

MARINE DISASTER—TOTAL LOSS OF THE BARK GENERAL COBB.

All Hands Saved—The Crew Rescued
Indians.

News reached here on Sunday morning of the wreck and total loss of the American bark Gen. Cobb, 648 tons, Capt. J. L. Oliver, on the west coast of this island. The vessel was bound for Seabeck, W. T., and sailed from San Francisco on the 2nd ult. in ballast. She experienced very heavy weather from the southeast all the way up to Cape Flattery, off which point she arrived on the 14th. The wind then veered round to the S. S. W. and the weather set in thick, foggy and raining. On the evening of the same day at about 8 o'clock the look out reported breakers on the lee bow. Capt. Oliver at once attempted to wear the ship, but owing to the intense thickness of the weather he was unable to do so and shortly afterwards breakers were again discerned on the lee bow. In a few minutes the vessel ran on a shelving rock, a reef being dead ahead and an upright rock on either side. Finding that she was bilged and filled, Capt. Oliver let go both anchors to prevent her from sliding off into deep water. A scantling was then run out on to the rock and one of the crew slid down it and attempted to make a landing with a line. His effort, however, was futile, as the heavy sea washed him off the rock and it was with great difficulty that he was saved. Finding that no landing could be made that night the captain and crew awaited daylight with great anxiety for their safety, as the sea was breaking heavily, rendering it utterly out of the question to launch a boat. At break of day a spar was again rigged out and after much risk and hazard all hands reached the rock in safety. Here they remained for two days and one night. Fortunately the disaster was witnessed by three Indians who conveyed the news to Clayquot, and on the evening of the 16th a large canoe hove in sight, much to the delight of the isolated crew, who by this time had suffered severely and were prepared for the worst, knowing that at any moment the sea might break over the rock on which they were imprisoned. The canoe, which contained 14 Indians, after effecting a very difficult landing, took the men ashore and conducted them to their houses situated on the beach close by. Here the estray crew remained for two days, after which they were taken by the Indians in canoes to Clayquot, where they received every hospitality at Capt. Warren's trading post, in charge of Mr. Robt. Turnbull. Previous to this the Indians had generously offered Capt. Oliver the use of a house at their village, advising him, however, for his own benefit to go to Capt. Warren's post. None of the crew understood the native language and the offer of the Indians had to be interpreted by Mr. Turnbull. Capt. Oliver having decided to go to the trading post the Indians insisted on presenting him and his crew with blankets, nuts and provisions. One of the chiefs, a son of Cedar Canim, not wishing to be outdone in generosity by the head chief, Schewish, gave the captain and crew money, which they received with reluctance but wished to give evidence of their good feeling. After staying at Capt. Warren's trading post until Tuesday last, Capt. Oliver engaged two canoes, manned by 21 Indians, and the weather having moderated he and his crew proceeded to Barclay Sound where the schooner Alert, belonging to Capt. Francis, was fired to bring them to this port. They left Barclay Sound on Wednesday morning and after encountering light but foggy southeast weather, reached here in safety as above mentioned. The first mite and the steward of the ill-fated vessel were left behind at Clayquot as owing to exposure to the weather and the hardships experienced they were unable to travel. The spot where the General Cobb went ashore is about three miles distant from the east of Portland Point, 32 miles distant from Cape Beale light. About a mile and a half southeast of this point the bark Mustang, loaded with a general cargo for Victoria, was wrecked fourteen years ago. Portions of the frame of the vessel are still visible. Nothing, however, is now to be seen of the Gen. Cobb, as five days after she went ashore a heavy southwest gale sprung up and she was quickly broken to pieces. She was built at Bath, Maine, in the year 1864 and was owned by W. J. Adams of San Francisco. Where she went to pieces she left two anchors with 115 fathoms of chain attached to each. These may possibly be recovered. Capt. Oliver reports that in latitude 45° 55', longitude 126° 40' on the 11th January he passed the bark Pride of England, bound from this port with a cargo of lumber and spars. She appeared to be in distress as the crew were throwing the deck-load overboard. The Gen. Cobb bore down on her, but the Pride of England did not ask for assistance. Capt. Oliver speaks very highly of the treatment he received at the hands of the Indians of the West Coast. Also, of the kindness received from Mr. Turnbull, Capt. Francis and the United States Consul at this port. The crew of the wrecked ship will be shipped to the United States as soon as an opportunity offers. In making his report to the U. S. Government we understand that the United States Consul has referred to the conduct of the Indians in eulogistic terms and has recommended that their humane services be properly recognized by the American Government. Had it not been for the natives all hands would doubtless have perished. There was no insurance on the lost vessel.

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