

[Mem] Hasty & the captain had left [earlier] & I did not see them.

Account of Charles W Davis 1st Mate. A Hanoverian. Who went out from N orleans.

They had pleasant weather up to Lat 58. so that they painted the vessel. Margaret conversed with him one day about the late wars in Germany & Italy. The child did not talk. He understood that Bangs had been Captain of one or two vessels before. At 2½ o'clock Am on Friday they had soundings at 21 fathoms—& thinking they were off the Jersey shore headed NE by E half E the wind being SSE—working round to South (Oakes said that the wind never held long at the SE) Both the capt. & he expected to know only their latitude not their longitude that was too dif. a calculation.! The storm was now raging— “Did the Captain turn in?— “He was in his room”! and would “come out and ask what the weather was”— The ship struck at 10 mns before 4 About 2 hours afterward the Cabin became untenable, & the sailors helped the passengers forward to the forecabin which was stronger—the latter being in their night clothes The ship lay along parallel with the shore headed east—the S or windward side up on the leeward down the deck sloping toward the shore—one end about as high¹ as the other. When he helped Margaret forward the rigging and sail had fallen across amidships so that it was dif. to get under or over it—while the sea was breaking over their heads. Margaret then asked him to get her money out of her desk? or portfolio? and then she said she would have enough to pay her passage to New York—also two large seal rings with a kind of family seal on them. He got the money which was in in doubloons about 70 dollars this he knew was all she had, except some drafts—also the seal rings & beside, 2 other smaller ladies rings & one with white stones in it, her breast pin, & her eye glass with gold handle & heavy gold chain which she did not wear that mornin. These things he brought to her & she told him if she & her husband were lost to send the child to the marquis of Ossoli in New York. He supposed that she meant her husband. The Ossolis sat still & silent. The child did not cry— Margaret sat flat on the deck in her white night dress with her back to the bulwarks on the upper—windward side her feet toward the foremast— The sea breaking over all, though the bulwarks afforded some protection. A smooth place under the lee of the vessel toward the shore was favorable for the passengers getting off. Having put Mrs Hasty on a plank— he started—swimming behind & pushing her before & they landed about 11 o'clock without any assistance He complained of a sore chest produced by the sea throwing the plank against him. This was a heroic exploit, and proves a great strength courage & skill. They completed [about] the 1st eight that got ashore. He staid on shore till the vessel went to pieces and was the last of the crew to leave the spot.

the men on shore had not courage enough to launch the lifeboat—they might have launched it without risk of life, he had seen a whale boat launched in as rough a sea. If it had been the coast of England they would all have been saved. The men sat for an hour or two on the side of the boat, doing nothing, but now & then picking up a hat that came ashore. They did not begin to *load* the mortar till it was too late—till the foremast fell.—& then they had brought but one ball though they had a plenty of them at the light House. One man said that he had done

¹In the left margin of the first manuscript page, which ends with the word “high”, T wrote the following paragraph vertically, from bottom to top:

I found the engraving at Oakes They said that they got left out of the trunk. I found the gown & one article of the child's dress at Dan. Jones Patchog & the other article of the child's dress at John Skinners in the same village—they said they were picked up 1½ or 2 miles east of the wreck. There were more things here & elsewhere which were either not worth taking or not worth waiting to see.

enough—he was not going back for another. He was at this time the only one of the crew there. Did the Captain do his duty?” “I should think he did what he could. I don’t know. he said that nobody would come ashore with him.” (The Captain did not get ashore till after the mate.) Davis & the Captain evidently were not on good terms with one another—the former did not know that Bangs was gone to Phil. till I told him, but he did not wish to say anything against him. With regard to the sea washing their clothes off he said Celesta’s were torn off perhaps by spikes in the wreck.

He said that the Ossolis had 4 trunks, perhaps 5–2 “pretty large ones” 2 smaller—one “pretty large case full of books”—a tin box marked MF which he painted over letters & all lead color on the voyage & some more small baggage

A small black iron bound trunk which I saw at Oakes’ was Margaret’s, He saw her put her [watch into] it. He saw ladies bonnets clothing &c taken out of the larger trunk when it was opened at Oakes’.— He knew that Mrs Hasty never had a tasselled dress—such as I found & described to him but he saw such a one on the voyage—in Margaret’s trunks—2 of which were often open before him.

