

Geo. Knowling

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Geo. Knowling

April 8, 1914

**The Daily Mail**

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All correspondence on business and editorial matters should be addressed to Dr. H. M. Mossell, Managing Editor.

Letters for publication should be written on one side of the paper only and the real name of the author should be attached. This will not be used unless consent be given in the communication.

The publication of any letter does not signify that the Editor thereby shows his agreement with the opinions therein expressed.

ST. JOHN'S, N.F.L.D., APRIL 8, 1914.

**AGONISING SUSPENSE**

The whole Colony is now waiting in agonising suspense for some news of the missing "Southern Cross."

Eight days ago we had the last tidings from her through the captain of the Portia. Then came the fearful storm of Tuesday and Wednesday, and a silence as to her whereabouts that we all earnestly pray does not mean the long silence of death for the one hundred and seventy men on board.

We mourn to-day seventy-seven of our most industrious countrymen lost in the disaster that overtook the crew of the Newfoundland.

What that blow actually means we cannot fully realise without visiting the North which has suffered to the greatest extent.

Think of little settlements comprising but a handful of families out of which seven or eight bread-winners have been taken.

Only the Giver of Consolation understands the depths of sorrow into which our people have been plunged.

And now there is this suspense about the "Southern Cross"; these disquieting fears as to her safety.

Surely our cup of woe is already full without this overflowing draught being added!

On board the missing ship are fifty men from one district—Harbor Main, and seventeen members of the L.O.A. at Kelligrews are included.

It will be a staggering blow for Concepcion Bay if the ship be not located.

But there is always "hope from the sea" and we wait with what patience we can command for tidings of the missing ship.

May they be tidings of safety and of joy.

L. O. A.



There will be a meeting of Rolay Oak Lodge, No. 22, L.O.L., Victoria Hall, at 8 o'clock this evening.

By order of the W.M.

R. SIMMONS, Sec. Secretary.

**Official Investigation of Newfoundland Disaster.**

(Continued from page 1)

ond hand, Abraham Parsons, went in charge. We continued working the ship towards the place where we had seen the men during the early morning.

Not long after, some of our men began returning, helping the other men along. The ship continued on until 4 p.m., picking up the live men. They were coming twos and threes all the time, squads of our men helping them. At 3 p.m. they were all on board, thirty-four of them. Several were brought on stretchers, as they could not walk. Most of them were in a bad condition.

The second hand had the bodies put on pans together so that there would be no trouble in picking them up. These were picked up between 3 and 4 p.m. We had on board fifty-eight bodies. The Newfoundland was in sight when we finished picking up the bodies, about six miles to the East. She was in sight all the evening before, as soon as the weather cleared.

**Condn't Get To Her**

The Stephano, Florizel and Bonavente were in sight all Thursday. We then tried to work towards the Newfoundland. I think she was jammed all the time. We were trying to reach her all that night. The ice was very tight and we could only make slow progress. We stopped a few hours during the night and reached the Newfoundland about 11 a.m. the following day, Friday.

The Stephano was alongside the Newfoundland when we reached her and Captain Abraham Kean came on board with the Newfoundland's articles. Previous to that he had been on board the Newfoundland and got the articles. He ticked off the names of those aboard the Newfoundland. I gave him a list of the live men we had on board the Bellaventure. These men were distributed over the ship. We ticked those off and saw who were dead.

Then we took the sick men from the Newfoundland on board the Bellaventure, about thirteen, and two from the Stephano, and also two dead men from the Florizel. She had in the mean time picked up nine dead bodies. We took them about 4 p.m. We then had on board sixty-nine dead men, and forty-eight sick.

**Dead and Missing**

After we had ticked off the sick men and counted the bodies we had, there were eight men dead and missing. After the first member of the Newfoundland's crew came on board, we got in touch with the Stephano by wireless. After I received a message from A. Harvey & Co. I reported. We arrived in St. John's about 5 p.m. on Saturday afternoon, hauled into Harvey & Co.'s wharf, where the sick men and bodies were taken charge of by the authorities.

I have been eight years at the ice. The seals were much scattered. We had to steam considerably more than usual this year. Seals were scarce, picking up small quantities for several days before the Tuesday. We were killing and we picked them up at once.

The Newfoundland's direction and the men's direction about forty-eight degrees. The men were not straight between us and the Newfoundland. We saw the Newfoundland between three and four on Wednesday. Nine of the thirteen sick men had been out in the storm with the second hand and got back to Newfoundland. I cannot speak of the other four.

**Out Forty-eight Hours**

The nine men had been out about forty-eight hours. We had no wireless connection with the Stephano on Wednesday. Some of our men reported on Friday after we had discovered the Newfoundland's men that they had seen men of another ship to the Eastward on Wednesday evening. They did not report this to me on Wednesday. I heard from the second hand. The direction thus reported would be the direction from which the Newfoundland's men were subsequently picked up.

