

# THE WRECK OF THE ENGLAND IN COURTENAY BAY HARBOR

### December, 1846, Was Date of Serious Marine Disaster— Full-Rigged Ship Arrived on 19th Before Gale of Wind and Struck on Foul Ground—Captain Andrew Irving and Four of Crew Drowned.

The loss of the ship "England" in Courtenay Bay, St. John harbor, in December, 1846, was the most serious marine disaster that ever took place in the waters immediately around the city, and to many of the older people it is not difficult to find some few who remember well the night of the occurrence, and incidents which attended the affair up to the time of the burial of the body of the captain in the lot where now a crumbling stone records in brief the story of the tragedy.

The "England" was a full rigged ship of 588 tons, built at Ten Mile Creek, St. John County, in the year 1837, by Captain Robert Ellis, who was the principal owner. The vessel was wrecked and captured in 1846, and had a particularly high forecastle, even for those times, which were before the days of deck houses forward and aft. The "England" had for some years been owned by parties in Cork, Ireland, and was engaged in the ordinary trade between Liverpool, London and St. John.

On this last and fatal voyage the ship had sailed from London in ballast, during the latter part of September, under command of Captain Andrew Irving, a native of London, and a stranger to the navigation of these waters. This was his first voyage to St. John. The autumn of 1846 was a particularly bad one, marked by several severe storms, and thus it was that the long period of eighty four days passed before the ship could reach St. John harbor. The ship's complement was twenty men, but a less number was sufficient for general purposes, and on this occasion the total number on board was reduced, including two apprentice boys, one of whom was related to the captain.

Mention has been made of the stormy character of that season. Just a month before Christmas, on the night of the 25th, and the morning of the 26th of November, one of the heaviest gales known in history of the city was experienced in St. John, and along the coast it was the worst known since the great storm of 1819. In this gale the steamer "Atlantic" was lost off the coast of Connecticut and many passengers perished, while the St. John steamer "North America" was wrecked off the coast of Maine in the city of St. John. Trees were uprooted, chimneys blown down, and roofs of houses partially wrecked. The new ship "Howard" was driven ashore on Rankine's wharf and fell over on its side, while the barque "Commerce" was jammed across the ferry slip in the midst of a quantity of timber. Other vessels were driven in the timber ponds, a schooner and a woodboat were sunk near the end of North wharf, and there was much other damage done.

The "England" had its experience of the storm on the ocean, but came through it safely, and as Christmas week approached it came up the Bay of Fundy. Captain and crew alike were doubtless rejoicing that after nearly three months, buffeting with wind and wave at that inclement season, they were at last drawing near to port, where their perils would be over and their expenses reduced to ten in the joys of a Christmas on land.

The "England" was sighted off Partridge Island early in the afternoon of Saturday, the 19th of December, in company with the schooner "Oronoco" and the brig "Charlotte" from Yarmouth. These were a little in advance. The barque was in charge of Captain David Grant, the schooner of the barque "Oronoco" from London, and the brig "Charlotte" from Yarmouth. These were a little in advance. The barque was in charge of Captain David Grant, the schooner of the barque "Oronoco" from London, and the brig "Charlotte" from Yarmouth. These were a little in advance.

It was then about an hour and a half before low water, and the wind was growing stronger every minute. Under the mate's directions the ship came along before the gale, under its three topsails, and standing by, and bore down upon the foul ground, on which, about half past four o'clock it struck with great force and remained fast. At this juncture, pilot Haviland got aboard with one of his apprentices, Patrick Lenihan, with the hope of still saving the ship. By this time darkness had set in and the force of the wind was unabated. Nothing could be done until the flood tide should come, which would be after six o'clock, and the captain and crew had their supper as usual. While at supper the second mate directly laid the blame of the disaster to Robertson, the first mate, who was somewhat related to the captain. Had he assumed to know less and followed the pilot boat, the ship would have been safe. There was no time for discussing what might have been, however, and the great question was as to what they could do to make matters better. The only hope was that when the ship was floated by the flood tide it might be worked to a secure port of the harbor.