He said that the cook was the only American among the crew—& he was “wild” i.e. intoxicated most of the time. The rest were very steady.

Account of John Helstrom a swede carpenter last 2nd mate—Davis interpreting

The Ossolis—Paulina cook—steward—& Sandford (himself (& westervelt? too?)) were in the forecandle till the forecandle commenced breaking up which was a few minutes before the foremast fell. they all left the forecandle immediately. He & Sandford went up the fore mast which was slanted over the water—then the cook & Ossoli—he & sandford helping the latter & The steward got up with the child in his arms its legs & arms sticking out— At the Same time Sandford [had] Paulina on the forerigging— When he & Sandford helped Paolina up—she being first mad Ossoli was standing behind her nex to the mast—but when they turned for her the sea² had taken her. She was drowned before her husband or child—*he was very sure of this.* a few seas after washed off the *top* by which Ossoli held & left nothing but the bare mast to cling to—then another sea washed him off— Either directly before or after this or at the same time he looked up & saw that the child was no longer in the arms of the steward. Then Came a sea & washed them all off together— It was only about 15 minutes after the forecandle began to break up.

I saw on the beach and after at their houses in Patchogue Selah Wood & Daniel Jones who were the earliest among those who admit that they were on the beach that morn They happened to be in the bay with their oyster boat under the shelter of the beach. There were many other boats a little further north.— Wood who behaved like one suspected & to be suspected said & omitting what has been related—that about 2 hours after sunrise the storm a little abating they saw the ship a mile & a half distant over bay & beach—& later went across. The foremast was

²At the top of the manuscript page beginning with “the sea”, T wrote an outline of his report:

1st before struck.

2nd till most had got shore

3^d The final breaking up.

1st Selah Woods account.

2nd Oakes’ ”

3^d account of beach.

standing the midmast was off at the top—the main mast cut off short. every sea broke over all. The tide was falling when he got there it had been over the whole beach up to the sand hills & came over again afterward The sailors kept shouting to him & he to them in vain—he motioning toward Oakes’—that he would go there. Most of the sailors & passengers effects had already come ashore. There were “many chests all stove open, broke open, and some with their locks prized off.” They looked & his companion found a fresh wagon track & a mans track & fresh horse dung—leading at last toward Oakes’. Oakes was mad with him for what he had said. When he got to the house Mr & Mrs Oakes were not to be found at once. Oakes had two men one of whom told Wood, after he had pointed out the vessel to him, that he had seen her 2 or three hours before & thought that she was sailing under bare poles at which Wood laughed at him & oakes said “You damn fool you shut your jaws you know nothing about it.” The first man came ashore while he was at oakes’ and had a life-preserver on. one or two more preservers washed ashore afterward. The sailors exclaimed—“My trunks, chests, all poor sailors things robbed, broken open & gone”. He himself had a rope round his body & stood in the surf & helped save all but 2 or 3 The Captains head was driven into the sand and it was with difficulty that they got him out. No dead body came ashore till the vessel broke up The sailors did not send their clothing ashore on planks. Their clothes probably were not washed off much—except Paulina’s. He delivered to Domy & a large man (Prine says it was Le Roy) “separate bundles of letters & papers” which the large man opened on the spot & separated & threw down on the beach what he thought of no value— What he threw down had writing on them. The Capt said he had rather have gone ashore among pirates. He could have gone to the wreck in a skiff on Thursday.

Mr & Mrs Oakes’ account

There had been no such storm since they had lived there or for 11 years few could remember such a storm at this season of the year—they compared it to the September gale—the fruit trees on the main land were much injured by the spray. their fire was put out by the rain—their house was isolated, the sea breaking quite over the beach in a hundred places. several oyster boats were sunk in the bay &c Their own boat still lay bottom up in the water. Oakes said that had been out early attending to his boat garden &c came in threw himself wet on the side of his bed & fell into a sound sleep. Was waked up about 9 o clock out of a very deep sleep & told that there was a vessel ashore rubbed his eyes & did not know where he was for a long time. sent a man for the life boat at the L H 3½ miles off—& went himself to the beach— Met one sailor 20 rods from the shore—there being nobody else there, he was in good heart & Oakes directed him to the house then another came ashore he went after the former directing him to go on & hasten the life boat They began to come ashore pretty fast. He had 3 naked men to take care of at once—one was entirely naked & Mr Adams put his frock coat over him— The sea washed all their clothes off— The captain was one of the three He was a dead man & oakes standing in the water up to his middle pulled him out with difficulty— He rolled him on a barel on the shore & in a few moments he cried “Oh—dont—you hurt me—” speaking up pretty strong Then they desisted— wrapped him up in buffaloes & took them all to his house in the wagon—the captain talking by the way—he was the farthest gone of any who were saved & did not get over the drowning & the rolling which last hurt his breast while he stayed at oakes’.

