

## Washed Overboard from a Sinking Brigantine and Rescued After Many Days of Pain, Thirst, and Hunger.

Two sailors of the ill-fated American brigantine Mary T. Kimball arrived here yesterday on the Cunard Line steamship Umbria. They were James Jeffers and Elijah Cast of Mobile. Both are colored. They were sent here by the American Consul at Liverpool. A shipmate, Peter Madison, is in a hospital at Liverpool, a victim of the hardships they all endured during the eleven days they were adrift on a frail bit of wreckage in the Gulf of Mexico.

Those were eleven days when slow death by starvation promised the only alternative from the fate of their fellows, whom they had seen go down with their ship during one of those gales which, late in September, swept the North Atlantic from the Gulf to the Banks. Their story is one of the looked-for chapters in the tale when the ocean is storm-swept, and rescued castaways are taken to far ports, or the succoring craft is a slow going sailing vessel.

The Mary T. Kimball, Capt. James Bowers, left Mobile, where she was owned, Sept. 1, with a cargo of coal below and railroad ties on deck, for Guantanamo, on the south coast of Cuba. The mate was known to the sailormen as Mr. Flood; the second mate was called "Charley." He was a young man. The name of the cook was not known to the sailors. They called him cook. These four were white men. The crew consisted of four colored men; those already named, and Peter Mitchell. All lived in Mobile.

### Havoc by Huge Waves.

The brigantine had twenty-one days of head winds. Then a stiffening breeze from the southeast and a sea that grew in turbulence led Capt. Bowers to shorten sail. A gale ushered in the twenty-second day, when the Kimball was off the eastern coast of Cuba, and all canvas was hastily got in, and the craft scudded under bare poles before the blow. The early afternoon of that day found her laboring in a boisterous sea. Huge waves flung their ponderous masses of water over her decks, and one comber ripped off her forward house and washed it overboard, with all that the galley contained, and the crew's belongings. Another snapped the lashings of the deck-load, which shifted, while scores of the ties were heaved about, now overboard and now on deck, smashing bulwarks and boats, and threatening to crush the men, who in vain tried to work the pumps.

Presently the chain locker hatch was washed away, and tons of water that flooded the decks flowed into the hold. An attempt was made to cover the fatal opening with canvas, but the vessel had settled down by the head, and the shifted deck load bore her over until the lower foreyard dipped the crest of the waves.

The mate and the cook rushed into the after cabin for an axe to cut away the foremast, but the place was flooded, and they escaped only by a rope's end that one of the sailors threw to them. Another axe was found, but there was no getting to the foremast amid the pounding ties. The weather rigging of the mainmast was cut, however, and the stick went by the board.

Just then a sea carried Jeffers overboard. He strove in vain to regain the ship, but clutched at a floating spar, which floated to leeward, and thus saved himself.

### Two Men on a Raft.

Meantime, the rising water in the Captain's cabin had compressed the air under the roof, and the whole top flew off with a report as of an explosion. Caught by the gale, it was carried over and dropped into the sea, not far from Jeffers, while a piece of flying timber struck him in the right thigh, gouging a deep hole in the flesh. Nerved by his situation, he was almost indifferent to the wound, and abandoning the spar, he climbed on to the roof. On it he found Madison, who had been carried over with it. Then Cash was seen floating by on another piece of wreckage, and they helped him to the saving raft.

It was now twilight, and as the men on the raft lay clinging to the frame of the raised skylight, they saw their master and the four others holding on to what they might at the weather rail, which was now all that there was left of the craft above water. Those on the vessel looked despairingly at those on the raft, and those on the raft looked back, but not a word was spoken. Darkness gathered, but before it could hide the vessel from view the waters had done so, and closed over those aboard her.

The roof upon which Jeffers and his companions had clambered formed a raft of about ten feet by fifteen feet area. The storm continued to rage all that night, and the seas washed over them continually, while they narrowly escaped the heavy pieces of wreckage that were tossed about them. Daylight brought little hope. The gale showed no signs of moderating, and their raft was tossed about from high rolling billows to low sinking troughs.

### Praying for Rescue.

Jeffers yesterday told the story of the days that followed on the raft. He is a strapping fellow and very black. He is also very religious, and before the second day was over, under his tutelage, both of his companions, as he expressed it, had "experienced religion."

"They told the Lord," he said, "that if He spared their lives they would be better men." They didn't talk about much but religion after that, and prayed most of the time. The pangs of hunger then took hold on them, and thirst drove them nearly mad. Their strength waned, and each of them was rolled off the raft more than once, but recovered it. They did not dare to sleep at night, but in the day one kept watch while the others got what sleep they could, the watcher keeping the sleepers from rolling off.

The storm moderated on the sixth day, and a schooner was espied a mile and a half to leeward. The men used what strength they had in waving their oilskins, but the sail passed out of sight without their having been seen. Lingered hope gave place to despair. Dolphins, butterflyfish, and barracouta sported about them that day, and a barracouta was washed up on the raft, but Jeffers said that as these fish are scavengers no attempt was made to catch them.

Thirst had now become so painful that on this, the sixth day, the men drank salt water. It seemed to refresh them a little

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at first, but after a day or two it made them sick, and their lips and tongues swelled and their mouths became sore. The wound in Jeffers's leg caused him intense pain, and salt water blisters added to the acute sufferings of all. Being in the Gulf Stream, the water, fortunately, was warm, and they were saved the suffering that cold would have added.

### Seeing Shore in Delirium.

On the seventh day Madison became delirious, wandering in his speech, but not becoming violent. At midnight Jeffers dozed off, and when he awoke he, too, was wandering in his speech.

"Let's go ashore, boys," he said. "There's a man on the shore there calling for us. He says he'll give us food." Then he stepped off the raft and attempted to walk on the water. Madison had meantime recovered his reason, and he and Cash succeeded in saving Jeffers, who was in a state of delirium.

A butterflyfish that flopped on the raft on the eighth day was scaled and cut into three equal parts. The men eagerly ate it, and felt somewhat revived. They were then beginning to lose the sense of hunger, they said. They were next attacked with cramps, but these wore off.

### Jeffers's Dream of Rescue.

Jeffers, who appears to have been given to dreaming, was "watching" on the eleventh day, when he fell asleep. Suddenly he awoke from a dream in which a voice said to him: "Arise! arise! There is a ship which I have prepared for you."

He looked around, and there, sure enough, was a sail in sight. He aroused his companions and they waved their signals again, Cash using a shirt which he tore frantically from his back. The vessel was five miles off, but headed their way. It came nearer and nearer, and proved to be a Norwegian brig, the S. N. Hansen, Capt. Rasmussen, from *Appalachicola* for Garston, England, laden with resin.

She bore down hard-by, came around so close that the castaways caught a line which was thrown to them, and, taking a turn around the skylight, made it fast. A sailor from the Norwegian boat helped them aboard. They were put to bed in the fore-castle, poultices were applied to their sores, and after a small quantity of water was given to them the Captain gave each a little toddy and a piece of bread.

They reached Garston Nov. 20. Madison was still so ill that it was necessary to place him in a hospital. The American Consul cared for them and secured passage for Cash and Jeffers. On leaving Ellis Island yesterday they started to look for a colored boarding house. They will call on the Shipping Commissioner to-day, and he will probably send them to their Alabama home.

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