It is not customary to make barometrical records at the seafishery. Public weather messages are not sent to us at the seafishery. On Tuesday the barometer did not sink rapidly at any moment to my knowledge.

Thomas Moulard, (sworn) and examined by Mr. Hutchings, K.C., said—I belong to Bonavista, and was one of the crew of the S.S. Newfoundland this year. Her captain was Westlake Kean, with a crew of about 180 men. I was in Arthur Moulard's watch. There were four watches on board.

I don't know anything as to the position of our ship on Tuesday, March 31st. I saw no steamers about us early that morning, except the Stephano, which was 7 or 8 miles

(frog us. I can't say in what direction.

I left the ship that morning at 7 o'clock in company with the full crew to board the Stephano. The captain instructed us to do this. About half way to the Stephano about 30 men turned back. The men did not inform me why they went back. I thought they returned as they feared bad weather.

**Looked Like Weather**

The sky looked dark, and it looked like bad weather. When we left the ship the weather was fine, with clear sky. Then men who turned back belonged to all the watches. I with others went on board the Stephano and reached her about noon. One of the Stephano's men told me the time.

When we were about a mile from the Stephano it began to snow, just peckish. We had a mug-up on board the Stephano. Capt. Kean told us, while we were getting a mug-up, that he would put us into a spot of seals, and when he came on deck he told us to get on the ice; this was about one hour after we got on board. The weather was bad then, snowing quite a lot, pretty thick, blowing and drifting; could not see more than a mile.

When we got on the ice Capt. Abraham Kean told us the seals lay to the south-west, and we all started for them, went about half mile, struck a small lot of seals very scattered. Some of our men remained there killing, the rest went on a short distance to look for another spot of seals. We only went about 100 yards and started killing; about twenty minutes after we were altogether again.

**Weather Worse**

The weather by this time was a lot worse than when we left the ship. The second hand gave orders then to start for the Newfoundland; this was probably between 3 and 4 o'clock. The wind was about S.E., not very cold. We all started for the Newfoundland, and could see no distance ahead then, the snow was falling thick.

When leaving, Capt. Kean told us our ship bore S.E., but we could not see her. The men were under the second hand, George Tuff, and followed his directions.

We kept together until half an hour before dark, when the watches of Thomas Dawson and Jones separated from us. They went to the left, but we met again just before dark in the path that we travelled in the morning.

We stopped walking at dark, all the rest all followed me.

About five o'clock the second hand came up and ordered me to stop as a man, William Pear, had given out. We stopped till the sick man came up, caught the foot path again, and walked a bit further until 5:30 when we stopped for the night.

We divided up into three sections within about three hundred yards. We were on three different pans and were divided because all could not get shelter on our pan. I was in the gang which the second hand, George Tuff, had charge of.

**Began to Separate.**

We remained together until after daylight Wednesday, when we commenced to separate. The second hand with another man and myself were to leeward about one hundred yards to see if we could see anything. After about an hour we continued on the same course and put up again. It was getting up towards noon then. We did not go back to the main group but the second hand did.

I saw three men dying after I left the group that morning. These men were wandering around in our path. We stayed on this last pan until it cleared off. I daresay there were ten men left, then the second hand went towards the Bellaventure which was in sight. Arthur Moulard had gone to the Bellaventure before, and when the second hand saw the Bellaventure turn stern towards him, he turned towards our own ship. We concluded the Bellaventure had not observed us.

**Long Way Off.**

The Newfoundland was a long way further away and in an opposite direction. When I saw the second hand going to our ship, three or four of us cut out and followed him. We kept on this way till about dark; then put up for the night. The wind was blowing strong, but the drift had died out, and it was very cold from early morning. I did not return to the main gang. One of the men with me died soon after the Bellaventure turned her stern to us. His name was Henry Dowden. I was holding him up. I saw only four men die on the ice.

On Thursday morning as soon as it got daylight, I with the men on the pan with me, started for the Newfoundland. Some got on board about eight, I did not until ten. I heard nothing said about remaining on the Stephano Tuesday night,

either on board, or on the way out to the Stephano. I did not give the matter of where we were going to stay that night any thought. I went by what the second hand said.

**Nobody Refused.**

I heard nobody refuse or object to leave the Stephano to go on the ice, nor did I hear anyone say anything about the locality of the seals.

I don't know how the men were provided with food, when leaving our ship. I provided myself pretty well. I know most all had hard biscuit. Oatmeal and hard tack is what is usually taken. The men had on their usual clothing.

To Mr. Lloyd Jones said that although I made no objection after getting my mug up, I did not expect to leave the Stephano as the storm was on. I heard some men say when the storm got worse on Monday evening, that they wondered why they didn't stay on board the Stephano.

