck included the two owners and four passengers from Monterey. [5]

NOTES

¹ San Francisco Daily Alta California, March 2, 1863.

² Ibid., February 6, 1863.

³ Ibid., February 18, 1863.

⁴ Ibid., February 21, 1863.

⁵ Ibid., March 2, 1863.

Bessie Everding

The 73.70-ton, two-masted schooner Bessie Everding, built at San Francisco in 1876, was 73.5 feet long, with a 25.5-foot beam and a 6.5-foot depth of hold. [1] The schooner was one of more than 500 two-masters operating on the Pacific Coast in the last decades of the nineteenth century, and carried a variety of cargoes between ports. Bessie Everding was built for the Pacific Coast lumber trade, and at the time of her loss was bound for San Francisco from Bowen's Landing, California, with a cargo of firewood and railroad ties valued at \$1,600. [2]

Anchoring off the San Francisco Bar on the evening of September 9, 1888, Capt. Jorgensen and his five-man crew had been unaware of Bessie Everding's slow drift toward the beach as thick fog obscured the land. "Soon the seas broke over her, and the crew...not knowing their position, took to their boat and safely reached San Francisco...." [3] A patrolling surfman from the Golden Gate Park Station of the United States Lifesaving Service noticed firewood and railroad ties washing up on the beach, and as he walked south of the station, he heard the meow of a cat to seaward. Flashing his lamp, he saw the dim outline of a vessel in the breakers and ran for help. When the lifesaving station surfboat reached the wreck, however, they found Bessie Everding abandoned by all save the ship's cat. [4]

When the tide fell, the lifesavers were able to board the schooner and note her condition. A message was sent to San Francisco, and in the morning Capt. Jorgensen and the cook arrived on the scene. Bessie Everding, lying about one mile south of the station near the foot of Lawton street on Ocean Beach, was stripped of her sails, rigging and useful fittings. [5] Half the cargo was salvaged, and Bessie Everding was abandoned to break up in the surf.

NOTES

¹ Op. cit., Merchant Vessels of the United States (1885) p. 86.

2

Annual Report of the Operations of the United States Life-Saving Service, For the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1889. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1891) pp. 338-339. (Cited hereafter as United States Life-Saving Service)

3

Ibid., p. 108.

4

Ibid.

5

Ibid.

Brignardello

The 543-ton bark Brignardello was built in Genoa, Italy, in 1865. [1] Owned by Brignardello & Bro. (Stefano Brignardello and Giovanni Battista Machiavello), "manufacturers, macaroni and vermicelli, ship bread, etc.," of San Francisco, California, and Genoa, Italy, the bark made only two voyages to San Francisco, being wrecked on the second. [2] On September 3, 1868, Brignardello, under the command of Capt. Mazzini, lay off the Golden Gate after a 54-day passage from Valparaiso, Chile. The captain, unable to take any bearings in the thick fog, and being without a pilot, was attempting to make the Gate when breakers were seen ahead.

Instantly the helm was put "hard aport," to bring the vessel "to," not knowing which way the beach trended, with the hope of heading off shore. Not being able to see the land, all was guess work...which, unfortunately, brought the barque square on the beach. [3]

Brignardello grounded in the surf on the beach directly south of Point Lobos, just under Cliff House in "Kelly's Cove." The crew managed to reach shore in the boats, and when the tide fell, began to land what goods they could from the wreck, "some of the men standing in the surf up to their middle while handling casks, bundles, etc." [4]

Brignardello lay perpendicular to the shore, her bow to the beach, her stern covered at low tide by eight feet of water, the bow lying in four feet. The wreck lay in a spectacular location, and thousands of San Franciscans flocked to the beach to see her. Salvage work proceeded slowly; by September 5, only some of the sailors' dunnage and a few spars had been sent ashore. [5] The effort increased over the next few days. A staging was built from the shore to the wreck, and 1,000 cases of nuts were landed, but undermining surf caused the staging to collapse. The pounding of the surf against the stern had opened Brignardello's seams, and by September 6, six feet of water lay in her hold. [6] Attempts to pull the bark free failed, and on September 12, 1868, she was sold with her cargo "as she now lies." [7] The cargo was lucrative: 200 tons marble slabs, 2,500 bxs. Olive Oil, 3,000 bags Almonds, 30 bxs. Cheese, 60 bales Paper, 100 sks. Macaroni Wheat, 200 sks. Chicory, 400 bxs. Bath Brick, 50s cs. Vermouth, and 4 cs. Blacking. [8]

L. R. Meyer of San Francisco purchased the wreck for \$8,050; "the marble alone--if it can be got out--is worth more than that sum, and the purchaser has a chance of making a good thing." [9] Meyer dispatched the steam tug Goliah to the wreck to land a barge and pump to aid in the salvage operations. Work progressed nicely: "the greater portion of the cargo...has already been beached in safety." [10]

The salvage operations continued through the end of September. As the cargo was removed, Brignardello began to list to starboard. [11] Meyer finally abandoned his efforts in October, having made back his investment. The wreck of Brignardello, along with about 70 tons of marble, 30 tons of sulphur, 20 tons of "miscellaneous merchandise," and two quarter-boats left on board was offered for sale again. [12] On October 10, 1868, the vessel was purchased at auction by San Francisco shipbuilder J. C. Cousins, who paid \$700 for the hulk. "From the price realized, one would conclude that the chances of getting her afloat were slight. There is still some marble in her hold, though the bulk of the cargo has been discharged." [13]

Brignardello remained in the surf through the remaining months of 1868. Unable to do much with the hulk, Cousins sold her. Late December storms tore at the exposed wreck, and "the heavy seas breaking completely over her, swept away the cabin, galley, and forward house...and turned her over on her port side." [14] Finally, in early 1869, as winter storms battered the hulk, the new owner, a Mr. Bruce, began to break the ship up.

All hope of saving her has been abandoned; and men were at work yesterday cutting away everything they could get at, and hauling it ashore. The foremast, which had stood intact through all the vessel's disasters, was cut away...and fell with a tremendous crash into the ocean, carrying with it everything above the deck save the short stump of the hindmast. It was secured by a line attached to a windlass on the beach, by which it was hauled ashore. [15]

In order to salvage as much of the vessel's copper fastenings and timbers as possible, Bruce planned to blow up Brignardello with black powder and "gather up the fragments, that nothing more may be lost. The explosion...will tear into fragments what was but a short time since as staunch and fine a vessel of her class as ever rode the waves...." [16] No further mention of the wreck of Brignardello was made in the local press.

NOTES

1

San Francisco Daily Alta California, September 12, 1868.

2

Henry G. Langley, The San Francisco Directory, for the Year Commencing October, 1868.... (San Francisco: Henry G. Langley, 1868) p. 109.

3

San Francisco Daily Alta California, September 5, 1868.

4

Ibid.

5

Ibid., September 6, 1868.

6

Ibid., September 7, 1868.

7

Ibid., September 12, 1868.

8

San Francisco Bulletin, September 6, 1868.

9

San Francisco Daily Alta California, September 13, 1868.

¹⁰
Ibid., September 14, 1868.

¹¹
San Francisco Examiner, October 1, 1868.

¹²
San Francisco Daily Alta California, October 10, 1868.

¹³
Ibid., October 11, 1868.

¹⁴
Ibid., January 11, 1869.

¹⁵
Ibid.

¹⁶
Ibid.

Cornelius W. Lawrence

The 144-ton revenue cutter Cornelius W. Lawrence was built by William Easby at Washington, D.C., in 1848. One of seven new cutters ordered by the United States Revenue Marine, Lawrence was 96.5 feet long with a 24-foot beam. [1] Launched August 20, 1848, the new cutter, rigged as a brig, was armed with five cannon; two 32-pounder guns, two 6-pounders, and one 18-pounder (later removed). [2] Lawrence, commanded by Capt. Alexander Fraser, who had until then been commandant of the Revenue Marine, was to sail to the Pacific, where she was to be the first Revenue Marine cutter in California, extending American customs and revenue laws to that recently acquired territory. Lawrence sailed from Hampton Roads, Virginia, on October 15, 1848, for California. After a long voyage by way of Cape Horn, with stops at Rio de Janeiro, Valparaiso, and Honolulu, Lawrence arrived at San Francisco on October 31, 1849. [3]

Gold had been discovered in California in 1848, and by the time Lawrence arrived at San Francisco, the formerly small town had blossomed as thousands of gold-seekers arrived to make their fortunes. Nearly 500 vessels lay at anchor off San Francisco, many of them deserted by gold-mad crews. Desertion, mutiny, and smuggling were major problems, and Lawrence and her crew were pressed into duty immediately. For more than a year Lawrence remained at anchor off San Francisco, enforcing the laws of the United States. [4] At the close of her one-year tenure at San Francisco, Capt. Fraser was commended by the Collector of the Port for Lawrence's activities during the Gold Rush.

When it is remembered that you have been in a harbor where from five to six hundred vessels were riding at anchor--in the midst of a great excitement--with crews insubordinate & lawless--without the aid of civil authorities or civil process & when day and night you have been called upon to render assistance & to aid Masters of vessels in suppressing mutiny & violence, surely it becomes me to bear willing testimony to the necessity of your presence & your promptness in the discharge of your onerous duties. [5]

Beginning in December 1850, Lawrence began patrolling the California coast, searching for smuggling activity. During the next year she made voyages to San Diego, the Channel Islands, Hilo, Monterey, San Luis Obispo, Santa Cruz, and Point Reyes, and gained a new captain, Douglass Ottinger, in June 1851.

On November 18, 1851, Lawrence sailed from San Francisco for Monterey. Arriving at Monterey on November 20, she picked up Collector William Russell and cleared for San Francisco. After a brief stop at Santa Cruz, the cutter anchored off Point Lobos on the evening of November 25. Unfortunately for Lawrence, the tide had ebbed and was running with a strong set to the south, impacting with the incoming swell from the west. After an hour, with rough seas sweeping the decks, the ship's anchor cable parted. Driving south, Lawrence struck the beach about four miles south of Point Lobos at 9:00 p.m.

The vessel first struck in 3 1/2 fathoms water, and in the next breaker came down with such tremendous force, that it appeared as if every seam and timber in her must have started. At the same time, tons of water fell on her decks. By changing the position of the sails, the ship's head was kept toward the beach and stern to the breakers....The vessel then laid bows toward the land, continuing to strike very heavily, and force her way through heavy combing seas toward the beach. [6]

The next morning Lawrence was hove up on the beach by means of a hawser carried ashore. For the next three days the crew labored to strip the wreck of "papers, navigation instruments, small arms, ammunition," cannon, sails, rigging, yards, chains, hawsers, and provisions. [7]

Lawrence was not salvaged, despite the opinion of Capt. Ottinger that she could be got off; "but the expense attending it with the requisite repairs would doubtless amount to a much larger sum than will replace her with a more suitable vessel for Revenue duty on this coast. The sailing qualities of the "Lawrence" were very ordinary...." [8] A small schooner, Frolic, was chartered to replace Lawrence. Outfitted with Lawrence's guns and gear and manned by Lawrence's crew, Frolic had an interesting career in the Revenue service, which included assistance to a number of vessels wrecked near the Golden Gate. The wrecked hulk of Lawrence was sold at auction in January 1852. The wreck remained visible for some time, because it was marked on a survey of Ocean Beach done in mid-1852. No further mention was made of her after that time.

NOTES

- 1
[Washington, D.C.] Daily National Intelligencer, October 30, 1848.
- 2
Ibid., August 21, 1848.
- 3
Logbook, C. W. Lawrence, in "Records of the United States Revenue Cutter Service, 1790-1915, Record Group 26, Records of the United States Coast Guard, National Archives, Washington, D.C.
- 4
Ibid., and James P. Delgado, "In The Midst of a Great Excitement: The Argosy of the Revenue Cutter C. W. Lawrence," American Neptune, XLV (2) Spring 1985, pp. 119-131.
- 5
James Collier to Alexander Fraser, November 21, 1850, in Correspondence, Collectors of the Port..., National Archives Record Group 26.
- 6
Lawrence log, November 25, 1851, National Archives Record Group 26.
- 7
Ibid, entries for November 26-29, 1851 and San Francisco Daily Alta California, November 28, 1851.

Drumburton

The 1,891-ton, four-masted ship Drumburton was built by Russell & Company at Glasgow, Scotland, in 1881. Built sturdily of iron, Drumburton was 266.7 feet long, with a 40.2-foot beam and a 23.9-foot depth of hold. [1] Built for Messrs. James Gillison and Joseph Chadwick, Drumburton was the third in their line of "Drum" ships, the first having been Drumlanrig in 1876. Ultimately, nine vessels shared the "Drum" prefix of Gillison and Chadwick. [2] At the time of loss, Drumburton was owned by three associates: the Drumburton Ship Company of Victoria, British Columbia, the Western Commercial Company of San Francisco, and Capt. John Barneson of San Francisco. [3]

On September 3, 1904, Drumburton cleared San Francisco in ballast, bound for Port Blakely, Washington, to load lumber. From Port Blakely, the ship was to sail to Valparaiso, Chile, to sell her cargo. At 10:00 a.m., she was off the Bar, passing the San Francisco Lightship. With all sails set, the vessel tacked south in the thick fog to avoid the Farallons. Drumburton, caught in the strong currents, was pulled close in to shore without Capt. William Thomas' knowledge. A sounding was taken that showed the ship to be in 15 fathoms of water instead of the 21 fathoms had she been on course, but Capt. Thomas continued on. At 6:30 p.m., the crew heard breakers ahead. The captain ordered them to tack, and at that moment the ship struck the rocks at Point Pedro:

There were three successive jars, none of them violent, as the vessel slid over the sharp rocks....There was an inrush of water through the gaping hole that was torn in the iron plates...and she settled quickly in the saddle of the rock from which nothing but the storms of winter will probably ever dislodge her. [4]

The vessel's position was described as being 500 yards south of the point, "not over twenty yards from the beach....she is tightly wedged in sharp rocks forward, and is apparently resting on rocks as far aft as midships." [5]

The vessel flooded, her maindeck awash abaft midships, but she held on the rocks and did not sink. A boat was lowered, and the second mate and four seamen made their way to shore where they made Drumburton's plight known. The following morning the tug Defiance arrived on the scene after searching in the fog for the wreck. A crew from the United States Lifesaving Station on Ocean Beach also arrived. The tugs could not pull the ship free, and the lifesavers "were unable to render any assistance beyond transporting the master's wife and the personal effects of the officers and crew to a tug." [6]

Capt. Thomas and his crew stripped sails, rigging, and gear from Drumburton until September 7. The wreck was sold for \$3,000 and turned over to wreckers, but heavy seas broke up the hull and washed her off the rocks into deeper water where she sank. On September 17, 1904, a court of inquiry convened by the British Consul in San Francisco found Capt. Thomas guilty of "being responsible for the wreck" by not anchoring when the soundings taken just before Drumburton struck indicated she was off course. He was suspended for three months for losing his vessel on the rocks. [7]

NOTES

1

Lloyd's of London, Lloyd's Register of British and Foreign Shipping.... (London: Lloyd's, 1900) n.p. (Hereafter cited as Lloyd's Register)

2

Basil Lubbock, The Last of the Windjammers. (Glasgow: Brown, Son & Ferguson, Ltd., 1927), Vol. 1, pp. 256, 473.

3

San Francisco Chronicle, September 17, 1904.

4

Ibid., September 5, 1904.

5

Ibid.

6

Ibid., and op. cit., United States Life-Saving Service. (1906) p. 81.

7

San Francisco Chronicle, September 17, 1904.

Dublin

The 706.06-ton bark Dublin was built at Brunswick, Maine, in 1839 and was 139 feet long, with a 30.8-foot beam and a 22-foot depth of hold. [1] By 1879 the vessel was registered at San Francisco and engaged in the Pacific Coast lumber trade. On August 31, 1882, Dublin, under the command of Capt. Maloney, was off the Heads with a cargo of lumber from Seabeck, Washington. The thick fog lifted enough for the captain to take his bearings, and as the fog again covered the water he ordered the course changed to make the Golden Gate. Losing his reckoning, Capt. Maloney sailed the bark ashore. [2]

Dublin struck Ocean Beach about two miles south of the Cliff House at 6:00 p.m. Her timbers started and the bark flooded until she lay on the bottom in 12 feet of water. A boat was lowered and some of the crew went ashore to seek assistance. After being notified, the tugs Katie, Holyoke, Donald, and Etna steamed to Ocean Beach to pull the wrecked bark free. On the first attempt the hawser parted, and on the second the bitts tore free. "Her captain and crew, with their personal effects, went on board the tugs and came in, leaving the Dublin, with her head on and sails clewed, to her fate." [3]

NOTES

1

Op. cit., Merchant Vessels of the United States (1880) pp. 45, 334, and op. cit., Lloyd's Register of British and Foreign Shipping (1879) n.p.

2

San Francisco Call, September 2, 1882.

3

Ibid.

Eliza

The 10.20-ton sloop Eliza was built at San Pedro, California, and was employed in the fishing trade. [1] Owned by "three Greek fishermen," Eliza left Meiggs Wharf, San Francisco, on January 31, 1871, for Sonoma with 1,000 lbs. of fish. One of her

owners, the sloop's captain (unnamed in the accounts of the wreck), was the only person on board. The captain sailed across the bay but lost the wind near Sausalito. Attempting to anchor, he found "he had not cable enough...bent the main sheet on...went below, where he turned in and went to sleep." [2] Caught by the outgoing tide, Eliza drifted out past the Golden Gate. At 1:00 p.m. Eliza went ashore on the rocks at Point Lobos. The captain rushed to the deck and was immediately washed overboard by the surf. He caught hold of the stern gearing, but was torn free, and "floundered around in the water" until thrown up onto a rock near shore. A neighboring rancher waded into the rough surf and pulled the captain ashore. Eliza was a total loss. [3]

NOTES

1

Op. cit., Merchant Vessels of the United States (1871) p. 73.

2

San Francisco Daily Alta California, February 1, 1871.

3

Ibid.

Eureka

The 295-ton, three-masted barkentine Eureka was built by Charles Murray at Indian Island on Humboldt Bay, California. Launched on October 31, 1868, Eureka was 134.3 feet long, with a 33-foot beam and a 10.5-foot depth of hold. [1] Just prior to her launch, the barkentine was described as "a model in which are skillfully combined the four great essentials: beauty, strength, speed and capacity....our town may feel justly proud that her name is borne by such a staunch and beautiful craft..." [2] Eureka was built to carry lumber and passengers from Humboldt Bay sawmills to San Francisco and bring back general cargo. The commencement of her career was auspicious. She made the run from Eureka to San Francisco in 30 hours, and then returned in 24 hours on that maiden voyage. [3]

Eureka had a long and successful career. In about the year 1900, the yards were sent down from her foremast and she was re-rigged as a three-masted schooner. Departing Meiggs wharf, San Francisco, on June 19, 1902, she cleared for Eureka to load lumber for her owners, the Charles Nelson Company. Sailing through the thick fog, Capt. Shou did not know that the current had caught his vessel and pulled her south of the Heads. At nine o'clock that evening, Capt. Shou, believing he was four miles offshore, ordered the vessel on a port tack. "The peak was lowered and the topsail clewed up, and, all of a sudden, the first thing we knew, she struck bow on." [4] Eureka had gone aground on the beach near Mussel Rock, five miles southeast of the foot of Sloat Boulevard.

The surf began sweeping the decks, and Capt. Shou ordered the crew and his wife, who regularly sailed with him (as did many wives of Pacific Coast lumber skippers), into the ship's boat. The boat was swamped, but they managed to right it and struggle through the surf to shore, where they built a driftwood fire to dry themselves. The crew at the United States Lifesaving Service station at Sloat Boulevard learned of the wreck at 10:30 and responded. They found some of the crew ashore, the others in the boat attempting to salvage what they could from the vessel, which lay broadside to the breakers, her bow pointed toward Mussel Rock. The station's surfboat was launched, and the lifesavers helped remove what they could from Eureka, including her compasses and chronometer. "When nothing further could be done, the crew returned to station." [5]

The morning "disclosed that there was no hope for her. Her worn-out timbers and frame had given in to the battering of the surf and sand, and her hold was rapidly filling with water, the garboard strakes having parted company with the keel." [6] Capt. Shou and his crew remained at the wreck, camping next to the cliffs in a small niche that they filled with items salvaged from Eureka:

The personal property of the schooner's crew made a strange assortment. There were big, white canvas bags--one for each man--two weather-beaten old trunks, two old hampers, several baskets and more boxes, and a red plush-covered whirling chair, another old red plush armchair, a rocking chair, and old-fashioned marble-top table that had been the elaborate sitting room furniture of the captain's cabin. [7]

On June 20, a wagon dispatched from the lifesaving station carried away the salvaged items and crew. Capt. Shou remained to guard the ship but she was a total loss. On June 24, Eureka's battered bones were sold to Harry Goodall of San Francisco for \$105, the low price indicating there was little of value left above the water to salvage from the hulk. [8]

NOTES

- 1
Op. cit., Merchant Vessels of the United States (1901) p. 59.
- 2
[Eureka, California] Humboldt Times, October 24, 1868.
- 3
Ibid., December 12, 1868.
- 4
San Francisco Chronicle, June 21, 1902.
- 5
Op. cit., United States Life-Saving Service (1903) pp. 174, 314- 315.
- 6
San Francisco Daily Call, June 20, 1902.
- 7
San Francisco Chronicle, June 21, 1902.
- 8
Ibid., June 24, 1902.

F. W. Bailey

The 711-ton ship F. W. Bailey was built at Freeport, Maine, in 1854 for C. Cushing & Co., who owned her throughout her career. [1] F. W. Bailey was 160 feet long, with a 33.3-foot beam and a 21.6-foot depth of hold. [2] F. W. Bailey was apparently engaged in the general carrying trade, and arrived at San Francisco on November 30, 1862, from Bordeaux, France. Clearing San Francisco on January 8, 1863, in ballast for Puget Sound, F. W. Bailey was to load lumber and then proceed to Australia. While still under the command of the pilot, Capt. Callot, the ship began to drift toward shore near the South Head. "It was found utterly impossible to wear her off...the anchor was let go. The chain, however....cut her bow down to the water's edge, and the craft drifted ashore." [3]

F. W. Bailey struck the beach three miles south of Point Lobos at 7:30 p.m. "There was no wind, but a very heavy sea." A boat was lowered but swamped. A second

boat was then lowered, and the second mate, the carpenter, and three seamen leapt in and drifted on to the beach. They went for help as the ship began to break up in the surf. Of the 17 people on board, only eight were saved, including the pilot. Among the dead were Capt. Lemuel P. Dyer, the mate, the cabin boy, the cook, and six seamen. [4] The wreck of F. W. Bailey was the first with a large loss of life on Ocean Beach. The body of the captain washed ashore along with the mate's and cabin boy's. None of the other dead were recovered. The following day, visitors to the beach reported that the ship was "fast going to pieces. As she breaks up, the detached pieces come ashore. The beach is strewn with fragments. Judging from the heavy surf beating upon the ill-fated ship, it cannot be long before she completely disappears." [5]

NOTES

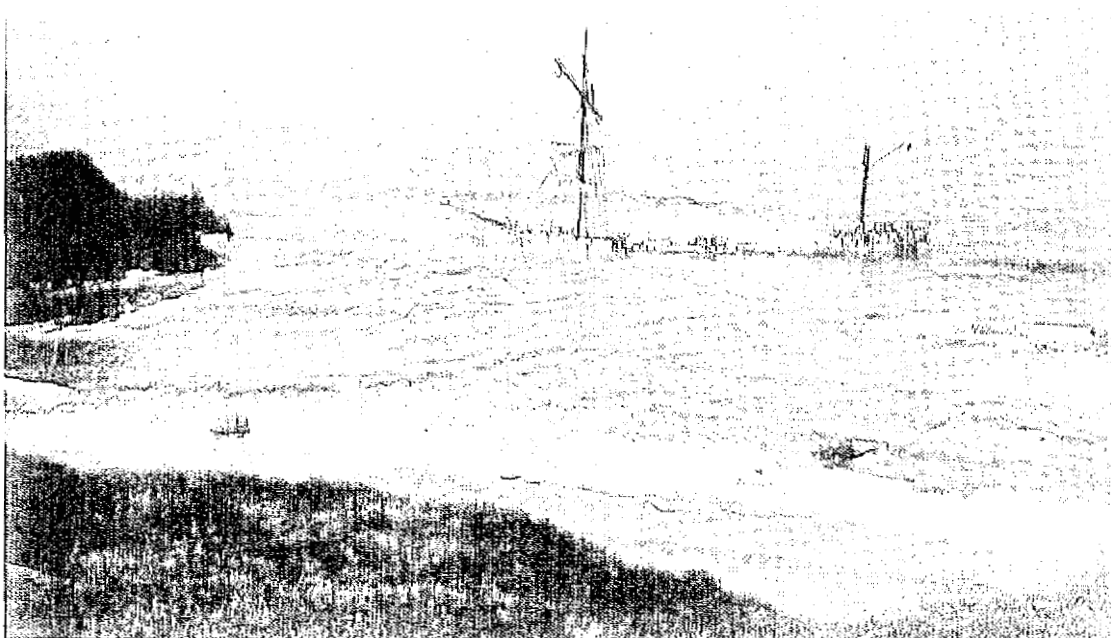
1 American Lloyd's Registry of American and Foreign Shipping (New York: E. & G. W. Blunt, 1862) p. 37. (Hereafter cited as American Lloyd's.)

2 Ibid.

3 San Francisco Daily Alta California, January 10, 1863.

4 Ibid.

5 Ibid.



Two masts have already succumbed to the surf, the mizzen is half gone, and only the foremast of the four-masted bark Gifford remains standing in this 1903 view of the wreck at Mussel Rock. Courtesy of San Francisco Maritime NHP.

Gifford

The 2,245-ton, steel, four-masted bark Gifford was built at Greenock, Scotland, by Scott & Co. in 1892. Built during a boom in large deepwaterman construction in the last decade of the nineteenth century, the bark was 281.6 feet long, with a 42.3-foot beam and a 24.6-foot depth of hold. [1] By 1895 Gifford was on the Pacific Coast, working in the lumber trade under British Registry:

The British iron [sic] ship Gifford...is operated by J. J. Moore & Company in the lumber trade between the Pacific Coast and Australia. She generally loads at San Francisco and the redwood portion of her cargo is taken to her by the schooners. She carries coal on the return trip from Australia. [2]

The ship was returning to San Francisco with coal from Newcastle, New South Wales, when she was lost on September 25, 1903.

As Gifford approached the Golden Gate on September 25, a thick fog obscured the shore. Capt. Robert Michie, who had "only a vague idea that San Francisco was near...plowed ahead, with shortened sails, hearing and seeing no warnings." [3] At 6:00 p.m. the ship struck the shore just off Mussel Rock, 12 miles south of Point Lobos. The crew reached shore safely after midnight as the heavy surf abated, and by the next morning help arrived. Tugs attempted to pull the bark free, but the hawsers parted. Holed, and half submerged, the vessel was abandoned. Salvors stripped as much equipment and rigging as possible, and a portion of the coal cargo was landed. [4] Two weeks after she went ashore, Gifford disintegrated in the surf:

The fate of the vessel was sealed yesterday when the battering waves reduced her sides to a shapeless mass of twisted iron and her heavily sparred mast was sent crashing over the side....The hull has settled deep in the sands and only her torn and shattered bulwarks appear above water at high tide. [5]

The stranding and loss of Gifford was ultimately determined by a Court of Inquiry to be the fault of Capt. Michie.

NOTES

1

Op. cit., Lloyd's Register (1893) Vol. II, n.p.

2

[Eureka, California] Daily Humboldt Times, February 19, 1895.

3

San Francisco Call, September 27, 1903.

4

Op. cit., United States Life-Saving Service (1905) p. 102.

5

San Francisco Call, October 10, 1903.

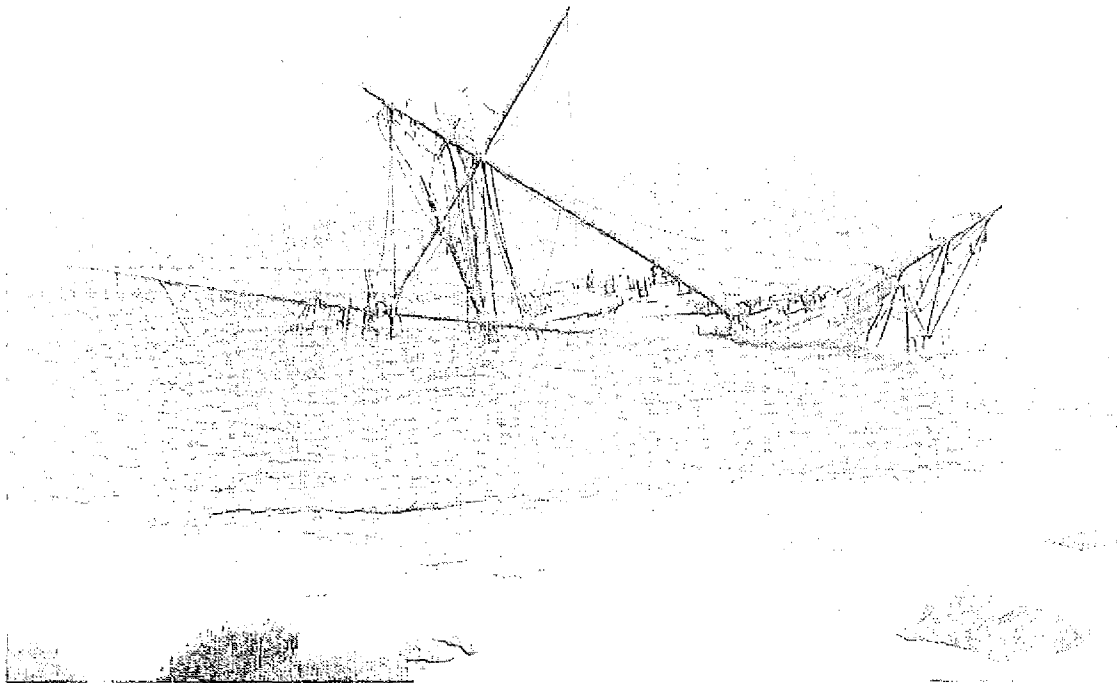
J. Sarkie

The English bark J. Sarkie was supposedly wrecked six miles south of Point Lobos on Ocean Beach on August 22, 1851. The vessel is not listed in Lloyd's Register of British and Foreign Shipping and her particulars cannot be ascertained. According

to the San Francisco Daily Alta California of August 23, 1851, the steamer Chesapeake spotted the bark ashore on the 22nd; "she had been on but a few hours, and was trying to work off, with all sail set." A search of vessel arrivals for the month of August and early September 1851 failed to list a J. Sarkie, and no other mention of the wreck could be located.

James Rolph

The 586-ton, four-masted schooner James Rolph was built in 1899 at Fairhaven, California, and was 169.1 feet long, with a 37.9-foot beam and a 12.8-foot depth of hold. [1] Built for the Pacific Coast carrying trade, the schooner made a number of coastwise voyages before she was lost on August 2, 1910. Sailing from San Francisco with a cargo of general freight, lime, hay, and 14,000 board feet of lumber for the sugar plantations of Theo. H. Davies at Hana, Maui, Hawaii, James Rolph was swept by the current and plagued by the lack of a strong breeze. In the thick fog, her master, Capt. A. Olsen, did not see the schooner sail close into shore. At 10:00 p.m. the captain heard surf and ordered the ship tacked offshore, but it was too late and James Rolph crashed into the rocks at Point San Pedro, grounding 50 feet from shore at the same spot where the four-masted bark Drumburton had been lost in 1904. [2] Rolph's crew managed to reach shore safely, but the vessel could not be pulled off the rocks. Tugs attempted to haul James Rolph free but failed. The last attempt to free the schooner failed on August 8, and on August 9, wreckers from Capt. T. P. Whitelaw's salvage firm stripped the wreck of usable fittings before abandoning James Rolph to the waves. [3]



James Rolph, wrecked at Point San Pedro, 1910. Courtesy of San Francisco Maritime NHP.

NOTES

1

Op. cit., Merchant Vessels of the United States (1906) p. 82.

2

Op. cit., United States Life-Saving Service (1912) pp. 86, 134, and San Francisco Examiner, August 3-11, 1910.

3

Ibid.

Julia Castner

The bark Julia Castner of Philadelphia, recently arrived at San Francisco from Puget Sound, was hauling from Vallejo Street Wharf to Steuart Street Wharf to complete ballasting when she capsized off Clay Street Wharf on June 28, 1859. The vessel began to drift and was caught by the steamer San Antonio, which left Julia Castner moored to the clipper ship Southern Eagle. [1] During the evening of June 29, Julia Castner again went adrift in a 7-knot current and was swept out the Golden Gate, where she went ashore on Ocean Beach. [2] By the next day, the bark was a total loss:

She is laying about a mile to the southard of Point Lobos, on the beach, about a quarter of a mile out from high water mark, with the rollers washing over her. Efforts have been made to save some of her spars, but to no purpose, as the seas are too heavy for any small boat to live, and with the exception of what may be washed high and dry, nothing will be saved. [3]

The remains of the vessel were not formally salvaged; oral tradition in San Francisco insists that timbers from a shipwrecked vessel, possibly Julia Castner, near Point Lobos were used to build the Seal Rock House on Ocean Beach around 1859.

NOTES

1

San Francisco Daily Alta California, June 29, 1859; July 3, 1859.

2

Ibid., June 30, 1859.

3

Ibid., July 1, 1859.

Josephine Wilcutt

The 86.04-ton two-masted schooner Josephine Wilcutt was engaged in the Pacific Coast lumber trade and was owned by the Mendocino Lumber Company. [1] The ship was wrecked at Mendocino in early April 1867 when heavy seas caused her and the schooner Mendocino to part their moorings and go ashore. Despite the opinion of the San Francisco Daily Alta California that Josephine Wilcutt "will probably be totally lost," she was gotten off. [2] On January 24, 1872, she was again wrecked, blown ashore at Point Lobos while departing San Francisco. Loaded with provisions for "a mill in Mendocino county," the schooner was tossed onto the rocks just north of the Cliff House:

The rocks forced a hole through her bottom, and the waves making a complete breach over her decks soon rendered her a complete wreck. She is now in pieces, and the adjacent beach is strewn with portions of the vessel and cargo. [3]

The wreck of Josephine Wilcutt was followed two months later by the loss of another Mendocino Lumber Company vessel, the schooner Ella Florence, which wrecked on the Mendocino Coast in March 1872. The West Coast Signal noted that the firm "has been particularly unfortunate," losing the schooner Brilliant, Josephine Wilcutt, and Ella Florence in the space of a year, "wiping out their stock of coasting vessels." [4] The wrecked hull of Josephine Wilcutt must have been salvaged despite the loss of much of the vessel in the surf, for the ship continued to be registered until 1878, when she last appears in the annual List of Merchant Vessels of the United States.

NOTES

1

Op. cit., Merchant Vessels of the United States (1873) p. 161.

2

San Francisco Daily Alta California, April 15, 1867.

3

San Francisco Bulletin, January 25, 1872.

4

West Coast Signal, March 13, 1872.

King Philip

The 1,194 40/95-ton three-masted ship (later a bark) King Philip was built by Dennett Weymouth at Alna, Maine, in 1856. She was 186.6 feet long, with a 37.2-foot beam and a 24.0-foot depth of hold. [1] Built for William T. Glidden of Boston, and engaged in the general carrying trade, she sailed from Boston to various ports in Europe, South America, and the Pacific. In March 1869 she was set ablaze by one or more mutinous crew members at Honolulu. King Philip's bow and forecabin were seriously damaged, and she was condemned and sold at auction. [2] The ship was purchased by Pope and Talbot of San Francisco, lumber merchants, who repaired her at their Port Gamble, Washington, lumber yard.

Operating under the Pope and Talbot flag, King Philip continued in the general carrying trade, principally shipping guano and grain to Europe. In May 1874 she was set on fire by another mutinous crew on Chesapeake Bay off Annapolis, Maryland. The fire was extinguished and the crew subdued, and King Philip continued on her voyage. The fire had damaged her hull, though, and she was forced to put in at Rio de Janeiro for repairs. After a long delay the vessel finally reached San Francisco in May 1875. [3] Pope and Talbot never sent her around Cape Horn again. In September 1876 she was re-rigged as a bark. [4] The rig had been reduced for King Philip to better sail coastwise in the Pacific Coast lumber trade. She was successful in her new career:

The Bark "King Philip" has just completed her tenth trip to Puget Sound and back since January 1st 1876, and has still some days to spare. She has brought to port in that time nearly ten million feet in lumber. [5]

On January 25, 1878, the bark departed San Francisco Harbor in ballast for Port Gamble, Washington. Off the San Francisco Bar she lost the wind. Her tug left her to assist in the rescue of the ship Western Shore, which was in trouble, and King Philip, her anchors failing to hold, dragged ashore on Ocean Beach at 5:00 p.m. [6]

The ship was driven high up on the beach by the wind as she grounded at a high tide. King Philip was high and dry at low tide; sightseers were able to walk up to and touch her hull. The vessel remained intact, though

Yesterday morning at and after daylight the sea was breaking well up to the vessel, and she moved very uneasily at times, but later in the day it appeared as if she had settled down in the sand...she was immovable. [7]

The action of the surf washing around the hull caused King Philip to sink deeper into the sand until 16 feet of her hull lay buried. On January 26, 1878, the stranded hulk was sold at auction for \$1,050 to John Molloy of San Francisco. Molloy stripped the wreck, cut away the masts, and blasted the upper hull apart with black powder to salvage the metal fastenings and timber. [8]

The lower portions of the vessel remained buried on the beach, and were visible though the end of the nineteenth century. In January 1886, when the whaling bark Atlantic went ashore near King Philip, accounts mentioned that the frames of the latter wreck were still visible. In 1902, when the three-masted schooner Reporter was lost at the same site, newspaper accounts noted that the "bones" of King Philip could be seen. [9] The bulldozing of the beach dune field in the early decades of the twentieth century buried King Philip's remains.

NOTES

1

Registry for King Philip, Port of Wiscasset, Maine, November 28, 1856. "Records of Merchant Vessel Documentation," Record Group 36, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

2

Frederick C. Matthews, American Merchant Ships, 1850-1900. (Salem, Massachusetts: Marine Research Society, 1931) pp. 211- 213.

3

Ibid.

4

Op. cit., Registry for King Philip, Port of San Francisco, California, September 4, 1876.

5

San Francisco Daily Alta California, December 23, 1876.

6

San Francisco Chronicle, January 26, 1878 and San Francisco Daily Alta California, January 26, 1878.

7

San Francisco Daily Alta California, January 28, 1878.

8

Ibid., January 26, 1878, and Matthews, American Merchant Ships p. 213.

9

San Francisco Examiner, December 18, 1886 and San Francisco Call, March 14, 1902.

Neptune

The 184-ton, two-masted schooner Neptune was built by Hans D. Bendixsen at Fairhaven, California, in 1882. Built for the Pacific Coast lumber trade at a time when three-masted schooners were beginning to take over the lumber trade, the schooner was a large two-master:

Neptune was 106.5 feet long, with a 30-foot beam and a 8.7-foot depth of hold. [1] Neptune was owned by a variety of owners through her career; at the time of loss, the controlling owner was Robert Dollar of San Francisco. Dollar, a former lumber mill operator, had begun his own shipping company in 1888; his business was booming by 1900, and by 1930 Dollar Lines was one of the biggest shipping firms in the United States.

Neptune's career consisted of dozens of short voyages along the coast each year, carrying milled lumber, pilings, and railroad ties from small coast mills to market in San Francisco. When she departed from San Francisco on July 25, 1900, she was under charter to the lumber firm of Sudden and Christensen to load shingles and pilings at the Northern California port of Houma Landing and bring them back to San Francisco. Sailing in ballast on the 25th, Neptune was back in port August 4, having

PUT BACK LEAKING. The schooner Neptune, Captain Johnson, which sailed from this port July 25th...put back last evening, with three feet of water in her hold. When thirty miles off Cape Mendocino the Neptune suddenly began leaking, and before the pumps could be got in order there were [sic] three or four feet of water in the hold. Captain Johnson managed to reduce the amount to three feet, but could make no greater headway against the leak, and decided to return to this port. [2]

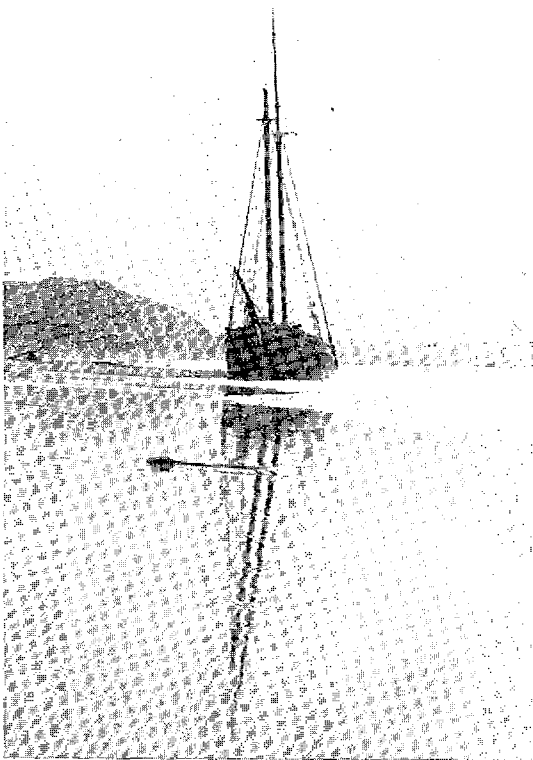
Neptune was quickly drydocked and repaired. She was ready to sail on August 10, 1900. On that date, according to Capt. Johnson:

We sailed from Main-street wharf...at 1 o'clock and became becalmed after getting outside the Heads. We began drifting toward Mussel Rock, and as we approached the shore we became caught in a strong and dangerous current that sets inshore at that point. We dropped both the schooner's anchors, but they failed to hold. Then we launched the boats and put out what is known as a cat anchor. The schooner kept drifting in spite of all we could do to prevent it and we were soon on the sand. [3]

Neptune was stranded on the beach two miles south of the United States Lifesaving Service station at Sloat Boulevard, some six miles south of Point Lobos. [4] The lifesavers had seen the ship go ashore and quickly responded with their beach cart to rescue Capt. Johnson and his crew. Aground with her seams open, Neptune was pounding on the hard sand. Late that evening the tug Alert was dispatched to pull her off, but by the time Alert steamed out past the Golden Gate, the tide had fallen and Neptune was high and dry on the beach.

By the morning of August 11, Neptune had been pushed even higher on the beach:

The little vessel is in a worse position than if she had struck on the rocks, for the reason that she is imbedded in the quicksand, and the



The two-masted schooner Neptune ashore at Fort Funston, 1900. Courtesy of San Francisco Maritime NHP.

wash of the waves will soon throw up a barrier around her that will be hard to dig away. [5]

The editors of the San Francisco Examiner noted that "it is the opinion of nautical men that she will remain where she is until a storm breaks her up and scatters her bones along the beach." [6] On August 12, 1900, the San Francisco Chronicle reported Neptune a "total loss." One last attempt to pull the schooner free on August 12 failed; the two tugs involved, unable to budge Neptune, departed that afternoon, "leaving the ill-fated vessel to bleach its bones on the beach." [7]

NOTES

¹ Op. cit., Merchant Vessels of the United States (1900) p. 244.

² San Francisco Chronicle, August 5, 1900.

³ Ibid., August 11, 1900.

⁴ Op. cit., United States Life-Saving Service (1901) p. 286.

⁵ San Francisco Examiner, August 11, 1900.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ San Francisco Chronicle, August 13, 1900.

Ohioan

The 5,153-ton freighter Ohioan was built in 1914 by the Maryland Steel Company at Sparrows Point, Maryland. Ohioan was 407.7 feet long, with a 53.7-foot beam and a 28.1-foot depth of hold and was propelled by a 4,000-horsepower triple-expansion steam engine. [1] The freighter had been built for American-Hawaiian Steamship Company of New York, the most important American shipping firm of the early twentieth century. Owners of 25 percent of the deadweight tonnage of large U.S.-registered sea-going freighters in 1917, American-Hawaiian, established in 1899, had revived the American merchant marine. It pioneered the American building of large modern steam freighters, the introduction of oil-fired boilers, opened the combination steamer-railroad link across Mexico's Isthmus of Tehuantepec and consistently earned profits. Its fleet of steamers, operating between the Atlantic and Pacific coasts and the Territory of Hawaii "constituted the largest single fleet of freighters under the American flag." [2] Ohioan was built as part of a major expansion of American-Hawaiian Steamship Company between 1910 and 1915 when it doubled its fleet.

Ohioan operated on the Atlantic through 1920. During the First World War, she, like other American-Hawaiian freighters, was requisitioned by the United States government upon America's entry in the war in 1917. American-Hawaiian's contribution to the war effort was significant: the first American troops sent to Europe in June 1917 went in the American-Hawaiian freighters Dakotan and Montanan, and 625,641 tons of cargo and 125,449 troops were carried in the company's steamers (including Ohioan) in 145 round-trip voyages. Five of the company's vessels were torpedoed and lost. [3] At the war's end, the company resumed its operations, and Ohioan was the first to initiate intercoastal voyages, steaming from Boston to San Francisco in December 1920. For the remainder of her career, Ohioan steamed from coast to coast via the Panama Canal.

Bound for San Francisco with a load of washing machines, trucks, and general merchandise, Ohioan had picked up a pilot and was being navigated through the thick fog. Lost in the fog, Capt. Read and Pilot McFarland allowed the ship to swing too close to shore. Narrowly missing Seal Rocks, Ohioan sailed past Cliff House and struck the rocks at Point Lobos at 11:20 p.m. Sparks from the steel hull's impact lit up the night sky. The engines were disabled and No. 1 hold, open to the sea, flooded. Lying north of Sutro Baths in a small cove adjacent to Point Lobos, Ohioan lay 100 yards from shore, her starboard side to shore and her bow pointing northward. [4]

The next day salvage of the cargo began. Tugs that were dispatched to try and pull Ohioan free could not reach her, "defeated by the heavy fog and treacherous rocks," and a breeches buoy was finally rigged to carry some of the crew and cargo ashore on October 9. [5] The following day barges were moored against the ship to load large and heavy cargo; "plunder cargo" or smaller packages were taken out and sent to shore on the breeches buoy. The San Francisco Call-Bulletin reported that: "Whether the ship can floated off will be determined only after most of the cargo is taken off and after divers have surveyed the damage." [6] Crowds of several thousand watched over the next week as the 1,400 tons of cargo was taken out of Ohioan despite heavy swells and seas crashing against the ship's stern.

The vessel was written off by American-Hawaiian Steamship Company as a total loss, and on November 4, 1936, Ohioan was sold at closed-bid auction for \$2,800.20 to William Mitchell of San Francisco. The vessel had originally cost \$729,000. [7]

Mitchell's seven-month salvage of Ohioan's remaining cargo and gear was a frustrating though ultimately rewarding experience. In December, Mitchell's barge Ellen F., while moored next to Ohioan, broke free of her moorings and stranded on the beach near Cliff House, but was pulled off. [8] On March 6, 1937, the vessel was set ablaze when one of Mitchell's men torched some spoiled meat in the hold. The flames spread to oil-soaked ropes and sacks and threatened to set off dynamite the salvors had on board, which would have ignited 9,000 gallons of crude oil left in a fuel bunker. Mitchell and Joseph Rosenberg made several trips to the burning wreck to throw the dynamite overboard and quench the fire. [9]

On June 29, 1937, Mitchell reported that he had sold Ohioan to a San Francisco scrap metal combine, who would cut up the wrecked freighter, which had been "stripped of all removable machinery, cargo, and furnishings..." [10] The vessel was not scrapped, however, despite a "vigorous campaign" by the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce to clear the harbor entrance of the rusting hulks of Ohioan and Frank H. Buck. [11] Nature finally obliged the Chamber of Commerce, with a winter storm in January 1938 bringing high tides that destroyed Ohioan:

Heavy surf, lashed by high winds, raged through the wreck of the steamer Ohioan at the Golden Gate, breaking the stern from the vessel and leaving the hull in three pieces as it was driven high on the beach. [12]

NOTES

1

Op. cit., Merchant Vessels of the United States (1935) pp. 132-133.

2

Thomas C. Cochran and Ray Ginger, "The American-Hawaiian Steamship Company, 1899-1919," Business History Review, Vol. XXVIII (1954) pp. 343-365.

3

"American-Hawaiian Steamship Company; The Story of the Efficient War Service of America's Pioneer Intercoastal Cargo Liner Fleet: Installment II," Pacific Marine Review, December 1925, p. 549.

4

San Francisco Chronicle, October 8, 1936.

5

San Francisco Call-Bulletin, October 9, 1936.

6

San Francisco Chronicle, October 10, 1936.

7

Ibid., November 5, 1936.

8

San Francisco Examiner, December 19, 1936.

9

Ibid., March 6, 1937.

10

San Francisco Chronicle, June 29, 1937.

11

Ibid., November 29, December 4, 1937.

