

THE "EXPLORER."

Capt. Waddell's own Account of the Sinking of the Vessel.

A Vivid and Picturesque Narrative of the Disaster.

The leading marine newspapers have republished the letter written by R. G. McCulloch, which appeared in THE SIGNAL on the 11th inst., and the interest taken in the sinking of the schooner Explorer is increasing. Some papers still hold to the opinion that Capt. Waddell did scuttle the vessel, while others aver that the report circulated regarding the findings of holes in the bottom of the schooner, is a vile slander, containing not one word of truth, and circulated only to wound the feelings of the family of the deceased captain. A reporter of the Detroit Free Press interviewed Customs Officer Baby, of Windsor, Ont., and obtained the following account of the loss of the Explorer from Capt. Waddell's own pen, it being a letter sent by him to Mr. Baby in response to a note asking for the particulars of the disaster. During the season preceding the one in which the little schooner was lost, Mr. Baby, together with several friends, took a trip in the Explorer, being the guests of Capt. Waddell. The trip was a very pleasant one, and Mr. Baby states that the Explorer was a staunch craft, well shaped and almost as much of a yacht as a freight schooner, having a large and well-appointed cabin. Capt. Waddell's letter which was dated Chatham, Ont., January 26, 1868, is as follows:

"You want a narrative of my voyage north on the last trip of the Explorer, and though I am almost tired of the subject, I will endeavor to give you an idea of what occurred from leaving Chatham till I reached Owen Sound, alone and nearly 'gone up,' nearly a month afterwards.

"The vessel made several trips with grain to Cleveland last fall, bringing back coal, etc., and about the 2nd of October I fitted her out for a trading trip on the north shore and intending to locate William (my son) at Little Current all winter with a small stock of goods to see what he could do with them. Accordingly, we cleared from here and went down to Windsor to finish our load. This was on the 1st of November (which was getting rather late). Having completed our load there, it was considered necessary that William or I should go up by steamer to be ahead of the vessel so as to make some preparations about the goods.

"As William did not know the coast very well I sent him up by steamer. I then engaged two good sailors to go with me, and on the morning of November 3 we got away from Windsor with a strong wind from the southwest. The wind blew the same way nearly till we reached Sarnia on the 4th, but in such furious gusts, with snow, hail, sleet, etc., that we had to 'come to' just below Port Huron, where, after dark, a large bark scraped us along so close that some of our head-gear was damaged and we had to lie over a day or two to refit, the wind blowing a hurricane all the while, which, though fair to go up the lake, appeared very treacherous and likely to shift at any moment to the northward. However, with the wind while blowing a living gale, we made sail and ran out of the rapids on the morning of the 8th of November, and I never saw any steamboat go out of the current quicker than we did.

"All went well enough till we got about fifty miles up the lake, when the wind increased in violence and the sea, though dead aft, was so heavy that the vessel would not steer well nor would her compass settle to a point so that we could steer a good course. We then 'hove to' for the night, thinking the wind would surely blow itself out after a while. Blew a hurricane all night, and in the morning put the vessel away before the wind with everything close-reefed. Sea tremendous and great trouble in steering, as she buried herself forward every now and then and stuck her rudder entirely out of water. Couldn't make a good course, but was aiming to go through the Detour or False Detour channel, whichever appeared most convenient when we sighted them.

"This afternoon our foreboom jibed suddenly and broke in two pieces. Hove the vessel to under fore staysail and double reefed mainsail till we fixed the foreboom. Night coming on, lay hove to all night. Next morning, about an hour or so after daylight, with the wind and sea still more violent than ever, and shifting from south to west every little while, we tried her at scudding before it again, and about 11 o'clock made land ahead about eight or ten miles but could not discover the channel or what land it was, owing to thick, smoky atmosphere. My idea, however, was that it was the Ducks we saw, and to make matters safe and sure, as I thought, I steered the vessel's course so as to stand along the Manitowlin Island in hopes of making Horse Island channel before dark, and getting into Stronness harbor.