In the west channel, and in a southerly wind the sea had a clean sweep up the harbor. It was raining furiously on this night, and when the flood tide lifted the ship it tore away the rudder, and the vessel came off the Foul Ground wholly unmanageable and with water over the ballast in the hold. It was out of the question to handle the sails so as to make a course, and the "England" was driven on the Round Reef, south of the Ballance, and there it remained for some time, when it went on the dulse reef, nearer the shore. It was then evident that the ship must go to pieces, and all hands went forward for safety. In this they made a fatal mistake. Had they gone aft they would have been safe, as was afterwards found, and they would have been perfectly secure had they taken shelter in the cabin, for the bedding in the berths was not even wet when the wreck was visited on the following day.

It was then early midnight. The night was intensely dark, and the scene of horror cannot be described. The vessel broke in two on the reef and the foremost went by the board. As it did so the broken part of it, near the heel, struck Captain Irving, killing him instantly and severing his body into two parts. The survivors clung to the top of the forecastle, which began to drift around Courtenay Bay, which the sea made continual breaches over it. Some of the party were lashed with lines, but all were in danger of perishing by the exposure. At length the drifting forecastle was driven on the east shore of the Bay, along which it was carried by the wind and tide until it came to where the stern of the ship had been driven, and the rocks which make out on the sands a little to the north of the Almshouse. By this time four of the crew were dead. These were John Smith, of Liverpool, seaman; Thomas Rogers, cook; with Francis Burdett, of London, and Charles Ward, of Coventry, apprentice. Young Lenihan, the pilot apprentice, Pilot Haviland, to attempt to get ashore, and the venture was made with success, using being made of the wreck of the stern for a part of the distance. Then the other survivors were to land, but not without difficulty and danger. So exhausted were the men with their terrible night's experience that on getting ashore some of them lay down on the snow ready to fall asleep, and had it not been for the strenuous exertions of Pilot Haviland they would have con- sidered to be there until the sleep of death overtook them. Kneeling them up, he conducted them to the Almshouse, where they received every possible care.

The bodies of the dead were looked after on the following morning and placed in an outbuilding. It was a sad enough sight, that of the five frozen remains of those who, at sunset the previous day, had been abounding in life and hope. Two of the bodies were those of mere boys. An inquest was held on Monday, when a verdict was returned in accordance with the facts. One of the bodies rescued from the wreck was kindly treated by a family living in that vicinity. He thus made the acquaintance of a daughter of the owner of the house, to whom he was afterwards married.

The "England" had been consigned to the Honorable John Robertson, and it was supposed he would attend to the burial of Captain Irving, as became the latter's position, and the sad circumstances under which he met his death in a strange land. There appears to have been some mistake made in the matter, however, and there was great surprise and indignation among the shipmasters when they learned that both captain and crew had been buried as paupers in the Old Burial Ground; that the undertaker had taken the captain's body to the grave late in the afternoon; that it had not been followed by a single mourner, and that no minister of religion had been called to commit the body to the earth. Upon learning these facts, a meeting of the shipmasters was held at the St. John Hotel on the evening of Saturday, the 26th of December, an- nouncing that on the Christmas morn- ing, but one which they would not bear postponement. The object of the meeting was stated to be the eliciting of information relative to the interment of Captain Irving and his men, "reports having got into circula- tion that they had not received a Christian burial," and Captain Abell occupied the chair. Captain Abell opened the proceedings by some re- marks in which he characterized the affair as a foul blot on a Christian community, asserting that a man who had lost his life in the exercise of his duty had been dragged to his final resting place like a felon, betwixt day, light and dark. He used other strong language, and trusted the blame would be put where it belonged.