12

San Francisco Call-Bulletin, January 15, 1938.

Parallel

The 148.80-ton, two-masted schooner Parallel was built in 1868 at San Francisco. She was 98 feet long, with a 31-foot beam and an 8-foot depth of hold. [1] Owned by S. E. Peterson of San Francisco, Parallel was one of hundreds of workaday craft plying the coast. Clearing the Golden Gate on January 13, 1887, with a typically varied cargo of hay, pig iron, kerosene, oak planks, and 42 tons of black powder for Astoria, Oregon, the schooner was unable to beat against the head winds and make the open sea. [2] The tide setting to the south also blocked her progress. Parallel struggled for westing for two days off Point Lobos before Capt. Miller finally gave up the fight. As the schooner was about to go on the rocks at Point Lobos, he gave the order to abandon ship. The nine-man crew pulled away from the ship as fast as they could, "fearing she would strike at any moment, and knowing the dangerous contents..." [3]

Parallel grounded south of Point Lobos in "the little bay to the south of the Cliff House, which is being remodeled by Adolph Sutro into an aquarium [Sutro Baths]" at 9:30 p.m. on January 15. [4] A crew from the United States Lifesaving Station at Golden Gate Park responded to the wreck. Finding no one on board, the lifesavers posted watchmen and retired for the evening. At 12:34 a.m. on January 16, the powder in the ship's hold was detonated by the schooner's jarring against the rocks. The explosion obliterated Parallel, demolished much of Cliff House, threw debris over a mile in every direction, and woke most of San Francisco. The watchmen were thrown more than 100 yards and were seriously injured, but survived. [5]

Parallel's crew, meanwhile, had rowed into the Golden Gate, landed at Sausalito, and after being transported to San Francisco, rode out to the beach to see what was left of their schooner. They were not alone; more than 50,000 San Franciscans flocked to the scene:

To the general astonishment, not a vestige of the wreck remained. Not so much as a floating barrel, bit of spar, or splinter of rail lay along the beach. Every bit of flotsam and jetsam had been carried off by the relic-hunters, and even the sand-dunes several hundred yards away were minutely searched in hope of finding a shred of sail or rigging or sliver of wood that belonged to the "Parallel." "Fakirs" materially assisted the relic hunters, and accommodately sold them at fancy prices bits of rope yarn, sections of ratlines and shrouds and squares of weather-beaten sailcloth procured at city junkshops. [6]

Capt. Miller was sharply criticized for abandoning his vessel and for not alerting the lifesavers or Cliff House area residents of the schooner's dangerous cargo when he arrived at Sausalito. Investigation disclosed that he had not even anchored Parallel to try to keep her off the rocks, fearing the jarring of the chain would set the powder off. [7]

NOTES

¹
Op. cit. Merchant Vessels of the United States (1886) p. 236.

²
San Francisco Chronicle, January 17, 1887.

³
Ibid.

⁴
Ibid., January 16 and 17, 1887.

⁵
Ibid.

⁶
Ibid., January 18, 1887.

⁷
Ibid., January 19 and 27, 1887.



Crowds gather in the cove next to the Cliff House to view the remains of Parallel after the schooner's explosive cargo detonated in the early morning hours of January 16, 1887. Courtesy of San Francisco Maritime NHP.

Reporter

The 351-ton, three-masted schooner Reporter was built in 1876 at Ludlow, Washington, by the Hall Brothers, noted Pacific Coast shipbuilders. [1] Reporter was 141.4 feet long, with a 34-foot beam and a 10.6-foot depth of hold, and was built of Douglas fir and fastened with iron. [2] She spent her career engaged in the Pacific Coast lumber trade, bringing milled lumber, shingles and pilings from small coastal logging ports to San Francisco. When lost, Reporter's managing owner was the E. K. Wood Lumber Company of San Francisco. After loading a cargo of 400,00 board feet of pine lumber, shingles and shakes at Grays Harbor, Washington, the vessel sailed for San Francisco in early March 1902. The crew grumbled about two bad omens; the ship had sailed on a Friday, traditionally considered bad luck, and the ship's cat--which happened to be black--had leapt overboard and drowned an hour before Reporter had weighed anchor. The cook, a superstitious man, felt that "the poor thing committed suicide" rather than sail on a doomed ship. [3]

On the evening of March 13 the ship neared the Golden Gate in a thick fog. In the dark, Capt. Adolph Hansen saw a strong light to starboard, which he took to be the lighthouse at Point Bonita. Allowing the vessel to drive ahead and pass the light to enter the Gate, Hansen found himself caught in the surf; "not until the schooner was in the breakers did he know he was trying to hurdle her over the peninsula instead of going in orderly through the harbor entrance." [4] Hansen had mistaken a light at Cliff House for Point Bonita Light, and Reporter struck Ocean Beach bow on about three miles south of Point Lobos, beaching where the bark King Philip had gone ashore in 1878.

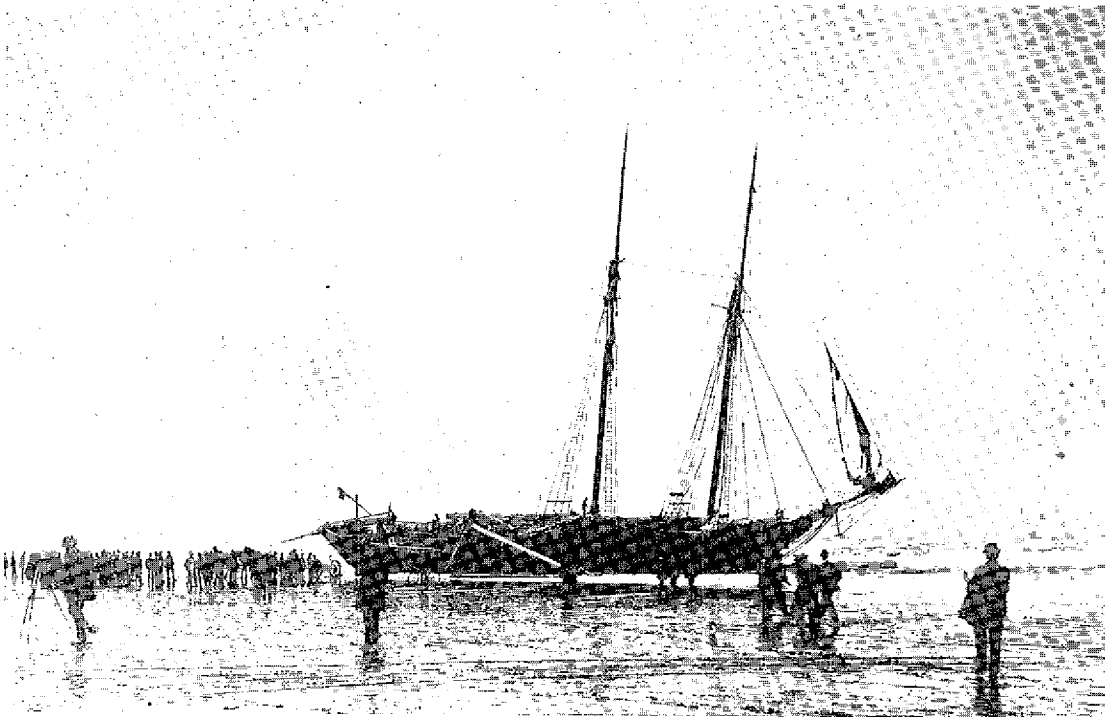
Heavy seas swept the decks, forcing the crew up into the rigging. The mizzenmast fell, injuring one man who fell to the deck. Capt. Hansen had meanwhile flashed a light as a distress signal, alerting a surfman from the Golden Gate Station of the United States Lifesaving Service patrolling the beach. Rescuers from the lifesaving station soon arrived, and launched a surfboat to retrieve Reporter's crew. The surfboat was swamped on the first attempt, but on the second try the crew was saved. [5] The schooner was gradually driven up on the beach, and at daylight lay on her starboard side 100 yards from shore. "During the day she heaved and lurched until she was lying almost stern on." [6] According to the San Francisco Examiner,

There is no hope for the Reporter. Her cargo of lumber, worth \$14,000, is likely to drift to the beach in parcels. It can be stacked and carted away into the city and so saved. The schooner can only fight until her tendons give. Her ribs and sheathing, masts and rails will wash ashore, to be carried away by thrifty seaside dwellers and be used as firewood. [7]

The day after the wreck, the schooner was visited by Capt. Hansen and the lifesavers, who managed to save the chronometer and a few personal effects. Thousands of San Francisco residents visited the wreck, "and not even the biting wind and sudden squalls could keep them away." [8] Enterprising businessmen posted broadsides on the hulk, advertising "Jesse Moore Rye and Bourbon" and "Boise Liniment" for rheumatism. [9] Reporter, her keel broken, began to break in half and disappear beneath the sand, "fast digging her own grave alongside the bones of King Philip, whose ribs are still seen...." [10] The bow and stern soon washed ashore and vanished.

NOTES

- 1
Op. cit. Record of American and Foreign Shipping (1900) n.p.
- 2
Op. cit., Merchant Vessels of the United States (1899) p. 158, and Record of American and Foreign Shipping,...
- 3
San Francisco Call, March 14, 1902.
- 4
Ibid.
- 5
San Francisco Examiner, March 14, 1902 and op. cit., United States Life-Saving Service (1903) p. 136.
- 6
San Francisco Call, March 14, 1902.
- 7
San Francisco Examiner, March 14, 1902.
- 8
San Francisco Call, March 14, 1902.
- 9
Photographs A3. 26,459 59 and A3. 6561, National Maritime Museum, San Francisco.
- 10
San Francisco Call, March 14, 1902.



The Schooner Reporter, lost in 1902 on Ocean Beach at the same spot King Philip was wrecked in 1878. Courtesy of San Francisco Maritime NHP.

Robert Henderson

The 368-ton bark Robert Henderson was built at Sunderland, England, in 1838. [1] Home-ported in Liverpool, Robert Henderson sailed from there to Batavia (Java) between 1839 and 1843. [2] In 1843 Robert Henderson began sailing between Liverpool and Calcutta, continuing to do so until 1849. [3] In 1850 the ship also sailed to Adelaide, Australia, where she took on 165 passengers for San Francisco. The Australian response to the California gold discovery had been tremendous, and dozens of vessels carried argonauts to San Francisco through the 1850s. [4]

Leaving Adelaide, the ship made a 123-day passage across the Pacific via Tahiti, and arrived off the Golden Gate. Then the vessel ran aground on one of the Farallon Islands, but was undamaged and got off. [5] On June 23, 1850, Robert Henderson sailed through the Golden Gate and safely landed her passengers at San Francisco. [6] After a short stay of three weeks, the ship cleared San Francisco on Thursday, June 12, 1850, for Adelaide. The bark missed stays off the Heads, however, and was blown ashore "on the south [Ocean] beach." [7] Her passengers and crew were rescued, but Robert Henderson was a total loss. The wreck was sold at auction for \$170. [8]

NOTES

1

Op. cit., Lloyd's Register (1839) n.p.

2

Ibid., (1843) n.p.

3

Ibid., (1849) n.p.

4

Charles Bateson, Gold Fleet for California: Forty-Niners from Australia and New Zealand. (East Lansing: Michigan University Press, 1963) p. 116.

5

San Francisco Daily Herald, June 24, 1850.

6

San Francisco Daily Alta California, June 24, 1850.

7

Ibid., July 13, 1850.

8

Sydney [Australia] Morning Herald, November 9, 1850, as quoted in Bateson, op. cit., p. 116.

W. H. Gawley

The 483.15-ton barkentine W. H. Gawley was built at Port Townsend, Washington, from the burnt-out hulk of the ship Northern Eagle. [1] Engaged in the Pacific Coast lumber trade, W. H. Gawley was carrying 400,000 board feet of lumber from Port Madison, Washington, when she was lost attempting to enter San Francisco Harbor on the foggy morning of October 23, 1880. The vessel ran aground on Ocean Beach five miles south of Fulton Street when the captain lost his bearings. Lying about 300 hundred yards from the beach on an even keel in quiet water, W. H. Gawley remained tight. A boat was launched, and the second mate and four seamen walked to Cliff House to seek help. [2]

The tug Rescue was dispatched from San Francisco and arrived at the wreck by midmorning. Three women passengers were taken aboard the tug and the effort to save W. H. Gawley began:

Men were busy tossing her deck-load of lumber overboard, and the tug...was snorting and straining in a vigorous effort to haul her off into deep water. Her topsails were set, her remaining sails were clewed and furled, her port-anchor was down, and such other dispositions had been made as might aid the endeavor to pull her afloat.... [3]

The effort failed when the barkentine would not move. The hull had given way and W. H. Gawley was full of water. [4] The following day, the surf came up, knocking W. H. Gawley on her port side. The crew from the Golden Gate Park station of the United States Lifesaving Service had been standing by, and fired a line to the vessel with their Lyle gun. With the help of several hundred spectators, the crew and captain of W. H. Gawley were hauled ashore on the breeches buoy. On Wednesday, October 27, the wreck began to break up, and by the 28th "she had gone to pieces, the lumber with which she was laden being scattered far and along the beach." [5]

NOTES

1

Op. cit., Merchant Vessels of the United States (1879) p. 213.

2

San Francisco Daily Alta California, September 24, 1880.

3

Op. cit., United States Life-Saving Service (1881) p. 119.

4

San Francisco Daily Alta California, September 24, 1880.

5

Op. cit., United States Life-Saving Service (1881) pp. 120, 218- 219.

William L. Beebe

William L. Beebe, built at Seattle, Washington, in 1875, was a three-masted schooner 134.7 feet long, with a 33.3-foot beam and a 10.7-foot depth of hold. She was registered at 281.43 tons. [1] The three-master William L. Beebe was engaged for her entire career in the Pacific Coast lumber trade, and at the time of her loss was bringing a cargo of lumber from Port Blakely, Washington, to San Francisco. After a rough 11-day passage, William L. Beebe arrived off the San Francisco Bar at 5:30 a.m. on December 10, 1894. The sea was smooth, and the schooner was crossing the bar when

Suddenly and without warning an immense breaker rolled over the stern...carrying away the wheelhouse and knocking Olsen [the crewman at the wheel] from his position...the first wave practically staggered the Beebe. She did not respond readily to the helm and became unmanageable. [2]

The rudder and mizzenmast rigging had also been swept away. There was no wind, and the vessel broadsided as she drifted south along the edge of the bar, with occasional breakers boarding her.

Finally at 7:30 a.m., William L. Beebe grounded on Ocean Beach near the foot of Sloat Boulevard. "She dove into the sand in a most remarkable manner, becoming imbedded so firmly that there was no possibility of her getting off." [3] The crew took to the rigging as the heavy surf swept the decks. Crews from the United States Lifesaving Service stations on Ocean Beach responded to the wreck. The surf, full of loose lumber from Beebe's cargo, was too rough to launch a lifeboat from the beach. A Lyle gun was set up and a line was fired to the schooner, but the line landed on the deck and could not be reached. The next three attempts also failed when the line tangled in debris; on the fifth try, however, the line was secured, and the crew was safely brought to the shore by breeches buoy. [4]

William L. Beebe had wrecked at high tide, and as the tide receded, she was left high and dry on the beach:

She has a big hole in her bow and is buried up to her water-line in sand, which makes it impossible to float her. Within a week or two she will probably have sunk nearly out of sight. About the only use that can be made of her is for firewood....The beach was strewn with broken lumber and rigging... [5]

The schooner was a total loss. She was sold to Capt. A. C. Freese of San Francisco for \$255. "The Captain considered that he had made a very good purchase for the winches and anchors will bring more than that. He is of the opinion that he can wreck the vessel from the beach. The masts and booms will be saved intact, and the rigging, with the exception of the mizzen shrouds, is all right." [6] The salvors stripped William L. Beebe of usable fittings before she was battered to pieces and disappeared beneath surf and sand.

NOTES

¹ Op. cit., Merchant Vessels of the United States (1893) p. 263.

² San Francisco Bulletin, December 11, 1894.

³ Ibid.

⁴ San Francisco Daily Morning Call, December 11, 1894, and op. cit., United States Life-Saving Service (1896) pp. 136-137, 234.

⁵ San Francisco Examiner, December 11, 1894.

⁶ [Eureka, California] Humboldt Times, December 14, 1894.

William Frederick

The 42.36-ton, two-masted schooner William Frederick was built at San Francisco in 1863. William Frederick was 63 feet long, with a 22-foot beam and a 4-foot depth of hold. [1] Like many other small two-masters, she was engaged in the Pacific Coast lumber trade. On July 2, 1887, William Frederick, with a four-man crew consisting of Capt. Martin Johnson and seamen Fred Jacobsen, William Keyser, and Jacob Demick sailed from San Francisco for Russian Landing to load lumber. Off the San Francisco Bar, however, the ship was becalmed and began to drift ashore with the current. Capt. Johnson attempted to sail against the current but could make no headway. [2]

The following day the schooner struck on the beach below Sloat Boulevard. Both anchors were dropped, keeping William Frederick from going ashore. The schooner Anna Matilda discovered the wreck and took off her crew:

subsequently the Captain and two sailors returned to the schooner to get their clothes. Finding that it was impossible to board...the men, despite the advice of Captain Johnson, determined to go ashore through the breakers. The boat was capsized and the two men drowned. [3]

Capt. Johnson struggled ashore and made his way to the United States Lifesaving Station at the foot of Sloat Boulevard. The bodies of the drowned sailors, Jacobsen and Keyser, were searched for but not recovered, and the tug Rescue was dispatched to pull William Frederick free. "It was impossible, however, to reach the craft, and when the tide ebbed she was left high and dry on the beach with her bottom knocked out, a total wreck." [4]

The wreck was looted by local residents despite the best efforts of the Lifesaving Service. The "sails, rigging, anchors, pumps, etc." were saved, though, and sold at auction for \$370. The wrecked hulk of William Frederick brought only \$5.00. The purchaser was John Molloy, a San Francisco grocer who salvaged wrecks. [5]

NOTES

¹ Op. cit., Merchant Vessels of the United States (1886) p. 287.

² San Francisco Daily Alta California, January 6, 1887.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid. and Max L. O'Starr, "Strange Case of the Schooner William Frederick," Pacifica (California) Tribune, February 4, 1981.

⁵ San Francisco Daily Alta California, January 13, 1887.

Yosemite

The 827-ton steam schooner Yosemite was built by the Bendixsen Shipbuilding Company at Fairhaven, California, in 1906. A single-ended steam schooner, Yosemite was 193 feet long, with a 40-foot beam and a 10.6-foot depth of hold. [1] She was powered by a 750 horsepower triple-expansion engine manufactured by the Fulton Iron Works of San Francisco. Built for the Yosemite Steamship Company, a "single-ship corporation" of San Francisco, Yosemite carried passengers and up to 850,000 board feet of lumber on her coastwise voyages. [2] In 1916 she was purchased by Pope and Talbot of San Francisco, the largest lumber firm on the Pacific Coast. As the first steam schooner purchased by the company, Yosemite was only one of the vessels in its fleet. She proved to be a successful investment: "she showed an annual profit of \$15,000 during the 10 years she operated." [3] For the remainder of her career, Yosemite ran between San Francisco and the Pope and Talbot sawmills at Port Ludlow, Washington.

Steaming out of San Francisco on February 6, 1926, Yosemite carried 25 tons of dynamite. In the early hours of February 7, the ship was off Point Reyes in a thick fog when she hit the rocks below Point Reyes light, tearing a hole in her bow.

As Capt. Silvia backed off the rocks, Yosemite began to flood. The radio operator broadcast a distress signal, which was picked up by the steam schooner Willamette only five miles away. Willamette rescued Yosemite's crew, who had taken to the boats and headed back for San Francisco. The Red Stack tug Sea Ranger, dispatched by Pope and Talbot, ran a hawser to Yosemite, whose starboard side was now submerged. The tug began to tow her toward the Golden Gate, but the task was difficult. Waves constantly washed over Yosemite and the hawser snapped once. [4]

After a day-long battle with the sea, Sea Ranger arrived at the San Francisco Bar around 2:00 a.m. on February 8, towing the water-logged Yosemite. The schooner began to drift, and the tug, with all engines going full speed ahead, was pulled astern. The anchor was dropped and torn away, and finally at 3:15 a.m., Yosemite broke free. Fifteen minutes later, the ship crashed on Ocean Beach, breaking apart as she hit the beach at the foot of Fulton Street, just below Cliff House. There was some speculation that the steam schooner's dynamite cargo had exploded, though the tug's crew reported that Yosemite had fallen apart in the surf:

Whatever the cause, the ship was splintered to atoms. Her wreckage, a litter of shattered timbers, empty powder boxes and broken spars, dotted the beach from the foot of Fulton street to Fleishacker Pool. Huge posts were twisted and spars were reduced to splinters. [5]

It was also noted that "a large piece of the ship is aground a quarter of a mile out and stands a torn and dejected monument to the ship...." [6]

Thousands of spectators crowded the beach for the next few days, picking up souvenirs and posing for pictures amidst the wreckage. The largest surviving piece of Yosemite's hull drifted ashore bottom up, smashing into the Lurline Pier at the foot of Fulton Street. The pier, which held an intake pipe for San Francisco's saltwater Lurline Baths, was battered by the hulk until 250 feet of the pier was torn away. [7] The beach was gradually cleared of smaller debris, but a week after the wreck large sections of Yosemite's hull remained visible.

NOTES

1

Op. cit., Merchant Vessels of the United States (1906) p. 325.

2

Op. cit., Lyman, The Marine Digest, June 5, 1943, p. 2.

3

Edwin T. Coman Jr. and Helen M. Gibbs, Time, Tide, and Timber: A Century of Pope and Talbot, (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1949) p. 247.

4

San Francisco Chronicle, February 8, 1926, and San Francisco Call, February 8, 1926.

5

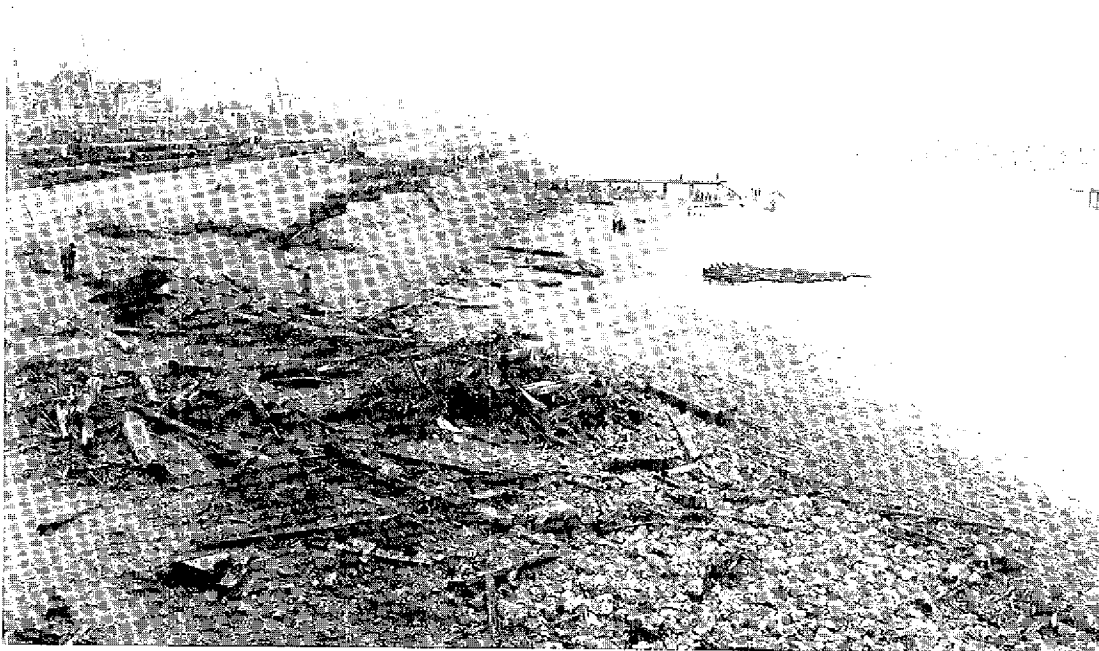
San Francisco Examiner, February 9, 1926.

6

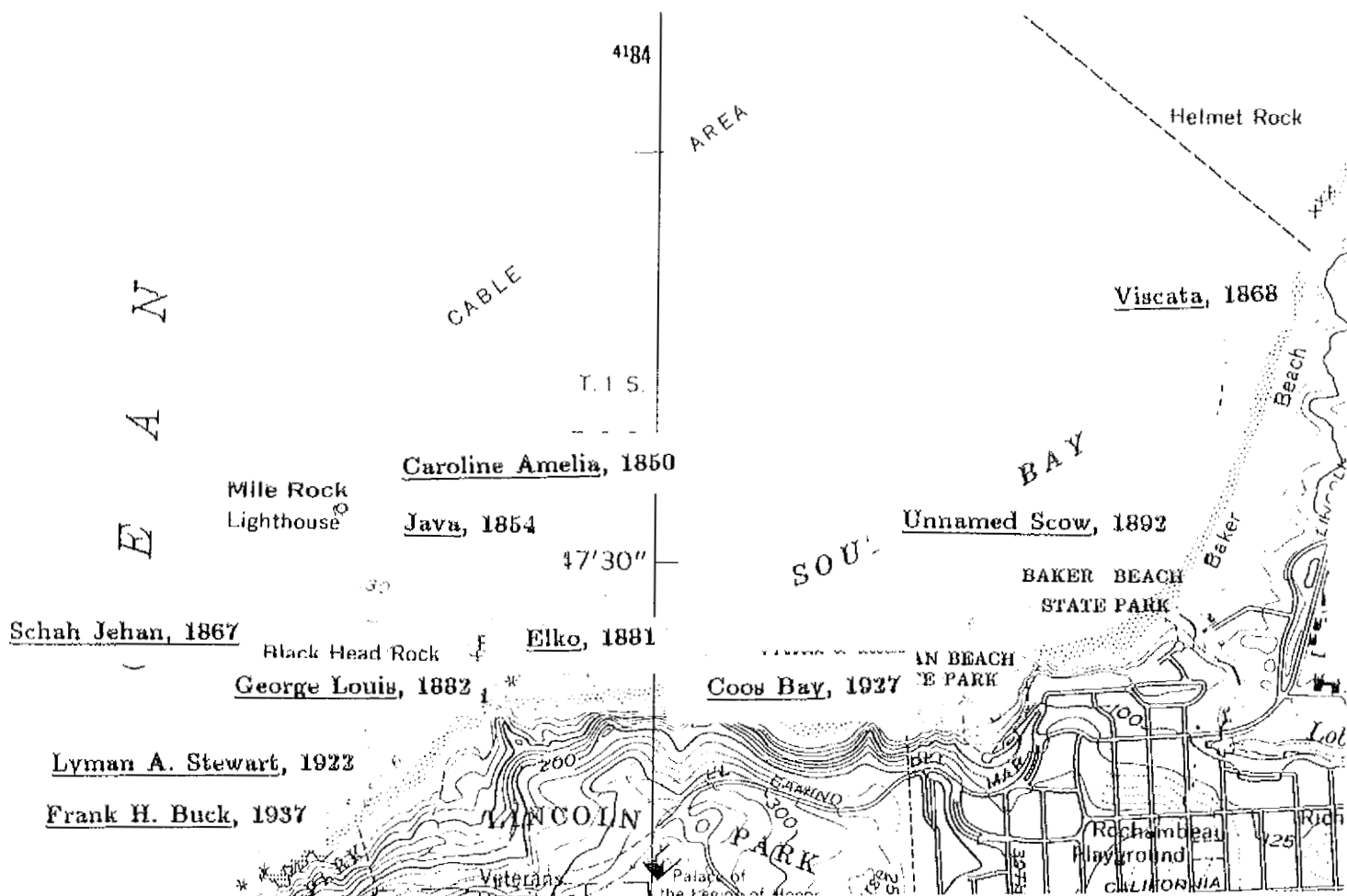
San Francisco Illustrated Daily Herald, February 9, 1926.

7

Ibid., February 13, 1926.



Debris from the wrecked steam schooner Yosemite litters Ocean Beach in February 1926. The hull, bottom up, lies in the surf near the broken remains of the salt water intake for the Lurline Baths. Courtesy of San Francisco Maritime NHP.



VESSEL LOSSES, LAND'S END WRECKS

Stephen A. Haller

These vessels are known to have wrecked at Land's End, either along the rocky stretch between Point Lobos and China Beach, or on the sandy stretches of China and Baker Beaches.

Caroline Amelia, 1850

Coos Bay, 1927

Elko, 1881

Frank H. Buck, 1937

Frank Jones, 1877

George Louis, 1882

Java, 1854

Lyman A. Stewart, 1922

Unnamed Scow, 1892

Schah Jehan, 1867

Trifolicum, 1914

Viscata, 1868

Caroline Amelia

Caroline Amelia was a Danish bark that wrecked on Mile Rocks on March 19, 1850. She is not listed in Lloyd's Register in the several years prior to 1850, and therefore the only source of information on the vessel and her wreck is an account that appeared in the Alta California of March 20, 1850:

Danish bark Caroline Amelia, which cleared on the 16th inst. for Costa Rica, was wrecked on the Mile Rocks in the offing yesterday morning. She was running for "the needles" when the breeze suddenly died away and a strong ebb tide set her in shore. She dropped anchors but her chain cables parted, and, in spite of all the exertions of the officers and crew she was driven by force of the current directly upon the above named rocks, staving an ugly hole in her bottom. Being an old ship her timbers soon gave way and filling steadily she went down in about ten fathoms of water, entirely out of sight. The captain succeeded in getting his chronometers, instruments, clothes, and money out of the ship before she sunk, and the crew saved all their dunnage.

The reference to Costa Rica may indicate that Caroline Amelia was intending to pick up a load of gold-seekers who were crossing the isthmus of Central America on their way to California; this conjecture is supported by the fact that there is no mention of cargo or passengers southbound in the Alta's story.

Coos Bay

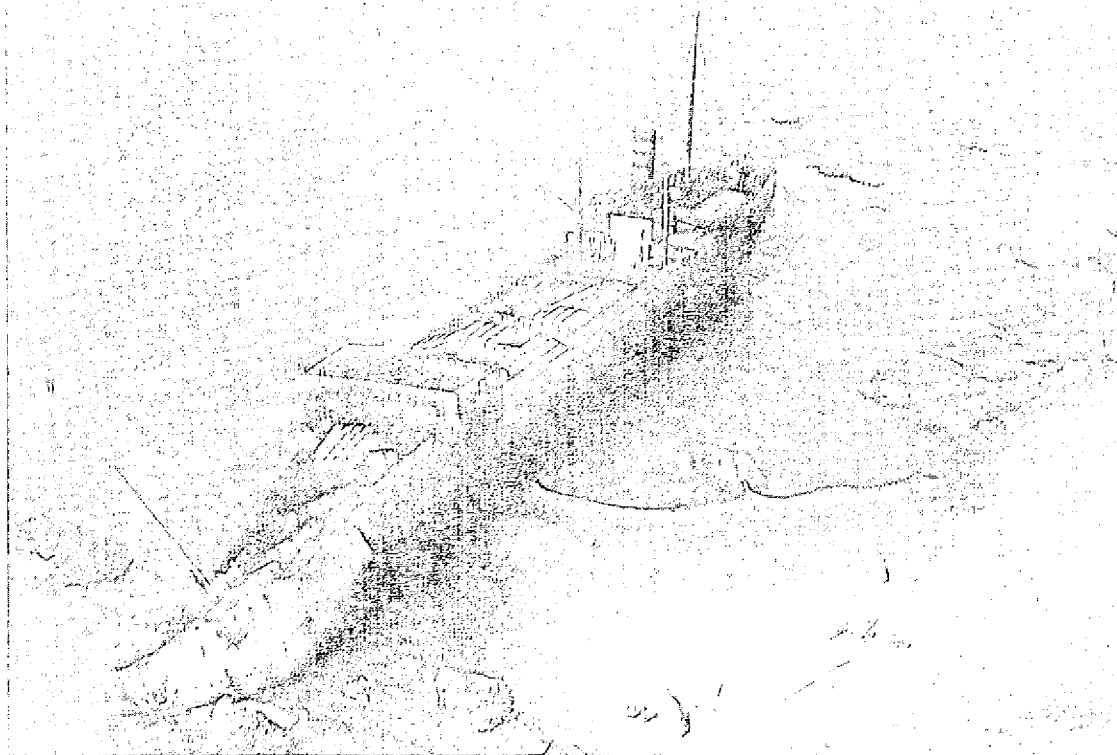
Coos Bay was built in 1909 at Sparrow's Point, Maryland, by the Maryland Steel Company, and originally named Vulcan. She was a steel-hulled vessel, intended for

service as a collier, with a pilothouse forward of midships, and additional superstructure aft. Vulcan was powered by dual triple-expansion steam engines producing 3,500 indicated horsepower. As built, she measured 5,451 gross tons, 2,989 net tons, and the dimensions of her hull were 386 foot length, 53 foot beam, and 29.8 foot depth of hold. [1]

Vulcan was owned by the Navy Department. Based in Baltimore, she was used to coal U.S. Navy vessels, and served various depots along the Eastern Seaboard. After a long career that included service in World War I, Vulcan was sold in 1924 to the Pacific States Lumber Company of Delaware for use on the West Coast. The sale reflected the passing of the older wooden-hulled steam schooners that had been the backbone of the West Coast lumber trade since the 1880s. Not only had many of these vessels reached the end of their useful lifetime, but lumber mills had begun to ship their timber directly to large ports such as Humboldt Bay, making the operation of larger steel-hulled freighters economically feasible.

Vulcan was sent to Norfolk, Virginia, for alterations and reconditioning, and emerged with greater freight capacity (net tonnage now 3,176) as Coos Bay. [2] Coos Bay was sent into the Pacific via the Panama Canal, and immediately began plying the coastal route, carrying lumber from the Northwest to San Francisco and San Pedro.

On October 22, 1927, Coos Bay left San Francisco in ballast for Coos Bay, Oregon. She departed late in the evening, and entered thick fog as she cleared the Golden Gate. In the poor conditions, the fog signals echoed confusingly. A strong ebb tide and a northwesterly swell caused the ship to stray far out of the main ship channel



The freighter Coos Bay lies aground near China Beach at Land's End, where she stranded in 1929. Courtesy of San Francisco Maritime NHP.

without the knowledge of Capt. B. W. Olson. Coos Bay swung toward the south, but never cleared the bight outside the Gate. At 8:06 p.m. the ship struck the rocks at Land's End to the east of China Beach. The hull was torn open and the engine room began to flood. The "black gang" fled as the main steam line ruptured, and steam and power were lost throughout the ship.

The 33 officers and crew waited out the night on deck as heavy swells continued to batter the vessel. At daybreak rescuers appeared on the scene. They readied a breeches buoy and fired the Lyle gun. The first shot had too great a charge, and it sailed over the heads of the rescue crew and the crowd that had gathered, to score a bull's eye on the home of a very surprised E. A. Kinney of 3633 Clement Street. Subsequent shots found their mark, however, and 14 crew members were saved by breeches buoy. The remainder were removed by boat.

By the next night, Coos Bay's decks had split under the tremendous pounding of the seas, and the vessel was doomed. All subsequent efforts to free her failed, and she was abandoned. For several years, the hulk remained relatively intact, and attracted curiosity-seekers to the site. The bow became bent and wrenched free, but the rest of the hull remained above water. The San Francisco Junior Chamber of Commerce began a campaign that eventually led to the scrapping of the vessel in April 1930, and all that remains visible today is an assortment of battered metal exposed at low tide. Various small metal fittings from the wreck are still occasionally recovered in the area east of China Beach. [3]

NOTES

1

Op. cit., Merchant Vessels of the United States (1910).

2

Ibid. (1926).

3

Delgado, Shipwrecks of the Golden Gate, (San Francisco: National Maritime Museum Association, 1984).

Elko

The 147.95-ton two-masted scow schooner Elko of San Francisco, "formerly owned and used as a coal scow by the Central Pacific Railroad Company," spent the last years of her career working in the Pacific Coast lumber trade. [1] On April 26, 1881, Elko loaded with lumber from Salmon Creek, California, crossed San Francisco Bar and was off the South Head (Point Lobos) when she was caught by the outgoing tide, which swept her in toward the rocks. Both of her anchors were let go, but the schooner grounded at Land's End. [2] The tug Wizard responded to the wreck but, as she readied a hawser to pull Elko off, came down on a submerged rock and had to return to San Francisco.

Two more tugs, Rescue and Water Witch, then responded to the wreck and attached a line, but as Rescue pulled Elko free, the rope was cut by the rocks and the schooner went ashore again, "where she remained all day, lying in a bad position and full of water." Late in the afternoon two more tugs, Neptune and Monarch, attempted to pull Elko off the rocks, but could not approach her in the heavy surf, which by then was "making a clean breach over the vessel.... After waiting about two hours, they were compelled to give it up for a hopeless job." Salvage was not attempted as it would scarcely pay to work at it on account of the locality of the wreck, approach by sea being next to impossible, and the only access by land being a trail perpendicular up the side of Point Lobos. [3]

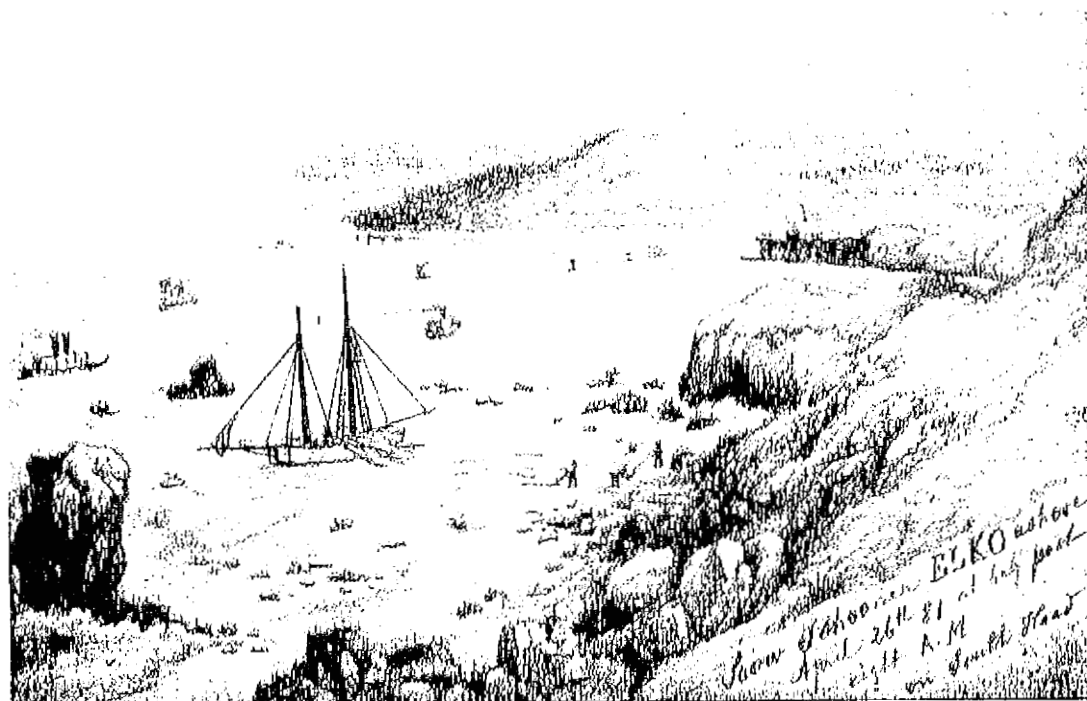
No further mention was made about the wreck of Elko after the initial account of her loss.

NOTES

¹ Op. cit., Merchant Vessels of the United States (1880) p. 52, and San Francisco Daily Alta California, April 27, 1881.

² San Francisco Daily Alta California, April 27, 1881.

³ Ibid.

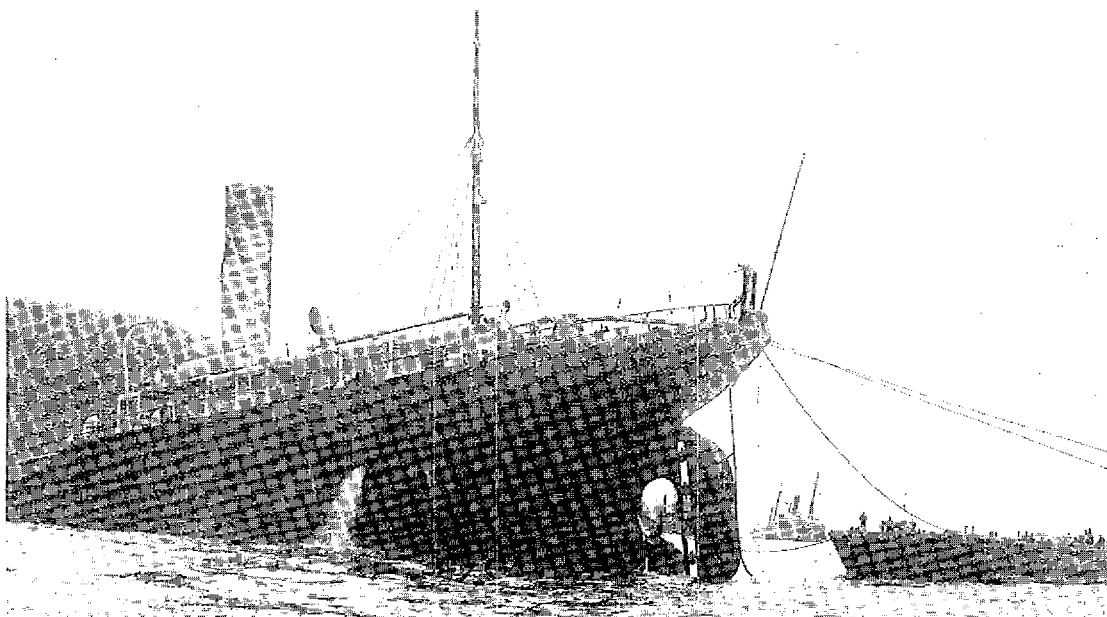


Drawing of the wreck of the scow schooner Elko at Land's End, 1881. Courtesy of San Francisco Maritime NHP.

Frank H. Buck

Frank H. Buck was built in 1913-14 at San Francisco by the Union Iron Works for the Associated Oil Company of California, and named for its president. She was said to be "the largest oil tank steamer flying the American flag, having 18 oil tanks and a carrying capacity of 62,000 barrels of oil." Of 3,850 net, 6,076 gross tons, she measured 408.8 feet long with a 55.5-foot beam and 31.7-foot depth of hold, and was powered by a (26.5-inch, 45-inch, 75-inch by 48-inch) triple-expansion steam engine. Her sister ship was Lyman Stewart, launched later the same year at Union. [1]

Frank H. Buck had an adventurous career that first took her between New York and far-flung ports in Europe, Central America, and Asia. In July 1918 in the midst of World War I, she exchanged fire with a German U-boat outside New York harbor. On September 13 of that same year, she destroyed another U-boat by gunfire in the mid-Atlantic. [2] Twice in 1924, she brushed with disaster. Once her rudder was wrenched free by heavy seas but she made port at Eureka, California, under a jury-rigged rudder. Later, she ran aground at Point Pinos near Monterey because of a navigational error. Holed and leaking, she was abandoned by her crew, but was eventually towed free and repaired. In 1935, she was struck by bullets fired from a high-powered rifle while crossing the Carquinez Straits at a time when tankships were involved in a labor dispute. She survived her sister ship Lyman Stewart by 15 years, but met a similar end at the same spot, in the greatest coincidence in the annals of shipwrecks at the Golden Gate.



Barges pump oil from the half-sunk hulk of the tanker Frank H. Buck, 1937. The stranded freighter Ohioan, wrecked in 1936, can be seen in the background. Courtesy of San Francisco Maritime NHP.

On March 6, 1937, while entering the Golden Gate with a full cargo of oil from Ventura, Frank H. Buck was rammed head-on by the Dollar Lines luxury passenger liner President Coolidge outward bound for the Orient. Although conditions were generally clear inside the bay, the fog dropped like a curtain just at the Golden Gate Bridge. Coolidge and Buck heard warning signals too late, and spotted each other only when collision was unavoidable, in spite of immediate evasive action. Although the bow was crushed, Coolidge was not in any danger of sinking. Buck, under Capt. R. W. Kelly, headed away from the cliffs of the northern headlands, in hopes that the strong ebb would carry the vessel to where she could be beached. When the vessel was down by the bow and trailing oil, the crew was ordered into the boats. Remarkably, no lives were lost in the collision. The crippled tanker finally came to rest, stern out of water, across the bow of Lyman Stewart, directly off Land's End. [3]

Although the stern continued for some time to swing free in the currents of the ship channel, Buck's bow remained wedged firmly in the rocks, and all attempts to free the vessel failed. The remains were dynamited in 1938 to clear the harbor approach, and the hulk rapidly broke up. Now only the engine and sternpost can now be seen at low water, next to the engine of the Lyman Stewart. The wreck has invited scavenging by beachcombers and divers over the years, and the site occasionally yields copper pipe, ship's fittings, and the letters that once spelt out her name.

NOTES

1

Op. cit., Record of American and Foreign Shipping (1915).

2

Capt. R. W. Daly and Katherine M. Daly, "Golden Gate Graveyard," Sea Classics Special (1976).

3

Op. cit., Delgado, Shipwrecks of the Golden Gate.

Frank Jones

Frank Jones was built in 1874 at Portsmouth, New Hampshire, by Daniel Marcy, also the owner of the vessel. She made two trips with general cargo over a triangular route between New York, San Francisco, and Liverpool, before she was lost. [1] The ship was a staunchly built Down-Easter with a medium-full model hull of oak, fastened with copper and iron. She carried the three square-rigged masts of a full-rigged ship. She measured 1,452 tons, and was 203 feet long, 40 feet wide, and had a 24-foot depth of hold. [2]

Frank Jones' final voyage took her from New York to San Francisco in 126 days under the command of Capt. James N. Nickles. On March 30, 1877, with a fresh gale blowing from the west-northwest and a pilot on board, Jones left port in tow of the powerful tug Monarch, bound in ballast for Manila. Monarch may have chosen a course that was closer to the south shore than was prudent under the conditions. In any case, the towing hawser parted, and the Jones began to set sail in an effort to gain steerageway. As the tug came up, another hawser was passed across (not without a certain degree of dickering, according to one account), but it, too, parted. An attempt to set anchors in the deep water of the Golden Gate failed, and the big ship was blown out of control across the South Bay until she struck the shore south of Fort Point. She scraped across some sharp rocks, then wedged between the rocks and a small sandy beach, coming to rest nearly upright. The hull was torn to ribbons, and the hold soon filled with 12 feet of water. [3]

The vessel was quickly sold at the Merchant's Exchange to one Capt. Lees for \$4,750. The salvager immediately stripped her of stores, spars, and sails, and installed steam pumps in an attempt to work the wreck free and repair her. This hard work proved in vain, however, and she was sold again to Col. A. W. Von Schmidt for a mere \$700. He attempted to raise her farther up the beach and repair her there, but failed utterly, and the vessel was dismantled. [4]

Because of the thorough salvage activity at the site of the wreck, it is unlikely that any sizable intact portions of the vessel remain. There may, however, be miscellaneous scattered fragments and ship's fittings buried under the sands to the south of Fort Point that were missed by salvors or buried by waves.

NOTES

1

Op. cit., Matthews, p. 119.

2

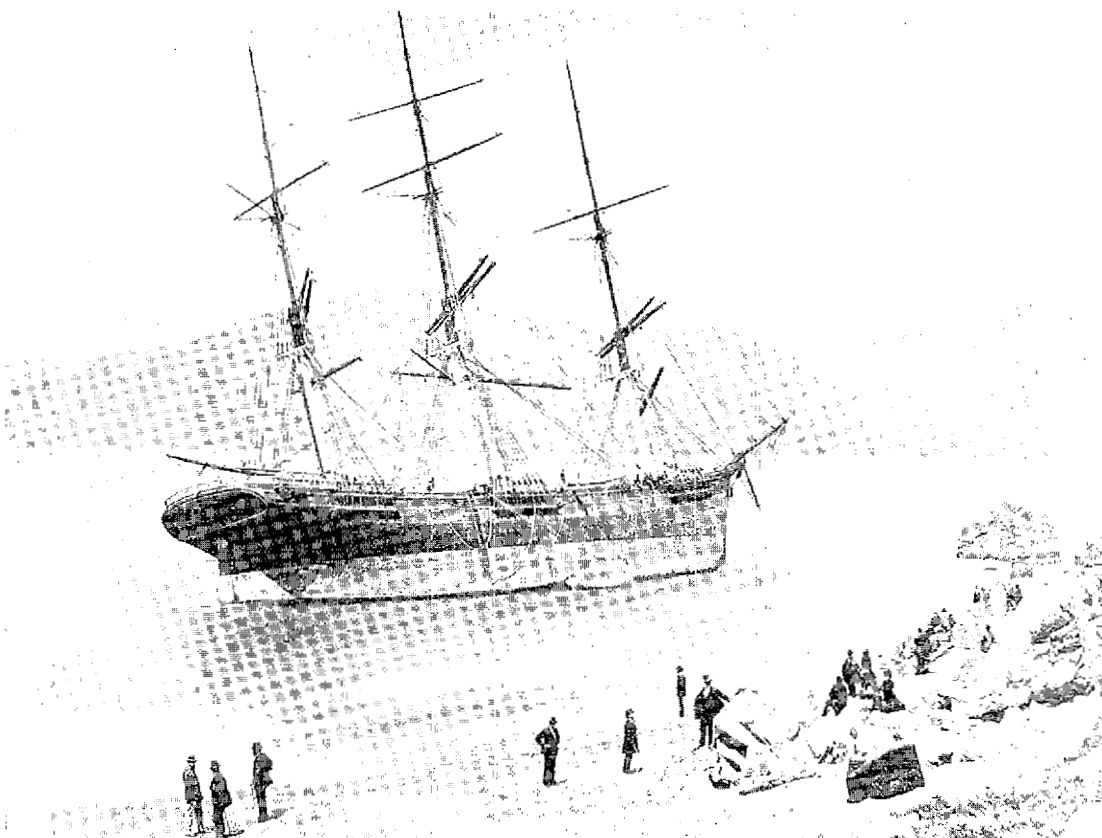
Op. cit., American Lloyd's (1876).

