

FURTHER PARTICULARS OF THE LOSS OF THE RELIANCE, EAST INDIAMAN.

The following are the latest particulars of the melancholy loss of life by the awful shipwreck of the *Reliance*, the previous accounts of which have appeared in the various public journals.

The survivors among the crew of the above ill-fated ship arrived in London on Thursday afternoon by the General Steam Navigation Company's vessel *Magnet*, Captain Stock, from Boulogne. The *Magnet* brings over the whole of the surviving members of the crew with the exception of Dixon, the carpenter, who is still detained by the consul, Mr. Hamilton, for the purpose of identifying the dead, only 12 bodies out of the 109 persons lost having been picked up when Captain Stock left.

The subjoined statement, made by O'Neill, an intelligent foremast man, and one of the two Englishmen saved—who was on deck when the vessel struck—coupled with the following important and affecting letter, written at sea by Captain Green to his brother, on the 4th inst., and received since the wreck, and of another letter written by one of the mates 28 hours before the calamity occurred, and picked up on the French coast, leaves no doubt as to the circumstances under which the *Reliance* was lost.

O'Neill states that they had had remarkably thick and hazy weather for some days previous to the 12th inst., and on Friday they shortened sail and the lead was kept going. At half-past twelve at night, one of the crew, named Thomas, whose watch it was on the fore-castle, reported that he saw lights, and soon afterwards they were distinctly observed by several others on the larboard and starboard. The second mate, Mr. Green, was on duty at the time, and said that those on the weather bow were a ship's lights, and added, "Hurrah, boys, the light on the lee-beam is Dungeness—we shall be in the

Downs this morning." They then steered north and thought they were running for the Downs. Their course was east by north, as it was given at twelve o'clock, when the look-out was relieved. About one o'clock Captain Green and Mr. Walsh, the chief mate, came on deck, and the captain immediately gave orders to wear the ship and heave the lead. As the vessel answered her helm the quarter-master gave the soundings, "By the hard deep six." At this moment the vessel was under close reefed fore and main topsails, was paying off by the wind, and gradually going round on the other tack. A seaman, named Munroe, was at the wheel at this time, and as she veered round, her heel touched the bottom, and she struck heavily on the sand. The shock is described by O'Neill as having been terrific. His language was "It struck me as if I had laid hold of an electrical machine." The whole of the crew rushed on deck, and before any orders could be given she shifted slightly, and became more firmly imbedded. This motion was repeated five or six times in rapid succession, and it was the opinion of the officers that the ship's back was broken by the force of the concussion. The tide was setting strong in, and the captain immediately ordered signals of distress to be fired. It was the opinion of all on board that they were off the English coast, and the captain seeing that there was no hope of saving the ship, desired several of the crew to cut away the mainmast. This was immediately commenced, and in a few moments it went over to the leeward with a terrific crash. The foremast soon followed, and in falling broke the leg of a young midshipman, named Forde, but the imminent danger of all around did not prevent, even at this crisis, every attention being shown him. The fractured limb was carefully set by the surgeon, and the poor lad was conveyed to the captain's cabin, where he remained until the breaking up of the ship obliged some of the crew to place him on the poop. While Forde was lying in the cabin, O'Neill and two other seamen made their

60 years of age, became so weak that he lost his hold and fell into the sea. Mr. Walsh called out to some of the sailors, "Pull up the captain, boys!" and he was raised on to the timbers more than once. The last time he was taken out of the water he was found to be insensible; but the men still assisted in holding him on. About half-past nine o'clock the loose spars became so exposed to the sea as no longer to afford protection against its violence, and the greater number of those who had sought refuge upon them were washed off. O'Neill plunged into the sea and seized a plank, at the moment of doing so several sailors clung to him. He was compelled to strike them off to save his own life, but one of the Malays reached the shore with himself. O'Neill states that, as daylight broke, men on horseback were observed on the shore; but he states most distinctly that no boat was put off, and no attempt, whatever, made to save the crew. Both the Malay and O'Neill were insensible on reaching the shore.

The following is a copy of a letter addressed by Captain Green on the 4th inst. to his brother, Mr. Robert Green, of Birchin-lane, one of the owners of the *Reliance*, which arrived in town by post on the 16th inst., but, in consequence of that gentleman's absence at Boulogne, remained unopened until Tuesday last:—

"*Reliance* at Sea, lat. 48. 20. North, long. 14. 10. West.
Friday, Nov. 4, 1842.

