

Two 1841 Shipping Disasters

by Tom Donoban

In 1841, shortly before the Great Famine struck in Limerick, there was a steady flow of emigrants leaving the city's port, bound mainly for North America. In May of that year, news of a shipwreck began to filter back home. The *Quebec Gazette* carried the following report on the 24th of May 1841, which must have struck terror into the families and relations of those who perished:

**"MELANCHOLY SHIPWRECK
ONE HUNDRED AND FORTY EIGHT
LIVES LOST**

It again becomes our duty to record a calamity involving destruction of human life to an awful extent. Four of the crew and four of the passengers of the brig "*Minstrel*", Captain Outerbridge, arrived here yesterday, bringing the disastrous intelligence of which the following is, we believe, an accurate summary: The "*Minstrel*" left Limerick, Ireland, on the 21st April last, for Quebec with one hundred and forty-one passengers: emigrants intending to settle in Canada. The vessel had a tolerable passage up to Tuesday last, at four o'clock in the morning, when she struck on Red Island reef. There was a heavy sea running at the time, but the boats were launched and made fast to the fore chains. Upwards of one hundred passengers embarked in the boats, but their doom was quickly sealed: the vessel 'heeled off' into deep water and went down stem foremost, so suddenly that the 'painters' of the boats could not be cast off and the people who had embarked in the boats perished with their equally unfortunate companions on board the ship, except four of the crew and four passengers, who alone of upwards of 150 souls remained to tell the sad tale. These eight persons had embarked in the gig, which was towing astern, and fortunately for them the rope which attached it to the vessel broke when she went down. They succeeded in pulling to White Island, where they remained until the following day when they were taken off by the ship "*Wellington*", of Belfast, Captain McIntyre, and brought to Grosse Isle."

arrived at Quebec on the 23rd May from Limerick with 163 passengers.

The passengers mentioned as being saved left the *Wellington* at Grosse Isle and came to Quebec in another Limerick ship, the brig *Thetis*, commanded by Captain Ross, from Limerick, with 131 passengers.

Captain Outerbridge, of the unfortunate *Minstrel*, behaved most gallantly during the awful scene until he perished with the rest. He declared that he would not leave the vessel until his passengers were saved, and he was the last person seen by those who were in the gig.

The following are the names of the survivors:

CREW

Patrick O'Lehlin, steward; James Grady, seaman; Thomas Enright, seaman; John Donohue, apprentice.

PASSENGERS

Denis Flaherty, shoemaker and wife, Biddy; Honora Ringrose; James Collins.

The following is a statement of the number of the crew and passengers who perished:

CREW

Captain Outerbridge, mate and 9 others, total 11.

PASSENGERS

Male adults: 47;
Female adults: 41; total adults: 88
Males under 14: 10;
Females under 14: 8; total under 14: 18
Males under 7: 9;
Females under 7: 12; total under 7: 21
Infants: 10
Total perished: 148

A.C. Buchanan Esq., emigrant agent at Quebec, supplied the *Mercury* newspaper with the following complete list of the passengers and crew of the *Minstrel*:

Isaac Lydham, of the County of Limerick.¹

Martin Meagher,
Winifred Meagher,
Denis Landrigan,
Bridget Landrigan,
John Landrigan,

Mary Landrigan,
James Collins, (saved)
Pat. Collins,
Theady Collins,
John Collins,
Charles Cokely, all of Newport.²

James Stranghnessy,
Catherine Stranghnessy,
N. Moriarty,
Mary Moriarty, all of the County of Clare.

John Ryan,
Michael Ryan, all of Newmarket.³

July Franklin,
Pat Franklin,
Wilmy Franklin,
Catherine Franklin,
Timothy Cavanagh,
Kate Cavanagh,
C. Hickey,
Bridget Hickey,
Mary Hickey,
Catherine Hickey,
Bridget Hickey,
John Hickey,
James Hickey,
Michael Farrell,
Catherine Donovan,
Pat O'Brien,
John and Margaret Dillane,
Mary and Denis Dillane,
Infant John Dillane, all of the County of Limerick.

J. Enright,
Eilen Enright,
John Enright,
Peter Enright,
Bridget White,
Dan Fooley,
Ellen Fooley,
Bridget Bennett,
Catherine Bennett,
Jas. Kinnerk,
Bridget Kinnerk,
Pat. Kinnerk,
James Kinnerk,
Daniel Hanley,
Ellen Hanley,
Bridget Hanley,
John Hanley,
Ellen Hanley,
Thos. Loughlan,
Ed. Fitzgerald,
Mary Fitzgerald, his wife,
Mary Fitzgerald,
Pat. Fitzgerald,
Peg. Fitzgerald,
Pat Cannon,
Jacob Lynham,
Jane Lynham,

The *Minstrel* was well known in the Quebec trade as a passenger ship from Ireland. She belonged to Limerick and registered 296 tons. The previous year she

George Lynham,
Mary Ann Lynham,
Danl. Eliza Tim,
Johanna Tim,
Con. Tim,
Jeremiah and Catherine Mulvihill, all of
Askeaton.⁴

Wm. Pendergast,
V. Pendergast,
Mary Pendergast,
Tom Pendergast,
Thos. Flaherty,
Biddy Flaherty, (saved)
Denis Flaherty, (saved)
Mary Carney,
Michael Cullinein,
Ellen Cullinein,
Tom. Bridgman,
Bridget McNamara,
Thos Kennedy,
R. Kennedy,
Thos. Amhill,
Michael Casey,
Cath. Casey,
Margaret Casey,
Mary Dwyer, all of the county of Clare.