"We ran along very well for a while till about 3 p.m. It began to snow and the wind was very changeable, still blow-

ing a violent gale and the lake one sheet of white foam. The land on shore speedily began to get white, which as it grew a little dimly towards evening confused me badly in calculating distance, points of land, etc. When we got within about five or six miles of the Horse Island channel we saw it quite plainly once or twice in the intervals between the snow showers, but I soon found out that between the weather and the darkness setting in fast, it would be almost certain destruction to try it, the whole expanse of water across the entrance being one ridge of surf and breakers. Therefore we hauled the vessel up for the night on Isle of Cores which we just began to get a glimpse of now and then, and the calculation was to steer across the ends of the bowsprits making off from Horse and Zoo Islands till we got into the ship channel, and then when the light bore E. and S. to run down Georgian Bay till we found shelter.

"We had not run very far on this new course till we found ourselves in shallow water with the sea breaking clear over us and throwing the vessel down on her beam ends, which shifted a lot of barrels of whiskey in her hold and gave her a bad list to port.

"We were then carrying close reefed canvass, and I was once or twice afraid she would capsize, but she ran over the shoal into deep water and kept on. The shifting of the load made it almost impossible to carry all the canvass we had previously carried, and we took in torsail but she would not work with that so we hoisted it again, and then one of my hands proposed to go into the hold and try to stow the barrels which had shifted but it was impossible to take the hatches off, and I directed them to take the axe and chop a passage through the cabin bulkhead, which they did, as the movable part of the bulkhead was jammed tight with the cargo stowed against it.

"After chopping the hole one man went in with a lantern, and when he came out reported some whiskey barrels stove in and a considerable shift of cargo on the port side, and he volunteered to take the other man and fix it as good as ever in fifteen or twenty minutes if the vessel could be kept steady. I had been steering from about 2 o'clock p.m., and I told them I would watch her sharp and give them notice of any danger. We then got the handspikes aft and I kept one to sound on the deck with as a signal of danger, or if I wanted the men on deck.

"The hands came out once after being in the hold about twenty minutes, lighted their pipes and went in again. A few minutes elapsed and one of them handed me some whiskey in a tin mug which he got out of the broken barrel. I cautioned them about drinking too much at this time. They then went to work again for over a quarter of an hour, and I thought I was come to shallow water again, so I knocked and both came up.

"They were both pretty jolly with the grog they had drunk, and after waiting about for some time the biggest of the two said that five minutes more would complete the job, and they would finish it. I tried to persuade them to stay up as we were drawing pretty well off Zoo Island into the Ship Channel, and would soon square away into Georgian Bay, but they went in again, nevertheless.

"After they had been about twenty minutes or more in the hold, a big sea breaking ahead drew my attention, when it was pretty clear I was getting on some shallow place again. I immediately knocked on deck, but by this time a huge breaker was reaching along to windward, and I kept the vessel away before it to ease her. This wave lifted her stern clear up almost perpendicular and broke over both sides near the fore-rigging, jamming her nose under water. She struck with force enough to tear the masts out nearly, and her bow settled on the shore, while her stern slewed round toward the lighthouse.

"The next sea was a sea of foam, and foamed like Niagara Falls, and just before it struck I saw it was going to sweep her clean, so I jumped into the port main rigging, but it tore her her cabin door off, threw the yawl on the top of the cabin, capsized the vessel clear over to starboard, the water pouring into the cabin and filled the hold right off. All this happened in less than three minutes, and when she struck with her fore foot on the rocks the shock was so violent that I could feel the cargo slide forward in a solid body right into the bow of the vessel, and the men in the hold must have been jammed to pieces before she filled with water, and I hung on to the rigging, expecting that my time was up.

"Each of the sea that came along kept turning the vessel round to the starboard, and at the same time drifting her into deeper water.

