

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Marine DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. 315

Presf

~~Misc~~

Dated

16 7

1859

Not to be folded or roughly handled

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Marine Department,
from 16th to 22nd July 1859.*

No. 1. Read the following letter from J. J. FRANKLIN, Esq., Superintendent of Marine:
to T. PYCROFT, Esq., Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George, dated 5th
July 1859, No. 2647.

I have the honor to forward the accompanying original letter from the Assistant Master Attendant, reporting the foundering of the "Sir Charles Napier" on her way from Rangoon to Falmouth, the treatment that the Commander his wife and the Crew met with on reaching Pulo Brasso, an Island at the North East end of Sumatra, and their subsequent rescue by the Commanders of the English country Ship "Melanie" and French Vessel "Jean Victor." I likewise forward an original Memorandum in the handwriting of the late Commander of the lost Vessel.

2 These papers shew that both the Commanders acted in a most praiseworthy spirit of determination in rescuing the unfortunate parties from the Islanders, and recovering as much of their property as possible. Captain Barton and his second Mate Mr. Thompson, seem to have been particularly active in their exertions, and the former ran some risk of injury from a man, who is stated to have been about to strike him with a creese. Captain Petibon also equally exerted himself in obtaining redress for the injuries suffered, and both sent armed Boats to the Village where the plunder was concealed, and recovered what they could. Moreover Captain Petibon supplied the sufferers with money and such provisions as he could spare the "Melanie" being a Country Ship and not supplied with food for an English Crew. He certainly received a Bill on the owners for the amount thus advanced, but this cannot in any way detract from the kindness with which he was actuated, and I would beg to suggest that the thanks of Government be tendered to him for the alacrity and kindness displayed by him in rendering aid to Englishmen in distress.

3. I would moreover solicit that Government should make some acknowledgement to Captain Barton and to his second Officer for the promptitude with which they proceeded to the rescue of the Captain of the ill-fated Vessel and his wife when they heard from a Malay, who boarded them near Acheen, that they were on the Island of Pulo Brasso.

4. The Crew were brought to Madras by the "Melanie" and a charge for this will probably be submitted.

From J. McKENNIE, Esq., Assistant Master Attendant; to the Superintendent of Marine,
dated Madras, 4th July 1859, No. 335.

I have the honor to report for the information of Government that on Saturday, 2nd Instant, the "Melanie" (Captain Barton) arrived from Acheen and Penang having on Board 13 persons late Crew of the Barque "Sir Charles Napier" of which William Balsillie was Commander. Appended hereto are the names of the above, the country to which they belong, with the situations which they respectively held on Board the ill-fated Vessel.

2. The Chief Officer appeared at the Master Attendant's Office and stated that the Vessel which belonged to Mr. Rutherford and sailed from Sunderland left Rangoon, 17th May, laden with Rice bound to Falmouth for orders, but which Port she never reached, having including Captain's Wife, 15 persons on Board.

3. That on the 30th May 10 o'Clock at night in Latitude 4, North Longitude 94, East the Vessel sprung a leak which the watch could not keep pace with. All hands were called which also could not lessen the quantity of water, which when the Crew abandoned her had eight feet water in the hold. On the 2nd June 7-30 A. M., the three Boats were lowered down. The Captain his Wife Chief Mate, Charles Morgan, A. B. and James Johnson, O. S. proceeded in the long Boat. In the Captain's Gig went Robert Balsillie 2nd Officer, Martin Gardiner Carpenter, Alexander Mackintosh, A. B. John Chemist, A. B. William Dixon Steward. In the Jolly Boat proceeded Alexander Paul, A. B. Thomas Wilson, A. B. John Brown, A. B. William Miller, O. S. Thomas Smith, Boy, all Boats were ordered by the Commander to proceed towards the nearest land which he supposed would be the Island of Pulo Brasso. The long Boat only had sail (Mainsail Jib

Handwritten signature

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Marine Department,
from 16th to 22nd July 1859.*

and Foresail) cutter rigged. The other two Boats having no sail were obliged to be pulled by Oars which when the weather became calm towed the long Boat. Same day saw the sinking Vessel on one side and made the land on the other which proved to be the Island above named.

A strong breeze springing up separated all the Boats the night before however a change took place in the disposition of the Boats Crew. The Chief Mate having been sent by the Captain from the long into the Jolly Boat.