No objection was made to Captain Kean on their behalf, and he understood the men were blaming themselves for leaving the ship. The attitude they assumed was that they should have remained on board.

Sidney Jones, (sworn) and examined by Mr. Hutchings, K.C., said—I belong to Newtown, Bonavista Bay, and was a master watch on the Newfoundland this spring.

We saw the Stephano about six miles N.W. of us, and the Florizel about N.W.E. of us 8-dr sh hrd sh about N.N.E. still further away. There were two other ships in sight but I did not know them, being too far off.

**Fine in the Morning.**

The weather was very fine in the morning, the sky slightly overcast, but nothing to indicate a storm.

Our whole crew started at seven o'clock to board the Stephano about one hundred and sixty in all.

A little over half way twenty-nine of our men turned back to the Newfoundland. They did not tell me why they turned back. I thought they went back because they talk the walk was long with nothing at the end of it.

One of these men belonged to my watch, and there may have been a couple of more, but I am not sure. There was nothing falling when they went back, but it was getting thick.

The rest went on the Stephano about 11:30 a.m. It was then snowing a little, and the weather was on when we got aboard, but it was not over thick.

**Something To Eat.**

I went below in the master watch's mess room. I think it was less than half an hour when I was on deck again, and some of our men were on the ice, some more below, and some on deck.

I heard Capt. Kean say for all hands of the Newfoundland's crew to get over. I did not hear him say anything about seals. I stood by until the last of our men got over. It was getting thick, I daresay you could see half a mile S.W.

Met up with a few seals when Jacob Bungay stopped with some men to kill them. I walked on with the others about three hundred yards. We all stopped on the pan together, and the second hand said he never saw a better chance to be all night according to the weather. It was then very stormy, the wind blowing a good breeze and drifting.

**Started For Ship.**

We started for our own ship, it being 12:45 by my watch. Bungay's crowd joining us as we passed along. The whole crew continued together for a short walk, when I started off in charge of a crowd of men from all the watches and went to the left of the other men. We did not go out of sight of each other and the two crowds made it better to travel. We kept on this way till we got on the path we came out in when we joined up again. We had then been travelling about an hour and a half. We recognized our footings, and the flag poles thrown away in the morning.

**Snow Foot Deep.**

The snow was about a foot deep and clearly showed our foot marks. We continued until about 4:30 when we had a lunch and the second hand came and told me to take four or five men and get to the ship if I could hold the path. It was then getting pretty dark.

I started with four or five men, but hands. The storm had increased, wind blowing hard, but it was a bit milder. We divided up in four bunches, and separated, each bunch going clear of the other on separate pans. This was in accordance with orders of master watches, but I don't know for what reason.

I remained with Arthur Moulard's crowd. Up to this time none of our men had given out. We stayed there all Tuesday night, and I was there all day Wednesday. The first man of our group died

about noon on Wednesday. I do not know his name. During Wednesday night and Thursday morning most of them died. Most of our group remained in this spot till Thursday.

The master watch, Arthur Moulard, and second hand, George Tuff, left us about four o'clock on Wednesday afternoon to go to the Bellaventure. Just before they started we sighted here about 4 or 5 miles away.

Moulard and Tuff returned to us about dark, being unable to reach the Bellaventure; I don't know why. They then, with two or three more men, left towards Thursday morning to go to the Newfoundland, the rest of us remaining in the same spot until Thursday morning, when my first cousin and I started to walk to the Bellaventure.

**Saw Them Coming**

We walked about half a mile when we saw the Bellaventure's crew coming towards us and we walked aboard with one of her men, the rest going on the place we had left. The Bellaventure's crew continued the search and picked up all the rest of our men living and dead.

We then went to the Newfoundland, when Capt. Randell took some men from her, as also, afterwards, from the Stephano and Florizel, when we bore up for St. John's, arriving at 5 o'clock Saturday afternoon, 4th inst.

When we left the Newfoundland we had some hard bread; I had 7 or 8 cakes; the others about the same. I don't know what the master watches had. Wednesday was very stormy until 3 or 4 in the afternoon, with wind N.W. and very cold, and grew colder as night came on.

We were clad in our usual clothes for sealing when we went out. None of the crew carried oil skins. When we left the Newfoundland our captain thought we would stay aboard the Stephano.

I did not hear the captain say this, but I was told so by George Tuff, second hand, at least I so understood him.

**Stay Aboard Stephano**

Replying to questions of Dr. Lloyd, Moulard said: I heard the captain of the Newfoundland say we could stay aboard the Stephano if the weather came on. On the way I heard the masters of watch say it looked for weather.

I was not surprised when thirty men turned back. I was going on board the Stephano as it was easier to get to her. When we got to the spot of seals we did not expect to go back to the Stephano.

At the time the men went over nobody raised any objection to leaving the Stephano. I did not object to leave the Stephano.

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