3

Op. cit., Matthews, p. 120.

4

Martin, Wallace E., ed. Sail and Steam on the Northern California Coast, 1850-1900 (San Francisco: National Maritime Museum Association, 1983) p. 92.



The ship Frank Jones, stranded and a total loss at Baker's Beach, near the Golden Gate, 1877. Courtesy of San Francisco Maritime NHP.

George Louis

George Louis was a small schooner of 40 tons. She carried the official number of 10730, and was based in San Francisco. While bound from San Francisco to Timber Cove, California, on March 8, 1882 (presumably to load lumber), she went ashore inside Mile Rock, six and one-half miles northeast of the Golden Gate Park Lifesaving Station. The captain, Erickson, and the crew of three were saved, but the vessel, valued at \$4,000, was a total loss.

The particulars of the incident, as recounted in the United States Life-Saving Service Annual Report of 1882 are given here:

At 3:45 pm the schooner George Louis, of and from San Francisco, California, for Timber Cove, in ballast, with a crew of four men, while beating down through the Golden Gate against a fresh northwesterly wind misstayed and went ashore under the cliffs near Fort Point at a place about six and a half miles, by land from Station No. 7, Twelfth District (Golden Gate Park). It was impossible for the accident to be seen from the station, and the keeper was not aware of its occurrence until the fact was reported by a messenger from Captain John Low, of the Point Lobos Signal Station, who, upon discovering the vessel ashore, dispatched his son, John B. Low, to the station, and then hurried to the spot alone to render assistance. The keeper immediately sent off for a team to draw the apparatus, and was soon on the way to the stranded vessel, arriving on the scene about 5 o'clock after a hard ride. By that time the captain and two others of the schooner's crew had managed, with the assistance of Captain Low, to climb the rocks and were safe, the cook, who was badly hurt by his efforts to make the ascent, being still at the foot of the cliff, unable to help himself. As young Low was the lightest man of the party he gallantly volunteered to make the descent and attach a line to the poor fellow so he could be hauled up. Accordingly, the young man was lowered over the precipice, a distance of seven hundred and eighty feet, by one of the station's lines, and upon reaching the foot of the cliff he bent a line around the man's body and he was safely hauled to the top. As he was unable to walk and in great pain, he was taken to the house of Captain Low, which was the nearest place of shelter, and was there properly cared for until the next day, when he was removed to San Francisco. The report of the district superintendent states that but for the timely arrival of the station appliances the man must soon have perished, the place where he was being a very dangerous one and inaccessible except by perilous descent from the top of the cliff, as undertaken by young Low. The vessel broke up during the night, and, on the following day scarcely a vestige of her was to be seen.

Java

Java is a vessel mentioned by Marshall as having struck, or wrecked at, Mile Rock in 1854. [1] No account of this incident was uncovered during research for this report. Although the Alta California of June 6, 1850, includes "Java, 422t, Bordeaux," among a list of vessels at San Francisco at the time, the closest vessel to that description in Lloyd's register is a ship Java of 487 tons, built at Quebec in 1838 and belonging to owners in Bristol, England. It is doubtful that either of those are the same vessel. A reminiscence in the Alta California of May 29, 1882,

states that, after service as a storeship, "Java, which lay near Broadway Wharf, afterward made a trip to sea, but finally came back and (Charles) Hare broke her up."

NOTE

1

Marshall, California Shipwrecks: Footsteps in the Sea (Seattle, Washington: Superior Publishing Company, 1978) p. 102.

Lyman A. Stewart

Lyman A. Stewart was built in 1914 at San Francisco's Union Iron Works. She was a steel-hulled oil tanker, identical to her sister, Frank H. Buck. (Refer to the section on Buck for dimensions of Stewart.)

Named for the president and one of the founders of the Union Oil Company, Lyman A. Stewart was delivered to her owners 10 months after her sister ship. Unlike Buck, however, she had an uneventful career in coastwise service on the West Coast. Shortly after leaving the Union Oil Company's docks at the San Francisco Bay port of Oleum, heavy with oil, Lyman A. Stewart approached the Golden Gate. A heavy swell and a strong tidal current added to the danger of a thick fog bank as the tanker proceeded out the harbor entrance. At the same time the freighter Walter A. Luckenbach was inbound through the Gate at the end of a long voyage from New York. At 3:27 p.m. on October 7, 1922, the fog cleared long enough for Capt. Brenner of Luckenbach to see the long hull of Stewart cut across his bow. The freighter cut deep into the port side of the heavily laden tanker, causing water



The tanker Lyman Stewart aground at Land's End in 1922. Courtesy of San Francisco Maritime NHP.

to rush in and putting her down by the bow immediately. The captain of Stewart ordered hands to abandon ship, as he stayed with his command and piloted her toward shore. The ship leaked oil as she went. Stewart grounded on the rocks at Land's End and tore out her bottom on the jagged rocks. All hands were saved. [1]

In spite of strenuous efforts to float her, Lyman A. Stewart remained hard aground. Eventually, heavy seas picked up the hulk and jammed it farther up on the rocks, breaking it in two. [2] In 1938, the wreck of Stewart and her sister Frank H. Buck were dynamited in an effort to clear the entrance of the harbor of visible wrecks. The dismembered hulks of both vessels slipped further below the waves, where now only the engine block of Stewart protrudes at low tide. [3]

Walter A. Luckenbach was able to make port under her own power, and was soon put back in service, although her ensuring was replete with collisions. In 1938 she collided with the Japanese motorship Arimasan Maru in San Pedro harbor, and in 1940 she struck the Norwegian refrigerator cargo ship Panama Express in heavy fog off Cape Mendocino. [4]

NOTES

¹
Op. cit., Delgado, Shipwrecks of the Golden Gate.

²
San Francisco Chronicle, November 28, 1926.

³
Sea Classics Tragedy at Sea, 1976; p. 105.

⁴
San Francisco Chronicle, October 15, 1940.

Unnamed Scow

On October 12, 1892, an unnamed scow drifted ashore one and one-half miles south of the Fort Point Lifesaving Station, and was totally wrecked. The vessel was valued at \$1,500 and carried gear worth \$500. A wire cable was run to a tugboat, which attempted in vain to haul the scow off. The scow was then stripped of everything of value that could be saved, including the tug's parted cable, in a process that took the salvors three days. The estimated value of the loss was \$1,950. No injuries occurred and no lives were lost in this incident.

Schah Jehan

Schah Jehan (or Shah Jehan) was a British full-rigged ship, about which little is known prior to her loss. A newspaper account of her loss states that she was an "old vessel" which arrived in San Francisco with a cargo of coal, tobacco, and brandy from Sidney, Australia. The cargo was seized by (customs?) Collector Miller, and the captain and mate (names unknown) were arrested for smuggling. Released on bonds, they departed San Francisco "rather hurriedly" on the afternoon of February 3, 1867, bound, it was stated, "up the Coast for lumber." It was conjectured that "This haste to leave between (within?) two weeks probably caused the loss of the vessel." [1]

Perhaps Schah Jehan left short of hands. It is stated that the immediate cause of the wreck was "missing stays through the breaking of the mainsail sheet." She was

driven ashore between Point Lobos and the South Head, where her bottom was stove in. All aboard reached shore safely. [2]

The wreck was sold to salvors shortly thereafter, but broke up before any salvage activity could take place. "A cleaner break-up and disappearance we never saw in our life," stated the newspaper. [3]

NOTES

1

San Francisco Daily Alta California, February 5, 1867.

2

Ibid., February 4, 1867.

3

Ibid., February 6, 1867.

Trifolicum

Trifolicum is the name of a vessel listed in Marshall as having wrecked at Land's End in 1914. No further account of this incident or mention of this vessel in any register has been found.

NOTE

1

Op. cit., Marshall, p. 103.

Viscata

Viscata was built in 1864 in Liverpool, England, by Hart. She was staunchly built, with a hull of iron and one bulkhead. Lloyd's gave her its highest rating during surveys in Liverpool and San Francisco. Viscata was a 1,065-ton vessel, whose hull measured 204 feet long, with a 32.8-foot beam and 21.6-foot depth of hold. [1] She is referred to as both a bark and a ship, but photographic evidence taken at the site of her stranding clearly shows her crossing a square yard for a mizzen course, and therefore she was rigged as a ship at the time of her loss.

Viscata was owned by J. Steel of Liverpool, who engaged her in a deep-water trade that took her more than once to San Francisco Bay to load cargoes of California grain, presumably in exchange for manufactured goods from England. [2] On March 7, 1868, Viscata cleared North Point and stood out the Golden Gate on an ebb tide. Capt. Drummond was the master, but the ship was under the direction of the port pilot, Capt. Jolliff, who had recently been in charge of the ill-fated Oliver Cutts, wrecked off Alcatraz only 55 days before. The wind was coming out of the northwest, and the ship began to beat her way out the narrow harbor entrance, tacking once off Fort Point, again off the Sausalito side, and attempting to do so a third time near the Fort again. On the last attempt, the wind shifted suddenly to the north and she missed stays and was taken aback. At the time she was dangerously close to the frothing rip of a counter-current that further complicated the maneuver. While moving astern, the starboard anchor was dropped, and 60 fathoms of chain were run out in an attempt to bring the vessel's head into the wind. The fates conspired against the vessel, however, for the anchor stock broke and the anchor failed to hold. It was now too late to avoid grounding, for to have let go a second anchor at that point would have caused the vessel to damage herself by running over her own chain. Viscata came up broadside on the sands of Baker

NOTES

1

Op. cit., Lloyd's Register (1867-68).

2

San Francisco Daily Alta California, April 28, 1868.

3

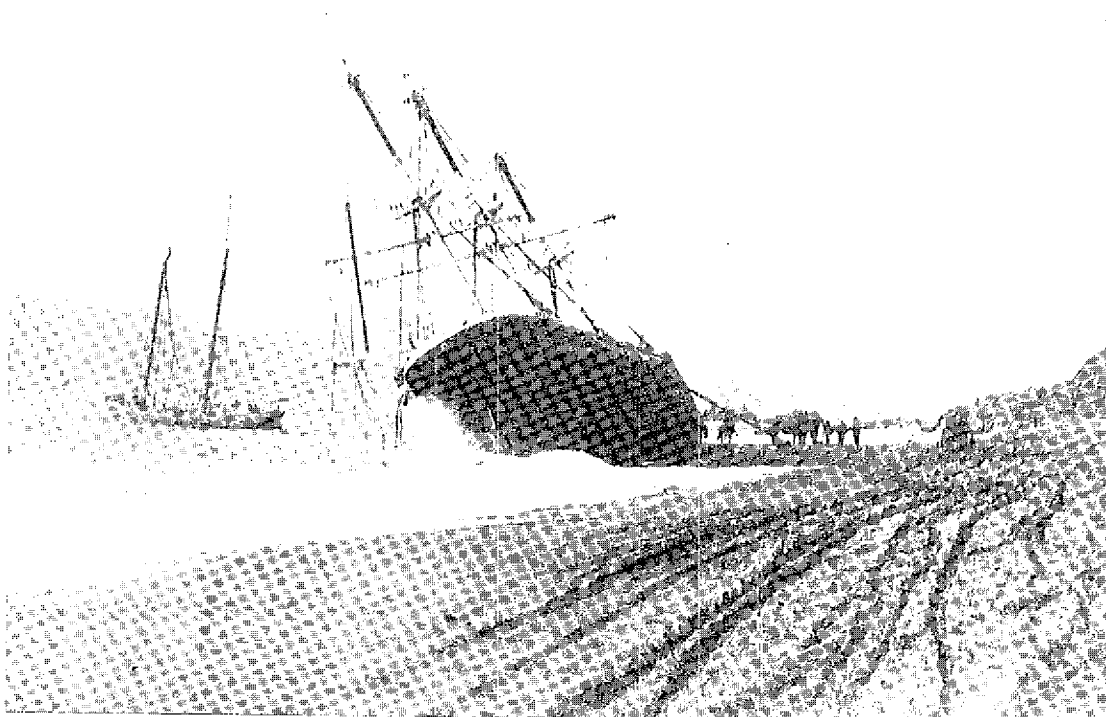
Ibid., March 13, 1868.

4

Ibid., March 23, 1868.

5

Ibid., April 30, 1868.



Viscata, a total loss on Baker's Beach, 1868. San Francisco Maritime NHP photo by Carleton Watkins.

Beach, where successive waves pushed her higher and higher until she could be reached by foot at low tide. [3]

The tug Rescue attempted to pull her free on the high tide, but failed, and the vessel was sold at auction to Messrs. Stevens, Baker & Co. for \$22,500 in gold at the Merchant's Exchange. The prevailing calm weather, and the vessel's position embedded in soft sand, made it "generally believed that there is a big thing in the purchase of the vessel, as she is lying, at the price paid." [4] The cargo of 32,731 100-pound sacks of wheat was, however, sold separately--and the vessel's fate was sealed. The owners of the vessel, while stripping the ship of topmasts, rigging, and spars, and engaging a steam pump to keep the hold dry, refused at first to allow the owners of the cargo to remove the sacks of wheat. Although much of the cargo was eventually removed from the hull in an effort to lighten ship and allow her to be floated free, the efforts came too late. When a heavy storm came up, both parties lost out as the vessel went to pieces.

Newspaper accounts stated that "the scene at the time was magnificent--the huge rollers, coming in with military precision and regularity, lifting their crests with a mighty roar and hurling themselves upon the fated ship, as if determined to destroy her utterly, while the sea and shore were strewn with her timbers, deck planking, and such portions of her cargo as had not yet been taken from her. Notwithstanding the rain that poured down unceasingly, many persons rode out from the city to witness the scene, and the bluff and the beach were covered at times with spectators." It was further stated that

she had worked loose from her bed of sand, and somewhat farther inshore, when her wooden decks began to yield to the tremendous blows of the waves, and gradually broke up as the beams were broken and timbers twisted and split to pieces. With the deck gone and the hold filled with water, the waves had full sweep. The iron plates on her starboard side near the bow and stern began to yield. The seams along the bilge began to open also, and the mainmast, with the iron maintopmast, fell out and went over the side to seaward, while the port side of the hull succumbed to the pressure and curled in "like a burnt shoe." The iron foremast was also bent and broken, threatening to fall at any moment. The mizzenmast alone stood erect and appeared uninjured....At nightfall only the ragged and torn shell of iron was left to tell of the magnificent ship.... [5]

It would appear from this account that considerable material remains of Viscata may indeed be buried under the sands of Baker Beach near or below the tide line. However, it is obvious that such remains would be more in the nature of twisted wreckage of the hull and masts, than any substantial intact portions of the vessel. Excellent photographic documentation exists that would aid in pinpointing the location of her remains.

As a postscript, it is to be noted that the pilot's license was revoked by the Pilot Examiners, in spite of supportive testimony by Capt. Drummond of Viscata. Examiners reasoned that he should not have attempted to come about so close to an obvious back eddy, and that more efforts should have been made to let go a second anchor. [6]

VESSEL LOSSES, FORT POINT TO FORT MASON, AND ALCATRAZ ISLAND

James P. Delgado

These vessels are known to have wrecked within Golden Gate National Recreation Area park boundaries between Fort Point, the Marina, and Fort Mason; only one vessel is listed as a total loss on Alcatraz Island.

Aberdeen, 1853
Chateau Palmer, 1856
City of Chester, 1886
City of Rio de Janeiro, 1901
General Cushing, 1858
Golden Fleece, 1854
Granada, 1860
Isaac Jeanes, 1876
Oliver Cutts, 1868
Samoset, 1852

Aberdeen

The 718-ton ship Aberdeen was built at Warren, Maine, in 1847. [1] The circumstances of her loss in late December 1852, or early January 1853, are not recorded, but the log of the United States Revenue Marine cutter Frolic noted the wreck lay at the Golden Gate "ashore on the Rock off Fort Pt." [2] On January 8, Capt. Douglass Ottinger boarded the wreck "and found her broken into two upon the rocks." [3] By January 9, 1853, the wreck had gone to pieces and Frolic landed a crew to "save property" for the owners: 13 hams, 5 pieces of pork, 1 keg of butter, and 1 box of soap were salvaged. [4]

The remains of the vessel evidently stayed on the rocks at Fort Point for some time; on February 16, 1854, the California Legislature passed a joint resolution instructing California's Congressional delegation to "obtain an appropriation from Congress, if possible, sufficient to procure the removal of the wreck of the ship Aberdeen, which now lies at the entrance of the Bay of San Francisco, and presents a serious obstruction to commerce." [5]

NOTES

1

Forrest R. Holdcamper, List of American-Flag Merchant Vessels Which Received Certificates of Registry or Enrollment at the Port of New York, 1796-1869, (Washington, D.C.: The National Archives, 1968) Vol. 1, p. 13.

2

Log of the United States Revenue Cutter Frolic, Entry for January 7, 1853. Records of the United States Coast Guard, Record Group 26, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

3

Ibid., Frolic log, Entry for January 8, 1853.

4

Ibid., Entry for January 9, 1853.

The Statutes of California, Passed at the Fifth Session of the Legislature.... (Sacramento: B. B. Redding, 1854) n.p.

Chateau Palmer

The 800-ton ship Chateau Palmer of Le Havre, France, was lost on her maiden voyage when she missed stays and crashed ashore at Fort Point on May 1, 1856. The final voyage began when she arrived at San Francisco in early 1856 with a "full cargo of merchandise," and was chartered by the firm of Bolton, Barron and Forbes, operators of California's New Almaden mercury mines, to ship 719 flasks of quicksilver from San Francisco to Callao, Peru. [1] Departing San Francisco on May 1, 1856, Chateau Palmer was just outside the Golden Gate when she missed stays:

...in attempting to wear ship, finding that she would not clear the shore, both anchors were immediately let go, when she dragged ashore about five hundred yards west of Fort Point. The wind blowing fresh from the WNW. at the time, with a heavy sea running, she struck heavily. Immediately after striking, she floated off shore with the head to the westward. [2]

Three days later, it was noted in a summary of the fortnight's news that the ship, with a cargo of quicksilver and "China goods" had gone ashore and "became a total wreck, but the cargo was saved." [3] No further mention of the wreck of Chateau Palmer was made.

NOTES

¹

San Francisco Daily Alta California, May 2, 1856.

²

Ibid.

³

Ibid., Daily Alta California, May 5, 1856.

City of Chester

The 1,106.21-ton, iron-hulled steamer City of Chester was built at Chester, Pennsylvania, in 1875. City of Chester was 202 feet long, with a 33.2-foot beam and a 15.9-foot depth of hold. [1] Owned by the Pacific Coast Steamship Company, City of Chester operated along the coast carrying passengers and freight between San Francisco and the lumbering ports on California's Humboldt Bay for most of her career. Upon her first arrival at Eureka, California, she was described as "the finest steamship ever in our harbor....large and roomy, having the finest of accommodations for passengers." [2] Trouble befell City of Chester in January 1886 when she ran aground on the South Spit of the Humboldt Bay Bar. The steamer was safely floated on the next high tide, but lost the rudder, rudder post, and a propeller blade. [3]

City of Chester's luck ran out with her second accident. With passengers on board, the steamer departed San Francisco on the foggy morning of August 22, 1888. As City of Chester steamed past Fort Point, the incoming iron-hulled passenger liner Oceanic, just arriving from Hong Kong and Yokohama, hit her at 9:25 a.m. The huge Oceanic cut through City of Chester's hull. When stern lifted high into the air, City of Chester sank rapidly, her boilers exploding as cold seawater hit hot

metal. Taking about 24 passengers with her, City of Chester plunged deep into the Golden Gate channel. [4]

Oceanic, though badly damaged, managed to stay afloat as members of the liner's crew leapt into the water to save the survivors from City of Chester. The wreck's location was marked by an oil slick that guided diver Victor Hinston to her. At 50 fathoms "he found the vessel lying across the channel cut in two. Water was rushing through the cut like a mill race." [5] No attempt was made to salvage the wreck until 1890, when wrecker Thomas Whitelaw sounded the wreck; "it was discovered that the City of Chester lay on a sloping ledge with her bow in 40 fathoms of water and her stern in 46 fathoms. This depth was too great...and it is not probable that any attempt will be made to raise her." [6]

NOTES

1

Op. cit., Merchant Vessels of the United States (1888) p. 278.

2

[Eureka, California] Weekly Humboldt Times, November 4, 1882.

3

[Eureka, California] Weekly Times-Telephone, January 2 and January 9, 1886.

4

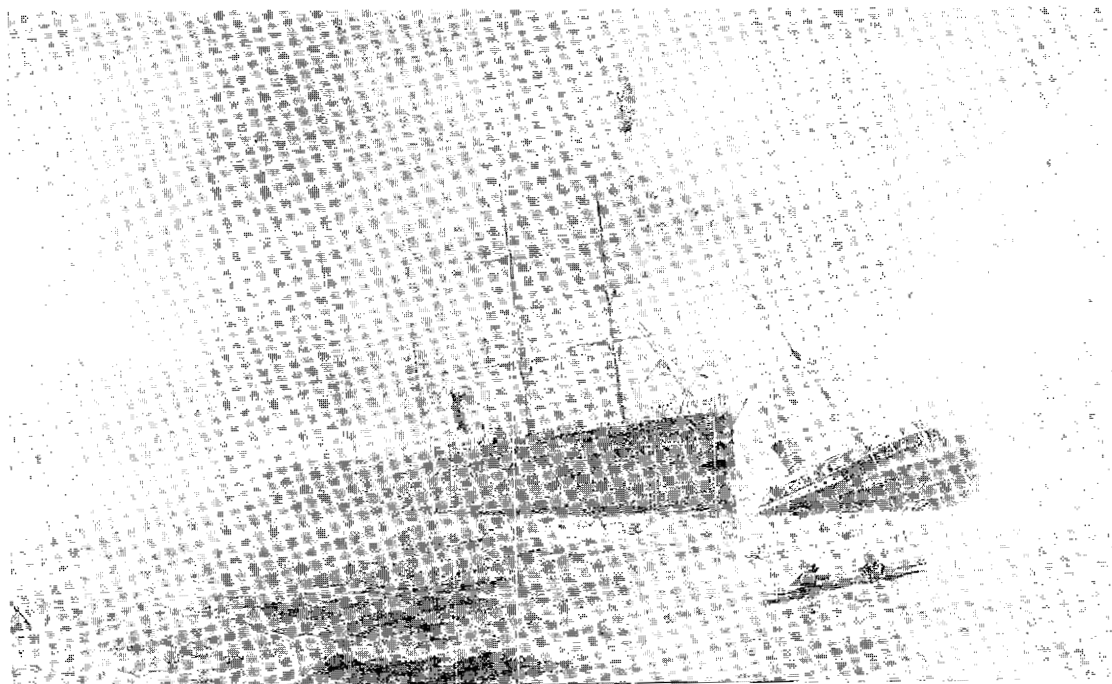
San Francisco Chronicle, August 23 and August 24, 1888; San Francisco Examiner, August 23, 24 and 25, 1888.

5

Op. cit., Weekly Humboldt Times, October 11, 1888.

6

Ibid., December 11, 1890.



Oceanic rams and sinks City of Chester at the Golden Gate, 1888. Courtesy of San Francisco Maritime NHP/Robert Gilbert, artist.

City of Rio de Janeiro

The 3,548-ton, iron-hulled steamship City of Rio de Janeiro was built in 1877 and 1878 at Chester, Pennsylvania. Built by John Roach, the foremost marine engine manufacturer and shipbuilder in the United States in the late nineteenth century, City of Rio de Janeiro was laid down with her sister ship City of Para, to provide steamers that would link Brazil with the United States. As built, City of Rio de Janeiro was 344 feet long, with a 38-foot beam and a 28.9-foot depth of hold. [1] The steamer's steam engines were removed in 1892 and a new compound engine manufactured by the Union Iron Works of San Francisco was installed. [2] Launched on March 6, 1878, City of Rio de Janeiro was termed "a first class screw-steamer."

The ship is inclosed with iron from the stern up to the hurricane deck, aft of the fore-hatch, to give her extra strength....The joiner work is...most splendid and elegant....The Rio de Janeiro will accommodate 100 first-class passengers and about 500 in the steerage. [3]

Unfortunately for John Roach and his backers, the steam line to Brazil was a failure. City of Rio de Janeiro proved particularly expensive; in 1879 she ran down three ships, including the lightship at the mouth of the Amazon River, sinking two of the vessels. [4] City of Rio de Janeiro and City of Para were sold in 1881 to the Pacific Mail Steamship Company of New York, which sent both vessels into service on the Panama route--City of Para on the Atlantic side, City of Rio de Janeiro on the Pacific side of the continent.

City of Rio de Janeiro made only one voyage to Panama before being sent into the trans-Pacific service. For the remainder of her career, City of Rio de Janeiro connected San Francisco with Honolulu, Yokahama, Japan, and Hong Kong. Although the steamer carried freight and a number of well-to-do passengers, her most significant service was the transportation of thousands of immigrant Chinese to a new life in America. Her career was eventful; frequently the vessel was involved in customs cases, as smugglers used City of Rio de Janeiro to bring a variety of items, usually opium, into the United States. In 1890 City of Rio de Janeiro was rammed by the English steamer Bombay, crushing her bow and forcing an 18-day delay in her next sailing. In January 1895, the steamer again met with accident when she ran aground on the rocks outside Nagasaki harbor. [5]

City of Rio de Janeiro was chartered by the United States Army's Quartermaster Corps during the Spanish-American War as a troop transport. On July 22, 1898, she steamed from San Francisco with 888 men and 40 officers from the 1st South Dakota Infantry, the 1st and 2nd Battalions of the 18th U.S. Infantry, a Signal Corps detachment, and recruits for the Utah Light Artillery. Arriving at Manila on August 24, 1898, City of Rio de Janeiro was quickly made ready for a return voyage. Sailing on September 22, 1898, she brought 150 sick and wounded soldiers back to San Francisco on October 22. [6]

Returning to immigrant service in 1900, City of Rio de Janeiro made only a few voyages until she was lost in heavy fog as she entered San Francisco Bay early on February 22, 1901. After arriving off the Golden Gate on the evening of February 21 and taking on Pilot Capt. Frederick Jordan, City of Rio de Janeiro weighed anchor at 4:00 a.m. the next day to head into San Francisco Bay. Steaming toward the Golden Gate, the vessel was swept off her course by a strong ebbing tide and struck the rocks at the Golden Gate at 5:30 a.m. [7] Tearing open the hull, the steamer backed off the rocks and slid into the ocean, carrying 128 of the 210

passengers and crew to a watery grave. [8] Most of the 82 survivors were pulled from makeshift rafts and wreckage by fishing boats that arrived on the scene as they departed for the day's fishing. The passing of the steamer left a large amount of small debris on the water; "small bits of broken planking strewed the vicinity of the wreck and floated with the changing tide, leaving a grewsome [sic] trail from Land's End up through Raccoon Straits to the Berkeley shores." [9]

The vessel apparently sank intact; little floated up from the wreck save a few bodies and light flotsam. In July 1902, the pilothouse tore free from the submerged hulk and drifted ashore at Fort Baker inside the Gate. Inside the pilothouse, the badly decomposed corpse of City of Rio de Janeiro's captain, William Ward, was found, still partially clad in his uniform. The captain was identified by his distinctive watch and its fob, a Chinese silver coin. [10] The wreck of City of Rio de Janeiro was the worst maritime disaster off San Francisco's shores, and bitter condemnation of the Pacific Mail Steamship Company, Capt. Ward, and, to some extent, Pilot Jordan, continued for years. The master was ultimately blamed. "This is the second large steamship [the first was the Pacific Mail steamer City of New York in 1893] lost within the Heads through a gross neglect to obey the promptings of sound seamanship." [11] The wreck was sought unsuccessfully for decades, the endeavors spurred by rumors of treasure on board. The various search and salvage efforts came to naught until 1985, when the remains of the steamer were apparently finally located in approximately 300 feet of water outside the Golden Gate. A claim for salvage has been filed with the State of California's State Lands Commission; this threat to the vessel is more fully discussed in the chapter dealing with salvage and other impacts to shipwrecks in the study area.



The ill-fated City of Rio de Janeiro, lost in 1901 at the Golden Gate. One-hundred-and-twenty-eight persons were killed, making this the worst shipwreck disaster in the Gulf of the Farallones. Courtesy of San Francisco Maritime NHP.

NOTES

- ¹ Op. cit., Lloyd's Register (1900) Vol. I, Steamers, n.p.
- ² Ibid.
- ³ [New York] Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper, March 23, 1878.
- ⁴ Op. cit., Swann, p. 122.
- ⁵ Max L. O'Starr, "Immigrant Steamer: The Story of the Rio de Janeiro. The Life, Death, and the Wake of a Ship," (1975) Unpublished manuscript, J. Porter Shaw Library, National Maritime Museum, San Francisco, California. pp. 36-47, passim.
- ⁶ Ibid., pp. 64-72, passim.
- ⁷ Op. cit., United States Life-Saving Service (1902) p. 122.
- ⁹ San Francisco Chronicle, February 23, 1901.
- ¹⁰ Ibid.
- ¹¹ San Francisco Bulletin, July 18, 1902.
- ¹² Alexander Woolf, "The Loss of the Rio de Janeiro," Overland Monthly, April 1901, p. 851.

General Cushing

The particulars of the ship General Cushing are not known. She was supposedly built in Maine in 1856 and was owned in Newburyport, Massachusetts. [1] On September 3, 1858, the vessel arrived at San Francisco from Australia to load grain. After lying at the Lombard Street Wharf loading 10,000 bags of oats and 10,000 bags of barley, General Cushing sailed from San Francisco for Sydney, on October 16, 1858. [2] As she sailed out past the Golden Gate, she missed stays and, caught in the ebbing tide, swung into the rocks at Fort Point, "at a point about midway between where the Golden Fleece...and the Chateau Palmer...were wrecked, and just under the 'ten gun battery' on the hill." The vessel lay close in to shore, rocking violently in the surf, and the masts were cut away to reduce the strain on the hull. The wreck was described the following day as "a mere mass of timber festooned with broken spars and tangled rigging..." [3] On October 17, salvage of the cargo commenced:

...three lighter loads of merchandise were removed from the ship General Cushing....The ship lies in the same position, and as the wind has gone down which blew so strongly...she does not thump as heavily as she did. The next gale will probably break her up. [4]

On the following day, the wreck and cargo of General Cushing were sold at auction by McRuer and Merrill of San Francisco. [5] The sale price was not recorded. Much of the cargo was pulled from the vessel, but General Cushing was a total loss.

NOTES

1

San Francisco Daily Alta California, October 17, 1858.

2

Ibid.

3

Ibid.

4

Ibid., October 18, 1858.

5

Ibid.

Golden Fleece

The 968-ton clipper ship Golden Fleece was built by Paul Curtis at Boston, Massachusetts, in 1852. Golden Fleece was 173 feet long, with a 35-foot beam and a 21-foot depth of hold. [1] The clipper sailed from Boston on August 16, 1852, for her maiden voyage to San Francisco. After a difficult passage, she arrived at San Francisco on January 4, 1853, with 11 passengers and a typically varied, speculative Gold-Rush-era cargo:

95 cases Burton ale, 3211 ft. oak plank, butter, hoes, 100 kegs white lead, 359 plough beams, drugs, candles, 25 boxes peppersauce, 6 churns, chairs, 55 bundles agricultural implements, camphene, 16 boxes gas and lamp fixtures, 5 boxes boiled cabbage, 3 boxes mutton soup, 7 boxes chicken soup, 112 grindstones, 12 vegetable cutters, 200 ox bows, 50 bales of oakum and assorted goods. [2]

Golden Fleece made a return voyage to the East Coast, sailing for Boston via Manila. She then sailed from New York for San Francisco a second time, arriving at the Golden Gate on April 10, 1854, after a 128-day passage. [3]

On April 22, 1854, Golden Fleece departed San Francisco for Manila. She was wrecked when beating out of the Golden Gate. Caught in an eddy, she missed stays and drifted ashore outside the gate at Fort Point. The next day found her "lying broadside on to the rocks...bilged and full of water, her mainmast is gone, also the fore and main top mast." [4] The tugs Resolute and Hercules attempted to pull Golden Fleece from the rocks and failed. By April 24 the salvage of the vessel was underway, the tug Resolute taking away "two loads of sails and rigging...." The ship lay "stern on, all her masts gone, save the stump of the mainmast." [5]

The wreck of Golden Fleece was sold at public auction on April 24, 1854, to Messrs. Bokee and Thromb of San Francisco for \$2,600. [6] Over the next few days they worked to strip and lighten the vessel:

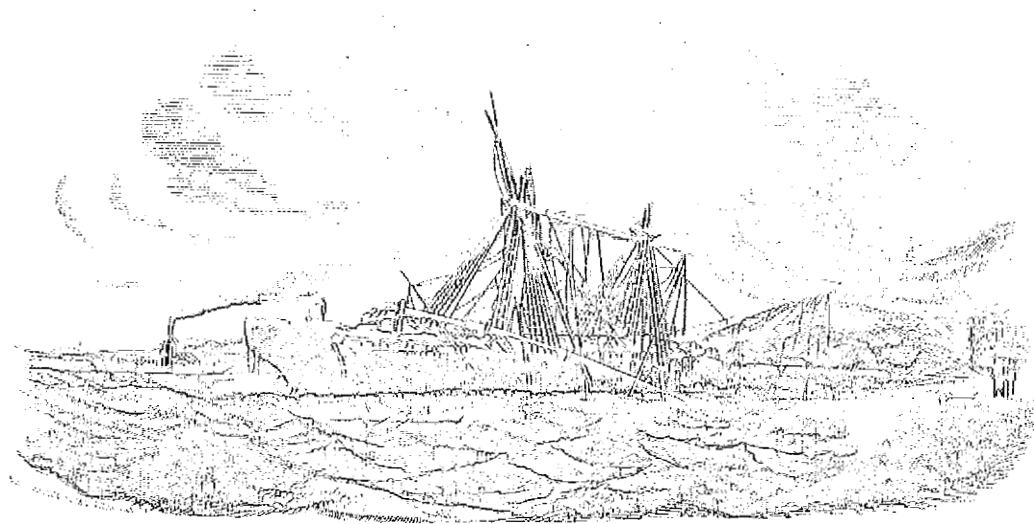
The purchasers of the wreck are busily engaged stripping her of everything moveable, at the same time preparations are being made to raise her....The sails, rigging, guns, &c., saved by the consignee of the ship, were sold at auction yesterday, the two brass pieces bringing \$580. [7]

The salvors sent 300 men to the wreck in late April to strip her, [8] but four of them were drowned on May 1 when their boat capsized in the surf as they headed from the ship to shore. [9] Six days later, it was noted that all efforts to salvage the

wreck off the rocks had ceased, since "the parties who purchased her have stripped her of everything moveable, and now await the time she may break up for further gain." [10] No further mention was made of the wreck of Golden Fleece.

NOTES

- 1 Octavius T. Howe and Frederick C. Matthews, American Clipper Ships, 1833-1858. (Salem, Massachusetts: Marine Research Society, 1926) Vol. 1, p. 231.
- 2 Op. cit., Rasmussen, Vol. 4, pp. 230-231.
- 3 Op. cit., Howe and Matthews, p. 232.
- 4 San Francisco Daily Alta California, April 23, 1854.
- 5 Ibid., April 24, 1854.
- 6 Ibid., April 25, 1854.
- 7 Ibid., April 27, 1854.
- 8 Ibid., April 30, 1854.
- 9 Ibid., May 2 and 3, 1854.
- 10 Ibid., May 7, 1854.



WRECK OF THE CLIPPER SHIP "GOLDEN FLEECE."
OFF FORT POINT, BAY OF SAN FRANCISCO.

*Lettersheet engraving of the wreck of the clipper Golden Fleece at Fort Point, 1854.
Courtesy of Mystic Seaport Museum, manuscript collections.*

Granada

The 1,058 91/95-ton, sidewheel steamship Granada was built by Jeremiah Simonson at New York in 1855. Granada was 228 feet long, with a 31-foot beam and a 15.6-foot depth of hold and was propelled by a vertical-beam marine steam engine. [1] Granada carried passengers between New York and Panama for the United States Mail Steamship Company from 1857 to 1859. [2] In early 1860 she operated between New York and New Orleans. Granada came to grief in January 1860 on striking floating ice on the Hudson River. After an anxious race to New York, she sank at the dock. The following day, as steam pumps labored to raise the sunken steamer, one of the boilers burst, killing one deck hand and scalding several others. The boiler flew 20 feet into the air, landing on Granada's pilothouse. [3] Granada was finally raised and repaired. The owner, Marshall O. Roberts, President of the United States Mail Steamship Company, then decided to send his steamship through the Straits of Magellan into the Pacific.

Granada was intended as the first steamer on a steamship line to link San Francisco with the East Coast by means of a land route across Mexico's Isthmus of Tehuantepec; she ran in tandem with the steamer Moses Rogers. [4] Arriving off the Golden Gate on October 13, 1860, Granada was wrecked when her main steam line broke, disabling the engine and scalding the chief engineer. Without power, the steamer drifted into the surf, grounding on a sandbar near Fort Point's beach. [5] Within two days, the grounded steamer was a total loss. Drifting up close to the high-water mark on the beach, her seams open, Granada lay in nine feet of water with the tide ebbing and flowing into her. [6]

The wreck was a popular attraction; the San Francisco Daily Alta California of October 15, 1860, noted "The Granada was visited by crowds of people yesterday, as she lay high and dry beyond Fort Point." The wreck could not be pulled free. On October 18, "the hull of the Steamship Granada...together with her engine, boilers, &c., including everything that may be on board" was sold at auction. [7] California Steam Navigation Company purchased the wreck for \$2,600. [8] Within a few days, "men...were taking the machinery out, and assisting the waves to break to pieces what is left of her." [9] After the engines and boilers were removed, the stripped hulk was abandoned to the surf.

NOTES

¹ John Haskell Kemble, The Panama Route, 1848-1869. (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1943) p. 229.

² Ibid.

³ [New York] Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper, January 14, 1860.

⁴ San Francisco Daily Alta California, October 14, 1860.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid., October 15, 1860.

⁷ Ibid., October 18, 1860.

8
Ibid., October 19, 1860.

9
Ibid., October 23, 1860.

Isaac Jeanes

The 814-ton bark Isaac Jeanes was built in 1854, at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Launched from the yard of William Cramp into the Delaware River, the bark was originally rigged as a ship and was one of only four clipper ships built at Philadelphia [1]. Constructed for the Isaac Jeanes Company, Isaac Jeanes was a clipper packet in the Mediterranean trade that made "one run in the California trade during the clipper ship decade--a passage of 129 days in 1855." [2] As built, the bark was 157 feet long, with a 35-foot beam and a 21-foot depth of hold. [3] By 1874 the vessel was operating from San Francisco.

On March 9, 1876, Isaac Jeanes, inbound with a cargo of lumber, was wrecked at the Golden Gate near Fort Point. The bark was entering the harbor "with a westerly breeze, the wind suddenly came out from the easterly, and after a vain attempt to tack ship, but not having room, she went ashore...near the spot where the steamer Granada was lost." [4] The crew barely escaped as the vessel broke up in the surf upon striking; "there was not a vestige of her to be seen, excepting a few spars and some rigging, the cargo of lumber having drifted in and out the harbor in all directions." [5]

NOTES

1
William Armstrong Fairburn, Merchant Sail... (Center Lovell, Maine: Fairburn Marine Educational Foundation, Inc., 1955) Vol. V, p. 2769.

2
Ibid.

3
Op. cit., American Lloyd's (1876) p. 132.

4
San Francisco Daily Alta California, March 10, 1876.

5
Ibid.

Oliver Cutts

The 700-ton bark Oliver Cutts was built at Pembroke, Maine, in 1863. Oliver Cutts was 143 feet long, with a 31-foot beam and a 21-foot depth of hold. [1] Toward the end of her career Oliver Cutts was sold to foreign owners, and when lost she was "hailing from Sydney and sailing under the British flag..." [2] On the evening of January 13, 1868, Oliver Cutts entered the Golden Gate with a cargo of 1,016 tons of coal from Nanaimo, Vancouver Island, British Columbia, consigned to the San Francisco merchant, Macondray and Company. Under the guidance of pilot Capt. Joliffe, Oliver Cutts was sailing past Alcatraz Island in a 7- to 8-knot breeze when she was "struck by a sudden squall, which brought her sails aback and brought her head round toward Alcatraz Island." [3] The ship could not be brought around, and Capt. Joliffe attempted to sail Oliver Cutts through the narrow gap between Alcatraz Island and the rock known as "Little Alcatraz." Unable to control the vessel, he ordered the anchor dropped, but as the crew prepared to do so, Oliver Cutts ran aground on the rock, striking it with her stern several times. By 8:00 a.m. on January 14, she had rolled into the rock, stoving in her starboard side below the

main chains; "at half past 12 today she was lying on an even keel. The point of rock had made its way through the planking, and the water filled her 'tween decks..." [4] The tug Rescue was dispatched with a pump to try and float Oliver Cutts off, but the effort failed and by the afternoon of January 14, "all attempts to free her of water had been abandoned..." [5]

Two days after running aground, Oliver Cutts was "a helpless wreck." When the tide fell, the ship's hull broke over the rock, and "she sank until her decks--fore and aft--are under water." The mainmast fell, carrying with it the mizzenmast. Wreckers stripped her of sails, rigging, spars, and "everything which can be saved..." [6] The wreck was sold at auction on January 16, 1868, together with "spars, sails, rigging, anchors, chains, cabin furniture..." and coal cargo. [7] The wreck was sold for \$875, and the cargo, consisting of the coal, 21 barrels of salmon, "and a lot of skins," brought \$1,550. The purchaser was San Francisco junk dealer Charles Harley. [8] The wreck of Oliver Cutts remained visible for a few months, one of the masts protruding from the water off Alcatraz Island. [9]

NOTES

1

Op. cit., American Lloyd's (1866) pp. 234-235.

2

San Francisco Bulletin, January 14, 1868.

3

San Francisco Daily Alta California, January 14, 1868.

4

San Francisco Bulletin, January 14, 1868.

5

San Francisco Daily Alta California, January 14, 1868.

6

Ibid., January 15, 1868.

7

Ibid.

8

Ibid., January 16, 1868.

9

A photograph of the Golden Gate taken from Alcatraz Island in mid-1868 by Eadweard Muybridge clearly shows a lower-mast of Oliver Cutts sticking upright out of the water next to Little Alcatraz. The photograph is in the collection of the Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

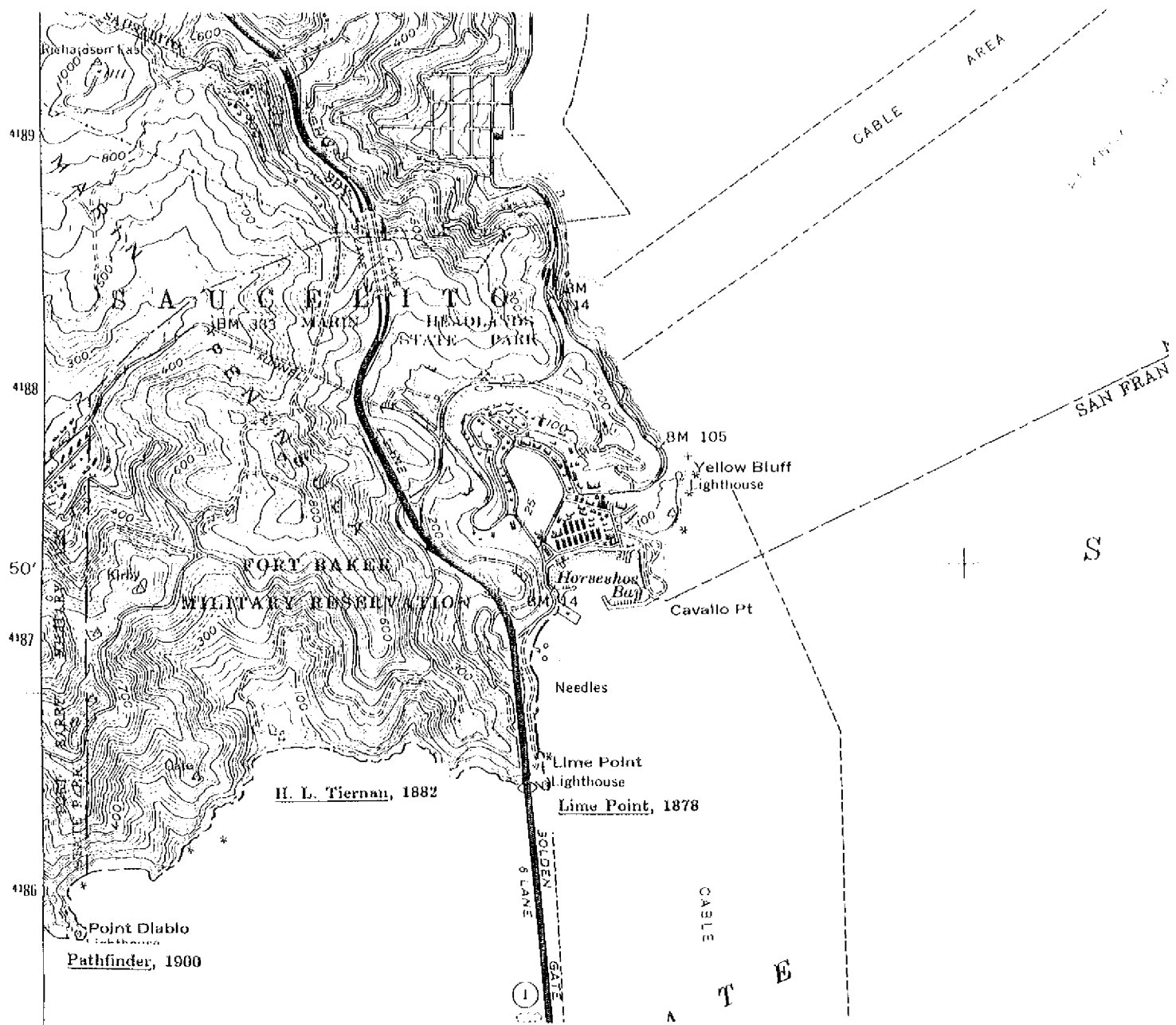
Samoset

Accounts of the wreck of General Cushing in October 1858, note that the ship was lost in the vicinity of the wrecks of Golden Fleece, Chateau Palmer and Samoset. Samoset was allegedly wrecked in December 1852; no other reference to the wreck can be located. Samoset, one of several hundred vessels that sailed to San Francisco during the Gold Rush, departed New York on March 21, 1849. [1] The vessel's subsequent career is not known, though one other Samoset, a 543-ton ship built in 1847, was afloat in 1862 and listed in American Lloyd's.

NOTE

1

C. W. Haskins, The Argonauts of California... (New York: Fords, Howard & Hulbert, 1890) pp. 421-422.



VESSEL LOSSES, LIME POINT TO POINT BONITA

Stephen Haller

Prevailing winds and currents at the Golden Gate usually push vessels toward the south shore--as a result only three vessels are known to have wrecked and been totally lost between Lime Point and Point Bonita.

H. L. Tiernan, 1882

Lime Point, 1878

Pathfinder, 1900

H. L. Tiernan

H. L. Tiernan was a schooner of 142.76 tons, based in San Francisco, and carrying the official number 11396. [1] On April 5, 1882, she departed San Francisco for the Chournagin Islands on a fishing voyage with salt and provisions on board. About 4:30 p.m., while attempting to beat her way out of the harbor, she missed stays and struck Mile Rock. The mate, John Clark, jumped on the rock but was washed off and drowned. A seaman named B. Sheehan was washed over the side a few minutes later and drowned too. The vessel drifted ashore below Lime Point and lay there on her beam ends while she was stripped of her sails and other removable gear. Tugs attempted to save her but failed, and the vessel was reported in the newspapers as a total loss. [2] While confirming the other particulars of the story, however, the Annual Report of the Lifesaving Service states that the vessel was only a partial loss. [3] Davidson's wreck chart indicates that the vessel got off, although she was badly damaged.