Mrs Oakes said that she could see the vessel & passengers plainly from the windows the first two sailors rested 15 minutes in her house then went on to the L. H.—one came back with the boat—the other not till the next day— After the first 13 got ashore at low tide there was an interval of an hour or two before the final breaking up during which no one left the vessel. Meanwhile

Mrs Oakes got clothing ready for the Ossolis in her bedroom & kept a fire agoing. She thought Mrs Hasty would have fainted when she heard that the ship had all gone to pieces. Mrs Hasty told her that Margaret wanted her get ashore & hurry the boat Vessel went to pieces says Oakes about 3½. Pm. Paulina washed ashore entirely naked about 4 o clock Pm One man Sandford had life in him when he came ashore but was not restored—had a wound in his side. The crew & Mrs Hasty 15 in all came directly to Oakes' House & stayed there.

It requires 8 or 10 men to get the life boat to the shore—they had to row it down in the bay 3½ miles then get it across the beach haf a mile more. In the winter there are not men enough on the beach to man the life boat & no body is made responsible for the use of it—or is paid for any service in it. Its complement is 7 men 1 to steer & 6 to row. It did not reach the wreck till about 12— If it had been there at 10½ or at low tide they might all have been saved. Storm at its height in the morning—vessel broke up at high rate in the afternoon.

One man told me that he saw Bangs tear up a pape part print part writing at Oakes—and Oakes told him not to do that again.

Mrs. Hasty told mrs Oakes that the sailors behave remarkably well were wonderfully ready to assist the passengers. They used such expressions as “fine lady” kind lady” referring to Margaret.— Mrs Hasty told her that The child had nothing but its night gown on at first it never cried at all. When found it was quite naked. Mr Oakes brought it up in his buffalo. Mrs Oakes who laid it out in a little blue dress found in the trunk—says it was a quite long stout & fleshy child with a large head which it would have outgrown with only a few pits left on its face. Just such a head as Arthur Fuller. Mrs Hasty told her it had just begun to talk Ital & English. It had “very short thin hair a little lightish—” & its hand bled the next day. It was buried sat afternoon 50 rods west of the house almost 3 feet deep as deep as the water would permit.

She said that Mrs Hasty was 28 or 9 years old. Had her husbands likeness on her wrist & his gold watch still running when she got to the house. That mrs Hasty thought they might all have been saved if they had done as the Captain advised. She & margaret split a cotton handkerchief & tied their money about their persons, 60 or 70 dollrs each. When they struck the passengers were all abed. There was great confusion the water coming into the cabin—every wave poured over them they got what they could to put on— Paolena screamed as loud as she could for 20 minutes— Ossoli said it was of no use & pacified her— Then she got on her knees & prayed an hour as hard as she could pray. & then kept quiet. Ossoli made a long prayer all kneeling & the water washing over them in the forecstle—referring to Mrs Hasty as one of another faith. Mrs Hasty could not endure the thought of being crushed by the deck. which was lifted by each wave. The crew in the mean while were above them fixing to get off at low tide.

The marble [caused] that at the first thump she broke her knees off like pipe staves

I saw at John Skinner's Patchog a calico dress like the pattern I [brought] much torn—with silk fringes—and drawers & a night gown torn. Elikom Jones said he would forward a ladies shift which a Quorum man had got—with perhaps the initial S M F on it—

At Carman's Rowland's in Patch—a gentleman's shirt

At W^m Gregory's rumor of a child's petticoat & a heap of rags He said his brother had much more

W^m Smith near Patch. a childs striped apron & a lady's skirt fringed.

Orrin Rose & Obadiah Greene of sayville had something

Geo Curtis of Sayville Skirt of a silk dress lilac ground mid. dark stripe—& many more.