Next day the Steward and apprentice were sent from the Gig into the long Boat, about two hours all Boats lost sight of each other. The Jolly Boat first got into Pullo Brasso. The Gig Company all the first night steering for Acheen at the same time they were chased by two armed "Prahus" under Oars. Owing to the darkness of the night they escaped. Day light in the next morning the two Prahus were again seen lying at anchor off the mouth of the River and which gave chase after the Gig and fired ball at it to surrender which obliged the Boat to heave to.

The two "Prahus" came up alongside the Boat and robbed them of every thing they had namely Clothes, and Ship's Fire Arms which the Prahus took on shore.

The Jolly Boat escaped into Acheen. The Gig was seized by both "Prahus" the Crews of each consisting of 30 in number.

The Crew of the "Prahus" gave the shipwrecked Mariners some curry and rice a hut to sleep in, and did not ill-treat them. The Gig was kept by the Natives but the Crew was sent under a guide a distance of 3 miles to the King of Acheen where they remained 2 days.

At Acheen the "Jean Victor," a French Vessel came in. Both Boats Crews proceeded on board this Vessel where they remained until the next day, Captain Burton of the "Melanie" then came for and took them on board accompanied by the late Master of the ill-fated Vessel.

2. Captain Balsillie and the whole of the long Boat's Crew were on board the "Melanie" about 6 hours, before the other 2 boat's Crews. This was on the 9th June when the whole of the lost Vessels Crew met together - Captain Balsillie his Wife and 2 Boys came on board the "Melanie" after being rescued by Captain Burton from the hands of the Natives on the Island of Pullo Brasso.

3. The "Melanie" remained at anchor 2 days after they arrived on board, on the 3rd day being 12th June got under weigh and sailed for Madras where she cast anchor as above stated on the 2nd July.

4. On the 23rd June, on board the "Melanie" the Captain's Wife was confined of a Female Child which died on the same evening (cause caught cold.) Three days after (26) the Captain died (cause general fever,) and on the 30th June his Wife departed this life (cause from child birth and fever) and all were buried at Sea.

5. I beg to state that I gave these people (who are all in the prime of life and in good health) with the exception of the Carpenter who is suffering from a severe cold caught from exposure in the Boat after leaving the "Sir Charles Napier," an order to go into the Sailor's Home. They will be dealt with agreeably to the provisions for distressed Seamen.

6. The undermentioned Articles were saved from the Ship wrecked Vessel and put into the Boats, viz. 1 Chronometer, 2 Barometers, 3 Compasses, some bread, water, Coffee, Tea, Sugar, Brandy for Medicines, Ale and Wine with some matches, Coconut Oil and Oakum, the whole of the three latter serving together proved very useful to cook food.

7. The Crew of the long Boat wish it to be particularly mentioned that had it not been for the great exertions of Captain Burton of the "Melanie" they would all have been murdered his influence on this occasion appears to be owing to his being able to speak the Malay language fluently. He freely risked his life to rescue them and was successful. One of the Malays drew a two edged weapon and went behind Captain Burton to cut him down and was defeated, only by his being too active for his opponent who was kept off by Captain Burton's sword which fortunately he carried with him at the time. The whole of the Crew of the

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Marine Department,
from 16th to 22nd July 1859.*

"Sir Charles Napier" also wish to add their testimony in behalf of Captain Burton, who treated them as kindly and plentifully as the Ship could afford. The Crew further wish the name of Mr. Thompson the 2nd Officer (of the "Melanie") to be inserted in their expression of gratitude.

8. No apparent cause can be assigned by any of the Crew for the sudden leak. The Vessel had been making a steady leak at the rate of (2) two inches of water per hour from the time she left Rangoon until she sprung aleak except one day before the accident when the leak increased greatly, the watch however was at that time able to keep her free. The Log Book has been saved, but it has not yet been presented to me.

9. Without any intention to connect cause with effect, I observe the "Sir Charles Napier" was built at Sunderland and is only classed A. 1 for 8 years. It may be further observed that she has been on shore twice since leaving England on 10th December 1857, however the Vessel has been docked once since that period.

List of Crew of the late Barque "Sir Charles Napier."