Because of the wreck's location in the area of the present north tower of the Golden Gate Bridge, it is conjectured that if any portions of the vessel did remain at the site of its stranding, they were destroyed during bridge construction, and it is highly unlikely that any material remains from this incident are extant.

NOTES

1

Op. cit., Merchant Vessels of the United States (1881).

2

San Francisco Daily Alta California, April 6-7, 1982.

3

Op. cit., United States Life-Saving Service (1883) p. 343.

Lime Point

Lime Point was a scow schooner of 19.86 tons, registered at San Francisco, and carrying the official number 15811. She went "ashore on the beach below Lime Point, full of water" on or slightly before February 7, 1878. [1] No further information about the incident has been uncovered.

NOTE

1

San Francisco Daily Alta California, February 7, 1878.

Pathfinder

Pathfinder was built in 1900 as a pilotboat. She was an 86-ton vessel with schooner-rig and an auxiliary gasoline engine that drove a single screw. [1] She carried a gaff-rigged foresail and a leg-o'-mutton mainsail on her two masts, and the standing rigging was secured with turnbuckles. The hull was made of wood, and it was thoroughly copper-plated below the waterline. [2]

The particulars of her loss are detailed in the Annual Report of the United States Life-Saving Service for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1914:

January 15.--While bound into San Francisco harbor on the night of this date in a dense fog, the 86-ton pilot boat Pathfinder, carrying a crew of five persons, got off her course and ran on the rocks at Point Diablo, 2 miles west of the Fort Point Station. After striking, the vessel lay against a perpendicular wall of rock and as the crew could not escape ashore and did not care to risk the vessel going to pieces under them they launched two small rowboats and put to sea, fighting their way offshore through a heavy surf. Fortunately for them, the crew of the Point Bonita Station had occasion on this night to answer the call of a vessel in difficulty on Angel Island. While running along at full speed in the darkness and fog, the station keeper caught a glimpse of two lights against the inshore rocks between Point Diablo and Lime Point. He turned aside to investigate, and without warning ran between the two rowboats containing the Pathfinder's crew. After taking the men on board, the power lifeboat went on her way and soon afterwards spoke the revenue cutter Golden Gate, which was making search for the Pathfinder. The rescued men and their boats were put aboard the cutter. Later in the night both the Fort Point and Point Bonita Station crews and the Golden Gate returned to the Pathfinder, the crew of the other endangered vessel referred to having been rescued. They found the pilot boat on the rocks and full of water. On the 16th the two life-saving crews were again on the scene of the casualty, assisting the pilot boat tender California, a tug, and the revenue cutter Unalga in running lines. Strenuous efforts made to float her, in which a number of hawsers were broken, were continued for some hours without avail. The Pathfinder broke up while the salvage work was going on. She was valued at \$20,000.

The remains of the hulk of Pathfinder should be fairly easy to locate from the description above. Material remains of her engine, hull, and bottom plating may be extant under the water at the base of the cliffs between Lime Point and Point Diablo. She is photographically well-documented, and is an interesting and significant type of vessel not otherwise well-represented in this survey, and deserves further attention.

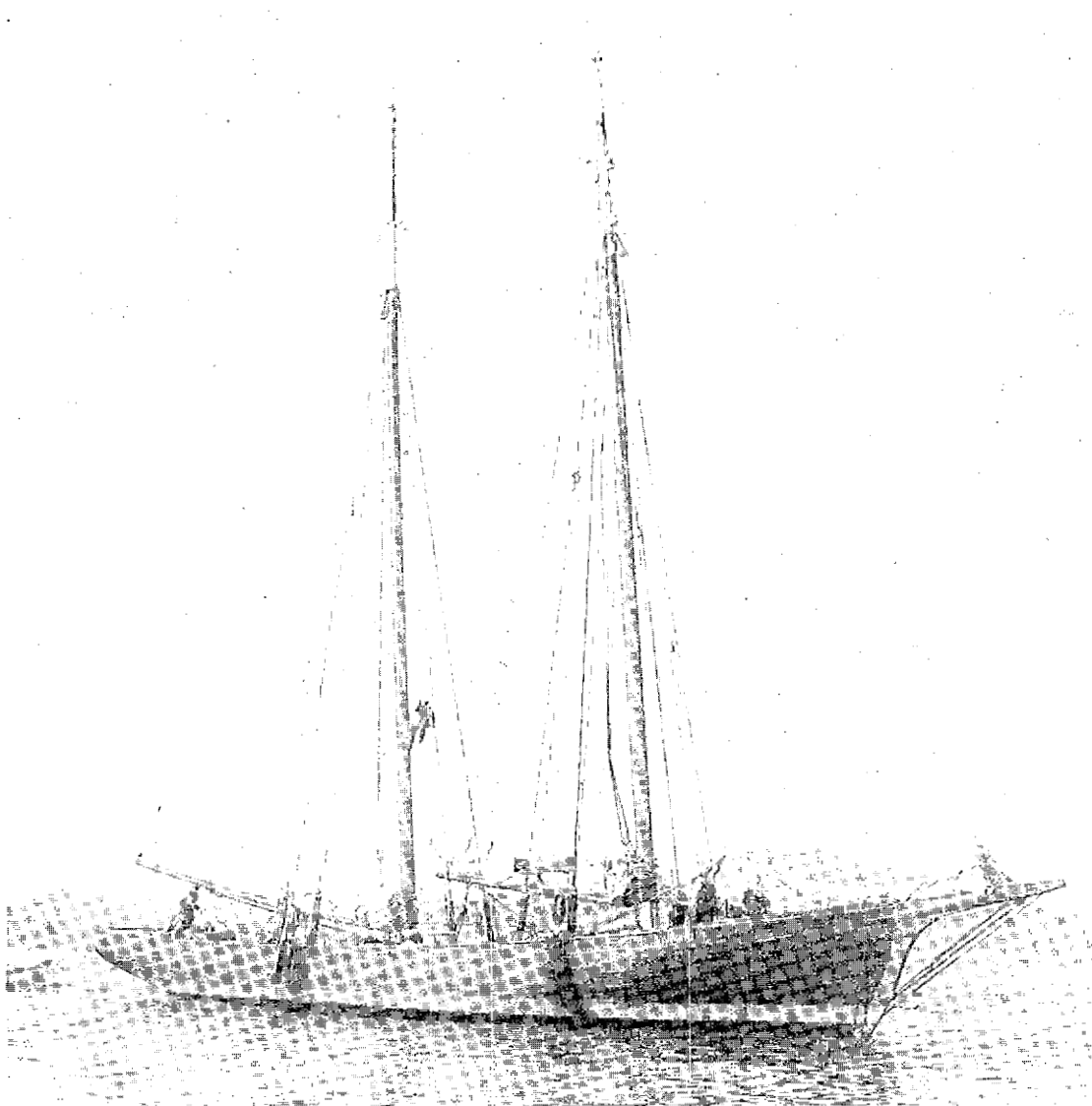
NOTES

¹

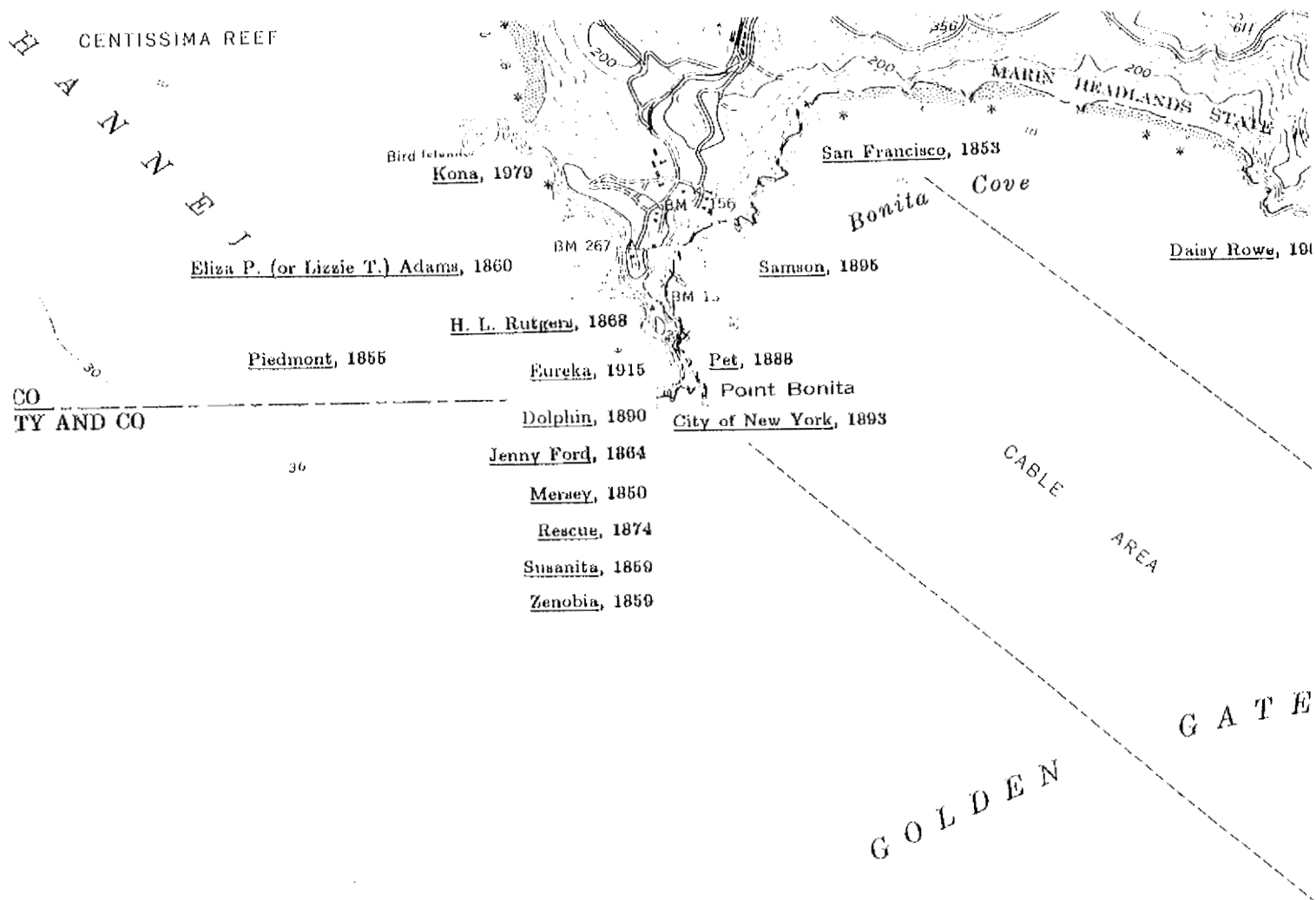
Op. cit. Merchant Vessels of the United States (1914) p. 429.

²

The D. W. Dickie Photograph Collection, National Maritime Museum San Francisco, pp. 78-449.



The pilotboat Pathfinder, wrecked at Point Diablo in 1914. Courtesy of San Francisco Maritime NHP.



Mile Rock
Lighthouse Little Mile Rock

Black Head Rock Pyramid Rock
Lands End
Lobos Rock
LINCOLN

VESSEL LOSSES, POINT BONITA TO TENNESSEE POINT

Stephen A. Haller

The rough water of Potato Patch Shoal, the deflection of waves north from the bar, and a current that sets into Pt. Bonita combined to wreck 18 vessels.

City of New York, 1893
Daisy Rowe, 1900
Dancing Feather
Dolphin, 1890
Eliza P. (or Lizzie T.) Adams, 1860
Eureka, 1915
H. L. Rutgers, 1868
Jenny Ford, 1864
Jenny Lind, 1858
Kona, 1979
Mersey, 1850
Pet, 1888
Piedmont, 1855
Rescue, 1874
Samson, 1895
San Francisco, 1853
Susanita, 1859
Zenobia, 1858

City of New York

City of New York was built in 1875 at the Chester, Pennsylvania, shipyard of John Roach. Roach, a controversial figure, was a well-known builder of vessels for steamship lines and the United States government. Among his clients was the Pacific Mail Steam Ship Company, for whom he built the City of Tokyo, City of Sydney, and City of Peking, the Oregon Steam Ship Co., for whom he built the ill-fated City of Chester, and the U.S. Brazil Mail Steam Ship Company, for whom he built the infamous City of Rio de Janeiro. [1]

City of New York was a 3,019-gross-ton, combination passenger-freight steamer, 339 feet long, with a 40.2-foot beam and a 28.9-foot depth of hold. Her hull was made of iron, compartmentalized with six bulkheads, and she was powered by a compound engine driven by six coal-fired boilers. [2]

She and her near-sisters were designed and built in the 1870s to replace the earlier generation of side-wheel liners that made Gold Rush history. The Pacific Mail Steam Ship Company, spurred by the success of the transcontinental railroad, had begun to supplement its Panama-to-California route with trade to Australia and the Orient. Passenger service to Asiatic ports was made profitable by the importation of great numbers of "coolie laborers" into the United States to work in the railroads, mines, and other industries of the Pacific Coast states. Cargo trade consisted of manufactured goods, flour, canned goods, and a variety of other foodstuffs expected to find a market in Asia. Those goods were sent west in exchange for spices, bamboo, indigo, rice, silk, rubber goods, and the many curios considered "exotic" in

the West. For almost two decades, City of New York plied the sea routes between San Francisco and China, Panama and Australia.

On October 26, 1893, City of New York stood away from the Pacific Mail dock and headed out through the Golden Gate bound for China, under the direction of pilot George Johnson. "There was the heaviest fog on at the time that had been known in years," the tides were "the highest of the month," and the "light from the tower on Point Bonita was eclipsed entirely and the metal mouth of the warning siren at that place had been so deflected as to throw its volume out seaward and render its weird cry worse than useless to the outgoing craft." Now off course to the north without anyone's knowledge, the vessel struck gently on submerged rocks about 100 yards offshore, to the southeast of Point Bonita. Then a large roller picked up the vessel and deposited her on top of the jagged rocks, bursting the bottom plates, and flooding the hold with eight feet of water. Panic gripped some of the passengers on board, many of whom were coolies on their way back to their homeland. As soon as she struck, the calamity was announced by firing rockets and signal cannons, which were heard at the Point Lobos Marine Exchange Lookout and the Fort Point Lifesaving Station. All available assistance was speedily dispatched to the stranded vessel, but tugs found her to be wedged fast upon the rocks. [3] With help on scene and the vessel obviously in no immediate danger of sinking, the human cargo was calmed. A heavy sea was running. With rocks nearby, tugs could not approach the stranded ship, so the lifesaving crew from the Fort Point Lifesaving Station took all the passengers off and transferred them to waiting rescue craft. The crew of the Golden Gate Park Station arrived and assisted their comrades in removing mail and \$241,000 in specie, articles of value, and the effects of the crew. The next day, four boats were recovered "that had broken loose from her and were drifting out to sea with some Chinamen on board." [4]



Salvage vessels strip the wreck of the Pacific Mail steamship City of New York, wrecked on the rocks below Point Bonita in 1893. The vessel in the foreground is probably Samson, which was blown ashore and lost while salvaging City of New York in January 1895. Courtesy of San Francisco Maritime NHP.

Salvage efforts immediately commenced. Part of the cargo of flour, shrimp, beans, and other general goods was removed, and vain attempts were made to tow the ship free. Later in November stormy weather set in, and all the wreckers on board or moored nearby had to abandon the site for their safety. [5]

"For months the big wreck [lay] there dismantled and drear like the decaying carcass of some vast black monster of the sea, sinking inch by inch into the surrounding depths" until a great storm in March 1894 shook her free and deposited the hulk in deep water between the rocks and the shoreline. [6] Even afterwards, divers continued to raise scrap iron from the wreck. In January 1895, the wrecking schooner Samson met a tragic end attempting to stand by the wreck site in another violent storm.

In recent years, sport divers have occasionally visited the wreck site, presumably removing such trophies as could be recovered from the dark, swift, shark-infested waters. In 1984, the National Park Service began to study the remains of City of New York. [7] Deadeyes and other paraphernalia have been recovered from the wreck site, and it obviously promises rich return for future research and on-site exploration.

NOTES

1

Op. cit., Swann, pp. 239-240

2

The Record of the American Bureau of Shipping for 1879.

3

San Francisco Examiner, March 13, 1894.

4

Op. cit., United States Life-Saving Service (1893) p. 110.

5

Ibid.

6

San Francisco Examiner, op. cit.

7

Op. cit., Delgado, Shipwrecks of the Golden Gate.

Daisy Rowe

Daisy Rowe was a schooner of 123 gross tons, 116 net tons, built in 1879 at Fairhaven (Humboldt Bay), California, by the noted Danish-American shipbuilder Hans Bendixsen, the same man who built C. A. Thayer, now preserved at the National Maritime Museum as a National Historic Landmark. [1] In common with most vessels built on the West Coast, Daisy Rowe was constructed largely of Douglas fir and fastened with iron. Her dimensions were 94.5 feet in length, with a 29-foot beam and 7.5-foot depth of hold. She carried a schooner's rig, and a vessel of her size would usually have two masts. [2]

Daisy Rowe was owned by E. Higgins of Higgins & Collins of San Francisco, and carried the official number 6977. Most likely she was employed in the coastal

lumber trade between San Francisco and the dogholes and lumber ports of the Northwest Coast. Her name drops from the vessel registers after 1900, the year in which she is listed as having been lost at Point Bonita. [3]

No particulars of this incident have been found in newspapers or the reports of the Lifesaving Service. However, the records of the Marine Exchange of San Francisco indicate that Daisy Rowe went ashore at 7:00 p.m. on November 20, "one mile inside Point Bonita," a location that would place her just west of Point Diablo. Although the crew was saved, the vessel quickly went to pieces and was a total loss. At the time of the disaster, Daisy Rowe was bound out of San Francisco for Coos Bay, Oregon. On what must have been the previous voyage, Daisy Rowe had come close to disaster when she lost her foresail, and her mainmast went over the side in a heavy blow at sea on September 23, while she was bound from San Francisco to Gray's Harbor, Washington. She was spoke on September 30 by the steamer San Blas as she was blown as far south as Point Sur in the gale, but declined assistance then and on October 1, when the steamer Corona sighted her. While anchored outside the bar at Gray's Harbor, Daisy Rowe's anchor carried away, and the hardy little schooner was finally forced to hail a tug for assistance in entering the port. [4] Perhaps this voyage was a premonition of things to come, for the next voyage was her last.

NOTES

1

Op. cit., Martin, p. 158.

2

Op. cit., Record of American and Foreign Shipping (1900).

3

Op. cit., Martin, p. 101.

4

Marine Exchange Disaster Ledger, Vol. 1; an unprocessed collection in the Historic Documents Collection of the National Maritime Museum, San Francisco.

Dancing Feather

Dancing Feather is mentioned in Marshall as having been the name of a pilot boat that became a total loss after she "went ashore in the fog at north point of the Golden Gate." No further information about the incident has been found in indexes of newspapers of the time, and the name Dancing Feather does not appear in any vessel registries.

NOTE

1

Op. cit., Marshall, p. 101.

Dolphin

Dolphin was a steam tug that reportedly foundered at North Head (Point Bonita) on May 18, 1890. Further research at the Bancroft Library may uncover more details of the vessel and the wreck, because they have a copy of the Marine Engineers Beneficial Association (Yearbook?), which reports on the incident (Call No. F869 S3M25). There are several vessels named Dolphin listed in the registers of the time, but it is not possible at this point to establish which one we are concerned with.

Eliza P. Adams

Eliza P. Adams (or Lizzie T. Adams) was a scow schooner, one of the bluff-bowed, barge-like craft indigenous to San Francisco Bay that carried general cargo on voyages between local ports. She had been chartered to load fencing at Bolinas and take it to San Jose. She left San Francisco without ballast, trusting to her flat-bottomed hull for stability, and capsized near Point Bonita in a very severe northerly blow. Stewart, the man who had chartered the craft and insisted that she embark despite the weather, and one of the crew of three lost his life. Adams was "found in tow of several Italian fishing boats who had picked up the wreck and stuck to their prize, claiming salvage, as is their due, for saving her." [1]

NOTE

1

San Francisco Daily Alta California, November 19, 1860.

Eureka

Eureka was built in 1900, by Charles P. Doe of San Francisco. In all likelihood, she was constructed at the shipyard of William Muller. [1] Built of Douglas fir and fastened with copper and iron, she measured 312 tons net and 484 gross tons. Her hull was 142.5 feet long, 26 feet at its greatest beam, and had a 12-foot depth of hold. Her double-compound steam engine produced 2,751 horsepower, and had 28-foot and 20-foot cylinders with a 12-foot stroke. [2]

She was owned by Doe for 12 years, then passed into the hands of the North Pacific Steamship Company. On January 8, 1915, she left San Francisco, bound south for Ventura. She was struck by an unusually heavy sea while in the north channel, and quickly became waterlogged and unmanageable. Her crew abandoned ship in two small boats and were picked up by lifesaving crews from the Fort Point and Point Bonita Stations. Second Mate Bolger stayed on board the crippled vessel, and was lost when she drifted onto the rocks at Point Bonita and was dashed to pieces. The monetary value of the loss amounted to \$50,000, which included cargo as well as the vessel. [3]

The remains of Eureka's boiler and engine may exist under the rocks at Point Bonita, although the location may be inaccessible. Eureka's hull and superstructure have no doubt long since disintegrated under the pounding of the ocean swells.

NOTES

1

Op. cit., Lyman.

2

Op. cit., Record of American and Foreign Shipping (1915).

3

Op. cit., Marine Exchange Disaster Ledger, Vol. 2.

H. L. Rutgers

H. L. Rutgers was built in 1855, at Perth Amboy, New Jersey. She was constructed of oak and cedar, fastened with copper and iron. She had a medium-full hull with dimensions of 167 feet long, 36.5 feet beam, 22.5-foot depth of hold, measured 405 tons, and carried a bark rig. She had one full deck, with partner beams below, and

a long poop that was reported to have reached all the way forward to the foremast. [1]

H. L. Rutgers was owned at different times by Laban Howes and by the Western Union Telegraph Company, which used her as part of the Russian American Telegraph Construction Fleet. Formerly commanded by Capt. Robinson, she was later skippered by Capt. Marston and seven-eighths owned by Adams, Blinn & Co., who used her in the lumber trade at the time of her loss. The other portion of Rutgers had been owned by an unnamed Confederate officer, whose interest was confiscated during the Civil War.

On January 1, 1868, the Alta California reported that H. L. Rutgers, bound in from Seabeck with a cargo of piles and sawn lumber, had gotten into difficulty in the Potato Patch Shoal, was lying "just outside the North Head, and exhibited signals of distress." One of her boats had been carried away, and "seas were breaking over her badly at times." [2] Nevertheless, Capt. Marston at first refused the aid of the tugs Rescue and Lookout, believing he could ride out the rough weather. On the morning of New Year's Day, she had worked in so far toward the rocky shore that a great sea disabled her rudder, and the captain then had no choice but to accept aid. The two tugs returned and attempted twice to pull her off, but twice were foiled when the towing hawsers parted. A party of men who had crossed to the Marin shore succeeded in getting the crew ashore by means of a line fast between the vessel and the beach, but Rutgers had gone "broadside on the rocks in a little cove or bay just beyond the Light House, on the north side of Point Bonita," so near shore that the crew might have escaped by climbing ashore on the fallen masts if they had not come down on the wrong side of the vessel. The bottom "was soon pounded out of the Rutgers and her masts falling through the breach, (she) soon began to break up...and next morning only a confused mass of broken timbers and loose lumber floating in the surf marked the place of the wreck." [3]

Judging from the description of the vessel as she broke up and the known violence of the surf on the predominantly rocky shore north of Point Bonita, it is unlikely that significant remains of this vessel are extant. It is possible that she came ashore in one of the small sandy coves between the Point and Rodeo Beach, in which case debris may be found buried in the sand.

NOTES

1

Op. cit., American Lloyd's, 1868.

2

San Francisco Daily Alta California, January 1, 1868.

3

Ibid, January 3, 1868.

Jenny Ford

Jenny Ford was built in 1854, at Machais, Maine, a full-hulled barkentine of 396 tons of mixed woods fastened with copper and iron. Her bottom was re-metalled in 1858, and she was last surveyed in San Francisco in 1863. [1]

In West Coast service she was owned by the pioneer lumber firm of Pope & Talbot, who kept her plying the coastal trade between San Francisco and the early lumber ports of the Northwest. She went ashore on the rocks at Point Bonita near the lighthouse on February 1, 1864, after missing stays as she attempted to come about

in the north channel. Two men were drowned in the disaster, and the vessel lay broadside to the shore, heavily damaged with 15 feet of her bows gone. Scavengers helped themselves to a considerable portion of her sails and rigging; the vessel's starboard side was gone as far aft as the mizzen, and only the mizzenmast still stood. Remarkably, the steam tug Merrimac was able to pull the hulk free and tow it to Rincon Point in San Francisco Bay. What was left of Jenny Ford was sold at auction several days later for a mere \$310. It was speculated that the purchaser could only obtain firewood from the remains. [2]

It would appear that, although Jenny Ford was pulled free from Point Bonita, remains of the masts, rigging and bow section may still exist on the site.

NOTES

1

Op. cit., American Lloyd's, 1864.

2

San Francisco Daily Alta California, February 1, 2, 3, and 4, 1864.

Jenny Lind

Jenny Lind is listed in Marshall as a British ship that became a total loss on the north side of the outer harbor of San Francisco in 1858. [1] No reference to such a vessel or incident has been found in the course of research. However, Lloyd's Register for 1859 includes a 349-ton bark Jenny Lind out of Waterford, Newfoundland, that is noted as "abandoned." This may possibly be the vessel referred to, but at present cannot be confirmed.

NOTE

1

Op. cit., Marshall, p. 102.

Kona

Kona was a 336-foot-long barge owned by Crowley Maritime Corporation, valued at \$2.5 million. She was used to haul general cargo between the San Francisco Bay Area and Hawaii. Shortly before midnight on December 31, 1979, the 136-foot Crowley tug Sentinel departed from Oakland with Kona and the 400-foot-long barge Agattu in tow, bound for Honolulu. Kona carried lumber, plastic pipe, and paper products. Among Agattu's general cargo were beer, 19 tons of nitro carbonitrate (a potentially explosive chemical used to manufacture fertilizer), and 35 cylinders of deadly chlorine gas. [1]

The weather forecast was stormy, predicting southwest winds to 20 knots and 15-foot swells, but as Sentinel crossed the bar and entered the rough waters of Four Fathom Shoal, skipper John Maddux testified that "the waves were between 35 and 40 feet high and towered over the wheelhouse of his tug." [2] At 4:00 a.m. the wire towline to Kona parted and the barge went adrift, to smash upon the rocky shore of Point Bonita between the point and Bird Rock. The ship soon went to pieces in the surf, strewing cargo far and wide between Point Reyes and Alcatraz.

Forty minutes after Kona was lost, Agattu's towline tangled in Sentinel's propeller and was cut. The big barge went ashore at the south end of Cronkhite Beach, hogged and impaled on an offshore rock. Army personnel at nearby Forts Cronkhite and Barry were placed on 5-minute alert through the next day, as the

threat of explosion from the chlorine cylinders loomed. However, in spite of fog and rough water, helicopters eventually succeeded in removing all of the dangerous cargo without a mishap, and much of the remainder of Agattu's cargo was salvaged by barge. [3] Agattu herself was pulled free from the rocks.

For weeks, scavengers collected wood that had drifted far and wide in the wake of the disaster. The remains of Kona are in place where she wrecked.

NOTES

¹
San Francisco Chronicle, January 1, 1980.

²
Ibid., January 4, 1980.

³
San Francisco Examiner, January 2, 1980.



The barge Kona was a total loss at Bird Rock, near Rodeo Lagoon, on New Year's Day, 1980. National Park Service photo by Richard Frear.

Mersey

Mersey, built in 1840 at Montreal, was a 393-ton bark owned by Buchanan of Liverpool, and apparently well-built, for Lloyd's surveyors assigned her their second highest rating in 1848 at the time that damage of an unspecified origin was repaired. In 1849 she was insured for a voyage from Montreal to Liverpool, a voyage typical of her career in such a common trade. [1] Shortly thereafter she came to California as one of the vessels bound for the Gold Rush, and was lost when she wrecked near Point Bonita on December 16, 1850.

The particulars of the wreck incident are unclear. It is known from a letter from the captain, William Cobbin, published in the San Francisco press, that the cargo had been consigned to Messrs. Starkey Brothers & Co., and that a certain amount of money was on board. "Bad weather" appears to have been the cause of the disaster. All hands were saved "with the greatest difficulty," but "the ship is a total wreck." Afterwards she was able to be boarded at low water, and a mate attempted to recover some of the crew's effects with the aid of a launch from the U.S.S. Savannah. It is known that the vessel carried three anchors. [2] Davidson locates the wreck at a small point of land about halfway between Point Bonita and Point Diablo. [3]

NOTES

1

Op. cit., Lloyd's Register, 1849.

2

San Francisco Daily Alta California, December 19, 1850.

3

Davidson, annotated shipwreck chart found in the George Davidson Papers, The Bancroft Library, University of California at Berkeley.

Pet

Pet was built in 1868, probably at Fisherman's Bay, California. She was a small schooner of 49 gross, 47 net tons, measured 67.5 feet long, with a 22-foot beam, 5.5-foot depth of hold, and her homeport was San Francisco. Her official registry number was 20092. [1] The particulars of the wreck of Pet are quoted below from an article that appeared in the Los Angeles Times on September 20, 1888:

Word was received at the [San Francisco] Merchant's Exchange today that the schooner Pet of this port [San Francisco] had gone ashore at North Heads.... Shortly afterward, the schooner Sarah Alexander, Capt. Cousens, which left here this morning for Salt Point, returned to port, having on board the captain's wife and three of the men composing the crew of the schooner Pet, and having the Pet's boat in tow. One of the men, Henry Wauhermann, had been injured severely when the vessel struck the rocks, and was suffering greatly. On landing, the captain's wife and crew stated that the schooner left here for Albrid [Albion?] river on Saturday noon, and during the evening, when outside, fell calm and she began to drift. Fearing that if the wind did not spring up that the vessel would be dashed on the rocks,

Capt. Purcher ordered the crew into boats with his wife and he, himself, stuck by the vessel hoping if wind sprang up that he might be able to save her which he could do as well without as with the crew. The boat stayed by the schooner awhile and then pulled out to sea and [was] picked up by the schooner Sarah Alexander, which was sailing out of the harbor, as stated, and brought it to Meiggs' wharf. It was learned to-night that the captain is safe.

Certain questions are left unanswered by this account. Why did Capt. Purcher not attempt to let go anchors to hold his vessel fast until the wind returned? If the wind had sprung up, did he expect that he could handle the vessel under sail alone as well as with even a token crew? How did Sarah Alexander sail out of harbor so handily under conditions that becalmed Pet?

The answers may never be known. What is known, however, from Davidson's annotated wreck chart is that the remains of Pet are located immediately southeast of the tip of Point Bonita, and that she was a total loss.

NOTE

1

Op. cit., Merchant Vessels of the United States (1888).

Piedmont

Piedmont was a little-known schooner, the only reported fact being that she was wrecked in 1855 after having been involved in trade at Humboldt Bay. The Daily Alta California of February 20, 1855, reprinted an article from the February 3 Humboldt Times that recounted the loss of Piedmont while "passing the heads... drifting into the north breakers." A year later, a suit was instituted in Humboldt County District Court regarding the loss, [1] and the same vessel under the same captain (Smith) is among those vessels listed as lost on Humboldt Bar. [2] It is therefore believed that the placing of this wreck at the "north heads" of San Francisco Bay (i.e., Point Bonita) is a case of mistaken location.

NOTES

1

San Francisco Daily Alta California, February 2, 1856.

2

Weekly Humboldt News, February 1, 1879.

Rescue

Rescue was a 139-ton tugboat built at San Francisco, carrying the official registry number 21645. She was a steam screw vessel rated at 300 horsepower, and owned by Captain Griffith & Co. [1]

At 11:00 p.m. on October 3, 1874, she ran ashore and was wrecked at Point Bonita while returning to San Francisco after towing the bark Cleta to sea. Running at "full steam" in spite of dense fog at the Point, she struck "just under the lighthouse...with a tremendous shock." A young lad named Thomas Markey who was along just for the ride was thrown overboard and lost. Boatman Steve Castle, defying great danger, went out in his boat and took the crew off the wreck. That evening Rescue proved to be "beyond rescue," as she sank and became an uninsured loss. [2]

"No signal was given from the fog bell nor from the lighthouse" because they were undergoing repairs at the time, and proper notice had been posted for mariners to take heed. "On October 1, 1874, the fog signal was stopped so that workers could...erect a new fog signal structure...on the stabilized site" after a severe landslide the previous February. [3] Under the circumstances, the conduct of the master of Rescue would seem to be reckless in the extreme.

NOTES

1

Op. cit., Merchant Vessels of the United States (1873-4).

2

San Francisco Daily Alta California, October 4, 1874.

3

Toogood, A Civil History of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area (Denver, Colorado: National Park Service, 1980) Vol. 1, p. 223.

Samson

Samson was built in 1890, at San Francisco. She measured 217 gross, 206 net tons, had hull dimensions of 109 feet long, a 34-foot beam, 8-foot depth of hull, and carried the official registry number 116375. Her home port was San Francisco. [1] She was purposely built strongly and with a shallow draft in order to serve as a wrecking platform for vessel salvage. She carried a small steam engine on board for hoisting, but depended entirely on tugs for mobility.

Samson had been engaged in the salvage and dismantling of the hulk of the steamer City of New York, which had grounded at Point Bonita in October 1893. Samson passed the winter of 1893-94 perilously anchored alongside the wreck. On January 3, 1895, a fierce gale sprang up, and it was deemed advisable to cast off stern moorings and allow Samson to swing freely at anchor. Soon a second anchor was let go, as the gale continued to increase in force, but by midmorning it was evident that the vessel, now dragging anchors, was in peril. Samson flew flags and blankets as distress signals and began to blow the whistle on her donkey engine, but sight and sound were drowned out by the howling storm. A boat was sent to the nearby lighthouse wharf (and apparently returned to Samson!) requesting that the fog signal be blown to summon aid. Even the fog signal was drowned out by the storm, which had attained "almost unprecedented ferocity." Most of that night the crew of Samson burned torchlights to summon aid, but failed to follow the example of the earlier boat and abandon their vessel while there was still time to do so.

The light was spotted in the early morning hours by a surfman of the Fort Point Lifesaving Station, and the keeper summoned the aid of the tug Reliance. With lifeboat and crew from the station in tow, Reliance attempted to steam to the rescue, but "the storm was found to be so severe that prudence forbade the continuance of the journey" until daylight. Late that night Samson's crew finally attempted to abandon the vessel. A small yawl put overboard broke free when only two men had boarded it, drifted to leeward, and was not seen again. Eight men got into the last boat left and pulled away with all their might. They were able to make headway, and managed to keep off the shore and avoid being dashed to pieces on the rocks. Before dawn, Samson went ashore in Bonita Cove at the height of the storm, and the watchman fell overboard and drowned. Three others, including the captain, rhymingly named Hamson, struggled ashore with the aid of the lighthouse crew. With daylight, Reliance and the Fort Point lifesaving crew appeared on the violent scene, and at much peril were able to take on board Samson's boat with eight survivors.

An assessment of the incident concluded that there was "some misgiving" as to whether enough anchor cable had been played out to stabilize the vessel, and that "if the crew had remained on board instead of taking to their boats the lives of the two divers swept away in the yawl need not have been lost." [2]

The hulk of Samson caught fire shortly after the storm and was "almost entirely consumed," leaving little trace of this exciting and tragic incident, with the exception perhaps of equipment and \$1,000 worth of salvaged iron on board. [3]

NOTE

1

Op. cit., Merchant Vessels of the United States (1894).

2

Op. cit., United States Life-Saving Service (1896) p. 49.

3

Ibid.

San Francisco

San Francisco was built in 1853 at the New York City yard of Abraham C. Bell, and launched on August 25. She was an "extreme clipper," with a very sharp entrance and extraordinarily tall masts. Measuring 198 feet in length on deck, 38-foot maximum breadth, and a 22-foot depth of hold, the keel was 190 feet long. [1]

San Francisco was owned by Rich & Elam and Thomas Wardle of New York, and commanded by Capt. Tetzer. She carried passengers and general cargo consigned (possibly) to Rich and Elam, that included large amounts of linseed oil. On her first and only voyage, a 106-day passage from New York to San Francisco, she cleared New York on October 25, 1853, passed Cape Horn without incident, and was becalmed for three days 450 miles from the Golden Gate. She then groped her way through four days of fog, which lifted providentially when she was a half-mile off the Farallon Islands. [2]

San Francisco picked up her pilot off the Farallons, and proceeded under his direction into San Francisco Bay. Passing close by Point Bonita, she was caught in an eddy and missed stays coming about. She hit the rocks near the Point, and lost her jibboom, bowsprit, head, and cutwater. Drifting clear, she anchored in Bonita Cove, and flooded. Steam tugs Abby Holmes and Resolute came to her aid, removed the passengers, and attempted to empty the rising water with their steam pumps, but failed. San Francisco shipped anchor and was towed "close inshore," where she soon filled and came to rest in the cove on her port beam, with her starboard waterways awash. The sea was calm, and hope was held that "if the weather continues fine, most of the cargo will be saved in a damaged condition..." although "the vessel will probably become a total loss, and a bad loss it is." [3]

The infamous sea captain R. H. "Bully" Waterman, formerly of the reputed "hell ship" Challenge bought the wreck and her cargo for \$12,000, in association with Capt. Wright. With a value of \$103,000 to \$125,000 for the vessel, and a reported value of \$150,000 to \$400,000 for the cargo, there seemed to be a good chance of an excellent return to be made on the investment. However, before or after the purchase (and probably both), a veritable "multitude of plunderers hastened to the wreck and proceeded to help themselves, owner's and agent's representatives vainly attempting to drive them away. Many of them were armed and defied opposition,

fought among themselves, and frequently stole each other's booty. It was reported that soldiers from the Presidio, across the Golden Gate, were among the crowd." [4]

On December 9 and 10, a storm came up that wreaked havoc among the scavengers. "Several boats were stove alongside or destroyed attempting to land in the surf." The half-decked sloop Midnight City, belonging to Capt. Hill, who owned one of the numerous storeships grounded at Yerba Buena Cove, drifted out to sea and was lost with its drunken crew of eight. A whitehall boat with two looters was swamped and the men drowned. "Lighters, tugboats and steamers" scattered for their lives, many seeking shelter in Horseshoe and Richardson's Bays, while "a large number of packages of goods were found floating in the bay...." [5]

San Francisco soon became "a complete and perfect wreck. Her foremast has gone by the board, and in falling it carried away the main yard.... The sails and part of the running rigging, as well as a portion of her cargo, were taken out.... Her upper deck is cut open fore and aft as far as could be to enable the persons employed to remove the cargo. Hundreds of boats are on the ground saving what they can." [6]

No blame was attached to Capt. Tetzer of San Francisco because the pilot was in charge of the ship at the time of the wreck. The blame accruing to the unnamed pilot has not been recorded.

The further fate of the hulk of San Francisco is not known. It may be assumed that the salvage work of Capt. Waterman, et al., was thorough, and the vessel lay with enough structure above water to allow for considerable dismantling. Nevertheless, it is possible that considerable portions of bottom structure and plating, as well as material remains of cargo, fixtures and other detritus, may remain on site near the lowtide line at the sandy portions of Bonita Cove. At another location nearer to the Point may lie what remains of San Francisco's headgear.

NOTES

1

Op. cit., Howe and Matthews, Vol. II, p. 542.

2

Ibid, p. 543.

3

New York Daily Tribune, March 13, 1854.

4

Op. cit., Howe and Matthews, p. 543.

5

Op. cit., New York Daily Tribune.

6

Ibid.

Susanita

Susanita is listed as a schooner that was a total loss on the rocks of the North Heads at the Golden Gate on December 31, 1859. [1] No other information about this vessel, or the wreck incident, has surfaced in the course of research.

NOTE

1

Op. cit., Marshall, p. 103.

Zenobia

Zenobia is described in the newspaper account of her loss as a ship, "built in Baltimore nearly twenty years ago, but...still sound and staunch, and good for ten year's service...valued at about \$15,000." [1] However, a search in Lloyd's Register for 1858 and for 1846 reveals no listing for a Baltimore-built vessel with that name.

Lack of information about her particulars and early career notwithstanding, the circumstances of her loss are well-recorded. Bound into San Francisco Bay from Sitka, Alaska, with a load of ice from the American Russian Ice Company valued at \$30,000, her captain refused the assistance of the pilot boats Daniel Webster and Golden Gate. Penny-wise shortly became pound-foolish as the wind died and the tide turned, catching Zenobia in a strong eddy, and depositing her "upon the outer rock which forms the extreme point of the North Head." The keeper of the Point Bonita Lighthouse, Mr. Chapman, and a whitehall boatman, Frank Murphy, succeeded in "saving part of the clothing of the crew," while the men "were saved by means of a whaleboat belonging to the ship, which, as the wind increased, was the only class of boat which could get near her." It was further reported that "the bottom came up to the surface...and floated in pieces into the harbor. The masts were standing at sundown, but doubtless went by the board during the night. Small portions of the rigging, and some of the sails in a damaged condition, may be saved." [2]

The location of this wreck is exactly fixed. However, the very rough conditions at the spot and the reports of her wooden hull going to pieces leave considerable doubt as to the present existence of sizeable remains at the site. Isolated pieces of her fittings may, however, be recovered by an exploration of the area.

NOTES

¹
San Francisco Daily Alta California, May 1, 1858.

²
Ibid.



The ship Elizabeth completely disintegrated off Slide Ranch on the Northern Marin coast in 1891. Witnesses described the wreck as a "breakwater of matchwood," as this view graphically illustrates. Courtesy of San Francisco Maritime NHP.

Fourth of July, 1878

Taxus, 1851 002

Tema 23328, 1853

Three Sisters, 1929

Tennessee Point

Petersburg, 1852

VESSEL LOSSES, NORTHERN MARIN COAST

James P. Delgado

The Northern Marin Coast has not been the site of many shipwreck events. Only seven shipwrecks have occurred which resulted in the total loss of the vessel and archeological deposition of the vessel's remains. These vessels are:

Elizabeth, 1891
Fourth of July, 1878
Petersburg, 1852
Prince Alfred, 1874
Tagus, 1851
Tennessee, 1853
Three Sisters, 1929

Elizabeth

The 1,866-ton ship Elizabeth was built at Newcastle, Maine, in 1882. Elizabeth was 231.5 feet long, with a 41.8-foot beam and a 19.8-foot depth of hold. [1] The vessel was launched in October 1882, and was owned largely by Searsport, Maine, sea captains, "active and retired, and their relatives." [2] On her maiden voyage Elizabeth sailed to Japan, Seattle, San Francisco, Liverpool, and New York. Thereafter all the ship's voyages were from New York to San Francisco, returning by way of England. Elizabeth carried general cargoes to San Francisco, there loading with California grain for Liverpool. [3] Elizabeth made six round-trip voyages, being lost on the seventh.

Arriving off the Golden Gate on February 21, 1891, Elizabeth brought a varied cargo of iron rails, pipe, ink, whiskey, and other general merchandise. In spite of rapidly deteriorating weather conditions, Capt. J. Herbert Colcord thought he could work his ship through the Gate, and refused a tow from two tugs. He soon realized his error, however, as the wind shifted and combined with "the strong eddy, and the heave of the sea" to drive Elizabeth toward Point Bonita. The tugs were hailed just before the ship went onto the rocks and they managed to get a line aboard, but it parted. Driving past Point Bonita, Elizabeth grounded on Four Fathom Bank in the Potato Patch. Swept by heavy seas, the vessel began to fill with water. The tugs again approached and took off Capt. Colcord's wife and family as Elizabeth drifted off the bank and continued north. Striking again at Tennessee Cove, Elizabeth drifted off again, finally going ashore seven miles north of Point Bonita at Big Slide Ranch. Going into the rocks, the ship quickly disintegrated, killing 18 of the 26-man crew. Among the dead was Capt. Colcord. [4]

Crews from the United States Lifesaving Stations at Golden Gate Park and Fort Point responded to the wreck; their efforts were heroic but doomed to failure. The Fort Point surfboat, in the tow of a tug, was swamped; Keeper Charles Henry washed overboard and drowned. Keeper Hollohan of the Golden Gate Park Station then took some of the Fort Point crew, crossed the bay to Sausalito by ferry, and with a single horse pulled their surf-cart filled with rescue apparatus over the hills to the coast. Arriving at Tennessee Cove, the lifesavers found that Elizabeth had pulled free and drifted farther north. Continuing their trek along the rugged

Northern Marin coast, they finally arrived at the wreck, too late to help. The lifesavers had responded to the disaster in the best tradition of their service, only to be thwarted by heavy seas. [5]

The wreck was described as a vessel "ground to splinters":

Scattered, mashed, and pulverized, the ship herself lined the shore--a breakwater of matchwood a third of a mile long....Here and there, on some jagged rock near the bar, a vaster lump of wreckage than any in the pulpy breakwater could be seen. The solid stern, almost flattened by the battering it received, abutted the surf at one point. It had been lifted bodily over a twenty-foot crag and flung on the rock coast about fifteen yards beyond. [6]

The wreck was noted as lying in large distinct pieces, most lying on shore. The port side of the bow lay in deeper water, however, weighed down by the port bower and the locker chain.

Local residents, after helping save the eight crew members who washed ashore, aided in the task of searching through the wreckage for bodies. Most of the dead were recovered, among the last being the captain, who washed ashore two days after the wreck. The flotsam in the surf was carefully picked over, but little was saved. [7] Four days after the loss of Elizabeth, the cargo salvaged from the beach was sold at auction, bringing only \$650, while the wreck sold for \$200. [8] However, the ship "contained a good deal of heavy freight that sank the instant the ship broke in two," and Capt. T. P. Whitelaw was engaged to salvage it. Using his boat Samson as a working platform, Whitelaw sent divers down to salvage what they could from "the heterogenous mass of stuff" that had once been Elizabeth. [9] The loss of the vessel was a shock to the Pacific Coast maritime community. The dramatic strength of the gale that blew her to her doom, the heroic rescue of Capt. Colcord's wife and family, the efforts of the lifesavers and the loss of Keeper Henry, as well as the complete destruction of the ship and much of her crew made the wreck of Elizabeth "one of the worst disasters that has happened on the coast for a number of years." [10]

NOTES

¹
Op. cit., Merchant Vessels of the United States (1890) p. 101.

²
Op. cit., Matthews, p. 104.

³
Ibid., pp. 104-105.

⁴
San Francisco Examiner, February 22 and 24, 1891, and op. cit., United States Life-Saving Service (1893) pp. 69-76, passim.

⁵
Ibid., United States Life-Saving Service, p. 73.

⁶
San Francisco Examiner, February 24, 1891.

⁷
Ibid., February 23 and 24, 1891.

⁸
Op. cit., Matthews, p. 108.

9

San Francisco Examiner, February 26, 1891.

10

[Eureka, California] Daily Humboldt Standard, February 23, 1891.

Fourth of July

The 49.95-ton, two-masted schooner Fourth of July was built by Thomas and William Johnson at Bolinas, California, in 1870. [1] Fourth of July made regular voyages from Bolinas and Point Reyes during her eight-year career, bringing produce and lumber to market in San Francisco. On February 20, 1878, en route to San Francisco, Fourth of July was caught in a nor'wester off Point Reyes that began to drive her ashore. The waves swept the decks, washing two men overboard, "leaving the Captain alone to meet whatever fate awaited him and his craft." [2] Making for Tennessee Cove, the captain anchored. The anchor failed to hold, however, "and the mighty breakers which were running mountains high and dashing upon the beach took the vessel, as a toy in the hands of a giant, and tossed it end over end far upon the sand." [3] Thrown high up onto the beach by the heavy swell, Fourth of July disintegrated, killing the captain.

NOTES

1

Op. cit., Merchant Vessels of the United States (1877) p. 91, and J. H. Munro-Fraser, History of Marin County, California.... (Oakland: Alley, Bowen and Company, 1880) p. 277.

2

Ibid., Munro-Fraser, p. 398.

3

Ibid.

Petersburg

The brig Petersburg of San Francisco was one of a number of small craft that carried on an active trade between various ports of call and the Gold Rush city. A detailed accounting of Petersburg's career is not available; however, an indication of the nature of her cargoes can be found in an advertisement in the San Francisco Daily Alta California of August 8, 1851:

POTATOES--The cargo of the brig Petersburg, from Sandwich Islands, in prime order, for sale by GANO & GRIDLEY, Pacific Wharf, cor. Battery st.

Petersburg was owned and commanded by Capt. Pike of San Francisco. On Monday, August 23, 1852, Petersburg went ashore in the fog, wrecking one mile north of Point Bonita in Rodeo Cove, "close to where the Tagus was wrecked..." [1] Petersburg carried a cargo of general produce, "which may be saved, though it is thought that the vessel will be a total loss." [2] No other mention of the wreck of Petersburg was made, and it is assumed that she was a total loss.

