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January 8, 1873

Some nine bodies from the wrecked ship Peruvian have been found, among which have been identified those of Capt. Vannah, Mr. Baine, chief mate, and the second mate's. The captain's body came ashore Saturday and his brother being here it was immediately recognized by him, though a good deal disfigured.

Captain R. B. Forbes says in reference to the wreck of ship Peruvian, that she went to pieces on one of the outer bars off Peaked Hill, about three-quarters of a mile off shore, and probably went to pieces before any one knew of her being there, and that from all information nothing could have saved the crew of that ship. The Humane Society have a surf boat and mortar station at Peaked Hill, and its agents would have gone to the rescue just as early as if under government pay.

January 15, 1873

The bottom of the wrecked ship Peruvian was discovered by dragging last Tuesday. She is heading S. W. and lies in twelve feet of water at low tide. She probably struck on the outer prong of Peaked Hill bars at low water as she drew 23 feet of water. The block tin, of which there were 130 tons, can be plainly seen. Several more bodies the past week have been found, very much disfigured, of course.

Peaked Hill Opens For War Service August 5, 1942 Famous Old Station Is Again Scene Of Activity

A crew of about 25 men of the Coast Guard service were brought down from Boston yesterday afternoon to bring the complement at the newly reopened Peaked Hill Station up to its required quota.

The station, which overlooks the most dangerous bars and shoals of Cape Cod which have doomed many hundreds of ships, was closed some three years ago and was later purchased by a summer resident. Some controversy followed as to the title of the property. It was never used.

- September 13, 1896 -

Bark Monte Tabor wrecked this night in 1896. Just before midnight Surfman Silvey of Peaked Hill Bars came upon an exhausted group of seamen, chattering in a foreign tongue. Life savers herded them to the station, then sought to launch a surfboat to the wrecked ship, but the sea ran too high. At dawn they found three bodies—but not of drowned men. Two had their throats slit, ear to ear, and one a bullet through his forehead. Civil authorities marched the seven survivors to police cells in Provincetown. Soon, through Italian interpreters, the story came out. In a violent gale, the bark struck on Peaked Hill Bars. Captain Luigo Genero, the mate, the steward, and a sailor whose body was never recovered, despairing, committed suicide. "They scout the idea of mutiny," translated the interpreter; "they tell of the good-bye salute and kiss of their gallant captain as he made his way to the stern and death." While the authorities pondered, in the surf, with other flotsam from the vessel, came a bottle, which contained a message fully confirming the survivors' accounts. In the third person, it briefly related how the storm struck the bark, and closed "The Captain and crew, all resigned to the will of Providence, gave their souls to God, thanked Him for the destiny assigned to them. One prayer, from the finder, for their souls.—The Captain, Genero."



ALONG THE BACK SIDE

Three Provincetown life savers lost their lives this bleak day in 1880 endeavoring to save the lives of the crew of the sloop Trumbull, stranded on the outer bar at Peaked Hill. The irony of it was that if Captain Elwell of the Trumbull hadn't insisted on getting his clothes before going ashore, and if Captain Atkins of Peaked Hill Bars station hadn't been compelled by a sense of duty to make a second trip to the stranded sloop, the tragedy would not have happened. The Trumbull, with granite, struck in a northerly gale. Captain Atkins and his men got safely alongside the sloop through angry seas, and called on the crew to jump. One by one, four jumped into the surfboat; two, Captain Elwell and Pilot Pool, didn't. There were two versions why they didn't, one that the Captain wanted to save his clothes and valuables, the other that he and the pilot refused to take a chance jumping. The lifeboat safely deposited the four passengers on shore. Then Captain Atkins, fearing the gale would break up the sloop, pulled out again. As the lifeboat neared the sloop, the Trumbull's loosened main sheet swung around the boom caught the bow of the lifeboat, and capsized her. Surfmen Young, Kelley and Fisher managed to make it to shore; Captain Atkins, Surfmen Taylor and Mayo hung on until icy waters loosened their grips and then disappeared in the deep. Next day the gale moderated, the tide floated the Trumbull, and she sailed away with captain and pilot on board.

November 30, 1880

THE BODIES ON THE BEACH

The morning of September 15, 1896 the Patrol from Peaked Hill Station found the bodies of two men lying near the water's edge with their throats cut, while farther along the beach lay another body with a bullet-hole thru the head. In the surf along the bars the battered old hulk of the Italian Bark Monte Tabor was pounding herself to bits . . . The beach was

loaded with wreckage, indicating the fury of the storm with which she had met her doom . . . But what about the bodies? Were they murdered or had their Life been taken by their own hand? It certainly looked like murder, or did it? The bodies were removed to the undertaker's and a report sent to the Italian Consul in Boston citing the possibility of triple suicide. The Consul immediately started an investigation and a com-

plete combing of the beach began. While searching thru the wreckage someone found the bottle which contained a message written in Italian. When translated it read:

"The Italian Bark Monte Tabor struck by a hurricane on Sept. 9, 1896, in latitude 40' north, longitude 70' west. The Captain and crew after having used all possible means, resigned themselves to the will of Providence. The hurri-

cane originated with a northeast wind on the 7th inst. at 1 A.M. two days previous; great lightning, then stormy and black. We tried to go on by force of sails but impossible. On the morning of the 9th of September, there were great waves and after pounding about proceeded 50 miles to the N. E. We were forced to stop. The Captain and Crew all resigned to the will of Fate, gave their souls to God, thanking Him for the destiny

assigned to them. One prayer, from the finder for their souls."

The Captain Genero.

So the puzzle was put together and the nameless bodies were identified as that of the Captain, the Steward, and the mate. What a tragic ending. What a pity that hysterics caused the death of those three, while five of the crew drowned, and seven found safety ashore. . . .

Men lacking, the Coast Guard now plans "automatic" lightships, without crews, to guide mariners off the Cape Cod coast and elsewhere along New England.

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