At this stage of the proceedings Hon. John Robertson sent a note re- questing that he be heard before the meeting, and he was accordingly ad- mitted. His explanation was that he gave orders to the undertaker to have the bodies decently and respectfully interred, without either extravagant or unnecessary expense, as soon as it could conveniently be done. After this Mr. Charles McLaughlan had called on him and said there was a feeling against the bodies being buried in the poor house burial ground; that the Collector of Customs (Mr. H. Bowyer Smith) and other offi- cials had made a contribution toward funeral expenses, and that he (Mr. McLaughlan) was willing to take charge of the arrangements. Mr. Robertson had replied that Mr. McLaughlan would have to see the under- taker, as the bodies were in charge of the coroner. He also had suggested that the bodies be buried side by side and a tombstone erected, towards which he offered to contribute. He had left the arrangements with Mr. McLaughlan, and had not been aware

of the interment until the next evening. Captain John Leavitt then took the floor, and a lively passage of words ensued between him and Mr. Robertson. After the latter had retired, Mr. McLaughlan was admitted, and de- tailed the efforts he had made to find the undertaker in time, but said he had met him only when he was on his way to the grave with the captain's body. The meeting then expressed its approbation of Mr. McLaughlan's conduct, and proceeded to pass the following resolutions: "Resolved, that the remains of the late Captain Irving be removed from their present resting place, and conveyed to the grave from some respect- able dwelling, for the purpose of being re-interred, and that a tombstone be erected to his memory, and also to the memory of those of the crew who perished with him."

It was also resolved that a subscrip- tion be opened to defray the neces- sary expenses, and that the proceed- ings of the meeting be published in the city papers. In addition to Cap- tain Abell, Taber and Leavitt, some of the well-known old-time ship- masters present were Captains Hip- ple, Thomas Reed, Stephenson, Dudge and Wiley. The sum of \$22 1/2, and 6d. was subscribed on the spot, and at a later date a balance remain- ing after the payment of funeral ex- penses was sent to Captain Irving's widow and family in England.

The place where the bodies had been buried was in the lower portion of the Old Burial Ground, next to the building lots on Union street. This was the part of the ground where free interment was allowed, and the sail- ors were allowed to remain there, but that of Captain Irving was disinterred, and on Wednesday, the 29th of December, ten days after the disaster, the funeral took place from the house of Mr. James Milligan, King Square. The day was marked by an exceedingly violent snowstorm, but a very large number of people attended and followed the body to the Church of England Burial Ground, beyond the Marsh Bridge. In due time a plain freestone tablet was placed over the grave, bearing the following inscrip- tion:

In Memory of  
ANDREW IRVING,  
Late Master of the Ship of England,  
of Cork,  
Who perished on the wreck of that vessel in Courtenay Bay, entrance of this harbor, on the night of the 19th of December, 1846.

ALSO  
John Smith, Seaman; Thomas Rogers, Cook; Francis Burdett and Charles Ward, Apprentices, who perished at the time. The remains of Capt. Irving and others in the port of St. John.

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# Some Canadian Political Topics

## Hon. Mr. Crerar Receives Much Attention from Cana- dian Papers — Toronto Globe Looking for Free Traders — Chatham Com- mercial on Warpath.

(Protective Tax)  
(Montreal Gazette.)  
Mr. Crerar has concluded his speaking tour in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. He had good gatherings to hear him, and seems to have grown somewhat more radical as he went on. At Kentville, according to the Halifax Chronicle reporter, he said that protection, as we have it, is a fizzle. We don't need and don't want it. It only enables the Canadian manufacturer to sell his goods, plus the protective duty, to the rest of us. What we want is absolutely free inter- course with our neighbors, not a tariff that will permit our own manufactur- ers to charge us more simply because the Government adds a protective tax. He advocated free and open competi- tion, dwelling on the idea that men who owned properties that were per- mitted to lie idle should be compelled to put a price on these properties, and if they refused to sell at that price, were to be taxed for that amount. The question has been asked, he said, if the protective tariff is done away with, where will the country derive sufficient revenue. Who pays the cus- toms duties, asked Mr. Crerar. He said that paying taxes, when you know you were paying them, was pre- ferable to paying them without realiz- ing it, for it would lead to greater economy and a more active interest in the affairs of the country.