NOTES

1

San Francisco Daily Alta California, November 25, 1852.

2

Ibid.

Prince Alfred

The 815-ton steamship Prince Alfred was built at Sunderland, Great Britain, in 1852. Prince Alfred was 160.5 feet long, with a 32.7-foot beam and a 21.9-foot depth of hold. [1] The steamer's engines were exhibition pieces from the Great Exhibition at London's Crystal Palace in 1851. Prince Alfred first arrived at San Francisco on June 6, 1870, "from Central American ports," and soon thereafter was sold to entrepreneurs who fitted her up to work between San Francisco and Victoria, British Columbia. [2] For the remainder of her career, Prince Alfred remained on the Victoria run.

Prince Alfred departed Victoria on June 11, 1874, with 85 passengers and a cargo of

100 bags of charcoal, 1 package of castings, 3 cases gaiters, 21 bundles of deer skins, 3 cases effects, 1 organ, 2 bundles and 213 hides, 31 sacks of furs, 75 bags of coal, 37 bales of wood, 3 packages merchandise and \$24,127 in treasure. [3]

On June 14, 1874, in a thick coastal fog, Prince Alfred struck Duxbury Reef, but the impact was so slight that the vessel continued on until the chief engineer informed the captain that water was pouring into the ship from a 10-foot-square hole punched through the side. The fires were extinguished to prevent the boilers exploding, and sail was raised in an attempt to run for shore. Prince Alfred was finally run aground on the rocks just north of Tennessee Cove. The passengers and crew were safely landed, the crew bringing the treasure and mail to San Francisco in a boat. Three tugs were dispatched to the wreck, but Prince Alfred sank and could not be salvaged. [4] Some of the cargo washed ashore after the wreck, but the remainder stayed on the bottom with Prince Alfred.

NOTES

1
Op. cit., Lloyd's Register (1873) n.p.

2
San Francisco Daily Alta California, June 15, 1874.

3
Ibid.

4
Ibid.

Tagus

As the California Gold Rush market boomed in late 1850 and early 1851, a large number of vessels sailed for San Francisco carrying larger quantities of cargo and fewer passengers. One of those vessels was the ship Tagus of Boston. On February 8, 1851, Tagus sailed from New York for San Francisco. After a 179-day passage, Tagus lay off the Golden Gate in a thick fog on August 2, 1851, in the company of the Australian vessel Mary Catherine. Both vessels took on pilots, and Mary Catherine, in the lead, anchored while Tagus continued on. Mary Catherine safely navigated the harbor entrance on August 3, where her passengers and crew learned that Tagus had missed the Golden Gate in the fog and had run ashore four miles north of the Gate. [1] On August 4, the steamer California was sent to the wreck to haul her off but could not. Tagus was declared a total loss but "most of the cargo will probably be saved....Several schooners and lighters are engaged in getting

out her cargo." [2] By August 8, most of the cargo had been landed in San Francisco:

Consignees by the ship Tagus are informed that a considerable portion of the cargo has been landed here by the Salvors, which is ready for delivery upon securing the freight, salvage charges, and expenses. The balance of the cargo not yet at hand, will be saved, and will be delivered as it arrives. [3]

Ultimately all of the cargo was salvaged but Tagus remained behind on the beach of small "Potato Cove," which was renamed Tennessee Cove two years later when the steamer Tennessee was lost at the same spot.

NOTES

1

Op. cit., Bateson, pp. 140-141.

2

San Francisco Daily Alta California, August 5, 1851.

3

Ibid., August 8, 1851.

Tennessee

The 1,275-ton, wooden side-wheel steamship Tennessee was built by William H. Webb at New York in 1848. [1] As originally built, Tennessee was 211.1 feet long, with a 35.8-foot beam and a 22-foot depth of hold. [2] Launched on October 25, 1848, Tennessee was fitted with a single side-lever steam engine with a 75-inch cylinder, 8-foot stroke, and 249 horsepower. [3] The steamer was built for the New York and Savannah Steam Navigation Company of New York, which operated Tennessee and her sister ship Cherokee in a bimonthly steam line between Savannah, Georgia, and New York. The steamers carried passengers, high freight goods, and cotton. A substantial area of the South was served by the New York and Savannah Steam Navigation Company; in 1848, it was noted "this line is now patronized by New Orleans travellers, and also those going to Florida, Alabama, and Tennessee, with which places the railroad communication from Savannah is now nearly complete." [4]

Tennessee was withdrawn from the New York and Savannah run in October 1849 after her 15th voyage, having been sold to Howland and Aspinwall of New York, for \$200,000. The steamer was modified to carry more passengers, and in December 1849 was sent into the Pacific to join the Pacific Mail Steamship Company's line of steamers connecting Panama and San Francisco. [5] The California Gold Rush had attracted tens of thousands of eager fortune-seekers to the Panama route, and dozens of vessels, sail and steam, busily served as the oceanic links of the route. Tennessee, in joining the Pacific Mail fleet, became the first American steamship to be disrupted in her regular service for the Gold Rush. Tennessee served on the Panama route for nearly three years, making 29 voyages between Panama and San Francisco. She carried passengers, high-duty freight, the United States mail, and specie until her loss on March 6, 1853, four miles north of Point Bonita.

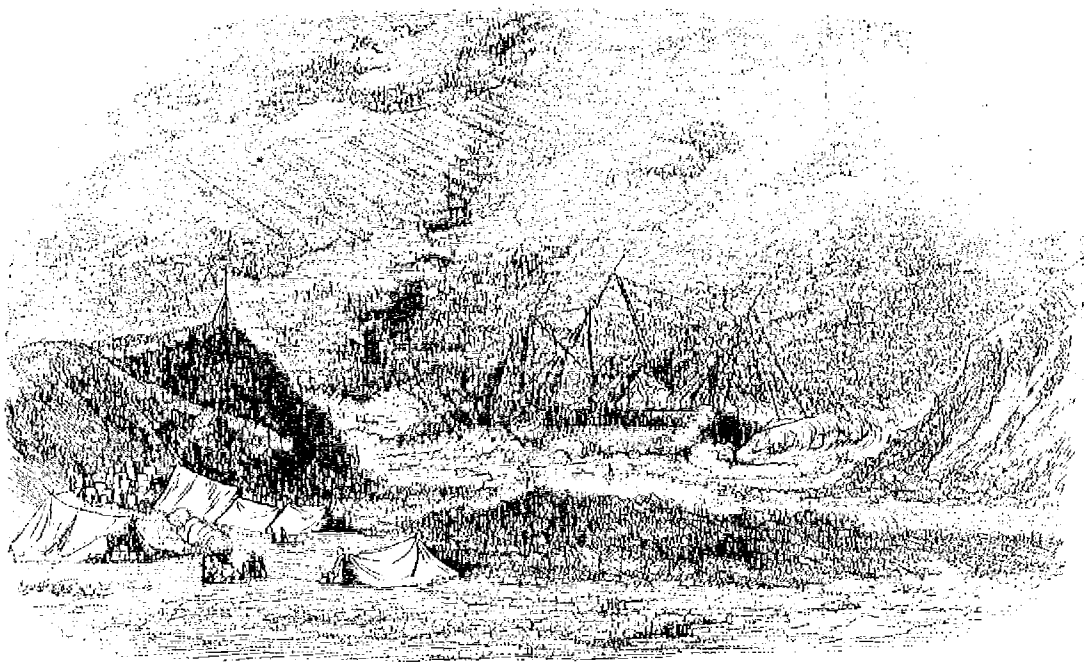
Steaming toward the Golden Gate on the foggy morning of March 6, Capt. Edward Mellus was not aware of the outgoing tide's strong current that was sweeping Tennessee north past the Gate and along the Marin shore. At 9:00 a.m. the lookout sighted breakers, and Capt. Mellus ordered the engines reversed. Rocks blocked

Tennessee, however, and Mellus had no choice but to beach the ship on the small beach of Tennessee Cove. Broadsided and hard ashore, the steamer heeled sharply to port. It was hoped that Tennessee would be pulled off, "she is perfectly tight, and although her copper is much chafed and rubbed off, there is every reason to suppose that no serious injury has thus far been sustained." [6]

Heavy surf on March 8 broke Tennessee's back, ruptured her steam pipes and started her timbers, flooding the ship. [7] A visit to the wreck on March 10

revealed her condition to be perfectly hopeless, and her situation almost unfavorable for the preservation of the valuable portions of her machinery and fixtures. She is fast going to pieces. Every joist appeared started. The sea was thumping heavily against her side, and the surf flying wildly over her. She cannot hold together another week. [8]

The crew had already salvaged the specie, mail, and baggage; salvors stripped the steamer of furniture and equipment through March 19. By that time, the stack had fallen, the deck had collapsed, and the starboard side was breached in several places [9]. By March 21, Tennessee had disintegrated into the surf, leaving her name to mark the site of the wreck at Tennessee Cove.



Wreck of the Tennessee.

Engraving of the wreck of the Pacific Mail steamship Tennessee at Tennessee Cove, March 6, 1853. Courtesy of San Francisco Maritime NHP.

NOTES

1

Enrollment #16, Port of New York, November 20, 1849, Records Relating to Merchant Vessel Documentation, National Archives Record Group 26, Washington, D.C.

2

Ibid.

3

New York Tribune, October 27, 1848.

4

New York Herald, October 26, 1848.

5

Op. cit., Kemble, p. 248.

6

San Francisco Daily Alta California, March 7, 1853.

7

Ibid., March 9, 1853.

8

Ibid., March 11, 1853.

9

Ibid., March 19, 1853.

Three Sisters

The 28-ton trawler Three Sisters was built in 1917 at Oakland, California. Three Sisters was 56.3 feet long, with a 15.6-foot beam and a 6-foot depth of hold. [1] Three Sisters carried a 135-horsepower diesel engine. The vessel was owned by A. Paladini of San Francisco and was a member of San Francisco's Fishermans Wharf fishing fleet. Three Sisters was wrecked on the rocks just south of Tennessee Cove on April 15, 1929, when she ran aground at the base of Tennessee Point in a thick fog. Two of the three-man crew were killed in the surf as they struggled to reach the shore; the third man was found by the Coast Guard "on a wave beaten shelf" three hours later. He died later that evening at the hospital. [2]

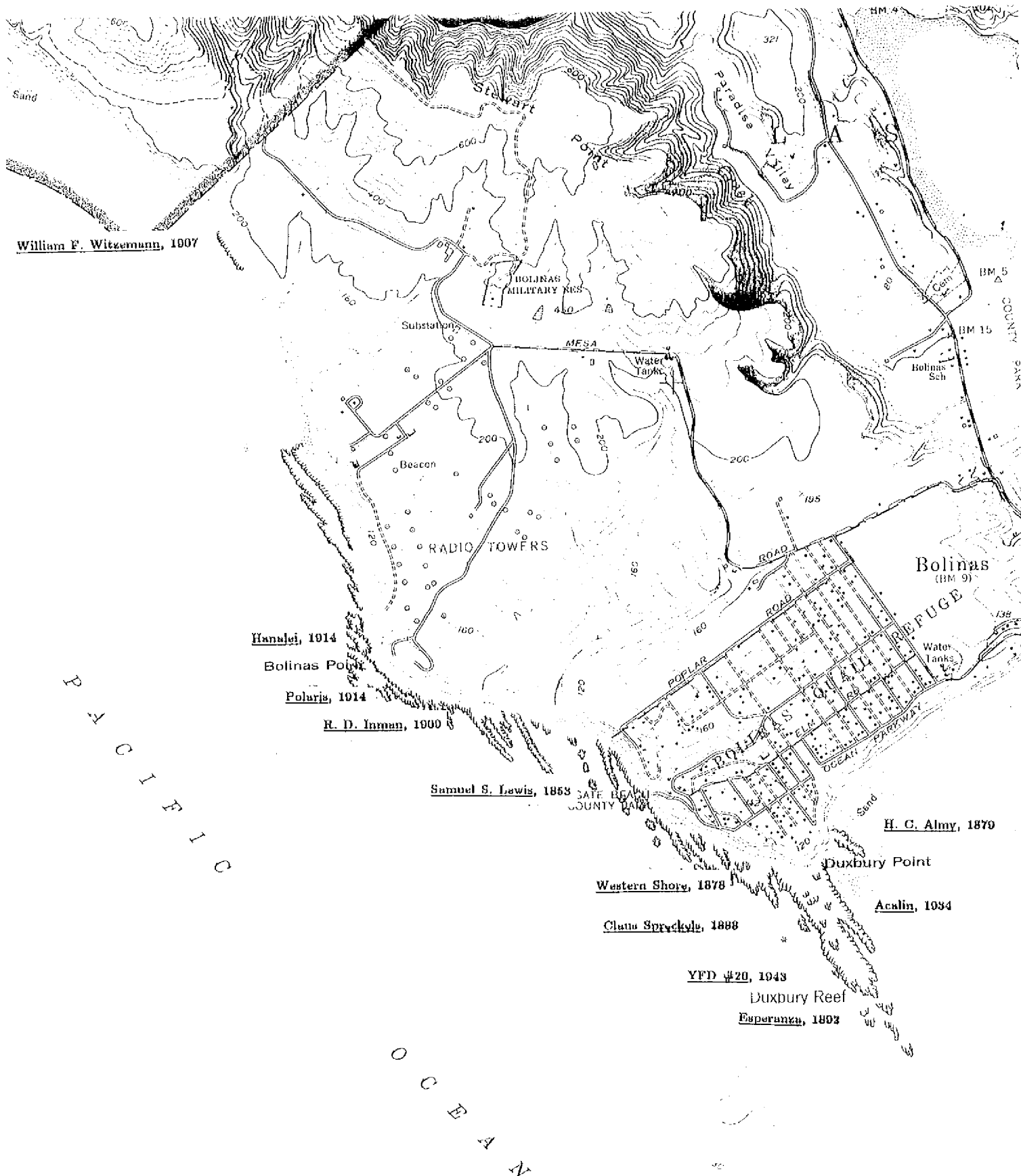
NOTES

1

Op. cit., Merchant Vessels of the United States (1928).

2

San Francisco Examiner, April 16, 1929.



VESSEL LOSSES, DUXBURY REEF TO BOLINAS

James P. Delgado

Twelve vessels are known to have been total losses off the tiny harbor at Bolinas; the majority were lost on the rocks of Duxbury Reef, which parallels the rugged West Marin coastline before jutting out into the Pacific at Bolinas.

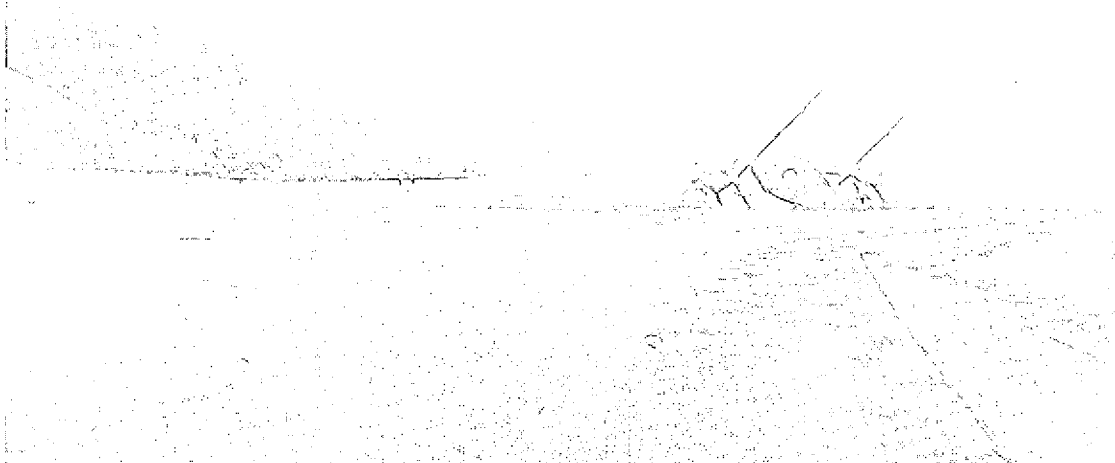
Acalin, 1934
Claus Spreckels, 1888
Esperanza, 1892
Hanalei, 1914
H. C. Almy, 1879
Polaris, 1914
R. D. Inman, 1909
Samuel S. Lewis, 1853
San Domenico, 1935
Western Shore, 1878
William F. Witzemann, 1907
YFD #20, 1943

Acalin

The 87-ton, diesel-powered purse-seiner Acalin was built at Los Angeles, California, in 1928. Acalin was 73 feet long, with an 18.7-foot beam and an 8.6-foot depth of hold. [1] Registered at San Pedro, California, Acalin's fishing career was uneventful until 1933, when her captain, Jerry Acalin, brother of the vessel's owner, and two members of the crew were accused of slaying Mexican customs guard Pedro Gonzales Pineda off Ensenada, Mexico. The incident sparked an international controversy between the United States and Mexico, and Acalin and the two crew members were convicted of manslaughter and sentenced to 18 months at the United States Penitentiary on McNeil Island, Washington. [2]

The next major event in Acalin's career occurred when she was wrecked the following year on Duxbury Reef. On August 30, 1934, the seiner, with owner Frank Acalin in command, was returning to San Francisco after delivering supplies to the steamer Lansing, which lay at anchor between Bolinas and Point Reyes. In the darkness of the early morning, Acalin was being navigated close to the shore through a thick fog. At 2:00 a.m., the purse-seiner struck Duxbury Reef, the rocks tearing holes in her bow and side. As the water poured into Acalin, Capt. Acalin pulled his vessel off the rocks and began to run for shore. The crew fired the ship's gun, set off flares, and finally ignited a barrel of pitch on deck to signal for help. As Acalin rounded the end of the reef, her engine room flooded, and she sank as Capt. Acalin beached her "on the sandy shore at the south end of the reef." [3] The 10-man crew took to the boats, and as they reached shore were pulled in by the crew from the United States Coast Guard Station at Bolinas, who had been alerted by the sinking purse-seiner's signals.

The Red Stack tug Sea King was dispatched to salvage Acalin, but reported her beyond salvage; "the only visible vestige of the vessel was a stubby mast sticking out of the water." [4] Acalin could not be pulled free, despite several attempts at



The purse seiner Acalin, aground and a total loss at Bolinas, 1934. Courtesy of San Francisco Maritime NHP.

salvage. Her hulk, imbedded in the south end of the reef, was finally considered a hazard to small craft traffic, and on January 1, 1935, the Coast Guard crew from the Bolinas Station "placed a charge of TNT in the hulk and blew the vessel to bits." [5]

NOTES

¹
Op. cit., Merchant Vessels of the United States (1933) p. 200.

²
San Francisco Examiner, August 31, 1934.

³
Ibid.

⁴
Ibid.

⁵
San Francisco News, January 2, 1935.

Claus Spreckels

The 246.62-ton brigantine (later a brig) Claus Spreckels was built by Matthew Turner at San Francisco in 1879. Claus Spreckels was the thirty-sixth vessel built by Turner, who constructed 228 vessels in his prodigious Pacific Coast shipbuilding career. Turner built more vessels than any other nineteenth century shipbuilder in North America. [1] Claus Spreckels, one of the largest two-masted vessels built on the Pacific Coast, was 122.5 feet long, with a 31.8-foot beam and a 10.5-foot depth of hold. [2]

Claus Spreckels was built for John D. Spreckels and Brothers, and was named for Spreckels family patriarch Claus Spreckels (1828-1908), a shrewd German immigrant who turned from the grocery business to sugar refining, gradually controlling San Francisco's sugar refineries and establishing California's sugar-beet industry. Spreckels expanded his interests to Hawaii, where he reportedly "financed the Hawaiian Kingdom and controlled much of its can production and shipping." [3]

Claus Spreckels was a quickly constructed vessel, being launched only 70 days after her keel was laid. She was, in the opinion of the San Francisco Daily Alta California, "both well built and good-looking." [4] On her trial trip, Spreckels handled quite well, with her builder, Matthew Turner, at the helm. Upon returning to dock, she passed through a number of yachts in Raccoon Straits. The yacht Fleur de Lis, racing with Claus Spreckels, crossed Spreckels' bow. Turner managed to avoid a collision, but Claus Spreckels' jibboom swung out and carried away Fleur de Lis' mainsail. [5] The yachtsmen were very angry, stating in a letter to the editors of the Alta California: "If Captain Turner possesses the preemption right to the waters of San Francisco Bay, and therewith the right to run over people, with impunity, we desire to know it, that we may govern ourselves accordingly..." [6]

After her near mishap on her maiden voyage, Claus Spreckels cleared San Francisco for Honolulu. For the rest of her career she transported general cargo, usually lumber, to Hawaii and brought back sugar to market in San Francisco. The Weekly Humboldt Times of July 22, 1882, noted that Claus Spreckels was then

...lying at Vance's wharf loading lumber for San Francisco. She will return from that city here and take a cargo of lumber to Kahalui. Captain Cousins is very proud of his vessel and counts her as one of the best sailers on the coast. She has logged 13 knots on many trips, and one trip ran the score up to 14.

Claus Spreckels was wrecked on Duxbury Reef on January 22, 1888, when bound for San Francisco with a sugar cargo valued at \$40,000. As the ship approached the coast she encountered thick fog, a light east wind, and a heavy swell from the south. Running with the breeze, Claus Spreckels struck the reef at 4:00 a.m. as the watch was changing. One of the crew later stated that

The Captain immediately ordered out the boats and ran out the kedge with the intention of pulling her off, but the sea was too heavy and the anchor would not hold and finally between 6 and 8 o'clock we left the vessel, it being impossible to do anything with her. At the time we left her she was keeled over about 15 degrees and was full of water....none of us saved anything except the clothes we had on and some few valuables we placed in our pockets. [7]

The 10-man crew was rescued by the steamer Emily, bound from Fort Bragg to San Francisco. The tug Relief was dispatched to the wrecked Spreckels, but she and her cargo were a total loss.

NOTES

1

The San Francisco Call of February 11, 1909, recounts Turner's career.

2

Op. cit., Merchant Vessels of the United States (1888) p. 88.

3
James D. Hart, A Companion to California, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978) pp. 420-421.

4
San Francisco Daily Alta California, June 10, 1879.

5
Ibid.

6
Ibid., June 11, 1879.

7
Los Angeles Tribune, January 23, 1888.

Esperanza

The two-masted schooner Esperanza was built in 1877 at Capers Island, South Carolina. As built, the 15.11-ton schooner was 46.2 feet long, with a 15.8-foot beam and a 3.5-foot depth of hold. [1] By 1890 Esperanza had made her way to the Pacific coast from her former home port of Charleston and was running between Bolinas and San Francisco. Esperanza carried butter and other dairy items from Olema Valley and Bolinas ranches to market in the city. On occasion she also carried passengers. On September 26, 1892, Esperanza sailed from Bolinas with five passengers and "freight," presumably butter. Sailing from Bolinas lagoon, she passed the end of Duxbury Reef. The incoming tide caught the tiny vessel and she was "carried against the reef." The passengers were safely landed, but "the breakers are now beating the vessel against the reef and it is expected that she will prove a total loss." [2] Esperanza disintegrated in the rocks of Duxbury Reef's southernmost extremity.

NOTES

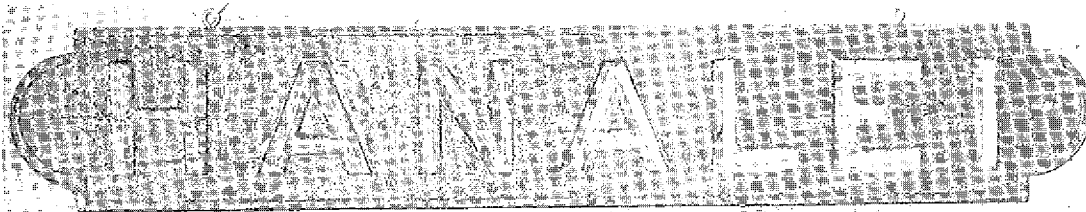
1
Op. cit. Merchant Vessels of the United States (1888) p. 111.

2
San Francisco Call, September 29, 1892.

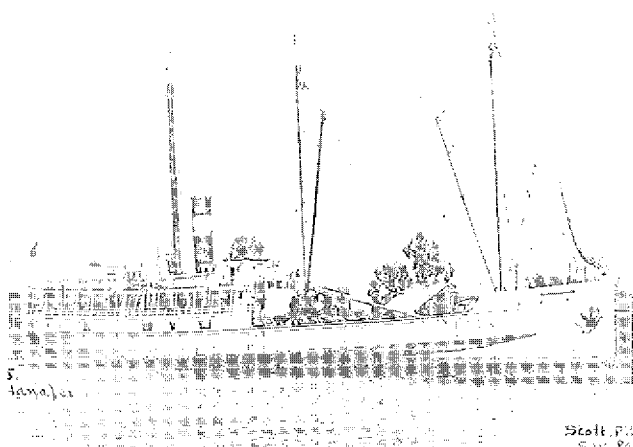
Hanalei

The single-ended, wooden-hulled steam schooner Hanalei was built at Alameda, California, in 1901. As built, Hanalei was 174.5 feet long, with a 36-foot beam and a 13-foot depth of hold. Hanalei was registered at 666 tons gross and 502 tons net. [1] Originally built for the Hawaiian sugar trade, Hanalei ran between San Francisco and Los Angeles in 1908 before entering the Pacific Coast lumber trade, carrying lumber and passengers between San Francisco and various north coast ports. [2] Sailing from Eureka, California, with 62 persons on board and a cargo of lumber, live cattle, sheep, and hogs, Hanalei was lost on November 23, 1914, as she neared the Golden Gate.

The schooner ran aground on Duxbury Reef opposite the Marconi Wireless Station in Bolinas around noon on Monday, November 23. Thick fog obscured the water, and the steamer struck the rocks without warning, tearing off the rudder. Stuck on the rocks, Hanalei remained in the surf for 18 hours as rescuers, alerted by the ship's wireless SOS, gathered on shore. Efforts to rig a breeches buoy failed, and as night fell, would-be rescuers lit bonfires on the beach to wait for morning. When Hanalei disintegrated, passengers and crew were thrown into the surf. The battering of wreckage and the loose lumber cargo, as well as the choking effect of the ship's



Above: Hanalei's nameboard, salvaged from the wreck and now displayed at the Bolinas Community Center with nameboards from other local shipwrecks. National Park Service photo by Edward de St. Maurice, Jr.



Left: The steam schooner Hanalei at San Pedro, ca. 1908. San Francisco Maritime photo by W. A. Scott.



The shattered remains of Hanalei. Twenty-three persons died in the wreck, the worst maritime disaster on Duxbury Reef. Courtesy of San Francisco Maritime NHP.

diesel fuel on the water took a deadly toll; 23 passengers and crew members died as they struggled to reach the shore. A number of persons were saved when the lifesaving steamer McCulloch's crew plucked them from the water; others washed alive to the beach after several hours in the water, buoyed by floating wreckage. [3]

The tragic wreck of Hanalei was the worst shipwreck disaster on Duxbury Reef. The efforts to save the shipwreck victims had been considerable:

Ineffectual attempts were repeatedly made by the life-savers on shore to shoot a line across to the doomed vessel while yet she held together. Several tugs and government vessels likewise essayed long in vain to get near enough to rescue the people on board, the seas breaking over the reef with fearful force. [4]

Criticism of Capt. J. J. Carey was immediate; one newspaper openly stated "the wrecking of the Hanalei seems to have been due to the negligence of her officers...." [5] Capt. Carey, who had been below when the ship crashed, blamed the disaster on first mate W. C. Reese, who had perished in the wreck. A Board of Inquiry found Capt. Carey guilty of negligence, however, and suspended his master's license. [6] Hanalei was destroyed by the surf, breaking into "splinters." A large fragment of the vessel washed in close to shore with some survivors clinging to it; that section was the only part of Hanalei left when the surf subsided. [7] The battered remains of the steam schooner were not worthy of salvage and were left to the sea.

NOTES

¹
Op. cit., Merchant Vessels of the United States (1906) p. 232.

²
[San Rafael, California] Independent Journal, September 14, 1908.

³
San Francisco Call, November 24, 1914.

⁴
Coast Seamen's Journal, Vol. 28, No. 12 (December 2, 1914) p. 5.

⁵
Coast Seamen's Journal, Vol. 28, No. 13 (December 9, 1914) p. 1.

⁶
San Francisco Call, November 27, 1914, and op. cit., McNairn and MacMullen, pp. 44, 47-48 passim.

⁷
San Francisco Call, November 24, 1914.

H. C. Almy

The small 12.71-ton schooner H. C. Almy was built by Joseph Almy at Bolinas, and was launched in the autumn of 1855. [1] Almy, a sailor who had emigrated to California during the Gold Rush, had settled in Bolinas in 1852. As master of the small schooner Julia, Almy had carried cargoes of lumber milled at Bolinas to San Francisco. [2] In 1855 he decided to build his own vessel. Establishing a small yard on the sand spit of Stinson Beach, near the entrance to Bolinas Lagoon, he began work:

He had never built a vessel before, and knew nothing about the work practically, but he was an experienced sailor, and had a theory of his own as to how a schooner should be constructed....Ship builders and

sailors laughed at him, and prophesied all sorts of evil betidings for his craft, but he laughs best who laughs last....When she was launched she proved that she was well proportioned and rode the crested waves like a thing of life. [3]

Almy sailed H. C. Almy between Bolinas and San Francisco for the next 12 years, carrying lumber and dairy products to market. Unfortunately, "by a series of strange mishaps, she used to get ashore nearly every trip," grounding on the sand at the entrance to the lagoon. In 1864 Almy sold her, supposedly "disgusted at the monotony of getting her away from home under such circumstances." [4]

After 1864 H. C. Almy passed through a series of owners, and reportedly served at one time as a pilot schooner on the San Francisco Bar. In 1877 she was sold to a Capt. Mullett, "who used her principally in his business of catching live sea-lions." [5] With Mullett at the helm, H. C. Almy sailed from San Francisco on Sunday, March 30, 1879, with a party of "twelve gentlemen, bound to the Farallons on a pleasure trip." [6] The sea being too rough off the Farallons, Capt. Mullett ran in toward Bolinas for shelter. Arriving late in the evening, Mullett decided not to enter the narrow channel to Bolinas lagoon and anchored outside instead. The heavy surf dragged H. C. Almy ashore, where she "became a total loss, the party having a narrow escape with their lives." [7] Unfortunately for Capt. Mullett, he had not renewed the insurance policy. Ironically, H. C. Almy was lost "only a few yards from where she was built." [8]

NOTES

1

Op. cit., Merchant Vessels of the United States (1878) p. 103.

2

Op. cit., Munro-Fraser, (1880), pp. 455-456.

3

Ibid., pp. 270-271.

4

San Francisco Daily Alta, California, April 5, 1879.

5

Ibid.

6

Ibid., April 4, 1879.

7

Ibid.

8

Ibid., April 5, 1879.

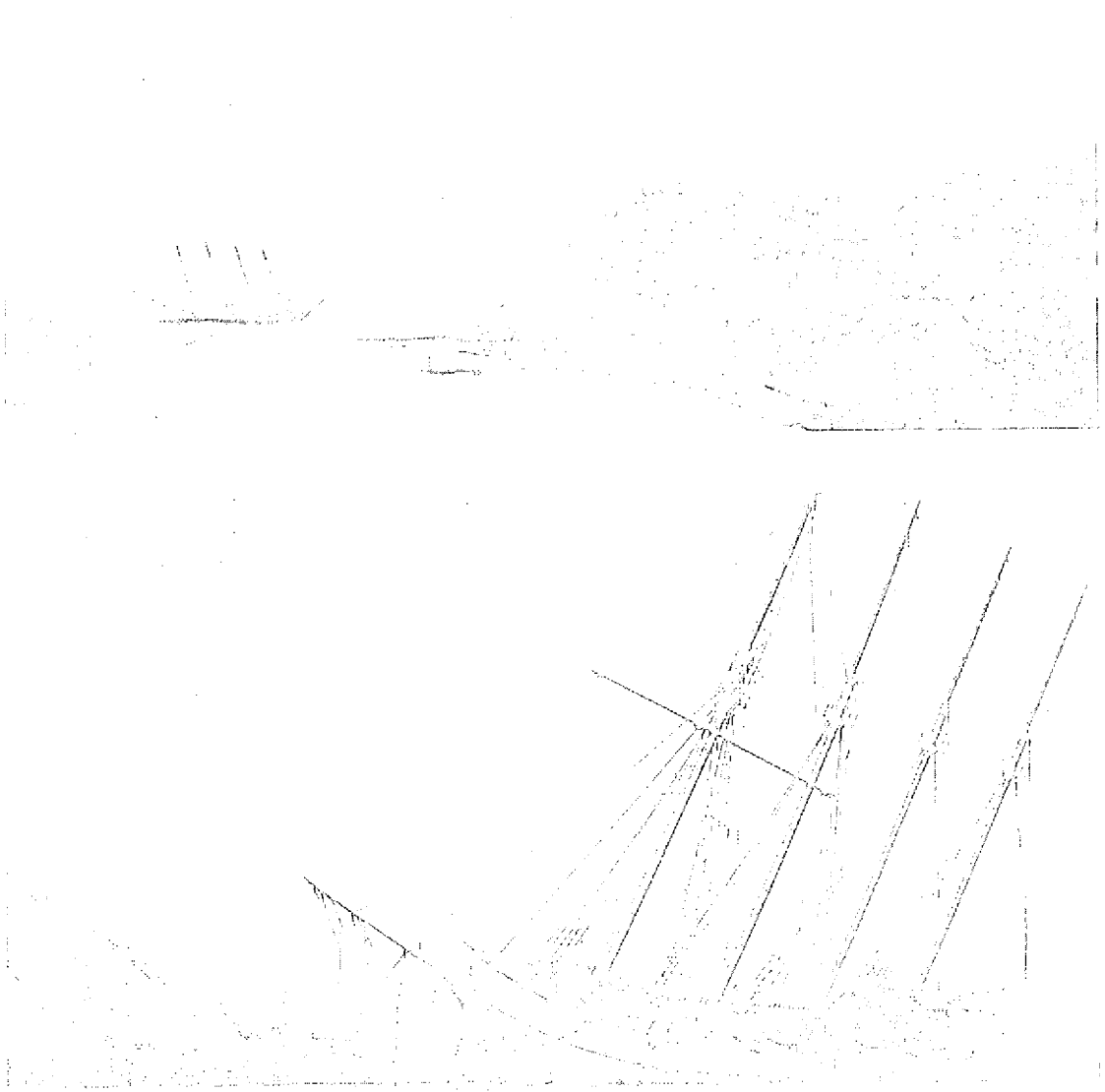
Polaris

The four-masted schooner Polaris was built at Marshfield, Oregon, in 1902. As built, Polaris was 195.1 feet long, with a 40-foot beam and a 15.6-foot depth of hold. The schooner was registered at 790 tons gross, 717 tons net. [1] She departed San Francisco in ballast bound for Eureka on Friday, January 16, 1914. Towed out beyond the Golden Gate by the steam tug Wilmington, both vessels were set adrift in gale-force winds when the towline snapped off the bar. Wilmington nearly went aground on Potato Patch Shoal before making it back into the bay. Polaris, her 16-man crew helpless, drifted north with the storm before crashing onto the rocks of Duxbury Reef at Bolinas Point. [2] A total loss, the four-master heeled to port

and broke up within sight of the remains of the steam schooner R. D. Inman, which had wrecked near the same spot in 1909. The vessel was partially stripped by salvors:

Left high and dry on the beach by the receding tide, the wrecked schooner "Polaris," which was driven ashore near Point Bolinas, has been stripped of her salvage by Captain A. S. Hansen and his crew. The schooner itself is said to be a total wreck and no effort will be made by her owners to save any of her timbers. Despite a broken back and the fact that portions of her hull and decks were carried away in the storm, the "Polaris" rigging was found to be practically intact. [3]

The donkey engine from Polaris was salvaged along with the schooner's rigging before the vessel broke up.



Two views of the four-masted schooner Polaris aground on Duxbury Reef, 1914. The upper view includes the remains of the steam schooner R. D. Inman, lost at the same spot in 1909. Courtesy of San Francisco Maritime NHP.

NOTES

1

Op. cit., Merchant Vessels of the United States (1906) p. 132.

2

San Francisco Examiner, January 17, 1914.

3

Coast Seamen's Journal, Vol. 27, No. 20 (January 28, 1914) p. 5.

R. D. Inman

The steam schooner R. D. Inman was built at Marshfield, Oregon, by Kruse & Banks in 1907. [1] As built, R. D. Inman was a wooden-hulled vessel 186.5 feet long, with a 39-foot beam and a 14-foot depth of hold, registered at 768 tons gross and 427 tons net. [2] R. D. Inman's career in the Pacific coast lumber trade was short-lived, the vessel being lost only two years after her launch. The ship went ashore at "Point Bolinas" on March 20, 1909, when Capt. A. J. Lancaster mistook a bonfire on the beach for the signal of another ship in distress. [3]

R. D. Inman had sailed in ballast from San Francisco on the evening of March 20, bound for Portland, Oregon. Darkness set in, "the sky was overcast, and there was a heavy swell from the westward." According to Capt. Lancaster,

When off Duxbury I saw a light inshore that looked to be from a vessel in distress, and I stood for it. The closer I got the more certain I was that it was a distressed vessel. Then it suddenly appeared that the supposed distressed vessel was on the beach, that it was a big bonfire, in fact, and before we could get out of that spot the Inman struck aft and stopped, and then swung inshore. The engines were reversed, but by this time the rudder-post and steering-gear broke, and the steamer began to fill. [4]

R. D. Inman came to rest parallel to the shore, 500 feet from the beach, washing over the reef into a shallow basin and listing heavily to starboard.

The vessel was wedged tightly in the rocks; no attempt was made to get her off. Instead, owner F. S. Loop of the Loop Steamship Company collected his \$100,000 insurance policy. Abandoned as a total loss, R. D. Inman was partially salvaged by the underwriters and left to the sea; "the steamer will be stripped of machinery and deck fittings and everything of value that can be secured. It is believing that all this, however, will be worth not more than \$10,000. There is no chance to save the hull." [5] Portions of the vessel, including the bow, were still visible on the reef when the schooner Polaris crashed ashore near the same spot in 1914.

NOTES

1

Op. cit., The Marine Digest, June 12, 1943, p. 2.

2

Op. cit., Merchant Vessels of the United States (1908) p. 277.

3

Op. cit., United States Life-Saving Service (1910) pp. 151, 270-271.

4

San Francisco Examiner, March 22, 1909.

5

Ibid., March 23, 1909.

Samuel S. Lewis

The screw steamer Samuel S. Lewis was built at Kensington (now part of Philadelphia), Pennsylvania, by Theodore Birely and Son in 1851. Designed by Capt. Richard F. Loper, Lewis was the result of Loper's experiments with screw propulsion and marine steam engines. A practical engineer, Loper's vessels were "remarkably successful." [1] Loper designed the steamer's engines and propeller, supervised the design of the hull to "ensure that it was structurally and hydrodynamically suitable for the mode of propulsion," and personally took part in the manufacture of the machinery and the construction of the hull of Samuel S. Lewis. Loper and two associates, E. Lincoln and Samuel Reynolds, intended Lewis to operate in the California trade, carrying immigrants and high-valued freight in the lucrative boom of steam transportation to the Pacific Coast following the discovery of gold in California. Before the steamer was launched, however, she was purchased by the Harnden Express Company of Boston to operate on the Atlantic Ocean between Boston and Liverpool. [2]

Samuel S. Lewis was launched on June 12, 1851:

The wharves were thronged with spectators, attracted by the spectacle.... At about a quarter of 1 o'clock, the beautifully modeled hull began to move along the ways, and...she was soon gliding away gracefully upon the bosom of the Delaware, amid the shouts of thousands that witnessed the sight. [3]

As built, Samuel S. Lewis was 216.9 feet long, with a 32.6-foot beam and a 16.3-foot depth of hold, and was registered at 1,103 77/95 gross tons. [4] Built staunchly of white oak, Lewis was "cleverly reinforced in critical areas" to withstand the vibration of the double-oscillating engine. Numerous knees, braces, and diagonal iron strapping in the engine spaces were installed. Specifications and scantlings for the vessel have survived and offer a detailed picture of this early American trans-Atlantic screw steamer. [5]

Samuel S. Lewis underwent trials at Philadelphia on September 4, 1851, and sailed for Boston on September 13. On September 16 she participated in a grand jubilee on Boston harbor to celebrate the completion of the first Boston-to-Canada railroad link. At Boston, Samuel S. Lewis took President Millard Fillmore and other dignitaries, including Daniel Webster, on a tour of the harbor. Lewis steamed from Boston on October 4, 1851, for Liverpool under the command of Capt. George A. Cole, who was recently returned from California and the steamer Tennessee. The steamer was the subject of much attention and high hopes:

Of all the new enterprises, the establishment of a line of American steamships between Boston and Liverpool has been made the occasion of great rejoicing on the part of our commercial and enterprising citizens....[Lewis is] the pioneer of the line....It is estimated that she will make seven voyages a year between this port and Liverpool.... [6]

Such was not to be the case. At sea, Lewis lost her propeller in a gale and was forced to sail to Liverpool, where a new propeller was fitted. She set out for Boston, only to run out of coal. Finally arriving back in the United States on January 3, 1852, Lewis's trans-Atlantic career was at an end when her owners' business failed. [7]

Sold in February 1852 to George A. Osgood of New York, an agent of Commodore Cornelius Vanderbilt, Samuel S. Lewis was readied for a new career. Vanderbilt had established the "Independent Line" to carry gold-seekers to California by way of Nicaragua. Lewis was to work the Pacific side of the route with the steamer Independence. Steaming from New York on March 5, 1852, Lewis sailed into the Pacific, touching at Rio de Janeiro before navigating the Straits of Magellan. After stopping at Valparaiso and Panama, Lewis arrived at San Juan del Sur, the Pacific terminus of the Nicaragua route, where several hundred passengers had waited for three weeks for her. From San Juan del Sur, she steamed to Acapulco, Mexico, arriving at San Francisco on July 7, 1852, with 653 passengers, 112 days from New York. [8]

The San Francisco Daily Alta California greeted the new steamer lukewarmly, "she is a large fine looking vessel, possessing apparently all the requisites for a good safe sea-going steamer." [9] Vanderbilt's steamers were not noted for good service, and the death by disease of 19 passengers en route to San Francisco was not the best introduction for Samuel S. Lewis. The steamer operated between San Juan del Sur and San Francisco for more than a year. Her career on the Pacific was marked by problems; she was fined in the fall of 1852 for overloading, and in January 1853 SS Lewis was described by the most reliable authority to have arrived here in the most filthy condition; so much indeed as to create nausea to those who visited her. She is in a very leaky condition, and has several feet of water. [10]

The San Francisco Daily Alta California's editors condemned the ship, stating "the lives and property of the public should not be trifled with...the present condition of the ship...is calculated to induce sickness and death, especially where human beings are packed together in dense masses..." [11]

On January 4, 1853, SS Lewis broke down off San Francisco and was towed into port by the steamer Goliath. [12] A week later, the San Francisco Daily Alta California reported that the ship was to be "thoroughly overhauled and repaired:"

New engines are going to be put in her, and new propeller paddles to replace the old ones. The copper will be stripped off, seams recaulked, new copper put on, and in time the ship made as good as new. We are really glad that such is to be the case. [13]

The ship was repaired under contract by the Pacific Mail Steamship Company at their Benicia depot near San Francisco. The old engines were repaired, not replaced, despite the newspaper's hopes. In late March 1853 SS Lewis departed San Francisco for San Juan del Sur. She was wrecked on her return voyage to San Francisco.

In the early morning of April 9, 1853, SS Lewis ran aground on Duxbury Reef, north of the point and close to Agate Beach. The thick fog obscured the land, and like the steamer Tennessee, lost just a month before, SS Lewis was wrecked through an error in navigation. [14] William Tecumseh Sherman, who was a passenger on board, noted that the ship did not completely sink:

...as the water gradually rose inside to a level with the sea outside, the ship swung broadside to the swell, and all her keel seemed to rest on the rock and sand. At no time did the sea break over the deck--but the water below drove all the people up to the main-deck and to the promenade-deck, and thus we remained for about three hours.... [15]

The 385 passengers on board were safely landed along with the ship's specie, mail, and some of the baggage. The U.S. surveying steamer Active arrived at the wreck

on April 10 along with the Revenue Cutter Frolic. On her way to the wreck, Active passed through a floating field of "drift," consisting of mattresses, benches, spars, and loose timber, which had floated down from the wreck; and what was the surprise of all on board to find that of the wreck itself, barely the hull remained! The SS Lewis, in one night, had completely gone to pieces! At the point on which she struck was to be seen a fragment of her hull--the lower portion--and even this remnant was being fast washed apart. Her timbers are strewn along the beach. [16]

On the afternoon of April 10, the steamer Goliah returned to San Francisco from the wreck of SS Lewis "with the balance of the passengers and baggage of that vessel. Nothing now remains of the wreck together, as she has broken up, and fragments can be seen strewn all along the beach." [17]

NOTES

- 1
Cedric Ridgely-Nevitt, American Steamships on the Atlantic (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1981) p. 189.
- 2
Ibid.
- 3
Gleason's Pictorial Drawing Room Companion, August 23, 1851.
- 4
Register #269, Port of Boston, Massachusetts, October 1, 1851. National Archives Record Group 41, Washington, D.C. and "Steamers Building in Philadelphia, August 1, 1851," Journal of the Franklin Institute, Vol. XXII (Third Series), No. 3 (September 1851) pp. 212-213.
- 5
Op. cit., Ridgely-Nevitt, pp. 189-190, passim.
- 6
Gleason's Pictorial Drawing Room Companion, October 25, 1851.
- 7
Op. cit., Ridgely-Nevitt, p. 190.
- 8
Register #6, Port of New York, March 1, 1852, National Archives Record Group 41 and San Francisco Daily Alta California, July 8, 1852.
- 9
San Francisco Daily Alta California, July 8, 1852.
- 10
Ibid., January 5, 1853.
- 11
Ibid.
- 12
Ibid.
- 13
Ibid., January 13, 1853.
- 14
Ibid., April 10, 1853.
- 15
William Tecumseh Sherman, Memoirs... (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1875) Vol. 1, pp. 95-96.
- 16
San Francisco Daily Alta California, April 10, 1853.

San Domenico

The 86-foot-long purse-seiner San Domenico was built at San Francisco, California, by Andersen & Cristofani and was launched in September 1935. [1] San Domenico was built for and owned by the San Domenico Corporation, "consisting of members of her crew." The vessel's career was brief; just three months after her launch, San Domenico was wrecked four miles north of Bolinas when she ran aground in the heavy fog on the evening of December 27, 1935. Her hull torn open by rocks, San Domenico filled as her 11-man crew lowered a skiff and headed for shore through the surf. After struggling to reach the beach, one-quarter mile distant from the wreck, San Domenico's crew reached safety. However, one man, Salvatore Finocchiaro, was swept overboard and drowned. [2] The wreck of San Domenico quickly broke up in the heavy surf; no attempt was made to salvage her. Finocchiaro's body was not recovered. [3]

NOTES

1

San Francisco Examiner, December 28, 1935.

2

Ibid.

3

Ibid., December 29, 1935.

Western Shore

The 1,117.86-ton ship Western Shore, built in 1874, was the largest full-rigged vessel constructed on the Pacific Coast. The ship was 183.5 feet long, with a 42-foot beam and a 22.6-foot depth of hold, and was built of Douglas fir and Port Orford cedar. The vessel's timbers were massive, her frames being 16 by 24 inches, molded and sided. The vessel was built by John Kruse at Asa Meade Simpson's North Bend Shipyard at North Bend, Oregon, and was launched on October 10, 1874. [1]

On her maiden voyage, Western Shore sailed from Coos Bay to San Francisco with 225,000 board feet of lumber. At San Francisco the ship loaded wheat and sailed for Liverpool, England. Returning to San Francisco with a general cargo, she cleared for Portland, Oregon, where she again loaded wheat for Liverpool. Upon her return from England, Western Shore entered the coastwise coal trade, carrying coal from Seattle to San Francisco. [2] Her first voyage from Seattle passed without incident, but trouble struck when she sailed from San Francisco in January 1878. Western Shore was nearly lost twice as she made her way out the Golden Gate. On January 22, she departed San Francisco under tow. In ballast, the lightly laden vessel proved too much for the tug Richard Holyoke, as Western Shore struggled in a strong southeast gale at the Golden Gate. Western Shore broke free of the tug and drifted toward Alcatraz Island. "Both anchors were let go and the ship brought up, just clear of the island. Had the wind continued blowing...the ship must have gone ashore, but as if by a miracle it suddenly shifted...and the vessel was saved." [3]

Two days later Western Shore again departed San Francisco, again under tow from the tug Richard Holyoke. In company of the barks King Philip and Don Nicolas,

Western Shore was off the San Francisco Bar when the wind died. As the three vessels began to drift in heavy seas, King Philip's tug cast off to aid Western Shore and Don Nicolas, both being in danger of going ashore near the gate at Point Lobos. Capt. Blinn of Western Shore was casting off the tug's hawser when the wind died. He and the mate then attempted to put a few turns of the hawser around the bitts when the line surged, breaking off the bitts and striking the captain, "breaking his leg in two places, and knocking him off the forecandle to the main deck, a distance of 12 feet.... He lived about four hours afterwards." [4] Western Shore was able to anchor and hang on until the next day, when Richard Holyoke was able to put a line on her and tow the ship into San Francisco Bay. Don Nicolas was also towed in, but King Philip proved a total loss when she went ashore two and a half miles south of Point Lobos.