The Great S beach is the principal beach on the S shore of long Island. It is 4 or 5 miles from the main land. separated from it by a very long & shallow bay which in two instances it took me 5 hours to cross on account of head winds. The bay abounds in oysters clams. This beach alone is 40 miles long without an inlet & half a mile wide rarely rising more than 25 feet above the ocean at any point. It is pure sand without rocks—thinly covered with beach & other grasses & shrubs. The western end near Fire Island Inlet is called Fire Island beach from some low sunken islands of that name in the Bay opposite. There are but 4 houses worth naming on the whole beach—Selah Strongs at the Light H. one mile from the Western extremity—Felix Dominy's Public house 1 mile furth east—Smith Oakes' another public house 3 ms further & Homans 10 miles further still. There are 2 or 3 temporary fishermen's bunks beside. Dominys is deserted in the winter. A mile further west across the inlet commences the West Beach. Almost every family on the neighboring main land owns a large oyster boat and such as did not chance to be on the ground at the time of the wreck—instantly repaired thither even some women & children taking their [provision]—for the purpose of plunder. This they do not pretend to deny. There are some proper pirates among them but most do not deserve this name—they are rather low thieves & pilferers without the spirit of pirates— A Thorough investigation would implicate many apparently respectable people—and I found there in the [shops] many who were inclined to hold fast to the property which their husbands & sons had stolen, who had already fitted to themselves the dresses of the drowned—& were unwilling to give them up as mementoes to the relatives of the departed. In the village of Patchogue & Sayville especially I should say that those whose hands are quite clean of this business are in the minority. Probably the inhabitants of no shore would have behaved worse It will take the honest a long time to wipe out the disgrace. which their towns have incurred & Probably Islip & Babylon would have been equally disgraced if their inhabitants had not been delay by a head wind.

I saw cartloads of [all most] {*illegible*} & the possessor trembled [w]hen I whispered of the small pox [that it was] {*illegible*} he had stolen with them {*illegible*} [for] oil was sold for little or nothing in that neighborhood—& soap they would not have to buy for many a year— I heard of persons in Patchogue who had no visible means of support—who would tell you how they live if you will give them 5 dollars— The thieves told me that they withdrew a little & divided the spoil—(while the friends of the dead are seeking their remains)—this will do for your child & that for your wife—these were the expressions which they themselves quoted. I found the young men playing at dominoes with their hats decked out with the spoils of the drowned.

Some had heard that there were 3000 dolls in rings on the fingers of the Marchioness. barrels of oil wer rolled across the beach haf a mile in the night & carried off in boats though a guard had been set over them trunks of sewing silk were stolen &cc for 2 or 3 nights following. They stole from one another—what some had hid in the bushes others stole again—according to the testimony of a third party.

They went along the shore stoving open boxes & chests & swearing when they did not find what they wanted. in spite of insufficient guard.

On Wednesday evening as I walked down the beach I saw great quantities of coarse rags & wood 4 or 5 miles west of the wreck which at first loomed up in the distance like rocks 10 or 15 feet high— Everything like a pocket among the rags was filled out with sand by the action of the waves though every one had been ripped open. I picked up the skirt of a gentlemans coat

with a pair of linen gloves beside it the latter so knotted up among the rags that I could not separate them without a knife—yet the fingers were filled with sand as if there was a hand in them. I ripped a button from the former which I afterward compared with one which I ripped from a coat known to be Ossoli's by the beads in the pocket at Oakes on Saturday & {illegible} I do not remember whether the latter coat had lost its skirt. The beach was covered with almonds & juniper berries sometimes in heaps of a bushel or more—& half a mile from the water—and a few bars of castile soap rolled into cylinders & spirally striped like a barber pole.

I saw many leaves of a large unbound Latin Book—scattered over the beach a mile from the wreck. The Universal Anatomy of Paul Mascagnius Pisa 1826

Oakes' is a proper pirates house with the stern ornaments of wrecked vessels over the doors. Oakes was once a car man in N. York—his house has been searched and he has had much trouble on account of his dealings with wrecked vessels.

The Captain signs himself “Henry P Bangs Master ship Elizabeth.”

I heard of one of her knees 10 miles east of the wreck on Wednesday.

Selah Strong was there at 3 or 4 PM.

Gregory saw a man with six hats on.