"My Dear Robert,—A ship is near us, which I hope will be able to supply us with some provisions, and I send Mr. Walsh on board to try to procure some. We have been on short allowance for nearly three weeks, and have on board to-day ten days' provisions at two-thirds allowance per man, with the exception of flour, of which we have not an ounce. This in ordinary times would be quite enough, but we have been so miserably unfortunate with our winds, that I do not consider it right to run the risk of starvation. I have desired Walsh to procure, if he can, two casks of beef and two of flour. He will draw on you for payment, if he can get all or any part of the above, which I will thank you to honour. My passage from Cape de Verd has been the longest I have ever made in my life. I have never since I have been at sea seen such a continuance of adverse winds. Each succeeding change of moon has disappointed us in a change, and for five weeks we had nothing but easterly gales and fresh breezes to contend with, some days making only ten miles, and never more than 65, except one day, the day before yesterday, when we made 130, and I was in full hope that all our miseries were at an end—the westerly breezes having set in with the change of the moon—but after blowing very hard for eight hours, it moderated, and before noon flew round again to the north-east, having let us enjoy it only 15 hours. I am almost worn out with anxiety, particularly when I remember that the insurance was out on the 1st of this month, and I am afraid they will consider us a missing ship and charge accordingly.

"Our passage up from St. Helena to the Cape de Verd, was a beautiful one; every one was confident, that even with the usual run of luck, we should be in the docks by the 22d or 23d of October, whilst now, it is much more likely to be a month later. We are now about 330 miles from the Lizard, a distance which we could run easily in two days; but if we are to go on as we have done these five weeks, it will take us at least eight, and may be more, for the wind is very obstinate at east with east, and the barometer rising.

"The native seamen feel the cold a good deal, and at this moment I have twelve men off duty from sickness, whose loss we feel very much. "This is a melancholy ditty, but I hope to see you even before you receive it. Remember me affectionately to Joseph and all at home. "I remain your affectionate brother,

"THOMAS GREEN.

"Mr. Robert Green, Birchin-lane, London."

The other letter, written a few hours before the wreck, and referred to above, as having been picked up on the French coast, is as follows:—

"East India ship *Reliance*, English Channel, Nov. 16.

"My dear Mother,—It is with the greatest pleasure that I take this opportunity of writing a few lines to be ready to send ashore the first opportunity. In my last I told you that I expected to be with you the latter end of September or the beginning of October, which the captain fully calculated upon, but the fates are against us. We made a long and tedious voyage of two months and a half from Whampoa to Batavia, since leaving which we have encountered nothing but unfavourable gales and light winds for nearly four weeks. We have been on short allowance, but I have enjoyed very good health all along. Not so with the rest. We have had about 20 on the sick list. We arrived at St. Helena on the 3d of September, when I was highly delighted to receive your nice letter; also one you wrote me last voyage. We left Whampoa on the 24th of April, so that we shall make about a seven months' voyage home. We are now, we believe, off Start Point, but having had it blowing very hard for the last two days, and very thick weather, we have not been able to get an observation. But we are in hopes of getting a pilot to-morrow, and then I shall have an opportunity of sending this ashore. If the present wind lasts, I think we shall be in the Downs about Saturday morning, and in the East India Docks about Wednesday or Thursday. I will write immediately on my arrival in London. I think I shall have to stay a day or two to make arrangements for next voyage, but will lose no time, you may depend, in hastening to "canny Newcastle." I look forward with great pleasure to meeting you all in good health. I hope you will write to me on receiving this, telling me how you have all been since I left you.

"I shall not close this letter till the pilot comes on shore. I shall write to uncle George by the pilot."

(The letter here breaks off.)

The following is the certificate of the Consul as to the finding of the above letter:—

"I certify this to have been picked up on the coast, off Merlimont, on the 15th inst., about 20 miles to the westward of Boulogne, and claimed by me.

"Witness my hand and seal of office.

"W. HAMILTON, H. B. M. Consul.

"British Consulate, at Boulogne, 1 P.M., Nov 16, 1842."

The French coast, where the *Reliance* was wrecked, is of shallow sand, and has no inhabitants upon it except a few fishermen. The French say they heard the first signals fired, and answered them by firing from the shore and hoisting flags as soon as it was daylight. They further allege that they launched two boats which made some progress towards the wreck, and were compelled to put back. Both O'Neill and the carpenter deny this, and the latter says it is true that he saw them "fingering" the boats, but there was no attempt made to put them off.