Western Shore's third attempt to clear San Francisco was without accident. The next voyage from Seattle to San Francisco, however, was her last. Sailing from Seattle on July 2, 1878, the ship, laden with 2,040 tons of coal, made a fast passage toward San Francisco. On the evening of July 9, while under full sail at a speed of 10 knots, the ship struck Duxbury Reef. Within three hours she had sunk, lying head on, listing to port, with only the masts (all sails still set) protruding from the water. The circumstances of her loss were never fully explained:

There are several theories....One is that there being a very strong current to the northward, the ship was considerably out of her course. Another is that the Captain, owing to a long experience, got careless....Others cannot comprehend how anyone able to see either Point Reyes or Farallone light could lose a vessel on a reef so well known and dangerous as Duxbury Reef, in a fine commanding breeze. There is certainly something remarkable about the affair that needs investigation.
[5]

The vessel, valued at \$72,000, was a complete loss, along with the cargo, valued at \$9,180. On July 11, the "Wreck of the Ship Western Shore, as she now lies on Duxbury Reef," was sold at auction. [6] San Francisco grocer G. Molloy, who had earlier bought and salvaged the wrecked bark King Philip, now purchased the ship that had eluded disaster when King Philip was lost. Molloy paid \$1,225 for Western Shore; the coal cargo was sold separately to a Mr. C. Wilson for \$70. [7] Neither man profited from the wreck, because heavy seas soon broke Western Shore up. The only items salvaged were the fore, main, and mizzen royals, the fore and main topgallant sails, the fore and main topsails, and the jibs, which were pulled from the yards by Italian fishermen. [8]

NOTES

¹ Op. cit., Merchant Vessels of the United States (1877) p. 269, and the North Bend (Oregon) News, September 6, 1984.

² The San Francisco Daily Alta California of July 11, 1878 recounts the ship's career.

³ Ibid., January 23, 1878.

⁴ Ibid., January 27, 1878.

⁵ Ibid., July 11, 1878.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷
Ibid., July 12, 1878.

⁸
Ibid.

William F. Witzemann

The 473-ton, four-masted schooner Wm. F. Witzemann was built by Hans D. Bendixsen at Fairhaven, California, in 1887. Launched on March 2, 1887, she was said to be the largest vessel then built on the shores of Humboldt Bay. [1] Witzemann was registered at 160 feet in length, with a 35-foot beam and 12.2-foot depth of hold. [2] Constructed for San Francisco lumber interests, she was intended for the Puget Sound lumber trade, ferrying lumber from Puget Sound sawmills to market in San Francisco. Her cargo capacity was 500,000 board feet. The new schooner attracted favorable attention at her launch:

The W. F. Witzemann is a fine able vessel, and as she rested on the water, attracted universal attention and admiration....Mr. Bendixsen is an expert shipbuilder, and the vessels constructed at his yard are considered among the best in the coasting fleet. [3]

After a long career in the Pacific Coast lumber trade, Wm. F. Witzemann was wrecked three miles north of Duxbury Point on February 6, 1907. Departing San Francisco for Gray's Harbor, William F. Witzemann, in ballast, crashed into the rocks of Duxbury Reef in a thick fog. The five-man crew was rescued by crews from the United States Lifesaving Service's Point Bonita and Fort Point stations. The captain and two officers remained with the vessel, superintending all possible salvage from the vessel, which was then abandoned. [4]

NOTES

¹
[Eureka, California] Weekly Humboldt Times, March 3, 1887.

²
Op. cit., Merchant Vessels of the United States (1906) p. 167.

³
Weekly Humboldt Times, March 3, 1887.

⁴
Op. cit., United States Life-Saving Service (1908) pp. 138, 252-253.

YFD #20

The only reference to this wreck event is a notation in a secondary source history, which notes that the vessel, a Yard Floating Drydock, broke free while under tow and went aground on Duxbury Reef on January 20, 1943. The wreck was "scrapped" over the next month's time. [1] No reference to the event was found in the San Francisco Chronicle for January 1943. The wreck may have not been publicized because of wartime censorship. A major storm lasting four days did lash the coast between January 18 and 22, 1943, according to the Chronicle.

NOTE

¹
Op. cit., Marshall, p. 122.



VESSEL LOSSES, TEN-MILE BEACH TO TOMALES BAY

James P. Delgado and Stephen A. Haller

Point Reyes' Ten-Mile Beach was the scene of numerous tragedies and accidents, mostly costing vessel losses of ships inbound from the Pacific that lost their way while seeking the Golden Gate. Twenty vessels are known to have been totally lost.

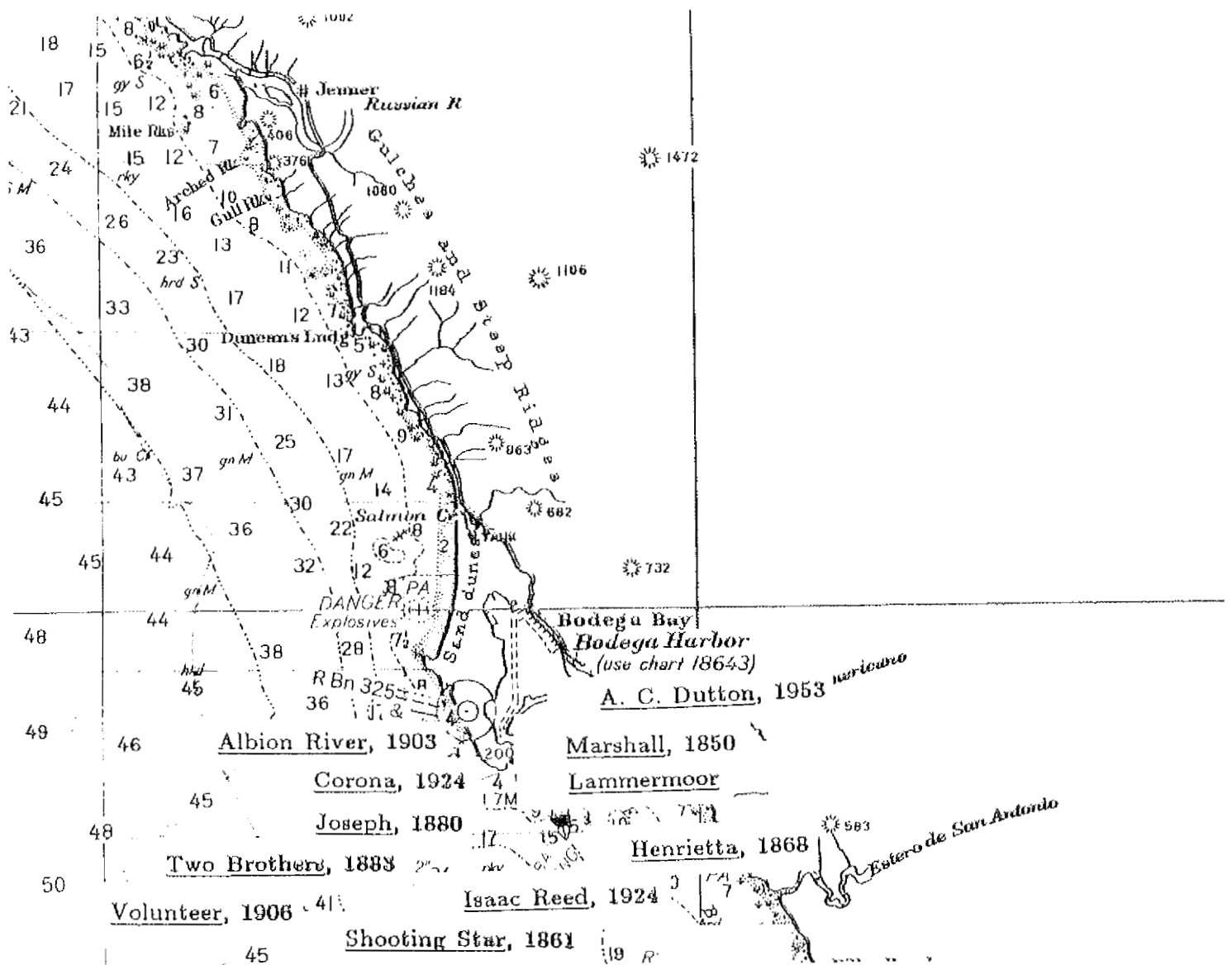
Albert, 1919
Alessandro, 1874
Anglo-American, 1877
C-7742
Copper Queen, 1903
Erin's Star, 1880
European, 1861
Evening Star, 1880
Francois Coppee, 1903
Haddingtonshire, 1885
Hayes, 1869
H. Caroline, 1874
J. E. Haskins, 1874
Marin, 1861
Novick, 1863
Oxford, 1852
Rachel, 1895
Samoa, 1913
Sea Nymph, 1861
Warrior Queen, 1874

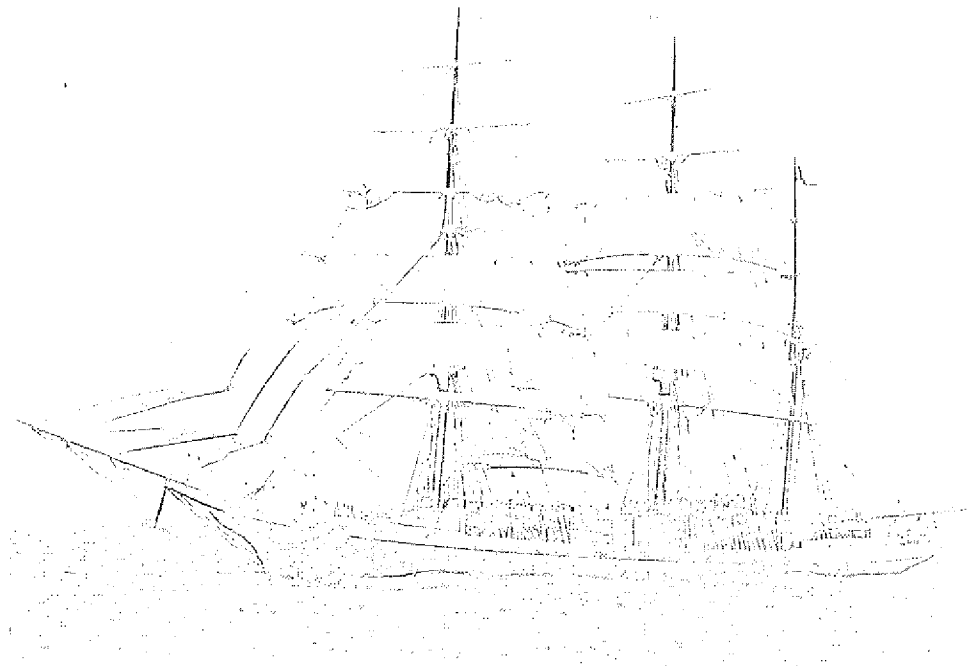
Albert

Albert was built in 1890 at Port Blakely, Washington, at the famous shipyard of the Hall Brothers. She was well-built of oak and Douglas fir, fastened with iron and copper. Her hull measured 182.1 feet long, had a beam of 38.3 feet, depth of hold of by 14.6 feet, and displaced 624 tons. [1] Albert was rigged as a three-masted bark, and crossed skysails on her foremast and mainmast. Contrary to the tradition of West Coast shipbuilders, she carried a figurehead rather than a billethead at her bow. The National Maritime Museum Library has the sail plan, rigging plans, inboard profiles, and the hull lines of this vessel in its pamphlet collection. [2]

Albert was owned by Ned Olson of San Francisco. She was engaged in general trade between the West Coast, Australia, New Zealand, and Hawaii, and also ranged as far north as Bristol Bay, Alaska. She had a fine reputation as a handsome vessel and a "crack passage-maker." [3]

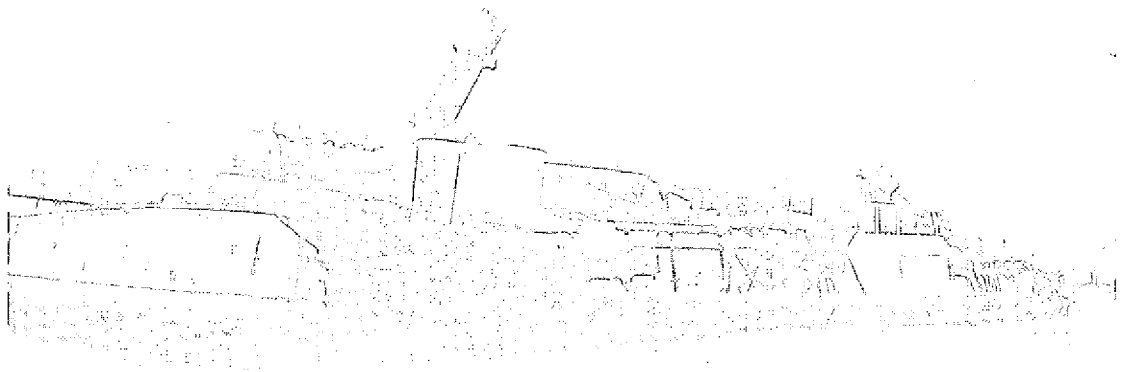
In her 29-year career she had several near disasters, the most serious being a bout with heavy northerly gales just 19 miles north of the Farallon Islands, inbound to San Francisco on a passage from Honolulu. The storm winds carried away most of her sails, damaged her main royal backstays, and blew her south for three days. Before repairs were made, she had drifted as far as Montara.





The bark Albert, built in 1890, had a 29-year-long career in the general carrying trade before her wreck. Courtesy of San Francisco Maritime NHP.

Albert sailed from Timaru, New Zealand, on January 26, 1919, and was off Point Reyes Beach early on the morning of April 2, when she went aground. The apparent cause of the accident was a combination of fog and light winds. Her crew of 11 men made it safely ashore with the assistance of the men from the nearby Coast Guard Station, but Capt. H. Ulburg (or H. O. Ulleberg) had broken his leg, was washed overboard, and was lost. The records of the San Francisco Marine Exchange indicate that the location of the wreck was at "Abbot's Lagoon 8 miles above Point Reyes." [4] The wreck report of the U.S. Coast Guard, however, places the wreck 12 miles north of Point Reyes. [5]



The wreck of the bark Albert at Ten-Mile Beach, Point Reyes, January 26, 1919. Courtesy of San Francisco Maritime NHP.

Within a day the vessel had broken in two in the heavy swell on Point Reyes Beach. The next day the wreck had entirely disappeared, and her cargo of tallow, hides, and leather had drifted ashore. The wreck was immediately sold to Capt. E. L. Whitney, but it seems clear that there was little left to salvage by this time.

NOTES

1

American Bureau of Shipping Record, 1918.

2

National Maritime Museum Library, Pamphlet file XA O3 A4 pam.

3

Campbell, Esther M., "Proud Sails on Puget Sound," Campbell Industrial Supply News, April 1959.

4

Op. cit., Marine Exchange Index Cards.

5

Evans, Peter A.; "Shipwrecks and Strandings on the Coast of Point Reyes National Seashore, 1840-1940;" p. 94, in manuscript.

Allesandro

Allesandro was the name of a fishing boat mentioned in Marshall as having capsized near the Farallons, and being towed to Point Reyes Beach on June 18, 1874. [1] It is further stated that she was the "largest in the fleet of fishing boats." No further records relating to this vessel have been uncovered during the research for this project, however, and the story of the Allesandro is a mystery.

NOTE

1

Op. cit., Marshall, p. 120.

Anglo-American

Anglo-American is the name of a schooner mentioned in the San Francisco Chronicle of September 30, 1877, as having been stranded and lost off Tomales in a spell of severe weather. The schooner Marin was also said to have suffered the same fate.

The Congressional Record of October 1861, mentions the partial loss at Tomales Bay of the schooner Anglo-American. [1] No further information on this vessel has been found to date, and it is unclear if these two incidents refer to the same vessel.

NOTE

1

Congressional Record, 8:1, p. 390.

C-7742

C-7742 is mentioned in Marshall as having been a salmon trawler, under the command of Captain Bowers, that became a total loss after running aground on a reef at the head of Tomales Bay near Dillon Beach during a heavy fog. [1] No further information has been uncovered about this incident.

NOTE

1

Op. cit., Marshall, p. 120.

Copper Queen

Copper Queen was a small, shallow-draft auxiliary schooner powered with a gasoline engine. She stranded at 1:30 a.m. on August 6, 1903, on Point Reyes Beach, seven miles north of the lifesaving station. Because of her light draft, she struck close to shore, and all of her five-man crew landed safely. The station-keeper was notified of the casualty by telephone, and proceeded with his surfmen overland in a "hired conveyance" to reach the site. Once there, there was little to do beyond aiding the tired and cold survivors, as Copper Queen was already breaking to pieces, and the cargo of fish had largely been lost. [1]

NOTE

1

Op. cit., United States Life-Saving Service (1903) p. 74.

Erin's Star

Erin's Star was built in 1877 at McFee's shipyard in St. John, New Brunswick. She had a wooden hull and was ship-rigged. Her hull measured 203 feet long, with a 38-foot beam, 24-foot depth of hold, and displaced 1,457 tons. It would seem that the McFees had deep seafaring roots in New Brunswick, for they built at least two other ships (Erin's Isle and Erin's Gem), and Thomas and J. M. McFee were masters of the Isle and Star. All three vessels were owned by P. G. Carville & Company of Liverpool and registered at that port. [1]

Erin's Star was sailing towards San Francisco inbound from Antwerp with a cargo of 1,800 tons of railroad iron destined for the Truckee R. R. Company, when she passed through a zone of dense fog just off the coast. Capt. Thomas McFee was unable to obtain sightings for two days. By the night of September 13, 1880, however, he stated that conditions had cleared so there was but little haze. The water was so smooth there was scarcely a ripple on the sea. Lookouts, aloft until 4:00 a.m., spotted Point Reyes Light, apparently 15 miles distant. At 4:35 Erin's Star very lightly touched ashore. There was a perfect stillness all about. Capt. McFee agreed later that the fog was not thick enough to warrant the sounding of the fog whistle, but accused the lighthouse keepers of allowing the light to go out in the early hours of the morning. The masters of the brig T. W. Lucas and the steamer Empire stated that they heard no whistle that night, despite fog, as they passed close by the Point Reyes Light, causing San Francisco newspapers to speculate on the negligence of the keepers of the lighthouse.

Erin's Star was reported to have gone ashore with her bow facing north, about eight miles north of the Point. She rapidly went to pieces, and little hope was expressed of saving her heavy cargo. [2] However, a coastal chart annotated about 1893 by noted navigation authority George Davidson, places the location of the wreck only three miles north of the Point, just south of the lifesaving station. If the cargo of railroad iron was not salvaged, strong magnetometer readings along the beach, either three or eight miles north of Point Reyes, may well indicate the site of this wreck.

NOTES

1

Op. cit., Lloyd's Register (1881-1882).

2

San Francisco Chronicle, September 14, 15, and 18, 1880.

European

European was probably a small two-masted schooner involved in the early coastal trade. She does not appear in any vessel registries around the time of her loss. The Bancroft Library holds a citation to the Congressional Record (8:1), in which it is stated that the schooner European was a partial loss at Bodega Bay in October 1861. In Mitchell's The Commerce of the North Pacific Coast, European is mentioned as having been lost while bound for Timber Cove, and as having been worth \$5,000. To the contrary, however, another source claims that a vessel named European was wrecked at Tomales Bay in 1861. [1]

NOTE

1

Op. cit., Marshall, p. 121.

Evening Star

Evening Star was a two-masted schooner wrecked at Point Reyes in December of 1880. [1] No further information about this event has been found, and the name Evening Star does not appear in any vessel registries around that time.

Some years earlier in 1863, San Francisco newspapers covered the launch of a missionary vessel of the same name, which was built by contributions of Sunday-school children. The Daily Alta California stated that "500 Sabbath school teachers, scholars & others assembled at Clark's Point to witness the launch of the missionary vessel Evening Star...built at an expense of \$750. ...for use in the Micronesian Islands...next week sent on her way by the bark Comet" August 19, 1863. It is, however, quite doubtful that these two incidents refer to the same vessel.

NOTE

1

Op. cit., Marshall, p. 121.

Francois Coppee

Francois Coppee was a magnificent and significant vessel, with a tragic, fascinating end. She was a steel bark of 2,289 gross tons, 1,728 net tons, launched on November 6, 1900, at the French shipyard of Chantiers de la Loire of Nantes for the firm of N. & C. Guillon. Guillon was an old name in French shipping trade, and their vessels, reflecting French maritime trade in general, often voyaged to the Pacific with cargoes of Chilean nitrate, Peruvian guano, California grain, and Washington lumber.

In contrast to other nations at the time, France subsidized the building of merchant sailing vessels, and strongly supported its merchant marine through the First World War. French merchant vessels were, in consequence, often referred to as "bounty

ships" by foreign competitors. Francois Coppee was one of a class of seven similar steel barks referred to as "Type C," which carried a distinctive rig known as a "jubilee rig." [1] Francois Coppee had a length of 267.5 feet, a maximum beam of 40.3 feet, and a depth of 22.4 feet, on a hull that also had its distinctive features:

The French ships have hulls quite different from the usual. The ordinary British, American, or Scandinavian ship was strictly utilitarian. She had a cargo-carrying hull with the minimum accommodation built on top of it--a bit of a raised fo'c'sle-head right forward and a poop aft....

Not so with the French. They had roomy long forecastles extending often to well abaft the foremast, large houses on deck, big donkey-rooms, long poops with large charthouses above, almost invariably. They looked as if they were designed to provide maximum accommodation, not minimum. I was to discover that indeed they were, and one reason was that, needing them and having some national appreciation of those who sailed in them, the French Government subsidized their building in French shipyards: the larger the gross tonnage, the larger the subsidy, naturally. They could afford to be generous. This also meant that they were safer ships, as I learned when I went to sea. There was less free space for the great seas to wash and drown and destroy when they broke aboard. They had to reach higher to get aboard in the first place: when they got aboard, there was far less volume to them, less weight to pin the ship down and so cause more seas to follow. [2]

Francois Coppee's career was short and tragic. Her maiden voyage was to San Francisco. Returning to the Golden Gate from Newcastle, New South Wales, on November 20, 1903, she went ashore on Bird Rock at the northern end of the Point Reyes peninsula. The event, with the loss of a dozen lives, became grist for the San Francisco newspapers, which indulged in much sensationalism and speculation in an effort to outdo each other. The particulars of this wreck are therefore quoted in some length from a report deposited with the French Consulate in San Francisco by M. Edouard Molines, first officer of the shipwrecked vessel:

On November 20, 1903, the vessel had been without observations for 3 days. The last points observed put the vessel in the latitude of San Francisco. The estimate made at 11 in the evening placed us south of the Farallones and the cape off the lightship from which we were expecting the phonic signals. The winds were variable from south to southwest with bad weather and thick fog cut by a few rifts. The Captain, who had been on the bridge for 48 hours, set the route slightly north of east to compensate for the southern current indicated by the Instructions. The sea was very heavy, the vessel with its main fixed topgallant was making 7 knots generously. The watch had been doubled and the afternoon soundings had not touched bottom with 200 meter of line out.

I had left the watch at 8 p.m. but I awakened to hear the man at the cathead yell "Land ahead"! Hearing the command to brace aback, I leaped at once onto the poop, having lain down fully dressed. At this time the vessel touched for the first time across from the foremast very close to a little island; enormous waves covered the central part of the vessel. The captain ordered the foresails to be taken aback and the lifeboats put out. The crew divided into two parts to execute his

orders. While the one part was taking aback (a very difficult maneuver under the shock of the waves), the vessel fell crosswise on some rocks situated at 500 meters from the island. During this time the steward's mate and 2 of the men were provisioning the lifeboats. The rear port lifeboat on the land side was the first to be put on its hoisting gear and provisioned. The attention was turned to the loanboat on the rear starboard, on the ocean side, and it was provisioned. The apprentices Nicol and Hillion received orders to embark in the first boat. Seven foreigners joined them there and lowered before orders while the rest were busy with the long-boat. The rear falls broke; the two men who were inside were thrown into the sea but were saved. The long-boat was broken, and then it was discovered that the first lifeboat had been swung out without orders and with 9 men. She was ordered to return, but could not get back. There was no other lifeboat. The sea was breaking, covering the roof and forward part of the vessel, making it impossible to put out the foreward boats, which were broken a few minutes later by the falling of the yards and of the masting.

At 2 in the morning the mainmast fell. At 5:30 it was the foremast; at 7:30 the mizzen, the gaff and pole of which had fallen previously. The bar and the skylight of the salon were torn away. We were shut into the watchroom, which cracked with every blow from the sea. About 3 in the morning the seaman Le Sachet offered himself, despite his 53 years to try to carry to shore a line fastened to the edging.... He had hardly left the deck when the vessel went to pieces. I had just time to loosen the line fastened aboard, and then we were all submerged. I had undressed and several others had done the same. The Captain, who had kept on his clothing and had put into a belt all the money on board, was swimming with the debris of a table. I was swimming toward the island, but did not see him again. On reaching the island, I found the men named Victor Auguste, Victor Adolphe, O'Neill Daniel; we spent 36 hours on the island fed by a few mussels and a tin of sea biscuits washed up by the sea. When the sea had grown calmer, we were able to reach the shore with the help of wooden debris. We spent the night at an abandoned barn. Monday morning we were found by a Portuguese who showed us the way to the farm of Charles Molzen. There they were succoured and sheltered until the evening of the 23rd, at which time we were able to return to San Francisco.

Outside of the four survivors named above, the two apprentices who were ordered to embark in the lifeboat were found and with them the 7 foreign seamen who put off without orders. Also two corpses were identified. The Captain and 11 men had lost their lives in the shipwreck. [3]

Because of the violence of the wreck event and the dangerous area in which she now lies, it is to be expected that the hull and other material remains of this vessel are badly damaged and strewn about the bottom, but have survived over the years with little intrusion from divers and salvors.

NOTES

1

Randier, Grands Voliers Francais (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1972) p. 237

2

Villiers & Picard, The Bounty Ships of France (Grenoble: Edition Des Quarte Seigneurs, 1974) pp. 17, 149

Haddingtonshire

Haddington was a British iron bark built in 1884. Her ocean-going career ended a year later on the shores of Point Reyes, two and a half miles north of the Point. [1] The vessel's background and the wreck particulars were admirably described in Eureka's Weekly Times-Telephone of August 29, 1885:

A telephone message received late yesterday afternoon from Olema, on the North Pacific Railroad, conveyed the news that the British ship Haddingtonshire, Captain Mackenzie, had gone ashore three miles above Point Reyes, Marin County, and that 18 lives had been lost, only two persons, a man and a boy, escaping the fate of their unfortunate comrades. It was learned that the vessel had gone ashore 3 o'clock yesterday morning, and that her commander was among the doomed.

It appeared that the Haddingtonshire was a new vessel which was making her first return trip from the Columbia River to Glasgow. She had a crew of 24 men, all of whom were shipped at Glasgow. She was rated a staunch vessel, and with a full cargo the voyage was begun on the 4th of July, with the first prospects of a favorable voyage.

All went well until the tropics were reached. Then the ship encountered a succession of fierce gales which finally culminated in a hurricane on the equator. For days the vessel was driven before the tempest. All that could be done was to keep her before the wind and in this effort four men were lost, swept overboard by the heavy seas.

Finally when the storm passed and they could take an account of the damage done, it was found that the ship was so badly disabled that it would be hopeless to proceed on the voyage, with the risk of encountering storms such as they had fortunately weathered. But here a new danger confronted them. They knew that they were far out of their course and their only safety was to reach this port, where repairs could be made. But the Captain found that he had lost his chronometer during the storm, and therefore the navigation of the vessel must be by dead reckoning, which at best is only guesswork. With all these drawbacks, however, the ship made fair way and would have no doubt have reached this port in safety but for the dense fog which shrouded the coast yesterday.

Early in the morning, when the fog was so dense that the lookout could not see 10 yards ahead, the vessel drove upon the big reef which juts out beyond Point Reyes light, on the Marin Coast, about 40 miles from this city. The wind was blowing a gale, the sea ran high, and it is an iron bound coast. There was small prospect for the doomed men on board to reach the shore through the surf, which beat upon the rocks, and whose roar they could hear high above the shrieking of the wind. Of the 20 men on board only two succeeded in reaching the shore alive. The remainder, including the Captain, went down in the surf or were dashed to death against the rocks.

Nothing could be done to save the cargo, the ship went to pieces very speedily, and it was impossible to reach the place where she struck. Her cargo was a valuable one, consisting of 12,514 barrels of flour, valued at \$50,056, and 17,696 cases of Columbia River salmon, valued at \$53,400. The cargo was fully insured in England.

The Haddingtonshire was an iron vessel and was built by Russell & Co. at Port Glasgow last year. She was 215-1/2 feet long, with 35 foot beam and 21 foot depth of hold. Her gross tonnage was 2,110, and her underdeck 1068. The vessel was valued at \$60,000 and was fully insured.

LATER. San Francisco, Aug. 22: The wrecked bark Haddingtonshire was sold at auction this afternoon in the Merchants Exchange to Paul Keyser, commission merchant, for \$80. The sale was by authority of the Board of Underwriters. There were few bidders. The sale was started at \$25.

For the Glasgow shipping firm of T. Law & Company who owned her, Haddingtonshire was the third loss in two years of trade between Europe and the West Coast. [2]

NOTES

1

Davidson, Coast Pilot, (1889) p. 249.

2

Op. cit., Evans, manuscript, p. 57.

Hayes

Hayes is the name of a vessel reported wrecked at Tomales Bay in 1869. [1] No vessel of this name appears in the registers around that time, and no further information about the incident has surfaced during this research.

NOTE

1

Op. cit., Marshall, p. 121.

H. Caroline

H. Caroline was a schooner of 22 tons, Official No. 11677, [1] registered at San Francisco, and totally wrecked at Tomales Bay in February 1874. [2] No other information about the vessel surfaced during the course of this research.

NOTES

1

Op. cit., Merchant Vessels of the United States (1874) p. 138.

2

Congressional Record, 8:1.

J. E. Haskins

The 32.88-ton schooner J. E. Haskins of San Francisco apparently was one of many small two-masted coasters working between San Francisco and various small lumber ports. [1] On Thursday, August 27, 1874, the vessel, bound for San Francisco with a load of lumber from Timber Cove, capsized off Point Reyes:

...the men four in number, after a severe struggle, climbed on her as she floated. In this exposed and perilous situation they remained for forty-eight hours, tossed by the waves and expecting every moment to be lost. [2]

The fishing smack Alexander rescued the crew of J. E. Haskins on the evening of August 29 and landed them safely in San Francisco. The wreck was last seen floating bottom up off Point Reyes; it is assumed that she ultimately went ashore. [3]

NOTES

¹ Op. cit., Merchant Vessels of the United States (1871) p. 131.

² San Francisco Daily Alta California, August 30, 1874.

³ Ibid.

Marin

The particulars of the schooner Marin are unknown. The vessel was reportedly a total loss in Tomales Bay in October 1861, when she and the schooner Anglo American were "stranded and lost off Tomales" in a spell of heavy weather." [1]

NOTE

¹ San Francisco Chronicle, September 30, 1877.

Novick

The particulars of the steam corvette Novick (also known as Norvick) of the Imperial Russian Navy are not known. She may have conformed to particulars cited for other Russian men-of-war that served with her; if so, Novick was between 800 and 1000 tons, carried a 300-horsepower marine steam engine, was screw-propelled, and mounted 6 to 12 guns. The ship was wrecked at Point Reyes on September 26, 1863. Novick was the vanguard of the Russian Pacific fleet commanded by Admiral A. A. Popoff. The fleet was en route to San Francisco as part of a Russian goodwill visit to the United States during the American Civil War. In the winter of 1863-1864, Russian fleets visited New York and San Francisco, where they were warmly welcomed by the beleaguered American government at a time when many foreign governments, notably England and France, were openly sympathetic to the rebellious Confederacy. [1]

Novick had departed Hokkaido, Japan, on September 1, 1863, for San Francisco. On the morning of September 26, the corvette was off Point Reyes when she ran aground on Ten-Mile Beach. Her officers thought the ship was 25 miles offshore when she struck. "The weather was very foggy at the time. She tried to back off,

but the very heavy sea running turned her broadside on to the beach, heaving her into from five to ten feet of water." [2] A boat was sent ashore and an officer walked inland to San Quentin on San Francisco Bay, where he caught a boat to San Francisco. With news of the wreck of Novick at hand, the United States revenue cutter Shubrick was sent with the Russian Vice-Consul Klinkestrom to Point Reyes. Arriving there, Shubrick found Novick broken up in the surf: "only a small piece of the stern was all that remained of her." [3] The 160-man crew managed to reach shore with the loss of only one man and were transported with their dunnage to San Francisco.

The salvage of materials from the wreck began almost immediately--by November 1863 San Franciscans were able to view "Relics from a Wreck:"

Some five or six guns have been recovered from the wreck, amongst which is one brass rifled cannon. This is a twenty-four pounder; the others being thirty-two pounders. There are also to be seen a number of substantial and handsome copper chests, used as powder magazines. Of these the Novick had on board no fewer than three hundred and forty. The engines were saved also, but not the boilers. The sails, made of simon pure "Russian duck," were also recovered, besides a variety of other articles, which will repay the inspection of the curious. [4]

Two weeks after the wreck, Admiral Popoff arrived at San Francisco in his flagship Bogatyre. A court-martial was held that ultimately absolved the officers of Novick of any blame in the loss of their ship. [5]

NOTES

1

Benjamin F. Gilbert, "Welcome to the Czar's Fleet: An Incident of Civil War Days in San Francisco," California Historical Society Quarterly, XXVI (1), March 1947, pp. 13-15, *passim*.

2

San Francisco Daily Alta California, September 28, 1863.

3

Ibid., September 29, 1863.

4

Ibid., November 27, 1863.

5

Ibid., October 13, 1863.

Oxford

At the conclusion of the War of 1812, trade between the United States and Great Britain blossomed when restrictive tariffs were repealed and merchandise that had accumulated on both sides of the Atlantic found its way to market. This new trade made New York the principal port in the United States, and large numbers of British and American vessels daily navigated through Verazzano Straits. Trans-Atlantic "packets," beamy bluff-bowed cargo and passenger-carrying ships were built to sail year-round across the Atlantic to Liverpool and European ports such as LeHavre. The conditions of the packet trade were difficult, and the "stormy North Atlantic and the hard winter passages, combined with the desire for speedy voyages, made the power to carry sail in heavy weather, seaworthiness, strength and speed prime requisites." [1] Dozens of packets were built, primarily in New York, between 1816 and 1848.

One of New York's notable shipbuilders was William H. Webb. Webb had begun his career apprenticed in his father Isaac's yard. Following his father's death, Webb entered into business with his father's partner in 1840. In 1843 the business reverted to Webb. William Webb's yard turned out 133 sail and steam vessels between 1840 and 1865, the greatest tonnage to come from a single yard during that period. Webb was also noted for the quality of his ships: the long career of the first vessel built under his supervision, the packet Oxford, and her survival in two different shipwrecks, attest to his skill.

The 752 47/95-ton ship Oxford was built at the Webb and Allen shipyard at New York, under William H. Webb's supervision in 1836. The ship was 147.6 feet long, with a 33.6-foot beam and a 21.6-foot depth of hold. Built with two decks, Oxford carried accommodations for passengers in her 'tween decks. Oxford's three masts sported a ship rig. Her registry papers describe her as having a "square stern, round tuck" with a billethead. [2] Oxford was built for the "Black Ball Line" of packets, running regularly between New York and Liverpool. She remained with the Black Ball Line until 1850. Oxford's 14-year packet trade career involved regular passages across the Atlantic; most occurred without incident. She was a fast sailer, her westbound passages averaging 32.6 days, an impressive figure because less than 33 days was considered a "fast passage." Her shortest passage was 21 days, the longest 47. [3] Oxford was also sturdy. In early January 1839, the great "Liverpool Hurricane" wrecked dozens of vessels along the west coast of England, including Oxford, driven ashore. Oxford survived the accident, being so sturdily built that when pulled off, she was found to be "as sound as before she was wrecked." [4]

In 1850, the Black Ball Line sold Oxford to Henry A. Heiser, a New York merchant. [5] Under the command of Capt. H. H. McLane, Oxford sailed from Boston in late 1851 for San Francisco, carrying a speculative cargo for the city's inflated Gold Rush market. Heiser and his partners hoped to double the investment on Oxford's \$100,000 cargo. Arriving off the California coast at the end of June 1852, Oxford drifted in heavy fog some 500 miles from the Golden Gate for two weeks, her master unable to ascertain the ship's position. On July 12, the fog cleared, and Capt. McLane, spotting the promontory of land at Tomales Head, mistook it for the Golden Gate. He sailed her in "slowly until close under the land, when the ship brought up suddenly upon a reef making out into the bay. The reef or point lies at the northern end of Bodega Bay..." [6] News of the wreck reached San Francisco the following day. On July 14, 1852, the San Francisco Daily Alta California reported:

SHIP OXFORD ASHORE--The Ship Oxford, Capt. Lane, from Boston, bound to this port, with a cargo of ice and merchandise, went ashore in Bodega Bay Monday evening. When the messenger left Tuesday morning, she was broadside on the beach, and imbedded 3 feet in the sand. Her position, however, was easy and could be got off by relieving her of some of the cargo.

The steamer Sea Bird, with the owner's agent and the underwriter's agent, reached the wreck on the evening of July 15. They found her "hard and fast head on, with all her spars standing and in an easy condition." Some 50 tons of cargo was taken from Oxford and loaded on Sea Bird, but the ship could not be freed. Her masts were cut away, but the ship could not be pulled off:

The force of the wind and heavy sea rolling in under her stern, works her every moment farther on, while the quicksand piles up about her, forming an embankment or bed in which she lies comparatively easy,

though we think without the slightest prospect of getting out....She had not bilged and was perfectly tight... [7]

Over the next week, much of the ship's cargo of dry goods, liquor, provisions, and 475 tons of ice was landed with the assistance of the bark Sulla, the revenue cutter Frolic, the steamer Sea Bird, the schooner John W. Brown, and the schooner Wm. A. Tarleton. The crew of Frolic succeeded in pulling Oxford free of the beach on the evening of July 18, but as "the ship on being hauled into deeper water commenced leaking badly," Frolic's crew let up on the hawser and "let her go farther up on the Bar." [8] On July 20 the steamer Sea Bird attempted to tow Oxford off after more cargo had been landed, but failed. According to the officers of the revenue cutter Frolic, the failure was due to "gross mismanagement" on the part of Sea Bird's officers, who let Oxford ground twice after pulling her free of the beach. [9]

Meanwhile, the cargo that was landed in San Francisco from the salvage vessels had been sold. The Daily Alta California noted on July 18 that an "assortment of Liquors, Provisions, Dry Goods, Boots and Shoes, Just Received from the Wreck, per steamer 'Sea Bird' and schr. 'J.W. Brown' [were being offered] for sale" by the ship's agents. The attempts to pull the ship free having failed, the vessel was abandoned, "the chief object of the efforts to get her down, viz., the saving of the ice, having been accomplished." [10] Work to salvage the last of the cargo and strip the vessel of usable materials apparently continued through the end of July; the last mention was the report of the revenue cutter Frolic on July 25, which noted that when she had last left the wreck, Oxford was nearly discharged, "having about 90 bbls. whiskey, and 100 tons ice on board." [11]

Oxford's hulk remained visible at the mouth of Tomales Bay for many years after the wreck. In 1889, the Pacific Coast Pilot noted in the discussion of Tomales Bay that

In 1852 the ship Oxford mistook the entrance to this small bay for that of San Francisco, and after getting on the rocks outside of Tomales Ridge...floated off, drifted into the bay over the bar with the flood tide, and...grounded on the flats...and lay inside of Sand Point for some years. [12]

NOTES

1

Howard I. Chappelle, The History of American Sailing Ships. (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1935) p. 277.

2

Registry for the ship Oxford, Number 252, Port of New York, August 15, 1836, National Archives Record Group 41, "Records of Merchant Vessel Documentation," Washington, D.C. Hereafter cited by registry number, port and date of issue.

3

Robert G. Albion, Square-Riggers on Schedule: The New York Sailing Packets to England, France, and the Cotton Ports (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1938) pp. 299, 276-277.

4

Ibid., p. 209.

5
Op. cit., Registry No. 170, Port of New York, Issued March 12, 1850. This registry was surrendered at San Francisco in 1852.

6
San Francisco Daily Alta California, July 14, 1852.

7
Ibid., July 17, 1852.

8
Log of the United States Revenue Cutter Frolic, Capt. Douglass Ottinger commanding, July 1852, entry for July 18. National Archives Record Group 26, "Records of the United States Coast Guard," Washington, D.C. Hereafter cited as Frolic log, with date of entry.

9
Ibid., Frolic log, July 20, 1852.

10
San Francisco Daily Alta California, July 24, 1852.

11
Ibid., July 25, 1852.

12
Op. cit., Davidson, p. 250.

Rachel

The 84.47-ton, two-masted schooner Rachel was built by Matthew Turner at Benicia, California, in 1892. As built, Rachel was 79.5 feet long, with a 25.7-foot beam and a 6.7-foot depth of hold. [1] Rachel was wrecked on June 21, 1895, while bound for Behler's Landing, California, with a cargo of general merchandise from San Francisco. [2] Rachel stranded three miles north of the Point Reyes light when she was sailed ashore in the heavy fog just before dawn. [3] The wreck was discovered by a patrolling surfman from the Point Reyes station of the United States Lifesaving Service, who threw a line aboard and rescued the five-man crew of Rachel. [4]

A tug was dispatched from San Francisco to pull the schooner off the beach, but "when the tug arrived she was unable to get near...on account of shoal water." A line was shot on board with a Lyle gun, but pulled free. "Soon afterwards the vessel came higher on the beach, where she broke up." [5] The lifesaving service crew helped salvage Rachel's cargo: an estimated \$200 worth of merchandise from a cargo valued at \$500 was pulled from the surf. [6]

NOTES

1
Op. cit., Merchant Vessels of the United States (1894) p. 221.

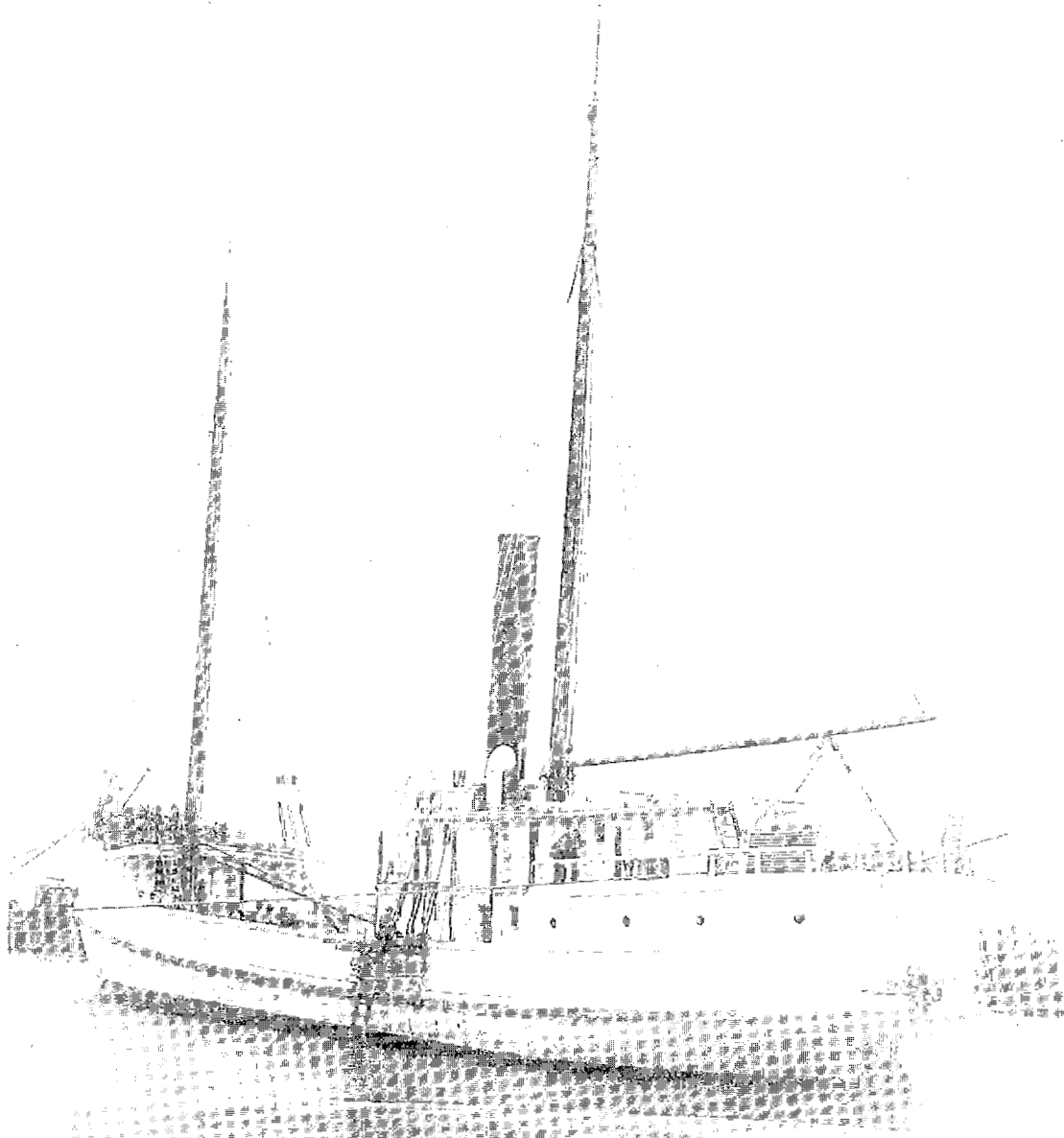
2
Op. cit., United States Life-Saving Service (1896) pp. 316-317.

3
[Eureka, California] Daily Humboldt Times, June 22, 1895.

4
Op. cit., United States Life-Saving Service (1896) p. 186.

5
Ibid.

6
Ibid., p. 317.



Samoa, a typical single-ended Pacific coast steam schooner. Courtesy of San Francisco Maritime NHP.

Samoa

The 377-ton, single-ended steam schooner Samoa, designed by John W. Dickie and built by the Fulton Engineering & Shipbuilding Works, was launched at San Francisco in 1898. [1] As built, Samoa was 151 feet long, with a 33.5-foot beam and a 10.7-foot depth of hold. Samoa was propelled by a 350-horsepower compound steam engine. [2] Built for J. R. Hanify, the schooner was named for a small lumber milling town on the Humboldt Bar and was engaged in the Pacific Coast lumber trade. Launched on February 5, 1898, Samoa underwent sea trials on February 17 and steamed on her maiden voyage to Eureka, California, three days

later with three passengers and 113 tons of freight. The Humboldt Times of February 22, 1898, noted that

The steamer is well-equipped throughout and has electric lights....She will carry about 450,000 [board feet] of lumber. The Samoa has good passenger accommodations for 23 cabin and 10 steerage passengers. [3]

Samoa escaped injury on March 3, 1900, when she struck a lumber-laden scow on Humboldt Bay. [4] The steam schooner's next brush with fate also ended fortuitously. In May 1900 Samoa was chartered for \$22,500 by a group of Russian miners seeking to mine gold on the Siberian coast, which was reported to be "practically the same as the Nome coast, consisting of a strip of beach behind which lies a tundra or belt of gold-bearing sand...." Samoa was to steam north to Siberia on June 1, 1900, returning about November 1. [5]

In mid-September Samoa suddenly returned to Nome, Alaska. After steaming from San Francisco, the schooner had laid in supplies at Nome, departing on August 9. American mining engineer George Roberts, leader of the expedition, along with Russian mining engineer A. Bogdanovitch, became suspicious of the 30 Russian laborers shipped on board Samoa. When he learned that the 30 men were Cossack soldiers and that they were plotting to "seize the vessel and maroon or murder the Americans," he and the other Americans "proceeded to arm themselves heavily and managed to conceal the remainder of the vessel's supplies of guns and ammunition. The boat was then turned around and headed for Nome." The ill-fated adventure ended in Nome with a squad of American soldiers guarding the would-be mutineers as they awaited trial. [6] Following this adventure, Samoa was sold by R. J. Hanify in 1901 to A. W. Beadle, a Pacific Coast lumber-trade steam-schooner builder and operator. Beadle in turn sold the steamer to the Caspar Lumber Company in 1903. [7] The Caspar Lumber Company owned Samoa until she wrecked 10 years later. On January 28, 1913, Samoa was en route to San Francisco from Caspar with a load



Wreck of the steam schooner Samoa on Ten-Mile Beach, Point Reyes, ashore and a total loss on January 28, 1913. Courtesy of San Francisco Maritime NHP.

of lumber and railroad ties when she ran aground in a thick fog on Ten-Mile Beach, 600 yards south from the United States Lifesaving Service station on the beach. The keeper of the station heard Samoa's whistle as "she made her way slowly down the coast...." A frantic series of blasts from the whistle alerted the lifesavers that Samoa was in trouble, and they hurried down the beach with their lifesaving cart and breeches buoy:

Shortly after the lifesavers arrived abreast of the steamer the fog lifted a little, disclosing her, bow on, in the breakers about 300 yards off the beach. The seas were sweeping entirely over her and the inshore surf was already filled with wreckage from her riven deckload of lumber. [8]

After two unsuccessful tries, a breeches-buoy line was shot within reach of the stranded sailors on Samoa and they were pulled in over the surf to safety by the life-savers and several nearby ranchers. Her keel broken, Samoa washed into shore, twisting and breaking up. Her bow wrenched free and the hull broken into fragments, Samoa disappeared beneath the sands of Ten-Mile Beach.