Name.	Rank.	To what place belonging.
Alexander Grieg.....	Chief mate.....	Dundee.
Robert Balsillie.....	Boat swain.....	Dunbar.
Martin Shepherd Gardner.....	Carpenter.....	Southshields.
William Dickson.....	Cook.....	Sunderland.
Alexander Powell.....	A. B.	Prussia.
John Brown.....	do.	Liverpool.
John Chemits.....	do.	Sweeden.
Charles Morgan.....	do.	Hamburgh.
Thomas Wilson.....	do.	Finland.
Alexander McIntosh.....	do.	Arbroath.
William Miller.....	O. S.	Dunbar.
James Johnstone.....	do.	Swinefleet.
Thomas Smith.....	Apprentice.....	Sunderland.

(Signed) J. McKENNIE,
Assistant Master Attendant.

On my arrival here I come to express you my thankfulness and gratitude; as well as that of my Wife, Steward, and two of my men all of the Crew of my Ship Sir Charles Napier towards Captain Barton of the Ship Melanie from Coringuy, Ship owners Mr. Lecombe, to whom we are not only indebted for the good treatment which he did not cease towards us, since the seventh of June until now, but yet and above all for our lives which he saved on Pulo Brass at the risk of his own life; where I two days previous had taken land, and where the treachery, and barbary of the natives kept us in a constant fear of being stabbed; they not only contented to plunder all my things, would not allow us either to Sail away or give us any thing to eat; being constantly in the Boat on watch for fear of their coming, to put an end to our life; Captain Bartons behaviour has been in this case so humanly and brave; that it is as well for me a pleasure as a duty to let you know his proceedings the 7th of June his Ship having come to an Anchor on the Coast of Acheen; he heard by a Malay that a Ship had foundered at Sea and that the men were on Pulo Brass; he at once had a Boat manned and taking with him the Malay who did not want to accompany him for fear of the Islanders on Pulo Brass he forced him to go with him as soon as they were landed on the South East Coast of Pulo Brass the Malay told him the white men were on the other side of the Island, he and his second Mate Mr. Thompson took their course through the woods and over the Island; they soon met some Islanders whom Captain Barton learned to be those who had plundered us meanwhile Captain Barton spoke to some of these one went back of him and drawing his knife was going to stab him; very happily Captain Barton perceived him and drawing his own Sword he told him although they were many he was

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Marine Department,
from 16th to 22nd July 1859.*

not afraid of them all what he asked was to have his fellow creatures delivered, if so he would make them a handsome present, and if not he and his second Mate were determined to sell their lives dearly Mr. Thompson having promised his Captain to share his fate, be it what it might then Captain Burton catching hold of the head man by the Arm, he forced him, Sword in hand, to take him where we lay at Anchor inside the Surf. It is impossible for me to find expression strong enough to relate my feelings my wife and fellow sufferers when we perceived Captain Barton and his Mate; having got on Shore to him whom we considered as our Saviour, as we every moment expected to be killed by the natives, we related him the ill treatment they had used towards us, he having always hold of the plunderer forced him to give up my Chronometer and many of the things they had taken away. Night coming on and not thinking prudent to stop on Shore we made sail for his Ship where owing to his as well as to his Lady's kindness we soon recovered from the distressed state in which we were the 8th in the afternoon I with Captain Barton went to the Acheen River to see if we could get any news from my Crew, ten men in all who had made for land in two other Boats.