## No Free Traders Now.

A reported remark by Mr. Halbert, M. P., the victor of North Ontario, leads the London Free Press to speak as follows:  
Retiring President Halbert of the United Farmers' Association, and member for North Ontario, declares himself a low tariff advocate, but adds that he is not one of those who believe in wiping out the tariff altogether at once. "I am not a free trader," he says. "The Toronto Globe asks who is a free trader, and says the 'Liberal' party holds precisely the position now assumed by Mr. Halbert. Here we have two political parties in Canada each finding it necessary to declare that they are not free traders. It was not always so."

## No Fancy Parties.

(Montreal Gazette.)  
Mr. Crerar, on his way home from the maritime provinces, stopped over at Quebec, and is understood to have had conferences with some of the local M.P.'s, who, of course, are all Liberals. Mr. Crerar's latest speeches seemed more designed for the radical westerners than for the conservative Quebecers, who have as a rule been inclined to protection. The "Solid Quebec," however, is attractive to all the leaders, as its repre- sentatives may readily hold the bal- ance of power after the next parlia- mentary election, and those who they will co-operate with. There are Liberals, however, who want nothing to do with fancy parties. Among the latest to declare himself is Mr. Gau- thier, M. P. Speaking in Montreal he held that most good is to be ex- pected from the success of parties constituted on the old lines, represent- ing all the classes. There are Con- servatives who have been led by re- cent events to share in Mr. Gauthier's view.

## Back to Party.

The Edmonton Bulletin, Hon. Frank Oliver's paper, dealing with the result of the North Ontario bye-election, has the following to say:  
"Nobody doubts for a moment what would happen if the Government were to the country now. It would never come back. And in its place would

# Language in Business.

(La Patrie.)  
Lloyd Harris, the Canadian Com- merce Commissioner in Europe, yes- terday addressed the Publicity Associa- tion on the necessity of know- ing two languages in order to achieve suc- cess in business. It is even better, he believes, to learn three or four or more, but two are essential. On the same occasion Mr. Harris advised his hearers to develop a Canadian patriot- ism in order to destroy the last traces of racial antagonism and the prej- udices of language so that the differ- ent groups in the nation can work in har- mony one with another. The experience which Mr. Harris gained during the years he spent in France as Cana- da's representative give his words great weight. Instead of a sentiment of pure sympathy inducing our Eng- lish speaking fellow citizens of the other provinces to learn French it is the interests of Canada as a nation and their own personal interest that should make them do so. Moreover the acquisition of two languages should be recommended to the Eng- lish element in our own province. How many business men of Montreal speak nothing but English.

## Mr. Crerar's Ambition.

(Chatham Commercial.)  
There is one thing certain, and it is that the attempt that is being made by Mr. Crerar and some of his friends to warn the farmers of provincial con- tests is going to do two things. It is going to cause a great many people who are friendly to the platform as laid down by the Canadian Council of Agriculture, to withhold their assent

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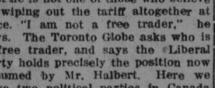
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There is no need to comment on a statement like this. It's true. What was done for Mr. Connors has been done for hundreds of others. Dodd's

# THE WRECK OF THE ENGLAND IN COURTENAY BAY HARBOR

December, 1846, Was Date of Serious Marine Disaster—  
Full-Rigged Ship Arrived on 19th Before Gale of Wind  
and Struck on Foul Ground—Captain Andrew Irving  
and Four of Crew Drowned.

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# 77 FOR COLDS

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# GENERALS WARM UP AND CHALLENGE FOR DUEL FOLLOWS

Outburst of Ilfeeling Between  
Czechs and Russians is at  
the Bottom of the Wrangle  
Between Commanders.

Irkuak, Dec. 25.—(By the A. P.)—As a result of a new outburst of ill-feel- ing between the Czechs and Russians, following an exchange of recrimina- tions by Admiral Kolchak, head of the All-Russian government, and Dr. Val- da Gira, Czecho-Slovak commissioner in Siberia, General Kappell, of the Western Armies of the All-Russian government, has challenged General Stryk, commanding the Czechs, to a duel.

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