NOTES

1

Op. cit., McNairn and MacMullen, p. 81, and op. cit., Lyman, The Marine Digest, May 1, 1943, p. 2.

2

Op. cit., Merchant Vessels of the United States (1906) p. 298, and op. cit., Lyman, The Marine Digest, May 1, 1943.

3

[Eureka, California] Humboldt Times, February 22, 1898.

4

Ibid., March 4, 1900.

5

Ibid., May 20, 1900.

6

Ibid., September 14, 1900.

7

Op. cit., Lyman, The Marine Digest, May 1, 1943, p. 2.

8

Op. cit., United States Life-Saving Service, (1914) pp. 106, 180-181.

Sea Nymph

The 1,215-ton clipper ship Sea Nymph was built by Reuben Fiske & Company at Fairhaven, Massachusetts, in 1853. [1] The vessel, a "California clipper," made four voyages between New York and San Francisco from 1854 to 1861, until she was lost. On May 4, 1861, Sea Nymph was bound for San Francisco with 1,778 tons of general merchandise. Sailing through thick fog, the ship was driving along at 10 knots when she struck Ten-Mile Beach three miles north of Point Reyes. The masts were cut away and washed ashore. The captain fired signal guns to attract help; several local ranchers finally gathered on the beach and aided in setting up a breeches buoy to bring the shipwrecked crew of Sea Nymph ashore. [2] The steward was drowned in the surf as he made his way to the beach; he was the only casualty. [3]

The vessel was driven up close to the beach by the surf before she finally bedded down in the sand. Two days after she went ashore, Sea Nymph "broke in two in

the centre, and the houses on deck were breaking up and drifting to the shore." [4] On May 9, 1861, the wreck and her cargo were sold at auction in San Francisco for \$6,650; "she was bought by Mr. Benjamin, of this city. A large sand bank is forming around the hulk, which is broken in two, and the cargo will probably be washed ashore during to-day and to-morrow." [5]

Sea Nymph's hull settled even deeper into the sand over the next few days, "which serves to keep her from going entirely to pieces." [6] The salvors camped on the beach by the wreck for 85 days, gradually gathering up unspoiled cargo that washed out of the hulk and onto the shore and making a good profit for their efforts. [7] The wreck was also lucrative for other parties; the steamship Senator left San Francisco on May 12, 1861, for an "Excursion to the Wreck of the Sea Nymph." For \$1, passengers on Senator would be landed to walk overland to view the wreck. "Ample time will be furnished passengers to view the wreck, amuse themselves in fishing, etc., etc. A Splendid BAND OF MUSIC will accompany the STEAMER." [8]

NOTES

1

Op. cit., Howe and Matthews, Vol. II, p. 549.

2

San Francisco Daily Alta California, May 7, 1861.

3

Ibid.

4

Ibid.

5

Ibid., May 10, 1861.

6

Ibid., May 11, 1861.

7

Op. cit., Howe and Matthews, p. 550.

8

San Francisco Daily Alta California, May 11, 1861.

Warrior Queen

The 988-ton ship Warrior Queen was built at Sunderland, Great Britain, in 1856. As built, Warrior Queen was 186 feet long, with a 34-foot beam and a 22.7-foot depth of hold. [1] The ship was built of oak and was copper-fastened, and spent her career trading between Great Britain and New Zealand. [2] On July 19, 1874, Warrior Queen was lost when she went ashore in the fog five miles north of Point Reyes on Ten-Mile Beach just below Capt. Peter Claussen's "E" Ranch. [3] The vessel was bound for San Francisco in ballast from Auckland to load grain for a return voyage. The 27-man crew took to the boats and for the next day rowed through wind-whipped waters in the fog to reach San Francisco. The captain remained on board because the vessel was not in immediate danger--she lay high on the beach with only three-and-a-half feet of water in her hold. [4]

Warrior Queen could not be pulled free. Salvors stripped the ship of sails, furniture, gear, and provisions before turning to the hull, which had begun to break up. "Enough can be made out of the vessel by the wrecking party to pay them for their efforts without undertaking the job of getting her off the beach." [5] A number of local ranchers salvaged what they could from the wreck, Warrior Queen

proving to be "the source of considerable profit...to several of our enterprising ranchers." [6] Warrior Queen's timbers were "built into many a house and barn along the neck..." [7] The ship's figurehead was taken to Capt. Claussen's ranch, where it remained a prominent landmark for many years.

NOTES

1

Op. cit., Lloyd's Register (1872) n.p.

2

San Francisco Daily Alta California, July 21, 1874.

3

Ibid.

4

Ibid.

5

Ibid., July 31, 1874.

6

Jack Mason, "Ghost of the Warrior Queen," Point Reyes Historian Vol. 3, No. 2, p. 292.

7

Erie Douglas, Did She Care for Him? (San Francisco: Philip I. Figel, 1886) as quoted in Mason, "Ghost of the Warrior Queen," Point Reyes Historian III (2), p. 292.

VESSEL LOSSES, BODEGA BAY

Stephen A. Haller

Twelve vessels were wrecked and became total losses at the minor port of Bodega Bay.

A. C. Dutton, 1953
Albion River, 1903
Corona, 1924
Henrietta, 1868
Isaac Reed, 1924
Joseph, 1880
Lammermoor, 1882
Marshall, 1850
Sarah Louise, 1865
Shooting Star, 1861
Two Brothers, 1883
Volunteer, 1906

A. C. Dutton

A. C. Dutton was the name of a barge reported to have been wrecked at Bodega Beach in 1953. [1] More information about the incident was not uncovered during the project's research.

NOTE

1

Op. cit., Marshall, p. 120.

Albion River

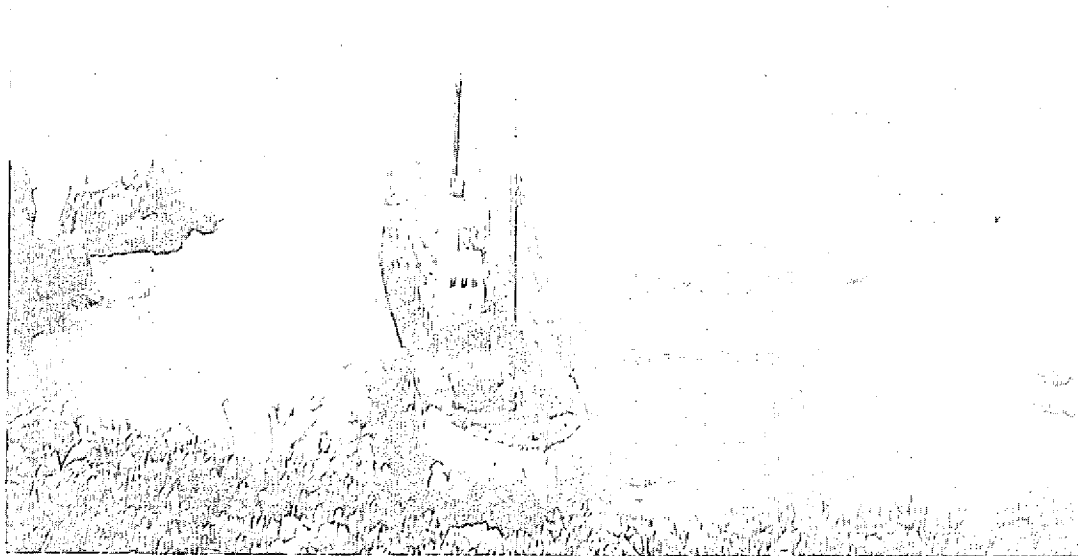
Albion River was a wooden-hulled steam schooner built in 1902 at Everett, Washington, owned by Robert H. Swayne and home-ported in San Francisco. The official number was 107737; dimensions were 137.1 feet long, 31.7-foot beam, 10.4-foot depth of hold, and the schooner displaced 185 net tons and 382 gross tons.

The United States Lifesaving Service Annual Report for 1903 gives full details of the wreck event:

Stranded about 3 a.m. at Bodega Head, 150 yards offshore and 50 miles from station [Point Bonita], hazy weather and moderate sea. She carried a crew of sixteen all told, forty passengers, and a cargo of general merchandise. At 10:40 a.m. the keeper received telegraphic orders from the district superintendent to proceed to the place of casualty, and he immediately mustered the crew and put out in surfboat. Soon after starting the boat was taken in tow by the tug Defiance, but the latter being compelled to lay to for repairs off Duxbury Reef, the revenue steamer McCulloch hoisted the surfboat at her davits, took the crew on board, and carried them to the stranded vessel, arriving near her at 9:30

p.m. Meanwhile all the passengers and nine of the crew had been taken off the wreck, and the lifesaving crew pulled to it in the surfboat to rescue the others but they refused to leave. The surfmen spent the night on board the McCulloch, which, on account of stormy weather, in the morning put into Bodega Bay, where it was learned that the tug SEA ROVER had taken the rest of the crew from the wreck, leaving the master alone on board. Considering his position perilous, the lifesavers landed in the bay, transported their beach apparatus to a point on the shore near the stranded craft, fired a line aboard, and soon had the breeches buoy in working order. The master, however, refused absolutely to leave his ship. After securing the breeches buoy in place for his escape, the lifesaving crew took some of the ship's cordage in exchange for that left on board, returned to the McCulloch, and were carried back to their station. The vessel finally broke up, the master landing safely in the breeches buoy. The crews of Fort Point and Point Reyes also started for this wreck, but were delayed by the high winds and seas and returned to their stations when they learned that the McCulloch had taken the Point Bonita crew to the scene of the disaster.

A personal conversation with the grandson of Albion River's part owner B. F. Weston revealed that her owners hired a salvage crew to strip the vessel of all machinery, hardware, and brass in order to install it on a new ship. Weston sent his son Bill to Bodega to supervise the crew and guard against pilferage. A steam donkey engine was set up on the bluffs [near the present location of the excavation for Pacific Gas and Electric Company's aborted nuclear power plant], and used to haul salvaged materials from the beach to the top of the bluff. Albion River's nameboard is presently in the possession of Mr. Weston's grandson, who is willing to donate it to the National Maritime Museum collection. [1]



The steam schooner Albion River ashore at Bodega Head, 1903. Courtesy of San Francisco Maritime NIIP.

NOTE

1

Personal conversation with Mr. W. B. "Bill" Weston, December 23, 1986.

Corona

Corona was built in 1918 at Neponset, Massachusetts, by Geo. Lawley for use by the U.S. Navy in World War I as submarine chaser SC-266. As built, she was a 75-ton vessel, with an overall length of 110 feet, breadth of 13.5 feet, and depth of hold of 5.5 feet. Vessels of this type usually had wooden hulls. In common with other members of her class, she was powered by three-shaft gasoline engines that drove her at a maximum speed of 17 knots. After the war, SC-266 was sold as surplus, and refitted for a career as a fishing boat, adding four tons to her burthen in the process. She was registered in Los Angeles, California, and carried the official number 221444. Merchant Vessels of the United States of 1924 gives her net tonnage as 31, her dimensions as 104.3 feet, 14.9-foot beam, depth of hold 8.3 feet, and states that she carried a crew of five. Perhaps at the time of her refitting, she was rigged with a schooner's rig, for she was called a "gasoline schooner" at the time of her loss.

The San Francisco Chronicle of April 24, 1924, carried the news that the gasoline schooner Corona had burned off Bodega. Marshall states that she was a total loss, and places the location of the disaster off Bodega Head. [1] Nothing further is known about the details of this event. It is conjectured that a gasoline fire on a small wooden vessel would leave little remains, and that perhaps only the engines remain as tangible evidence of this event.

NOTE

1

Op. cit., Marshall, p. 120.

Henrietta

Henrietta was a small schooner (probably two-masted) of 63.79 tons based in San Francisco and carrying the official number 11671. [1]

Mitchell, in The Commerce of the North Pacific Coast, states that the vessel and cargo, with a combined value of \$4,000, were lost when the schooner wrecked at Tomales on December 11, 1868. The Alta California of December 15, 1868, stated she had been bound from Tomales to San Francisco when she went ashore on December 12, about one mile north of Tomales Bar. The cargo of 2,000 sacks of potatoes and 500 sacks of wheat was indeed a loss, but it was thought the vessel might be saved. The captain, who was not named, and the crew were all taken off safely.

It is unknown if there are material remains of the wreck on the site. The incident has a certain historical significance in that it is associated with the early coastal trade along the California coast, and that the cargo reflected the early agricultural nature of the Tomales and Bolinas area as a produce supplier to San Francisco.

NOTE

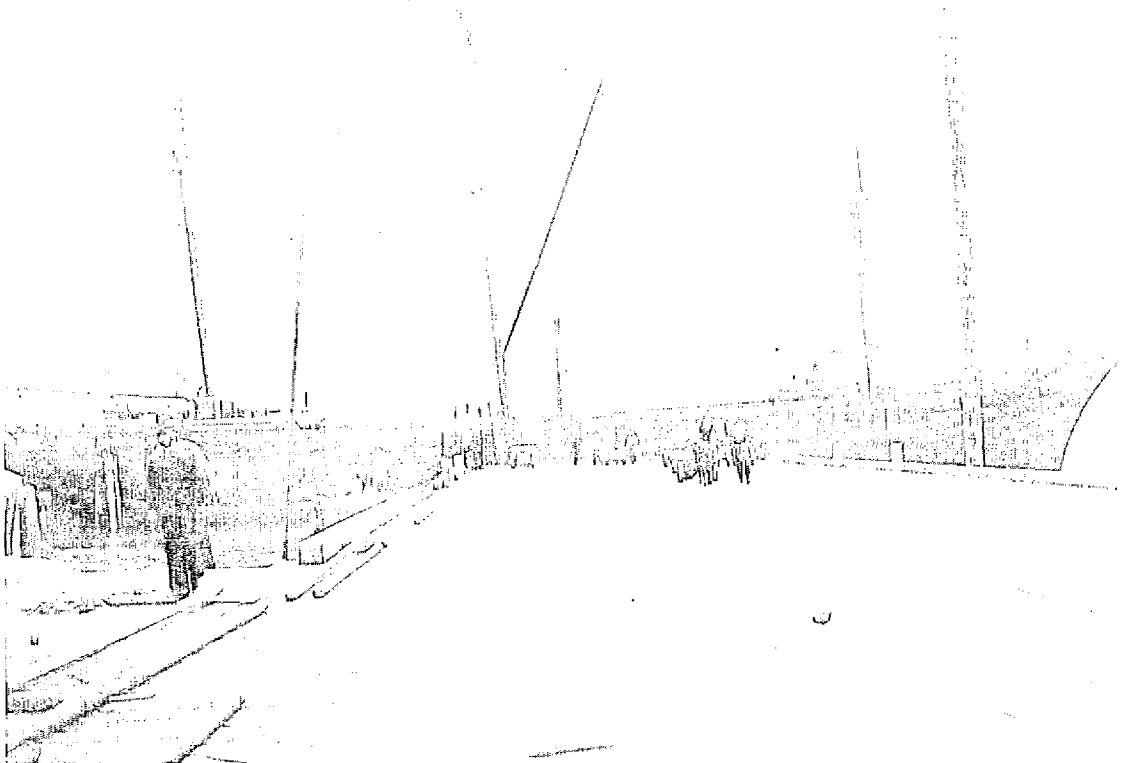
¹

Op. cit., Merchant Vessels of the United States (1867-68).

Isaac Reed

Isaac Reed was built in 1875, at Waldoborough, Maine, by A. Reed & Company of New York. By 1878, Yates & Porterfield had joined the original owners in purchasing shares of the vessel. She was a full-rigged ship, of the type known as "Down-Easters," built under the supervision of the American Shipmaster's Association, of live oak and white oak with iron and copper fastenings. Isaac Reed displaced 1,551 tons on a hull that measured 199 feet long, 40 feet beam, and 24-foot depth of hold. [1]

Isaac Reed became a Pacific coaster at the turn of the century, after being bought by J. Jenson. Her Down-East captain, named Waldo, gave way to a skipper from the "Scandinavian Navy" named Holmgvist. Isaac Reed's career in the coastal trade was relatively brief, however. In 1905, she joined a large fleet of vessels waiting at Newcastle, New South Wales, for the end of a coal strike. The skipper of another Down-Easter, the James Drummond, bet money against any other vessel that he would make the fastest passage to San Francisco when the strike ended. When the race came off, the British vessel Daylight came in first with a 60-day passage. The field included such historic names as Kauliani, W. F. Babcock, and Olympic. Isaac Reed's time was not recorded, but she came in among the also-rans. [2]



The Downeaster Isaac Reed, formerly a full-rigged ship but cut down to a barge in the early 20th century, was lost at Bodega on August 20, 1924. Courtesy of San Francisco Maritime NHP.

Some time early in the twentieth century, Isaac Reed was cut down to a barge. With only the lower sections of her three masts and a stump of a bowsprit remaining, she continued to travel the seas, under tow, until she foundered inside or off Bodega Bay on August 20, 1924. The location of the wreck is not known. It may be presumed from the nonviolent nature of the wreck event that the hulk of Isaac Reed was relatively intact when it sank. Whether subsequent natural or human activity had disturbed the remains of the vessel is not known.

NOTES

1

Op. cit., Record of American and Foreign Shipping (1878).

2

Basil Lubbock, The Down Easters: American Deep-Water Sailing Ships (Glasgow: Brown, Son & Ferguson, 1929) p. 99, 129.

Joseph

Schooner Joseph, official number 75800, 65.58 tons, of the home-port San Francisco, is listed in the 1879 Merchant Vessels of the United States. Marshall states that a schooner named Joseph went ashore and was a total loss at Bodega Head on May 21, 1880. [1] No other mention of the vessel or wreck event has been uncovered during the course of research. However, a chart annotated about 1893 by a noted authority on Pacific Coast navigation, George Davidson, marks the site of Joseph's wreck at the very southern tip of the Head.

NOTE

1

Op. cit., Marshall, p.121.

Lammermoor

Lammermoor was built in 1874, at Port Glasgow, Scotland, by the firm of J. Reid & Co. She was a three-masted full rigged ship, whose sleek lines and very tall rig caused her to be referred to often as an "iron clipper." She carried skysails on all three masts--a rig that was perhaps over-extreme, for it was not repeated on her sisters. Lammermoor was registered at Liverpool as 1,626 net and 1,710 gross tons, with a double-decked hull of iron that measured 260.2 feet long, with a beam of 40.7 feet and depth of hold of 23.5 feet. [1]

Her owners were J. Williamson and W. C. A. Milligan of the Waverly Line, two of the best-known owners of iron clippers in Liverpool. All their vessels were named after characters in Sir Walter Scott's stories, and they all carried lavish decorations of scenes and portraits from the Waverly novels. Lammermoor, and two of her sisters, Ivanhoe and Cedric The Saxon, were widely considered to be "three of the most beautiful iron clippers that ever left the ways." [2]

Lammermoor was commanded first by G. Duncan, and after 1880 by J. D. Guthrie, who commanded her at the time of her loss. Davidson's annotated wreck chart shows the location of Lammermoor as approximately one-half mile southeast of Bodega Head. The wreck was sold at public auction to J. P. H. Whitelaw for \$750 and the cargo for \$80. It was felt that he would be able to save the sails, rigging, anchors and chains, and other articles.

NOTES

¹

Op. cit., Lloyd's Register (1881-2).

²

Op. cit., Lubbock, p. 131.

Marshall

Marshall was a brig, bound from Malaga, Spain, with a cargo of wine and fruit valued at \$49,000, that stranded on August 4, 1850, "somewhere in the neighborhood of Bodega." The captain and the crew were saved, but the vessel was presumed a total loss. [1] Because of the date of her loss was before tugs came to San Francisco and could double as salvage vessels, it is a near certainty that Marshall became a total wreck. No particulars of the vessel are to be found in Lloyd's, the only merchant vessel register published at the time.

NOTE

¹

San Francisco Daily Alta California, August 6, 2:1.

Sarah Louise

The schooner Sara Louise (or Sarah Louisa) was mentioned in a small item in the Daily Alta California, November 11, 1865:

Schooner Sarah Louise, Captain Bruce, from Monterey in ballast, went ashore on Monday the 20th 21 miles NW of Tennessee Cove. She lays high and dry and has not received any damage.

In 1875 a schooner of the same name was wrecked and became a total loss at Fish Rock, well to the north of Bodega, between Gualala and Point Arena. It is very likely that both incidents involved the same vessel. If so, then any material remains lie well outside the boundaries of this study. The Daily Alta California reported that

Schooner Sarah Louise dragged moorings and went ashore at Fish Rock on the afternoon of the 15th during the late southeaster, and became a total loss. She was a favorite coasting schooner valued at about \$6,000 and insured for \$4,300.

Sara Louisa, as listed in American Lloyd's of 1875, was a 49-ton single-deck schooner with a centerboard, fastened with iron, and built in San Francisco, in 1863. Her dimensions were 68 feet long, 22-foot beam and 5-foot depth of hold.

Shooting Star

Shooting Star was a schooner that capsized off Bodega Bay in July 1861. The value of the vessel was \$3,650. [1] She may be the same vessel listed in American Lloyd's of 1862 as having been built at Pembroke, Massachusetts, in 1860 of mixed woods, fastened with iron, owned by Wilder & Co., displacing 153 tons, having a draft of 9 feet, and skippered by C. Ramsdell.

NOTE

¹

John H. Mitchell, The Commerce of the North Pacific Coast (Washington, D.C.: 1879) n.p.

Two Brothers

Two Brothers was a schooner of 56.36 tons of San Francisco, whose official number was 24487. [1] On April 17, 1883, while bound from San Francisco to Salt Point, California, with an unknown cargo, she capsized off Bodega Head. The crew of four was lost, and the vessel a total loss. It is unknown where the schooner went ashore, if it did. [2]

NOTES

¹

Op. cit., Merchant Vessels of the United States (1883).

²

Op. cit., United States Life-Saving Service (1883) p. 373.

Volunteer

Volunteer was built in 1887, by T. McDonald at Hoquiam, Washington. She was a three-masted fore-and-aft rigged schooner, of a type sometimes referred to as "tern-rigged." Volunteer displaced 529 tons on a hull that measured 128.4 feet long, with a 38.9-foot beam and 12-foot depth of hold. She was constructed of oak, yellow pine, and cedar, with iron and copper fastenings. [1]

On June 4, 1906, while bound from San Francisco to Coos Bay, Oregon, she was wrecked off Bodega Head. Two children, the sons of Capt. Brissin, lost their lives in the disaster, as did a seaman named P. C. Nilson. [2]

The exact nature of the wreck event and the disposition of the wreckage is unknown.

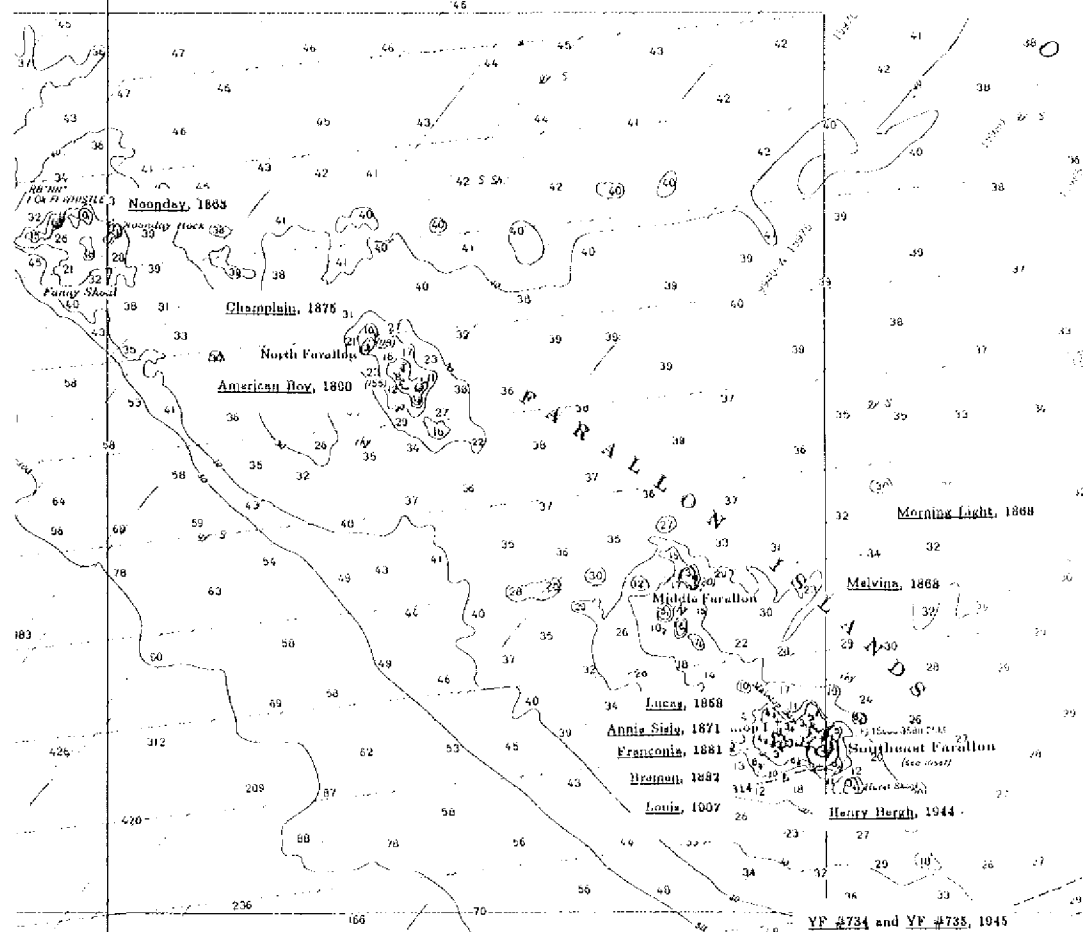
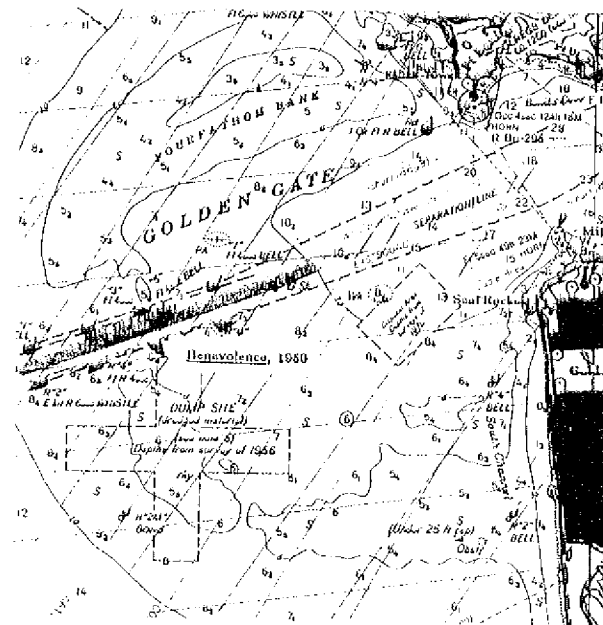
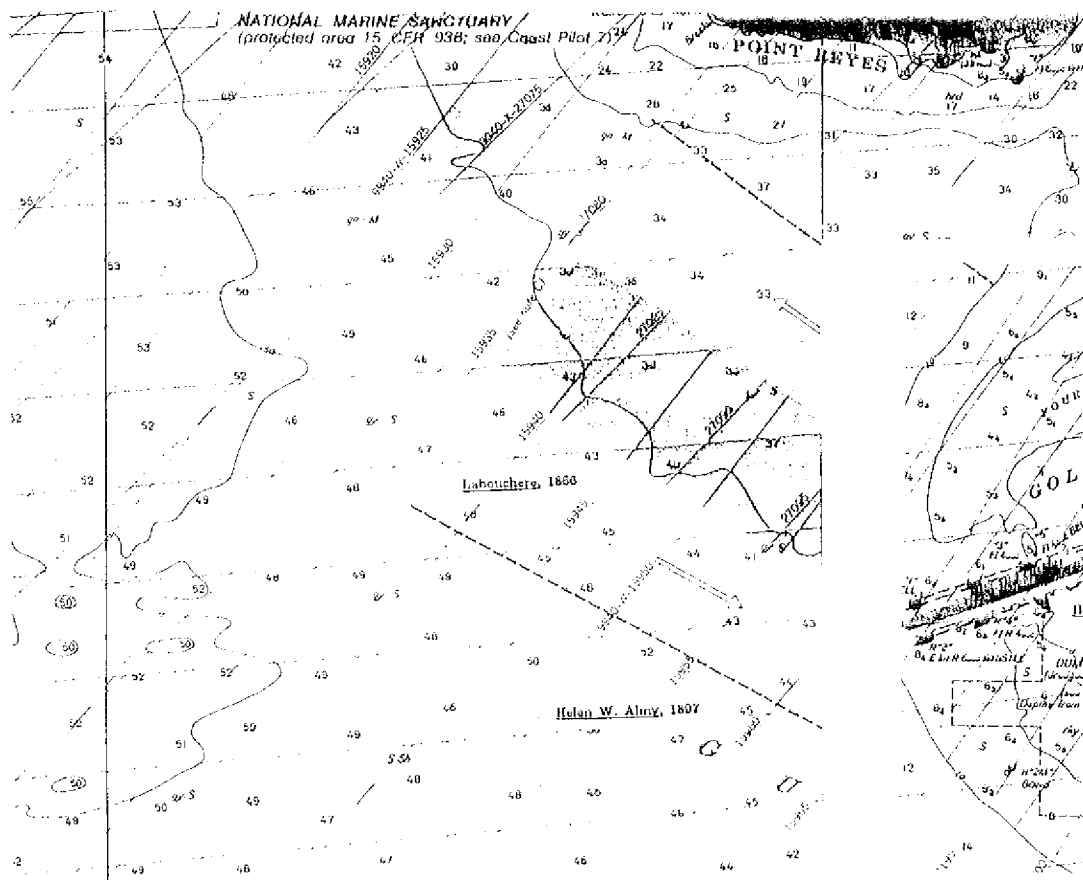
NOTES

¹

Op. cit., Record of American and Foreign Shipping (1906).

²

Coast Seaman's Journal, June 13, 1906.



VESSEL LOSSES, FARALLON ISLANDS AND NOONDAY ROCK

Stephen A. Haller

The Farallon Islands, 26 miles west of the Golden Gate, has been the site of 18 wrecks, two of which were lost in the vicinity of the islands or in the shipping channel.

American Boy, 1890
Annie Sisie, 1871
Benevolence, 1950
Bremen, 1882
Champlain, 1875
Franconia
Helen W. Almy, 1897
Henry Bergh, 1944
Helen W. Almy, 1897
Independence, 1868
Labouchere, 1866
Louis, 1907
Lucas, 1858
Melvina, 1868
Morning Light, 1868
Noonday, 1863
Puerto Rican, 1984
Sierra, 1923
YF #734 and YF #735, 1945

American Boy

American Boy was a U.S. schooner built in 1882, at Seabeck, Washington Territory, by Hiram Doncaster. Some confusion occurs because a schooner on the ways at Hans Bendixen's Fairhaven, California, shipyard in 1876 was to have been christened American Boy, but apparently was not. [1] American Boy of 1882 was a two-masted schooner of 183 tons, built of yellow fir (probably Douglas Fir), and fastened with a combination of iron and copper. Apparently she was well maintained, for she was surveyed in San Francisco in 1885. [2]

She was first owned by William Smith, and later from 1888 on by S. H. Harmon, both of San Francisco. She was engaged in the lumber trade, with a home port of San Francisco. In 1886, her captain's name was Nelson, a common name for a sailor on that coast. [3]

On the morning of November 4, 1890, while southbound from Gray's Harbor, Washington, with a cargo of lumber, she went ashore on the North Farallones during a fog. The vessel and cargo were a total loss. The vessel was only partially insured; the crew took to the boat and were picked up by a tug. [4] The historical record gives no indication of the exact site of the wreck, nor is there any record of salvage at the site either shortly after the wreck event, or by sport divers in later years.

NOTES

1

Op. cit., Martin, pp. 90, 333.

2

Op. cit., Record of American and Foreign Shipping (1886).

3

Ibid.

4

Op. cit., Martin, p. 206.

Annie Sisie

Annie Sisie was an American full-rigged ship built in 1856 at Portsmouth, New Hampshire, by G. Raynes. She was constructed of quality materials: white oak with essential fastenings of copper and iron. Her dimensions were 182 feet long, with a 36.5-foot beam and depth of hold of 23.5 feet. She displaced 1,030 tons on a full-shaped hull with two decks and a half-poop. She was surveyed in California by a marine surveyor accredited by Lloyd's in October of 1865, and re-metalled (most likely with copper sheathing) at that time. [1]

Annie Sisie was owned by Sise & Chase, with homeport at Portsmouth. In 1866, the captain's name was Shields. It seems the ship carried general cargoes, for she has been reported as carrying both railroad iron for the Central Pacific R.R. and coal at the time of her wreck.

On September 18, 1871, the Daily Alta California reported that Annie Sisie went ashore on the west-end reef of South Farallon Island, with all sails set and anchors hanging by the shank painters. She proceeded to go to pieces. People from the Farallons reported having found the ship's log book and chronometer boxes, but the chronometer was missing and the cabin had been "well cleared out."

The West Coast Signal reported that her captain's name was Tucker, that he seemed to have "lost his way reckoning completely," and that "a mystery overhangs the disaster." By September 27, the wreck had been sold to the Pacific Wrecking Company for \$500. [2] Presumably the owners of the wreck attempted to make good on their investment, but no further references to historic or recent salvage activities at the site have been uncovered.

NOTES

1

Op. cit., American Lloyd's (1866).

2

Op. cit., Martin, p. 65.

Benevolence

Benevolence was a U.S. Navy hospital ship converted from the U.S. Maritime Commission standard C-4 type cargo vessel launched as Marine Lion. [1] She was built at the Sun Shipbuilding Company of Chester, Pennsylvania, and launched on July 10, 1944. Within the month Marine Lion was transferred to the U.S. Navy for conversion to a hospital ship. That work was carried out at the Todd-Erie Basin Shipyard at Brooklyn, New York, and completed by May 12, 1945, at which time the vessel was commissioned into the U.S. Navy as Benevolence (AH-13). [2] Her

displacement was 13,330 long tons, and her dimensions were 520 feet long, 71-foot beam, and 21-foot-3-inch depth of hold. Vessels of her class were powered by dual-cylinder steam turbine engines, and could make 18.5 knots. [3]

Benevolence spent the waning weeks of World War II tending to those sick and wounded in operations against the home islands of Japan, and entered Japanese waters shortly after the cease-fire in order to begin processing of liberated Allied prisoners of war. She was on station near Bikini Atoll during the 1946 atomic bomb tests, and went to China in 1946-47 for her last cruise before inactivation.

Benevolence was removed from the reserve fleet in 1950 and refitted at Mare Island Naval Shipyard for service in the Korean War. On August 25, 1950, she completed a series of routine test runs outside the Golden Gate. Proceeding in a generally easterly direction in the main ship channel at a speed of 16 to 18 knots, she entered a fog bank, but continued as before since her radar screen clearly showed five ships, but none near enough to be a hazard. Suddenly, the freighter Mary Luckenbach appeared out of the fog, and in spite of evasive action by the hospital ship, cut into her port side. Water poured into the 20-foot by 30-foot hole, the ship listed to port, and began to settle by the bow. Her captain immediately requested assistance by radio, but assumed that the vessel would remain afloat, and gave no order to abandon ship. However, Benevolence sank within 40 minutes. [4]

Two crews had been aboard: one of Navy personnel, the other made up of civilians being trained to take over--526 persons in all. Many struggled in the cold water for hours, as a fleet eventually totalling about 40 rescue vessels combed the foggy ocean for survivors. In all, 18 people lost their lives in the area's worst maritime disaster since the wreck of Rio de Janiero in 1901. [5]

An extensive investigation disclosed some curious particulars that contributed to the disaster: Luckenbach's radar was not in use at the time of the collision, in spite of the fog; reports of her speed at the time varied from 8 to 16 knots. Capt. Leonard C. Smith of Luckenbach testified that he ordered his vessel to drop anchor after the collision, and that he remained in that location for an hour and a half, hearing no distress signals, without attempting to contact Benevolence by radio, and without lowering lifeboats. He had concluded "that the damage to the hospital ship was all above the water line and that she was proceeding into port." [6]

The hull of Benevolence came to rest on its port side, in 74 feet of water, approximately one mile south of the main ship channel. It is located 4,250 yards from Mile Rock, bearing 252 degrees true. The white hull with its red crosses was clearly visible at low water, and was deemed a hazard to navigation. Unable to raise the vessel, the wreck was dynamited in 1952 to clear the obstruction. More than 50 feet of water now covers the remains of Benevolence. [7] It is therefore unlikely that significant structural sections, or objects retaining their original provenience, will presently be located at the site.

NOTES

¹
Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships, Vol. 1, p. 115.

²
Corps of Engineers Specifications: SC-2, manuscript at the National Maritime Museum, San Francisco.

³
Ibid.

⁴
San Francisco Progress, January 21, 1977.

5
San Francisco Examiner, August 27, 1950.

6
San Francisco Chronicle, August 30, 1950.

7
Letter; C.O. 12th CG Dist. to Mr. Frank Power: April 11, 1960.

Bremen

Bremen has an unusual and fascinating story. Built in 1858 at Greenock, Scotland, by Caird & Company, she had an iron hull and weighed 2,687 net tons, and her dimensions were 328 feet long, beam of 40 feet 2 inches, and depth of hold of 33 feet 4 inches. She was originally fitted with a steam engine of now-unknown characteristics (unknown because she does not appear in Lloyd's at that time). Plying the route between Bremen and New York, she was found to burn too much coal, and the engine was removed about 1870. Re-rigged as a ship, she sailed under the "red ensign" out of Liverpool for the firm of E. Bates & Sons. [1]

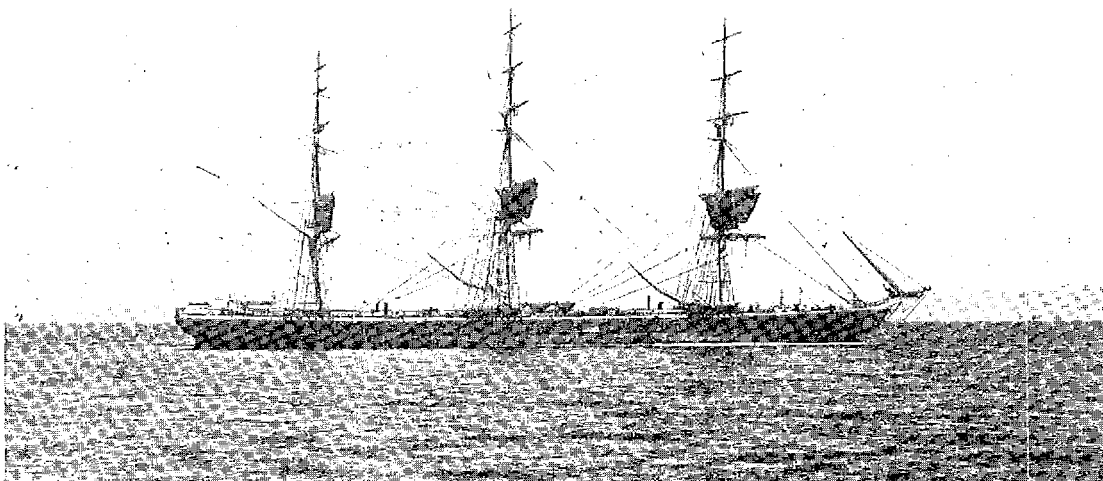
The two recorded voyages of Bremen were both from Liverpool to San Francisco with full cargoes of coal. It is likely that California grain was the return cargo--that was a common pattern--and both known voyages were intended to arrive in California about harvest time. Bremen became notorious in San Francisco when in 1875 she arrived in port after a hellish voyage with a crew more dead than alive.

On February 6, 1875, she cleared Liverpool with a crew consisting of her captain, a man named Leslie, three mates, a carpenter, carpenter's mate, three apprentices, one able-bodied seaman, 36 "colored" seamen, and two stowaway boys (one was the captain's son, who was running away from home).

Six days out, Charles Purvey, one of the black seamen, reported sick. He was sick indeed, for an examination showed that his "lungs were completely gone," and in spite of treatment with cough pills, he died. Despite treatment of lime juice, sickness increased among the crew until, in superstitious panic, one watch "in open revolt" refused to do their duties, the ringleader threatening to "cut the mate's lip off." It took the force of the armed captain to restore discipline. Two men were put in irons for a week on rations of bread and water.

Heading south to round Cape Horn, the black seamen became more and more demoralized as the passage grew colder. Panicking, they refused treatment of lime juice and turnips. Symptoms of scurvy appeared, in spite of fresh messes twice a week that included sago, rice, arrowroot, oatmeal, and fresh meat. In all, 12 blacks and one white died on the gruesome 121-day passage to San Francisco. Bremen was christened a "floating coffin" by the local press. [2]

Seven years later, under Capt. Dougal, Bremen was approaching San Francisco in a heavy fog, 118 days out from Liverpool. At 1:00 a.m. on October 16, 1882, the captain was about to give the order to heave to and wait for better visibility, when the cry of "breakers" and "land" was heard. The ship went head-on to the northwest side of South Farallon Island, the after part going underwater and the vessel "striking heavily" in a severe swell. All hands were saved.



The bark Bremen, lost in heavy fog on South Farallon Island on October 16, 1882. Courtesy of San Francisco Maritime NHP.

Bremen went ashore within a short distance of where the American ship Franconia had been lost, and in very similar circumstances. As in the previous wreck, reports indicated that at no time was the whistle of the Farallon Island Light Station to be heard. [3]

NOTES

1

Op. cit., Lloyd's Register (1882).

2

San Francisco Daily Alta California, August 18, 1875.

3

San Francisco Daily Alta California, October 17, 1882.

Champlain

Champlain was built in 1874, at East Boston, Massachusetts, by the firm of Malcom & Brooks, who had a reputation of building good ships. Owner John M. Brooks had previously been foreman for six years at Donald McKay's legendary shipyard. Champlain was built for W. H. Kinsman & Co. of Boston. She was a wooden vessel of the type known as "down-easters," her displacement was 1,473 net tons, and her dimensions were length of 216 feet, beam of 40 feet, and depth of hold 24 feet.

Champlain's career was short-lived. Her maiden voyage was to Bombay and Madras. The passage to Bombay was fast enough to set a record, from Madras she proceeded to New York and took aboard a general cargo for San Francisco. She cleared port on February 15, 1875, in company with five other fast ships, and would have beat them all into the Golden Gate by as much as 40 days, but for the fates that drove her ashore on the Farallons. [1]

One hundred twenty-one days out, Champlain entered a dense fog bank. She sailed on for two more days when "the lookout uttered the fearful cry of 'breakers ahead'." After she struck, orders were given to take to the boats, while the vessel slid off the rocks and began to rapidly settle. Capt. Reuben Merrill and 16 others in a longboat had the misfortune to pull up under the bow of the ship just as a swell lifted the boat. Simultaneously, the ship's bow came down, and the martingale stay smashed the boat, killing the captain and mortally wounding a seaman. The survivors were picked up by the schooner Mendocino.

The ship's fully insured cargo was listed in great detail, and makes a fascinating itemization of the seaborne trade of the times: ash, boxes, bottles & jars, bolts, boots & shoes, bitters, copperas, chairs, cork fenders, coal, candles, cocoa mats, crucibles, earthenware, emery, galvanized iron pipe, gas fixtures, glassware, iron pipe, iron, ink, tobacco, marble, nails, oil cloth, oak plank, paper hangings, pipe staves, pitch, paper, peppers, pumps, rosin, stoves, starch, spikes, tin, tar, trunks, tiles, whiskey, and wine. [2]

The wreck was sold in short order for \$500 to one N. Bruns, whose "first and principal job is to find her." It was presumed that "she has gone to the bottom of the sea." The search by the tug Neptune was a very unpleasant one for several of those who participated. "One was so disgusted that he immediately made his will on his return, and another who thought he saw the ship with a main spenser set, was sufficiently excited by a spirit of 'true inwardness' to offer up all of his effects to the god who rules the 'briny deep.' Both have since recovered, and are again useful members of society." [3]

No further records of any salvage activity on the hulk of Champlain have been found, and the exact whereabouts of this interesting wreck is a mystery.

NOTES

1

Op. cit., Fairburn, Vol. 5, p. 2969.

2

San Francisco Daily Alta California, June 19, 1875.

3

Ibid., June 22, 1875.

Franconia

Franconia was "among the Down-Easter type of sailing vessels built subsequent to the Civil War." She was built in 1874, at the Bath, Maine, shipyard of William V. Moses & Sons. William and his brother Oliver were prominent Bath shipbuilders, in business there since at least 1842. [1]

Franconia was a staunch vessel, constructed of oak and hackmatack (or yellow pine) fastened with copper and iron. She was of "full model" with two decks and a half-poop, ship-rigged, displacing 1,461 tons, with dimensions of 207-foot-6-inch length, 40-foot-6-inch beam and 23-foot depth of hold. She appears to have been a well-maintained vessel, for she was surveyed in Liverpool in 1875, and re-metalled in 1878. [2]

She had been engaged for seven years as "a general trader to South America, India, and the ports of the far east," when she was wrecked at the Farallon Islands on her first passage to San Francisco. [3] Under Capt. William H. Otis, who had been her master since at least 1876, and who had been calling at San Francisco since Gold

Rush times when he was the master of the ship Rome, Franconia was inbound to the Golden Gate in a thick fog. By dead reckoning she should have been off Point Reyes, when, without warning, the vessel struck Middle Rock, and land was spied all around. Within 15 minutes she found herself "hard and fast on a sandy beach in a bight on the northwest side of the island." The captain, his wife, the entire crew of 21, and all their effects were safely landed and kindly cared for by the Government employees of the island of South Farallon, the scene of the wreck.

The cause of the wreck was ascribed to the fog whistle, which was not heard either before or after the accident. The nature of Franconia's cargo was unspecified, but it was noted that it was valuable, worth \$250,000, and consigned to John Rosenfeld. The reports received in San Francisco indicated that "nothing can be done to save the ship and she has started to break up...and portions of her cargo were going ashore..." The next day the newspapers reported that a good deal of salvage, probably including the ship's sails, rigging, and spars would be secured, and that "the purchaser can, without doubt, if he works to advantage, make a good and quick turn on his investment." It is not known for certain, however, just how thoroughly this hulk was scavenged, either at the time, or later by sport divers. [4]

NOTES

1

Op. cit., Fairburn, Vol. IV, p. 2493.

2

Op. cit., American Lloyd's (1876).

3

Op. cit., Fairburn, Vol. III, p. 1693.

4

San Francisco Daily Alta California, June 27 and 28, 1881.

Helen W. Almy

Helen W. Almy was built in Fair Haven, Connecticut, in 1859. She was constructed of oak, fastened with iron and copper, measured 117 feet in length, 29 feet in beam, had a 12-foot-9-inch depth of hold, and displaced 299 tons. [1] Her rig is variously described as a bark or a barkentine. After coming to San Francisco, she participated in the trades up the coast with the California and Oregon Packet Line, [2] and to the South Sea islands, under owners unknown. She was last surveyed in San Francisco in 1890.

Under Capt. William J. Hogan, a former "down-easter" from Maine, she was fitted out in San Francisco to take gold-seekers to the Alaska gold rush in 1897. The owner, K. C. Eldridge of San Francisco, insisted that she leave port against the better judgement of the captain, who feared a coming storm. More than 200 passengers and crew lost their lives the night they sailed. The vessel was found floating capsized and abandoned the following day. The exact circumstances of the disaster will forever remain unknown.

More than 20 years later, in a curious aftermath, fishing trawler Ituna snagged its nets on a wreck in 47 fathoms of water "at a point nearly midway between Point Reyes and the North Farrallon island." That wreck was believed to be the Helen W. Almy, although the article does not state how the identification was made. [3]

NOTES

1

American Bureau of Shipping Record (1897).

2

Op. cit., Fairburn, p. 44.