"Her bow kept going down, but her stern floated, and after awhile I found she was in deep water, drifting along into Georgian Bay with a heavy current. About half an hour or more elapsed when I began to think if I could save the boat till daylight I might yet get off shore. The boat washed off the cabin with the sea and unhooked the starboard tackle towing or rather hanging on by the other tackle and the painter, and

getting some awful hard thumps now and then.

"The sea began to be more moderate as the vessel drifted eastward, and I managed with a spike-pole, which was used to the rigging, to get hold of the main throat-halyards, which I rigged into a head rope to help me up on the stern of the vessel. After getting pretty well fixed I discovered that the end of our bucket-rope was made fast to the rigging I was in and also one ear lashed there. I tried to get the boat alongside and bail her out, and I worked over six hours at it, finally succeeding.

"By this time it was 10 o'clock at least in the day, and I employed part of my time in catching the little scraps of biscuit which floated out of the cabin window. I now began to suffer from numbness in the joints and cold.

"So having drifted away below Flower-pot and Ben's Plum, and the wind being round to the northwest and blowing straight on the main shore, I got into the boat and left with my gail and one ear. I was about ten miles off shore then and it took about four hours to get there. The beach I picked out to land on was bad and the surf came very near capsizing the boat. However I got ashore and let the boat beach herself the best way she liked.

"A good deal of snow on the ground and all my matches wet except a few in my vest watch pocket which were just damp enough not to go off. Picked out a snug place under a big cedar to make a fire and get some shelter and then started and riced up and down the beach for hours till I got pretty warm.

"Four or five hours after being ashore I got a match to light and set my combustible afire, which was a great comfort, enabling me to dry my feet. Kept hunting wood and firing up all night. "For three days and a half I could not get away from this place, wind being northwest and a gale all the time. Nothing to eat but wet biscuit which had fallen out of the pail into the bottom of the boat and were full of sand, etc., and only about a pound of this altogether.

"The third day after being ashore, I launched the yawl and, with the wind southwest worked round the point into Wingfield Basin near Cabot's Head, where I found a poor old Indian all alone with a few salt fish only to live on. His son and some others had gone away with the boats two weeks before and as near as I could understand him, he did not know what had become of them. I stayed there three days, living on salt fish entirely, and then got a supply of fish and left with a south wind, intending to get to Owen Sound the best way I could.

"After ten days of misery and suffering I reached Cospey's Bay, ill and exhausted as you may suppose. The idea was entertained that the vessel would float ashore somewhere, but I had two men and a Mackinaw boat out for three weeks and they report having seen nothing of her."

The firm of J. & S. McEachen, Douglas, writes in June 1st, saying: "There is no other preparation we can recommend with so much confidence as Burdock Blood Bitters, which invariably gives the best of satisfaction." Burdock Blood Bitters cures all diseases of Blood, Liver and Kidneys.

A Remarkable Escape. Mrs. Geo. C. Clarke, of Port Dalhousie, Ontario, states that she had been confined to her room for a long time with that dreadful disease, Consumption. The doctors said she could not escape an early grave, but fortunately she began taking Dr. King's New Discovery for Consumption, and in a short time was completely cured. Doubting others, please write Mrs. Clarke, and be convinced. Trial bottles free at Rhynas' drug store. Large size \$1.

Gold—Is excellent for filling decayed Teeth; but "TEABERRY" prevents the decay, makes them white, and make people lovable. 5 cent samples.

Dennis Menard, captain of the tug Annie Louise, fell off his boat on Saturday, at Chatham, and was drowned.

"Twenty-four years' Experience." Says an eminent physician, convinces me that the only way to cure nervous exhaustion, and weakness of the sexual organs, is to repair the waste by giving brain and nerve foods, and of all the remedies compounded, Magnetic Medicine is the best. See advertisement in another column. Sold in Goderich by Jas. Wilson, druggist.—1m

A game of cricket was played at Blyth on the 9th inst., between the Clinton and Blyth clubs. The latter won by four runs and eight wickets



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