Pat. Carney,
Mary Carney,
James Carney,
Pat Carney,
Bridget Carney,
James Carney,
Ann Carney,
Peggy Dwyer,
Rhody Ringrose,
Michael Ringrose,
Honora Ringrose, (saved)
Will. Ryan,
James Carney,
Bridget Carney,
Peggy Carney,
Tom. Carney,
Patty Carney,
Mary Maddan,
John Meara,
John Rourke,
Thady Rourke,
Judy Rourke,
Isaac Bethel,
Catherine Bethel, all of Trook.⁵

Thomas Cronin,
Mary Cronin,
Patt. Cronin,
Mary Cronin,
Judy Cronin,
Ellen Cronin,
Timothy Cronin, all of Down.⁶

Margaret Hayes,
Mary Hayes,
Biddy Rierden,
Norvy Rierden,
James Griffin, all of Ardagh.⁷

July Murnane of Newport².
Patt. Mangan,
Biddy Mangan of Stoneman,⁸
Patt. Floyd of Doonas,⁹
Bridget Heffernan,
Michael Heffernan,
John Heffernan of Hospital.¹⁰

Loss of the Barque Amanda

The following September another report of the loss of a Limerick ship was carried in the local newspapers, albeit over a month after the event. *The Limerick Standard* of November 1st 1841 carried a story copied from the *Quebec Mercury*. The same emigrant agent, A.C. Buchanan, supplied the paper with the list of passengers and crew, as he had done some months earlier for the *Minstrel*. The following report carried in the *Standard* did not refer to the earlier tragedy:

"It is with deep regret that we record this day the wreck of this fine vessel, the property of our fellow citizen, George Williams, Esq., attended with the loss of forty-one lives. She left this port on the 22nd of August last with emigrants, and was driven ashore off Metis[-sur-Mer], on the 26th of September, and totally lost. The greater portion of the crew and passengers took to the boats, which soon swamped, and all were lost; the captain, some of the crew and passengers, who were left on the wreck, were saved. The following we take from the "*Quebec Mercury*" of October 5:-

Shipwreck of the Barque *Amanda* - Forty-one lives lost - In the *Gazette* of Friday last, we informed our readers that Captain Buchanan, of the ship *Scotland*, had seen off Metis a ship on shore, which, to all appearances was a total wreck. Yesterday morning the subjoined melancholy confirmation of that recent report was received in a letter, by Messrs. W. Price, and Co., of this city, from which we have been favoured with the following extract:-

"Metis, 29th September, 1841.

I have to inform you of the loss of the barque *Amanda*, Captain Davis, from Limerick, which came ashore at Little Metis Point, at five o'clock, on the 26th instant - She had forty passengers and a crew of eighteen. The captain, two seamen, and two apprentices were amongst those saved."

"A.C. Buchanan, Esq., Emigrant Agent, has kindly favoured us with the following list of passengers and crew:- List of the passengers and crew of the barque *Amanda*, Solomon Davis, master, bound for Quebec, cleared on the 17th August, and sailed on the 22d August, from Limerick:

PASSENGERS SAVED

James O'NEILL
Catherine O'NEILL, of the County of Clare;
Patrick HANLON, county Kerry;
Timothy MURPHY,
Michael HALL,
Maurice HALL,
Philip SARFIELD,
James NEVILL,
Margaret MOLONY, of county of Limerick;
Anne O'NEILL, of the county of Cork.
Total passengers saved- 10.

PASSENGERS LOST

James SLATTERY,
Patrik. CLANCY,
Anne MURRAY,
Mary HALL (aged 6),
J. HINCHEY,
Margaret HINCHEY,
Maria HINCHEY,
John HINCHEY,
Frederick HARDEN,
Daniel CARNEY,
Margaret CARNEY,
James CARNEY,
Mary CARNEY,
Daniel CARNEY,
Jeremiah CONNERS,
Catherine EUSTACE of Limerick;
Julia CRA WLEY,
Patrick O'NEILL,
John O'BRIEN,
Michael O'BRIEN,
Stephen RENNALS, county of Clare;
Mary CUMMINS,
Bridget CUMMINS,
Anne CUMMINS,
Catherine CUMMINS,
Michael CUMMINS, of the county of Galway;
Thomas KENNEDY, of Dingle.
Male adults lost 11
Female adults lost 12
Total Adults 23
Children Lost 6
Total passengers lost 29¹¹

CREW SAVED

Solomon DAVIS, master;
Edward ROUNDY, second mate;
Timothy BEHANE, seaman;
Patrick O'BRIEN, apprentice;
Charles DONNELLY, apprentice.
Total 5.

CREW LOST

Patrick BLAKE, 1st mate;
James McINERNEY, carpenter;
Michael HEGARTY, cook;
John FAHY, steward;
David KEEFFE,
John HARPER,
John GRAHAM,
Thomas ALLAN,
Patrick SHANNON,
Thomas HARTE,
John HYNES, sea-men;
James CUSACK, apprentice,
Francis JOHNSON, apprentice.
Total crew lost, 12.¹²

NOTES

1. Isaac Lydham is possibly same family as Lynham listed below.
2. Newport, County Tipperary.
3. Newmarket on Fergus, County Clare.
4. Askeaton, County Limerick
5. Possibly Trough, County Clare.
6. Possibly Doon, County Limerick.
7. Ardagh, County Limerick.
8. Possibly Stonehall either County Limerick or Clare.
9. Doonass near Clonlara, County Clare.
10. Hospital, county Limerick.
11. There are only 27 names listed.
12. There are 13 names listed