3

San Francisco Examiner, February 14, 1919.

Henry Bergh

Henry Bergh was a freighter of the U.S. Maritime Commission's standard type EC-2, built at Henry J. Kaiser's Permanente Metals Corporation Yard No. 1 in Richmond, California, and launched in June 1943. In common with all liberty ships, Henry Bergh had a registered gross tonnage of 7,176 and displaced 14,125 tons on a hull that measured 441.5 feet in length, 56 feet 11 inches in beam and depth of hull of 37 feet 4 inches. Liberty ships were constructed largely of welded steel that had been sub-assembled and brought together at the shipyard in order to take advantage of mass-production methods. Henry Bergh's triple-expansion steam engine (24.5 x 37 x 70" bore x 48" stroke) was manufactured in Sunnyvale, California, by Joshua Hendy Iron Works. Henry Bergh was one of 33 of the 5,000-plus liberty ships built that were fully converted to troopships. Such conversion involved installation of berths for an official capacity of 504 persons, provision of evaporation plant and galleys, heavy-lift equipment, strong rooms and equipment storage areas, and extra lifeboats and liferafts. [1]

Henry Bergh was owned by the War Shipping Administration, operated by the Norton Lilly Company, and chartered to the U.S. Navy for use as a transport. On the final voyage, she was bound to San Francisco from the South Pacific, overloaded with 1,300 sailors returning from the war, as well as a crew of nearly 100. By the pre-dawn hours of May 31, 1944, she had been cruising through thick fog for 36 hours. Unknown to the captain, Joseph C. Chambers, his allowances for current and wind were in error. Bergh had set to the north by nearly 10 miles, and was heading straight for South Farallon Island at 11 knots. A faint whistle heard at 4:55 a.m. was wrongly assumed to be that of a passing ship, and the vessel continued on her way for five minutes, when a faint whistle was heard again, and almost immediately land was spied dead ahead. In spite of prompt evasive action, she ran hard aground on jagged rocks about 200 yards offshore, and the exertions of her engines full astern could not budge her. [2]

Although Henry Bergh's SOS had been received in San Francisco at 5:05 a.m. and help had been immediately dispatched, it was evident that none would arrive for some hours, and that abandoning ship was in order. The weather was fairly calm, and "the abandonment was so orderly it was more like a drill," one veteran remarking later, "after what we went through in the war,...this morning was mild." [3]

Passengers were shuttled ashore 25 at a time in each of the vessel's eight lifeboats, and by the time the first rescue craft had arrived on the scene at 8:00 a.m., 600 men had been landed. By early afternoon, all hands had been safely picked up. A volunteer crew remained on board as a tug attempted without success to haul Henry Bergh off. Her hull had cracked at the No. 4 hatch by the time the last man aboard--the captain--had left. [4] The rescue of every man on board Henry Bergh was a remarkable achievement. Only two men were injured, and 35 required hospitalization for exposure. [5] But for luck and good discipline, the toll might have been much greater.

In the aftermath of the wreck, an investigation was held by the U.S. Coast Guard. Its findings were that Capt. Chambers had failed to properly plot his vessel's course; proceeded at an unsafe speed through the thick fog; failed to use navigational aids available, including taking soundings; and permitted his passengers to be so noisy, as they celebrated their imminent return home, as to interfere with the hearing of his lookouts. He was demoted to the rank of First Mate. [6]

Photographic evidence indicates that Henry Bergh rapidly broke into three sections. The hull forward of the bridge is shown hard ashore on South Farallon the day after the wreck, while the stern and the bridge sections lay partially submerged--the bridge just offshore, and the stern hung up on a reef about 200 yards away. [7] The position of the wreck has been given as 37 degrees 45 minutes north latitude, 123 degrees 0 minutes west longitude. Salvage efforts at this site have not been found in the historical record, so presumably the remains are present at the site.

NOTES

1

L. A. Sawyer and W. H. Mitchell, The Liberty Ships (London and New York: Lloyd's of London Press, 1985) pp. 124, 191.

2

Ships and the Sea Quarterly, Summer 1957, p. 49.

3

San Francisco Chronicle, May 31, 1944.

4

Op. cit., Ships and the Sea Quarterly, p. 51.

5

San Francisco Chronicle, June 1, 1944.

6

Ibid., June 10, 1944.

7

Op. cit., Ships and the Sea Quarterly, p. 24.

Independence

Independence is listed in the California State Library index as having an entry in the Daily Alta California of March 13, 1868, but upon inspection of that issue, no mention of the vessel was found. She does not appear in any vessel registers around 1868, and no further information about the vessel or the supposed wreck event was found during the course of research.

Labouchere

Labouchere was built in 1858. Sources give the place of her construction as either London [1] or "the Clyde." [2] Labouchere was built of "oak and teak...a staunchly constructed vessel," and measured 190 feet in length, 26 feet 1 inch in beam with a depth of hold of 14 feet 9 inches, and displaced 507 tons. [3] Labouchere's 160 horsepower steam engine was thought to be "very superior, being built for the Great Exhibition in London in 1851, at which they took the highest prize." Prize-winning engines notwithstanding, Labouchere was considered to be "of small size and a slow traveller." [4]

Labouchere entered service with the Hudson's Bay Company under Capt. J. Trivett. London was her home port. Before the end of the decade, however, she had come out to California, presumably lured by the expansion of commerce on the Pacific Coast in the wake of the Gold Rush. In late 1865 or early 1866, she commenced running between Victoria, British Columbia, and San Francisco. Her second voyage on that run ended in disaster.

Under the command of W. A. Mouat, Labouchere stood away from the Howard Street Wharf at 6:00 p.m. April 14, 1866, with approximately 100 passengers and a full load of general cargo on board consigned to Falkner, Bell & Co. In calm but foggy weather, she proceeded north at nine knots until Point Reyes was sighted without warning, only seconds ahead, "the abrupt rocky shore towering threatening above them, while the breakers roared around them." The location was stated to be "at almost the exact point at which occurred the disastrous wrecks of the Oregon and Northerner some years since." Labouchere "backed off the reef into deep water, and the engines were put under full steam in order to keep the pumps--four in number--running. Unfortunately, as it turned out, the steamer was not headed back for San Francisco, but continued to run around in the open water outside Point Reyes all night, the damage being, at first supposed, so slight, as to not necessitate the abandonment of the trip." [5] However, early on the morning of the 15th, a new leak was reported and water began to gain rapidly on the pumps. Capt. Mouat now ordered the boats launched and the passengers taken ashore--some eight miles distant. A number of "toughs" on board attempted to rush the boats, but were stopped by a shot from the captain's revolver. Eight boats were launched, but one was upset by the ship's gangway and two men were drowned. Fortunately for the 23 men still on board, the Italian fishing smack Andrew now hove into sight and took all hands off just before Labouchere made her final plunge. Soon all that was left in sight was her deck cabin, recently installed in San Francisco, which floated free as the vessel went down. All the survivors in the boats made shore, and were kindly cared for at the ranch of Mr. Flood and family near Point Reyes until the tug Rescue was dispatched from San Francisco to pick them up.

The lack of a precise location in which Labouchere went down and the deep water in the general vicinity make the likelihood of salvage activity at the site remote.

NOTES

1

Op. cit., Lloyd's Register (1858-59).

2

San Francisco Daily Alta California, April 20, 1866.

3

Op. cit., Lloyd's Register (1858-59).

4

San Francisco Daily Alta California.

5

Ibid.

Louis

Louis was a vessel with an interesting history. Built at North Bend, Oregon, in 1888 by John Kruse, she was laid down as a steamer, rigged as a schooner with five temporary masts, and sailed south to San Francisco for installation of engines. She therefore became the first of her rig to sail on salt water (as well as later becoming the first five-mast schooner to circumnavigate the world). The temporary rig

performed so well, however, that the engines were never put in. Louis displaced 831 net tons, and measured 193 feet 8 inches with a 36-foot beam and 18-foot depth of hold, and had two full decks. She was constructed of cedar, with iron and copper fastenings. [1] It is said that two of her masts were stepped off-center to give her a greater spread of sail while running before the wind. [2]

The Simpson Lumber Company of San Francisco was her owner throughout her career, which was largely spent hauling lumber from the Northwest to the population centers of the Pacific Basin. In November 1902 she left South Bend, Washington, bound for East London, South Africa, which she reached seven months and a day later. From there, she continued east to Newcastle, Australia, and Lahaina, Hawaii, finally arriving at South Bend in October 1903. Her coastal passages took her as far north as the Aleutian Islands and as far south as Redondo, California. Twice she had brushes with disaster. She struck heavily on the bar while being towed out of Willapa, Washington, harbor in 1904, causing her to leak 10 inches per hour throughout her voyage. In 1906, while being towed into San Francisco, she collided with the British ship Clan Galbraith and had her jiggermast carried away, the cabin stove in, and bulwarks, rail, and starboard side badly damaged. Although exact dates are not known, her captains at various times were Haskins, Meyer, A. J. Hatch, and (lastly) Dyer. [3]

Her final voyage was from Gray's Harbor, Washington, when bound for San Francisco with 900,000 board feet of railroad ties. She never arrived. The particulars of the disaster are recorded in the Annual Report of the United States Life-Saving Service for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1907:

Stranded at 2:30 a.m. in dense fog, about 30 miles WSW of stations. Moderately rough sea. Reported by Merchant's Exchange and by Weather Bureau. Both (lifesaving) crews (Fort Point and Point Bonita) were immediately mustered for service, and upon arrival of the tug Sea Queen they were taken in tow for the Farrallon Islands, where the wreck had occurred. The schooner was found fast ashore, full of water, and in danger of going to pieces at any moment. The master refused to leave her, so the lifesavers rigged up a breeches buoy between her and the island. By evening the sea had made up so that the master was persuaded to leave; 5 were taken ashore in the breeches buoy and 5 in the ship's boat. The surfboat crews were then towed back to port. The schooner went to pieces that night. [4]

Records of the Marine Exchange of San Francisco confirm that Louis went to pieces, and offer the further information that the location of the wreck was at "Franconia Beach" on the "West end of Island." [5] The ship Franconia was lost in 1881 at "a sandy beach on the northwest side of the island," meaning, in context, South Farallon Island. [6] The occurrence of any salvage activity at the site is unknown. Considering the floatable nature of the cargo and the fact that she soon went to pieces in heavy weather, it is unlikely that such activity took place after the wreck event. The impact of sport divers on the site is unknown.

NOTES

1

Op. cit., Lloyd's Register (1905-06).

2

Op. cit., Lyman, The Marine Digest, June 14, 1941, p. 2.

3

Op. cit., Marine Exchange Index Cards.

⁴
Op. cit., United States Life-Saving Service (1907) p. 166.

⁵
Op. cit., San Francisco Marine Exchange Index Cards.

⁶
Daily Alta California: June 27, 1881.

Lucas

Lucas was built in 1828 at Castine, in the Penobscot Bay region of Maine. Castine was a busy shipbuilding port from 1810 to 1857. Lucas was constructed of white oak and hackmatack, had dimensions of 102 feet long, 25 feet in beam, 12-foot depth of hold and was rigged as a full-rigged ship. [1]

At the time of her loss, Lucas was owned by her captain, a man named Dagget, and Leonidas Haskell, an early San Francisco merchant and squatter at Black Point, now Fort Mason. The ship had left Victoria, British Columbia, with 180 passengers on board, most disappointed gold-seekers from the rush at the Frasier River. Running south for several days in the fog without aid of accurate sightings, she struck a rock in the dead of night, and broached to as the ocean swells hit her. An attempt to free her by kedging the anchor failed, and people commenced to abandon ship by boat, by swimming, and by ropes brought a "few hundred yards" to shore by swimmers, as the "crew worked nobly to save the passengers."

Within an hour of running on the rocks, only the topsail yards of Lucas were visible, and daylight revealed that the ship had run upon "Seal Rock" to the "southward and eastward of the main Farallon Island, distant about 300 yards." The keepers of the recently established Farrallon Island Lighthouse cared for the survivors to the best of their ability until the U.S. Survey Steamer Active picked them up. Between 15 and 30 people lost their lives. The Alta California reported, "as near as we can learn, this is the first vessel lost on these islands." [2]

The next day, the Alta California's reporter described the scene of the wreck:

Salvage activity at this site is not known, and it is presumed that sport diver activity at the site has been limited, because of the prevalence of sharks in the area. [3]

NOTES

¹
Op. cit., Fairburn, Vol. V, p. 3459.

²
San Francisco Daily Alta California, November 12, 1858.

³
Ibid., November 13, 1868.

Melvina

Little is known about the sloop Melvina beyond what appeared in the Alta California of February 1, 1868:

The sloop Melvina from Bolinas, with a load of wood, sprung a leak, filled with water and capsized on January 29th and drifted off the

Farallones. The crew were rescued by the schooner Horace, bound in from Tomales, and brought into port after being on the vessel's bottom 24 hours.

In the 1850s and 1860s, before roads of any sort connected west Marin County with San Francisco Bay, Bolinas gained prominence as a port where lumber and cord wood, cut on the northern slopes of Mt. Tamalpais, was lightered out to small locally built sailing vessels for the brief voyage into the Golden Gate. Although short, such a voyage was obviously not without risk. The story of the Malvina is an episode in this significant early trade.

Morning Light

Morning Light was a schooner lost on the Farallon Islands in 1868. Although two schooners named Morning Light are listed in American Lloyd's for 1868, both were East Coast vessels built in 1855 and 1856, and surveyed in New York as late as 1862. It is possible, but unlikely, that one of those vessels came around Cape Horn to the West Coast. Probably Morning Light was a small schooner, locally built for the early lumber trade and was lost before her name appeared on any of the published vessel registers. The particulars of her loss, scarce as they are, and the size of her cargo seem to support this conjecture.

Morning Light, under Capt. Stevens, was bound south from the Russian River with 50,000 feet of lumber destined for the firm of H. B. Tichnor & Company when she sprung a leak and was abandoned near the Farallon Islands. The weather was foul, and the newspapers reported that it was the "roughest storm in many years" as the crew took to a boat. The boat was able to make South Farallon Island, where the crew was rescued by the lighthouse crew. The water-logged schooner was driven by southeast winds until she went ashore on North Farallon Island, where she was presumed to be a total wreck. [1]

It may be assumed that a vessel adrift in such conditions would have come ashore on the south or southeast side of the island. In all likelihood it was quickly smashed to pieces. Perhaps some of the larger iron fittings remain near the shore, but no references have been found.

NOTE

1

San Francisco Daily Alta California, January 20, 1868.

Noonday

Noonday was a fine medium clipper ship built in New England for the California trade. Howe and Matthew's American Clipper Ships contains such an excellent narration on this vessel that it is worth including at length:

Medium clipper ship, built in 1855, by Fernald & Pettigrew, at Portsmouth, N. H., for Henry Hastings of Boston. She had fuller lines and was somewhat larger than the Midnight, a product of the same builders in 1854, for the same owner. The Noonday was 200 feet in length, with a beam of 38 feet-6 inches, depth of hold of 23 feet-6 inches; 1,189 tons old measurement; deadweight carrying capacity, 1,500 short tons; capacity for weight and measurement

general cargo for California, about 2,100 tons. She was a fine-looking ship and carried only one skysail, the main.

On her maiden voyage, under command of Capt. William Blackler Gerry, whose last ship, the Cahota, had been sold at Calcutta in 1854, the Noonday sailed from Boston, October 17, 1855, and arrived at San Francisco March 4, 1856, in a passage of 139 days. The Noonday completed three other passages from eastern ports to San Francisco, being lost on the fourth when about to take her pilot near the Farallon Islands. Capt. Brock, who had her on her second passage, reported on arrival out, May 13, 1857, that this run was 117 days from Boston. Her next arrival out was on February 10, 1860, Capt. Henry, formerly in Romance of the Seas in command; passage, 126 days from Boston. In 1861, reaching San Francisco, August 26th, Capt. Henry reported being 146 days from New York....

Her first two voyages were completed by her return east from San Francisco, via Calcutta. On the second, she was forced to put into Batavia, August 1857, for repairs, having struck a rock near the Banda Islands. It was found that 50 feet of her keel had been knocked off and a hole stove in her bottom. In 1860 she took guano from Callao to Hampton Roads, in 85 days.... In 1861 the Noonday loaded wheat and other California products for London and made the passage from San Francisco in 117 days.

On Jan. 1, 1863, the Noonday was approaching the entrance to San Francisco harbor, 139 days out of Boston, weather clear, sea smooth but with a long swell on, the ship under all sail to main skysail and topgallant studdingsails and making 9 to 10 knots. When about eight miles west of the North Farallon, she struck a rock but glided clear. The shock was not sufficient to carry away any of the spars or rigging. However, her bottom had been stove and she immediately started to fill. Capt. Henry and his crew had only time to save a portion of their effects and take to the boats before the ship sunk in 40 fathoms. The pilot boat Relief, some two miles distant, picked up all hands. It appears that the rock that caused the disaster was covered by 18 feet of water; its existence was known to pilots but it had not been charted; it subsequently received the name of Noonday Rock.

The Noonday had 2012 weight and measurement tons of general cargo, which with the vessel, was estimated worth about \$450,000. It is noted that the Midnight met her fate in the Banda Sea, not far from where the Noonday narrowly escaped being wrecked in 1857, some 20 years later. [1]

In spite of the depth, there were apparently some attempts made to salvage her cargo, in some reports valued as high at \$600,000. The steamer Active sailed from San Francisco on January 3, 1863, with the intent of grappling for the hulk and attaching hawsers. The results of that attempt are unknown. [2] In more recent times, Noonday's bell was recovered, quite by accident, when a trawler Junto dragged her net across the site of the wreck while fishing near the Farallons. [3]

The wreck of Noonday had a more beneficial sequel, however, than simply the application of a new name to the rocks formerly known as Fanny Shoal, according to the Marysville Daily Appeal:

The United States schooner William L. Marcy arrived in port last evening, having been absent since the 26th inst. in search of the mysterious Fanny Shoal, which was found and located by the officers who had the Marcy in charge...the Department at Washington will be immediately telegraphed to in regard to the survey of the shoal, after

which will be published an account of the survey, when the correct bearings, distance, soundings and all other particulars will be given that will be of service in preventing another Noonday disaster and the loss of any more \$400,000 cargoes! [4]

NOTES

1

Op. cit., Howe and Matthews, Vol. 2, pp. 441-443.

2

Marysville Daily Appeal, January 4, 1863.

3

Unknown San Francisco newspaper, April 20/??.

4

Marysville Daily Appeal, February 1, 1863.

Puerto Rican

Puerto Rican was built in 1971 at Sparrows Point, Maryland. She was a chemical-product tank vessel of 34,684 deadweight, 20,295 gross, 15,922 net tons, measuring 632.3 feet long, 90.1 feet in beam, with a 45.8-foot depth of hold. She was powered by a steam engine delivering 13,600 horsepower using oil for fuel. [1] Originally owned in trust by the Banker's Trust Company of New York, she was operated at the time of loss by the Keystone Shipping Company of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Under master James C. Spillane, Puerto Rican arrived in San Francisco Bay on October 25, 1984, and called at Richmond and Alameda. She loaded a cargo of 91,984 barrels of lubrication oil and additives, took on 8,500 barrels of bunker fuel, and departed for sea shortly after midnight on October 31, bound for New Orleans. At 3:24 a.m., as she was disembarking the pilot outside the San Francisco Bay Entrance Channel, an explosion occurred near the No. 6 center-independent tank, which blew flames several hundred feet into the air, knocked the pilot and two crew members into the water, and folded back an immense section of the deck measuring nearly 100 feet square. The pilot boat San Francisco rescued pilot James S. Nolan and third mate Philip R. Lempiere, but able seaman John Peng was lost.

Response by the Coast Guard was immediate, and the burning tanker was towed to sea in order to minimize the chance of a disastrous oil spill on the sensitive areas of San Francisco Bay, the adjacent ocean shoreline, and the Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary. By the following afternoon, the fires had been extinguished, but on November 3, Puerto Rican, her hull weakened by explosion and fire, broke in two sections, releasing 30,000 barrels of oil into the water. The stern section, containing 8,500 barrels of fuel oil, sank at 37 degrees, 30.6 minutes north latitude and 123 degrees, 00.7 minutes west longitude, one mile inside the boundaries of the sanctuary. The remains at a depth of 1,476 feet have been thoroughly surveyed by side-scan sonar. Oil still leaks slowly from the vessel.

From November 6 through 15, an intensive cleanup program worked to minimize the effects of Puerto Rican's cargo on the environment of the area. More than 1,000 sea birds died from the oil, but the disaster could have been greater if not for the cooperative efforts of various government agencies, corporate bodies, volunteer groups, and private individuals.

On November 18, the forward section of Puerto Rican was towed to drydock at Triple-A Shipyard in San Francisco, where the cargo was removed and the vessel was made seaworthy. On April 6, 1985, the remains of Puerto Rican were towed to Taiwan where she was scrapped. [2]

NOTES

1

Op. cit., Merchant Vessels of the United States (1980).

2

USCG, Marine Safety Office; "On Scene Coordinator's Report, Tank Vessel Puerto Rican Explosion and Oil Pollution Incident, San Francisco, California, 31 October 1984".

Sierra

Sierra was built in 1916, at Illoquiam, Washington, by the Matthews Shipbuilding Company. She was a wooden-hulled double-ended vessel of the Pacific Coast type commonly known as steam schooners. In her case the term is somewhat misleading, for Sierra was fitted out with two Bolinder diesel engines and twin screws instead of traditional steam power. [1]

She was owned by the E. K. Wood Lumber Company of San Francisco, the firm that first owned C. A. Thayer. Like Thayer, Sierra was intended for the coastal lumber trade, but the great range of her diesel engines allowed the ship to carry lumber as far south as Valparaiso, Chile, where it was exchanged for nitrate cargoes.

In the foggy early morning hours of February 7, 1923, Sierra collided with the Matson Navigation Company's passenger liner Wilhemina near the San Francisco lightship. Her lumber cargo kept her afloat, however, and a 45-degree list righted itself as the hold filled with water. Sierra was towed slowly into San Francisco by the tug Fearless, where her \$150,000 worth of damage was repaired. Sierra had a long career that ended when she deteriorated on the tidal flats of Lake Union, Washington. [2]

Reports that she was wrecked at the Farallones are incorrect, and no material remains of this vessel should be anticipated within the area of this study.

NOTES

1

Op. cit., Lyman, The Marine Digest, July 3, 1943, p. 2.

2

Bughes, "Sierra," in The American Neptune, October, 1965, p. 288.

YF #734 and YF #735

YF #734 and YF #735 were U.S. Army barges that are mentioned in Marshall as having "foundered in heavy weather off the Farallons" on March 22, 1945. No additional data on this incident has been found.

NOTE

1

Op. cit., Marshall, p. 92.

MANAGEMENT ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

James P. Delgado

Beach Activity

The remains of five shipwrecked vessels are known to be exposed periodically by seasonal winter beach erosion in the project area. Neptune, King Philip, and Reporter's remains are sometimes exposed on Ocean Beach in San Francisco, and the remains of SS Pomo are occasionally visible on Limantour Spit in Drakes Bay. Artifacts from the wreck of SS Tennessee are sometimes found on the beach at Tennessee Cove. Scavenging and collection of artifacts from the Ocean beach wrecks are not known to have occurred, although an unknown person did saw the end from an exposed frame in the bow of King Philip in 1983; this is the only recorded act of vandalism at the site.

A more serious problem exists with the remains of SS Pomo. The exposed remnant of a portion of the vessel's hull which lies at the base of the cliffs immediately south of Drakes Beach has been burned--apparently as a beach campfire--on more than one occasion. The fires have caused the destruction of the knees, some of the ceiling planking, and charred frames. Other hull remains that lie on the beach at Limantour Spit have escaped burning, probably because they are only occasionally exposed by erosion. [1]

The remains of SS Tennessee have apparently been collected from the beach at Tennessee Cove for years; unverified oral tradition insists that brass artifacts, including a builder's name-plate, have been pulled from the surf and sand in years past. Artifacts exposed on the beach have been noted and recovered by National Park Service staff whenever possible; it is likely that the discovery of artifacts by park visitors occurs more frequently and is unreported. In summer 1986 a park visitor recovered a fragmentary iron double-bar chainplate and deadeye, apparently from SS Tennessee, from the rocks of Tennessee Cove. The artifact was presented to park rangers and is now in the park collections at the National Maritime Museum. Other maritime artifacts that have either washed ashore or become exposed on the beaches in Golden Gate National Recreation Area have been scavenged by park visitors; the sternson of an unidentified mid-nineteenth century vessel exposed on the beach at Rodeo Lagoon in 1981 was in the process of being stripped of its yellow metal fastenings by visitors when park maintenance workers recovered the piece, which is now in the park collections at the National Maritime Museum. [2] At Point Reyes National Seashore, park visitors occasionally recover exposed porcelain fragments from the 1595 wreck of San Agustin. Some of these pieces have been turned over to the park staff and are now in Point Reyes' museum collection; others may be in private hands. Visitors have recovered additional maritime artifacts from Point Reyes shipwrecks in past years; in the early 1960s, the donation to the Marin County Historical Society of a deadeye still attached to a strap-iron chainplate fragment of late nineteenth or early twentieth century vintage inspired uninformed speculation that it was left behind by Francis Drake in 1579. [3]

Several hundred artifacts, including spikes, "a striker pin from a pistol, a sailmaker's awl, rectangles of amber, china shards, glass fragments and trade beads" have been recovered from the shallows of Duxbury Reef at Agate Beach over the past few

years by San Rafael resident George Epperson. Epperson believes that the artifacts he has salvaged, and which are now in his possession, are evidence that Francis Drake landed at the site in 1579, when Drake was known to have made a California landfall. Others, notably former California Historical Society Trustee and President Robert H. Power, believe the discovery of artifacts "suggests that an Elizabethan expedition [other than Drake's] reached the Bolinas area." Another possible explanation is that the materials come from a more recent shipwreck on Duxbury Reef, perhaps Samuel S. Lewis (1853) or Polaris (1912). [4]

Sport-Diving Activity

The extreme environmental conditions of the Gulf of the Farallones, the North Pacific Coast, and San Francisco Bay, as well as the area's reputation as a breeding and foraging area for the white shark, generally limit sport diving activity in the project area. Nonetheless, some sport diving has taken place that has included the collection of artifacts from shipwrecks. Sport divers have allegedly collected artifacts from the wrecks of Drumburton and James Rolph at Point San Pedro. The Pacifica Sea Lions diving club salvaged an anchor from the wreck of James Rolph that was donated to the City of Pacifica in 1962 and now stands in front of City Hall in Pacifica. [5] Two wreck diving brothers visited a number of shipwrecks in the project area, apparently locating and salvaging brass, copper, and other artifacts from Samuel S. Lewis on Duxbury Reef. They also dove the wreck of City of New York off Point Bonita and recovered artifacts, two of which, a sheave and a deadeye, were donated to the San Francisco Maritime Museum.

Salvage

SS Ohioan

The wreck of the American-Hawaiian freighter SS Ohioan in 1936 was followed by more than a year of intense salvage effort. Nevertheless, when the vessel finally broke up in the surf a number of fittings remained in the wreck, the most valuable being a 10-ton manganese bronze propeller in cargo hold No. 4. In September 1973, the San Francisco Examiner reported that

Lt. Jim McDermott and Bill Norton of the [San Francisco] fire department will be doing a lot of scuba diving below Sutro Baths, not for fun, but profit...

The goal of the two men was the propeller from Ohioan's No. 4 hold: "Look down...at Land's End and you can still see the Ohioan's boilers sticking out of the water." According to the story, McDermott held title to the ship, a relative of his having purchased the wreck with the hope of raising the propeller. "But nothing came of it. That's the ambitious project of the two fire department scuba divers 37 years later" [6] The propeller was not salvaged, but the story attracted other divers to the wreck, and, whenever conditions have been safe, local divers have visited the wreck.

On March 7, 1982, United States Park Police and Golden Gate National Recreation Area rangers from the park's Ocean District halted a partial salvage of Ohioan's remains. The salvage vessel Cosmos, owned and operated by George K. Purvis of San Francisco was anchored over the engine room of the wreck when observed by park rangers. Because a permit had not been issued by the California State Lands Commission for the salvage of the wreck (which lay inside park boundaries but which was under State jurisdiction), the rangers and Park Police stopped the salvage and escorted Cosmos to Pier I, Fort Mason, where 28 salvaged pieces of wreckage

were unloaded and taken into custody by the National Park Service. [7] The recovered artifacts included copper steam pipe with brass flanges, bronze shaft bearings, and brass valves.

Subsequent to the seizure of the Ohioan artifacts, the California State Lands Commission authorized the National Park Service to "hold such items pending a more formal arrangement between the Commission and your agency and the Commission's issuance of a salvage permit to the salvor pursuant to its regulations." [8] In May 1982 the State Lands Commission issued a permit to the salvor retroactively authorizing the salvor to remove the recovered artifacts. Under the provisions of the permit, 25 percent of the artifacts was retained by the State. The State Lands Commission authorized the National Park Service, through the Service's National Maritime Museum, to select "historically significant" artifacts for the museum's collections. Those artifacts which the museum selected would then constitute the State's percentage. Eight artifacts were placed in the museum's collection.

The salvage of artifacts from the historically significant remains of SS Ohioan, and the State's subsequent decision to sanction the salvage of a submerged cultural resource on tidelands and submerged lands (within the park's boundaries but as yet not transferred to the National Park Service) spurred park officials to seek review of State actions and, ultimately, review of the management of the park's shipwreck resources. A public agency general permit from the State Land Commission for the purpose of managing the submerged tidelands within Golden Gate National Recreation Area was drafted and signed in 1987.

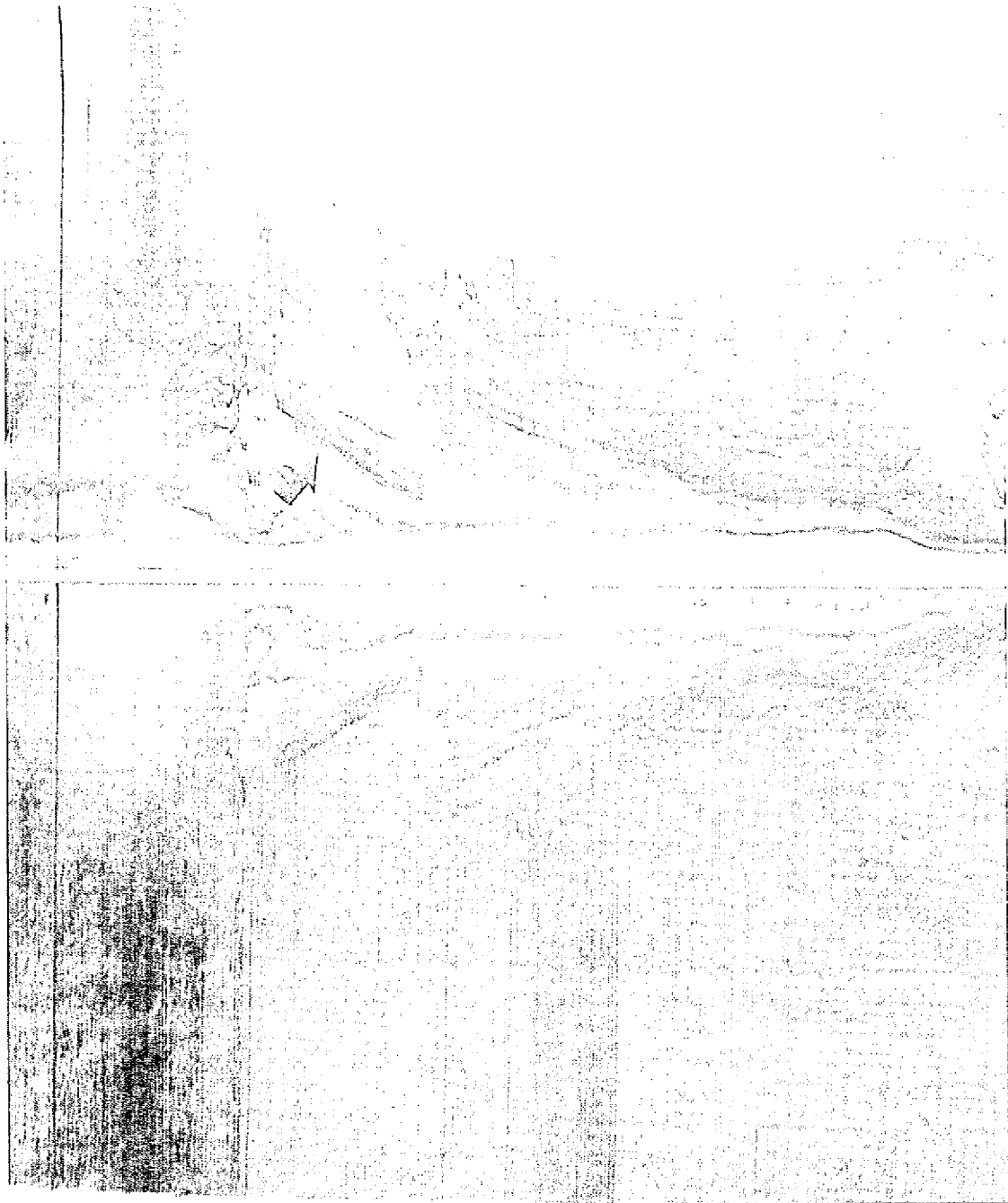
SS City of Rio de Janeiro

The first attempt to locate and salvage the wreck of SS City of Rio de Janeiro began soon after the ship sank. In 1901 the "Rio Wrecking Company" was formed and later incorporated to locate and salvage the wreck. According to the company's prospectus, on March 14, 1901, "Capt. John Ross, assisted by Capt. J. J. Sullivan, in company with sub-marine divers Thomas Olsen and John McLaughlin, began the search in the harbor of San Francisco for the location of the lost steamer." [9] The goal was the cargo, which the company listed as \$1,200,000 of "silk, opium, cocoanut oil, tin, silver in bars..." The prospectus also noted "rumors of treasure".

Of the various rumors regarding the treasure, it is fair to assume the steamer carried for her own special use \$20,000 in gold. Reliable information states the Collector of Customs at Honolulu shipped \$35,000 in gold coin. Newhall & Co. insured treasure to the amount of \$35,000. It was rumored from a reliable source on the day of the sinking of Rio that treasure amounting to \$250,000, consigned to the banks of this city, was lost. [10]

"We feel perfectly safe," the prospectus said, "in stating...that we think we have located the wreck of the steamship Rio in 21 to 23 fathoms of water, where the sea is rough and choppy, the currents strong, and where diving will be difficult." [11]

The Rio Wrecking Company failed to back up its claim. Since then, numerous searches and occasional "discoveries" of the wreck have been announced. In 1913, diver Herman Stelzner, "inventor of a new diving device, went down 128 feet...in the vicinity of Mile Rock, and saw the shadow of a hull which he believes to be the remains of the...Rio de Janeiro....The Rio's cargo included a large shipment of raw silk, the value of which is doubtful, after 12 years submersion. There was also a shipment of tin, which might be worth recovering....The only money known to be on board is locked up in the purser's safe." [12]



Side-scan image of the intact hull of City of Rio de Janeiro, located in over 300 feet of water in the Golden Gate channel in 1986. Courtesy of Seagamb, Inc. and the California State Lands Commission.

In May 1924 the government dredge Culebra, deepening the San Francisco channel five miles west of the Golden Gate, struck an obstruction thought to be "an old hull...the wreck of the Pacific Mail Steamship Rio de Janeiro, which sank...with a loss of 131 lives and \$1,500,000 in treasure..." [13] The wreck was again "located" in 1937 by Santa Barbara diver Bill Wood, who claimed he found the ship lying upside down in the shallows between Mile Rock and Land's End with holes in her hull "big enough to pass a rail car through." Wood supposedly pulled a brass plaque from a lifeboat that read "Rio de Janeiro--Capacity 20 Persons." Wood stated he made no attempt to salvage the wreck because "she contained nothing of value...." But newspaper reports of Wood's discovery stated, "There have been persistent reports over the years...that the vessel carried \$5,000,000 in gold into the murky depths of the Golden Gate." [14] The same year former Postal Inspector William Madeira claimed to have deposited \$75,000 in gold coin on board the vessel. While doing so, he said, he noted stacks of Chinese silver bars worth nearly \$2,000,000 lying in the steamer's vault. Madeira's claim spurred other efforts to locate the wreck of City of Rio de Janeiro.

In May 1946 a highly publicized hunt for the wreck one and a half miles southwest of Mile Rock led to a mound of sand that covered a wooden hulk in the vicinity of Seal Rocks. The divers attempted to excavate the sand mound but finally abandoned their efforts to locate the wreck and her treasure of "five million dollars in gold bullion." [15] In 1955, a group led by William A. Pomeroy claimed to have found the City of Rio de Janeiro inside the Golden Gate, lying on her side in 100 feet of water off Angel Island. Pomeroy's divers were reportedly making daily dives on the wreck, searching for precious cargo. "She carried with her to her grave at least \$2,000,000 in gold bars and bullion, silver, and gems." [16] Nothing came of Pomeroy's quest.

In the 1950s, Oakland diver Al Mikalow began to claim that he had found the wreck off Angel Island. Mikalow to this day [1987] periodically announces his intent to salvage the wreck. In May 1985, he again stated his plans to excavate the bay bottom to reach the ship, noting "I've been chasing the Rio since 1950...I know what's in there. It's taken this long to build the proper equipment and raise enough money....[I will have to go] through about 60 feet of water and 60 feet of sand...." [17]

In October 1985, the California State Lands Commission received a permit application from Seagamb, Inc., a group of individuals not associated with Mikalow. Seagamb claims to have located the substantially intact wreck of City of Rio de Janeiro in the Golden Gate channel in the vicinity of Point Diablo, and have provided side-scan sonar images to support their claim, along with tracking data drawn from historical accounts and tide and current charts. [18] The State Lands Commission deemed the application complete on November 27, 1985, but as yet has not granted a permit for the salvage of the wreck.

San Agustin

The most recent salvage attempt of a historic shipwreck within the study area concerns the remains of the earliest known wreck, San Agustin. Lost in 1595 during Sebastian Cermeno's exploratory expedition, San Agustin has been the center of numerous unauthorized secret searches by private individuals. The 1982 National Park Service/National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration submerged cultural-resource survey of portions of Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary and Point Reyes National Seashore may have located the remains of the vessel, but test excavation of a number of promising anomalies is required.

Considerable media attention devoted to the NPS/NOAA survey focused public interest on the wreck of San Agustin and ultimately attracted Florida salvage-hunter Robert F. Marx to Drakes Bay.

To finance excavation, Marx has contacted potential investors under the aegis of Phoenician South Seas Treasures, Ltd. The investors would be compensated with "non-unique duplicate" artifacts. Marx was provided with copies of federal legislation and regulations governing external archeological work in National Park Service areas, notably the Archeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA). Marx, after reviewing the ARPA materials, filed a suit in United States District Court to arrest the wreck of San Agustin under the provisions of Admiralty law, a common legal device used by salvors seeking absolute control of shipwrecks. [19]

Marx's admiralty case ultimately was dismissed. Meanwhile, claiming that the wreck may actually lie more than one-quarter mile offshore and hence not within NPS-controlled submerged lands within Point Reyes National Seashore, Marx filed a successful application with the California State Lands Commission for a lease of submerged lands immediately outside the park. Marx's permit would allow him a one-year lease on a 20-acre parcel for survey purposes. If San Agustin is found, Marx would then apply for another permit to allow him to excavate the shipwreck. Under the provisions of State law, Marx would not have to comply with the archeological standards recognized by federal law and would keep 75 percent of all recovered artifacts or be compensated for their value by the State. [20]

At the time of writing, Marx's permit application has been approved by California State Lands Commission staff, despite a variety of technical deficiencies and archeological ethics issues raised by NPS, NOAA, and the California Office of Historic Preservation. A permit is required from NOAA for Marx to conduct his search because the permit area, while not within NPS jurisdiction, does lie inside the boundaries of the national marine sanctuary. Marx's NOAA permit application is currently under review. A decision on this permit request is still pending at press time.

Samuel S. Lewis

Minor salvage of the remains of SS Samuel S. Lewis, wrecked off Duxbury Reef, is known to have occurred within recent years. The wreck was apparently located by two wreck-diving brothers, who removed a number of large brass valves and other artifacts for scrap. They showed their finds to shipwreck historian/diver David Buller of Pinole, California, who managed to purchase many of the artifacts for their scrap value and save them. Buller retains the artifacts in his private collection.

The threat of salvage of Samuel S. Lewis was exacerbated with the publication of an article by John Grissim in the April 26, 1984, edition of the Point Reyes Light. Grissim informed his readers that Lewis's purser's safe, containing "19th century U.S. gold coins worth at least half a million dollars lie in less than 30 feet of water..." Grissim told the story of the wreck, and concluded with an estimate of where the ship lies, and an invitation to his readers to find the wreck. In response to Grissim's article, then Sanctuary Manager Peter J. Gogan, in a letter to the editor published in the Point Reyes Light June 7, 1984 edition, noted that research had shown the safe had been salvaged from the ship after the wreck and that the site lay within the sanctuary, making such salvage illegal: "Sanctuary regulations prohibit the removal or damage of any historical or cultural resource." Rumors of unauthorized searches for the wreck of Samuel S. Lewis occasionally circulate but have not been verified.

NOTES

- 1 James P. Delgado, "Erosion Exposed Shipwreck Remains, Winter 1982," in Larry Murphy, ed. Submerged Cultural Resources Survey, Portions of Point Reyes National Seashore and Point Reyes-Farallon Islands National Marine Sanctuary, Phase 1 Reconnaissance, Sessions 1 and 2, 1982. (Santa Fe, New Mexico: National Park Service, 1984) pp. 179-185, passim.
- 2 Ibid., p. 179.
- 3 [San Rafael, California] Independent Journal, April -, 1966.
- 4 Robert H. Power, "Maritime Artifacts in Marin: A Historic Whodunit," California Historical Society Courier, February 1984, p. 9.
- 5 Richard Tooker, National Maritime Museum, San Francisco, personal communication, September 1986.
- 6 San Francisco Examiner, September 27, 1973.
- 7 National Park Service Case Incident Record, Case 002358, March 7, 1982. United States Park Police, San Francisco Field Office files.
- 8 Leslie H. Grimes, California State Lands Commission, to United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, April 5, 1982.
- 9 Anonymous, Rio Wrecking Company (San Francisco: Marshall Printing Company, 1901).
- 10 Ibid., p. 3.
- 11 Ibid., p. 7.
- 12 San Francisco Call, October 18, 1913.
- 13 San Francisco Chronicle, May 19, May 20, 1924.
- 14 San Francisco News, February 21, 1938.
- 15 San Francisco News, May 18, 1946.
- 16 Fred Storm, "Seeking the Golden Gate's Sunken Treasure," San Francisco Examiner, April 3, 1955.
- 17 San Francisco Chronicle, July 27, 1985.
- 18 Seagamb, Inc., Salvage and Research Design for the S.S. City of Rio de Janeiro. (Lafayette, California: Seagamb, Inc., 1985)
- 19 San Francisco Chronicle, February 11, 1986, April 11, 1986, October 29, 1986; [Bolinas, California] Coastal Post, November 10, 1986; Sacramento Bee, December 1, 1986.
- 20 Proposed Salvage Permit and Salvage Proposal, W 23816, Files of the California State Lands Commission, Sacramento.

Management Recommendations

1. Continue Detailed Historical Research

This report consists of summary statements of vessel characteristics, historical contexts, and circumstances of loss. Exhaustive historical research into all wrecks in the study area should be continued to provide in-depth analysis of the significance of these resources. Constant searches for graphic materials, such as ship plans, paintings, and photographs, as well as artifacts associated with these vessels, should be undertaken. The existing information files for shipwrecks in the study area should be maintained and expanded as research continues.

2. Archeological Survey

Physical archeological surveys of the submerged areas of the Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary, Golden Gate National Recreation Area, and Point Reyes National Seashore should be accomplished. Survey efforts should include remote sensing with magnetometers, side-scan sonar, and the use of remote-operation vehicles (ROV) in deep areas such as the waters surrounding the Farallon Islands and the Golden Gate channel. In other areas, ground-truthing by divers should be undertaken. Basic-level mapping of exposed shipwreck remains--as was done in the survey of portions of the sanctuary and Point Reyes National Seashore in 1982--should be accomplished for each wreck encountered. Sites located and identified should be listed in the California Archaeological Sites Inventory; NPS-administered sites should also be listed in the computerized Cultural Sites Inventory (CSI) and the shipwreck inventory of the National Maritime Initiative. As much information as possible should be gathered to nominate shipwrecks--as individual properties, districts, or thematic groups--to the National Register of Historic Places.

The following list is a priority order for survey efforts based on potential threat, accessibility, and potentially significant wrecks:

1. Duxbury Reef
2. Ocean Beach
3. Lands End
4. Farallon Islands
5. Fort Baker/Fort Barry
6. Fort Point
7. North Marin Coast
8. Bodega Bay/Tomales Bay
9. Ten-Mile Beach

3. Site Specific Surveys

Detailed site mapping and assessment activities should be commenced (and in some cases continued) for the following shipwrecks:

1. SS Tennessee
2. SS Samuel S. Lewis
3. SS City of Rio de Janeiro
4. SS Ohioan
5. SS Frank Buck/Lyman Stewart
6. King Philip
7. Pomo

8. Shasta
9. Richfield
10. Hartwood

National Register nominations should be prepared as soon as possible for Samuel S. Lewis and City of Rio de Janeiro. Documentation of Pomo should begin as soon as possible to architecturally document the scattered remains of the vessel on the beach, accurately plot the locations of the wreckage, assess geomorphological processes, and hypothesize a natural site-formation process for the shipwreck.

4. Test Excavation

The anomalies recorded during the 1982 submerged cultural-resource survey of Drakes Bay should be selectively test-excavated to determine the nature of the subsurface remains of shipwrecks and to attempt to identify and locate remains of the 1595 Spanish Manila Galleon San Agustin.

5. Collections Management

The National Maritime Museum, San Francisco, is in critical need of a permanent full-time conservator and a conservation facility, in order to adequately treat and maintain artifacts from marine environments that are currently in the museum/park collections, and to provide a support base for the recovery of endangered or test-excavated shipwreck materials from park or sanctuary waters.

6. Exhibits

Additional exhibits on shipwrecks and submerged cultural resource management in the parks and sanctuary will enhance public understanding, appreciation and support. Specifically recommended are:

- a. A permanent exhibit on shipwrecks and maritime archeology at the National Maritime Museum, San Francisco.
- b. Reinstallation of the SS Tennessee exhibit at the Marin Headlands Visitor Center, Golden Gate National Recreation Area.

7. Increased Public Interpretation

Other interpretive devices should work hand-in-hand with exhibits in museums and visitor centers to foster public interest and support of submerged cultural-resource significance and management. Specifically recommended are the following:

- a. Additional wayside exhibits for shipwrecks at the following locations (or wrecks): King Philip/Reporter; Mussel Rock; Point Bonita; Slide Ranch (Elizabeth); Ten-Mile Beach; Point Reyes Light; Limantour Spit.
- b. Continuation and expansion of existing ranger and VIP-led interpretive talks and walks.
- c. Preparation of video documentaries with local groups/media to document the historically unique or significant shipwreck events and also document submerged cultural-resource-management projects, such as survey and identification of shipwreck resources.

- d. Publications to assist in the interpretive effort. Trail guides for exposed shipwreck remains in the Golden Gate National Recreation Area's Lands End area should be prepared. A popular-style, well-illustrated book, Shipwrecks of the Golden Gate, which discusses history and archeology, should be written and sold. Reprints of first-hand shipwreck narratives of survivors and picture postcards of historic wreck views should be published and sold.
- e. Wherever possible and safe, shipwreck locations should be buoyed and wreck trails laid out to encourage sport diver use and appreciation of these resources.

8. Maritime Archeology VIP Program

An active public participation in shipwreck research, archeology, and interpretation should be commenced in each park and at the sanctuary, perhaps operated by the National Maritime Museum through the Volunteer-in-Park (VIP) Program. The public is extremely interested in management of underwater sites, and should be encouraged to participate. The public is extremely knowledgeable, helpful, cost-effective, and supportive. Sport diver and other public participation in shipwreck management activities at Isle Royale National Park and other areas has proved beneficial, not only to the work at hand but also to the long-term preservation of the shipwrecks.

9. Park Dive Team Establishment and Training

Each park should have in-house dive teams with submerged cultural resource management components prepared to work on specific projects year-round and to form a working group when external assistance through academic organizations, the United States Navy, or the National Park Service Submerged Cultural Resource Unit becomes available. The possibility of a combined dive team jointly funded and staffed by the two parks and the marine sanctuary could also be considered. Adequate dive training for depth, current, and limited visibility work is needed, as well as training in submerged cultural-resource research and knowledge of naval architecture/maritime culture. Maritime/naval training can be conducted through internships in cooperation with the National Maritime Museum, San Francisco, which could offer the same opportunity service-wide and to National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration staff as well as to staff of other local, state, and federal agencies involved in submerged cultural-resource management.

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