As soon as we were on Shore the Mate of the French Ship "Jean Victor" from Nantes in France Ship owners Messrs. Gabriel Lauriol and Co., under the Command of Captain Petibon, J. M.; had been sent to us by his Captain to tell us the remainder of my Crew was all safe on Board of him; the next day morning having gone on Board of the "Jean Victor," to express my thanks to Captain Petibon; for his kind behaviour to my men; my Mate made me the report that on the fourth of June they had taken land near Pulo Keechil, and that two Proas having chased them a whole night but that owing to the darkness they did not catch them until the next day morning when being fired at by the Proas they were obliged to heave to; they then were taken on Shore where they plundered them of every thing even of one of the Boats; leaving only an old rotten Boat; they then left them go under promise that they would not say any body how they had been treated; that same day they came in the River of Acheen and having gone up the River they came to a Village where one of the King's head men kept them and treated them as kindly as could be telling them that place where they landed previously before Captain Petibon having heard the same report from my Mate; had at once gone up to the King of Acheen to complain of these men, and tell him how my poor men had been treated asking him to send a messenger to the place where the things had been plundered the King persuaded him all the things would be taken back and the men who had done this mischief punished; and he at once sent a messenger to the Shore, Captain Petibon, telling him that if they were not delivered he asked the King's permission to go land in arms with his Crew and that of the Melanie and to take it by Force and show them a little they have been wrong in acting as they have done; as Captain Petibon is on friendly terms with the king allowed him to do it but however he said it was better to wait until his messenger came back; Captain Petibon took leave of him taking at the same time the ten men of my Crew that same day Captain Petibon having seen on shore a Boat which he saw at once to be European, thinking that we were yet in her made for the land, as quick as he could for fear the natives would do us harm as soon as he was on Shore he told the natives the Boat was to be delivered, and that he would repay them for having saved her he then enquired of two Madras men what had become of me wife and three men and heard with pleasure that we were safe on Board of the Melanie; then he took my long Boat on Board where he put in safety the little cloth we had saved, the 9th at 10 o'clock in the morning I went to express my best thanks to Captain Petibon for his good behaviour to my men; and I can say myself that I received from him as good a reception as I could expect from my own brother; making me any offer he to get me in a friendly country as quick as possible, but he going to Lombock and not wanting to detain him I preferred accepting the offer of Captain Barton who was going to Madras however I accepted from Captain Petibon victuals which we would have been short of as well as money for the expenses my men I had made and fresh victuals for the passage. My Crew join me with pleasure to ask you to have the kindness after such a good treatment as we received from Captain Barton and the French Captain Petibon to give publicity to my letter thinking the least we could do to express our thanks being sorry that

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Marine Department,
from 16th to 22nd July 1859.*

our misfortunes do not allow us to give them a remembering of our thankfulness however they are such noble hearts that the pleasure of having been of good service to us repays then well, good heart need no reward; so is their saying.

No. 2.

ORDER THEREON, 16th July 1859, No. 315.

The Superintendent of Marine forwards a letter from the Assistant Master Attendant, reporting the foundering of the "Sir Charles Napier" on her way from Rangoon to Falmouth, the treatment that the Commander, his wife and the Crew met with on reaching Pulo Brasso, an Island at the N. E. end of Sumatra, and their subsequent rescue by the Commanders of the English country Ship "Melanie" and the French Vessel "Jean Victor." He likewise forwards an original Memorandum in the handwriting of the late Commander of the last Vessel.

2. The Honorable the Governor in Council has read these papers with much interest. The conduct of the Commanders of the "Melanie" and "Jean Victor" in having with much promptitude and courage rescued the Commander, his wife, and the Crew of the shipwrecked Vessel from the Islanders, and recovered as much of their property as could be regained is highly honorable to them. The Superintendent of Marine will convey to Captain Barton of the Ship "Melanie," and to his first Officer Mr. Thompson, the acknowledgments of Government for their spirited and humane behaviour on the occasion, and will report what more substantial and permanent marks of the approbation of Government may be conferred upon them.

3. The French consul Mr. Lecot, to whom a copy of this order and of Mr. Franklin's letter will be furnished, will also be requested to convey the thanks of the Madras Government to Captain Petibon of the French Ship "Jean Victor," whose conduct was equally praiseworthy.

(Signed) T. PYCROFT,
Chief Secretary.

Exd. A. P. W. Begbie.

Law

Marine Department.

Proceedings of the Madras Government.

Read the following letter
from the Superintendent
of Marine.

(Here enter 5th July 1859,
No. 2647.)

Order thereon, 16th July 1859, No. 315.

The Superintendent
of Marine forwards a
letter from the Assistant
Master Attendant, reporting
the foundering of the ship
"Charles Napier" on her way
from Rangoon to Calcutta,
the treatment that the com-
mander, his wife, and the
crew met with on reaching
Pulo Brasso, an island
at the N. E. end of Su-
matra, and their subse-
quent rescue by the com-
manders of the English
Country Ship "Malanie"
and French vessel
"Jean

ms
Ag
N

"Jean Victor." He likewise forwards an original Memorandum in the handwriting of the late Commander of the lost vessel.

Manie Miller to England dated 23^d
September 1859.
Receives to 8/14 February
1860 of 1859 -

121

75th 451-75th 593-

9/15/1859

Manie Miller to England

1859

Pro of 8/22 1859
Manie Miller to England

1859