With the exception of the French fishing-boat, the *Reliance* had not met a single vessel for some days previous to the wreck. This boat was met on the day before the melancholy occurrence, and was hailed to know how the land bore. The answer of the Frenchman was not understood, and the *Reliance* laid to, that some one from the fishing-boat might come on board. At first it seemed the intention of the crew to send off a boat; but after reaching the ship, she filled her sails and went right away.

The *Reliance* came ashore in six or eight pieces—the keel lying out at sea about half a mile. The portions of the wreck were sold for £2,000 francs.

The names of those brought over in the *Magnet* are—John O'Neill, a native of Kingstown, Ireland; John Anderson, a Norwegian; Charles Boetz, a Prussian; and three Malays—all common seamen. On their landing at London-bridge-wharf, they expressed their thanks to Captain Stock for his kind attention to them while on board. Shortly after, by the direction of Mr. Robert Green, five of them were conveyed in a hackney-coach to the Sailors' Home, Wellclose-square, until arrangements could be made for their return to their several homes. O'Neill, who is suffering from the injuries he received while on the wreck, is at present under the care of a friend residing at Spadwell.

A singular fact is, that at the time the body of Captain Green was found, his watch was still going. The *Reliance* left Gravesend on the 15th of June, 1841, having on board 70 Englishmen and 60 Lascars. The China men and Manilla-

men above alluded to, supplied the place of the Lascars on the homeward voyage.

It has been mentioned that one of the mates promised the crew, just before the vessel struck, that they should be in the Downs in the morning, and on the afternoon of the 10th, about 36 hours before the wreck, so fully did the captain expect to be shortly in the river, that the royal yards were sent down, and every preparation made for running up to Gravesend.



WRECK OF THE "RELIANCE."

way there, and took away a musket, a couple of pistols, and a bag of powder, with which they fired signals from the poop. O'Neill admits that those of the crew engaged in firing the signal guns got to the spirit casks, and drank to excess. Subsequently, at the captain's direction, who, according to O'Neill, manifested the greatest coolness and presence of mind, lights were placed in the mizen rigging, in order to point out their position to any boats that might come off to their assistance. The sea was now tremendous, and as the vessel rolled her bottom could be distinctly heard breaking up. The water rushed in, and her cargo of tea becoming wet burst up the decks, which for some time previous had been dangerous to stand upon, from the planks opening and shutting, whereby the feet of several seamen were jammed between the seams. Three hours had now elapsed since the vessel struck, and the day was beginning to break. The captain, with the officers and passengers, and many of the crew, were on the after part of the vessel, which still held together, the sea making a breach over her. Chests of tea floated one by one on the surface, indicating that a portion of the bottom was entirely gone. Orders were now given to get out the long-boat, but from the injuries she had sustained from the falling of the masts and rolling of the ship she was found to be useless. There were two other boats on board, but their condition at this time, as O'Neill states, was such as to render them of no service. The Europeans

among the crew were then desired by the officers to construct a raft, but this could not be accomplished. In fact, O'Neill admits that the crew refused to work at it. His statement is, that "While some of them were working at it, one said to the other, 'Why don't you lend a hand? I sha'n't work if you don't!' And they all left together. Several of the crew sought refuge on the masts and rigging that had gone to leeward, where, amidst the loose chests of tea and spars, a most precarious position continued for some time to be maintained. The vessel held together until eight o'clock p.m.: rolling fearfully from side to side with the swell of the ocean, and drenching the crew continually. About this time, Captain Green, the first mate, Mr. Walsh, and several others left the poop of the ship to take refuge with the sailors in the floating spars and rigging of the mainmast. Captain Tucker and many others still remaining on the after part of the vessel. Shortly before nine o'clock, as nearly as can be ascertained, the vessel parted midships, the sea breaking right through her, and in a few minutes she was a complete wreck, portions of her timber floating about in all directions. Numbers of the crew sank immediately, and were entirely lost sight of amidst the breakers. Captain Tucker was among this number. The captain, Mr. Walsh, O'Neill, the sail-maker, the armourer, and several others, still clung to the mainmast and rigging, which being released from the vessel, floated towards the land. Captain Green, who was near