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The Canadian Post.

LINDSAY, FRIDAY, AUGUST 11, 1893

THE LOST "YVONNE."

Steamer King Philip, Hr. McDowell, Liverpool, arrived at 7 p.m. yesterday. Fine weather with moderate west wind throughout.

This is an extract from the shipping news published by a Boston paper one morning last August. My attention was called to it by a young man who sat beside me on a train coming into town from Riverside. He put his thumb on the place and handed me the paper with an excited gesture.

"My canoe—my watch—my sweater!" he said. "Been afloat three weeks to-day. I must go down to the King Philip and claim my property."

"Floated away by a rising tide from some place where you had drawn the canoe up, I suppose," said I.

"No. Haven't you heard how I lost my canoe? I've told so many people about it that I thought everybody in West Newton knew. But I was forgetting; you're almost a stranger there. Well, the Yvonne was blown out to sea and I with her."

"You don't say so! How did you manage to get ashore without her?"

"That's the story. I'll tell you all about it. There's time enough before we get to Boston."

"Three weeks ago to-day I got into the Yvonne at Kennepunkport and paddled out beyond the pier to sea. The weather was fine and the sea calm. There wasn't a curl on the water; nothing but the long ocean swell. Still I didn't feel quite comfortable out there. Were you ever at sea in a canoe? No?"

"Well, perhaps you can imagine how the size of the water affected me. I had never before been out in a canoe on anything wider than the Charles between Riverside and Waltham. It wasn't that I felt in danger of capsizing or being unable to get back to land; but an oppressive sense of the enormous spread of the sea grew on me as I knelt in my cockle shell away out there, with my head only three feet or so from the billows."

"There was no island on the offing; nothing but sea and sky and gulls, except the red canoe of a young Englishman named Albert Edward Jones, who had gone out from Kennepunkport half an hour or so before I did."

"We called him 'Wales' Jones, and I must say that a more unsober chap I never came across than he seemed. I suspect now that nothing worse than shyness was the matter with him."

"All day long he was paddling, generally out at sea, and certainly he was a wonderful hand in a canoe."

"Often he would stay out in a wind that sent bigger surf ashore than most of the bathers liked, and in he would come, fairly sliding along on the crest of some curling wave that would wester around his canoe near the pier so that you'd be sure he must go down before reaching quiet water in the river."

"I thought him foolhardy, though I could appreciate his great skill with the paddle. Most of the summer people regard him as demented to run such risks."

calculation that it will stay just so.

"As I withstood my nervous feeling it nearly disappeared and I paddled out perhaps a mile. The weather was perfectly clear; there was just a breath of air from the south at first. This died away after awhile; the afternoon sun beat fiercely down and yet I sat so close to the cool water that I was not uncomfortably hot."

"I was paddling in 'trunks,' with my well-tanned arms and shins bare. My sweater and my watch were in the stern, for I knelt before the second thwart."

"Instead of coming toward me, as any American fellow would have done on seeing me, Wales stood farther out, and I could barely make out the gleam of his red canoe through the heat spirals and faint mist that cling close to the sea on a hot, calm day. When I became convinced that he either didn't see me or wouldn't come in for a chat, I began to think of turning back to shore."

"In fact, I did turn, but I still had plenty of daylight ahead of me; the shore seemed not more than a mile away, and I just sat there without paddling and let her swing on the billows."

"I suppose I must have fallen into a sort of dream. Though I did not sleep nor close my eyes, I wasn't taking notice of anything. How long this lasted I can't say, but I was suddenly roused by a faint shout from seaward. At that I turned to see Wales Jones coming in at a great pace."

"His double-bladed paddle was going like the arms of an old-fashioned windmill. He was within a quarter of a mile or so of me, and I could make out that he was down on one knee, with the other leg thrust out in front of him—his favorite attitude for putting on all steam."

"I got it into my head that he was 'hitting it up,' as he calls speeding, by way of showing me his superior pace; but pretty soon he jumped to his feet, pointed to shore with his paddle and shouted some words that I couldn't make out."

"There was no mistaking the gesture, though. I looked ashore to see the sky blackening with the coming of a squall."

"Well, sir, in about one minute, I guess, there was no shore to be seen. It had been blotted out. A front of rain and wind came fairly shrieking over the water. I knew there was no use trying to paddle or control the Yvonne; the best thing I could do was to lie down and so give her my body for low ballast."

"As I stretched myself out in the bottom, the squall broke over me with a fury that passed almost as quickly as it came. It was just as though some vast mouth had opened, giving one long, mighty puff and closed again."

"Little more sea had risen than would come on a big pond with such a sudden gale. But where was Wales? I looked back as I turned toward shore. In the distance I saw the squall racing away; I was confident that it had fled past where I had seen the Englishman, yet not a glimpse of his red canoe did I catch."

"Before I had fairly searched the seaward horizon the wind came up of which the squall had been a forerunner. It was not what you'd call a great wind, but from the first I could feel that it was going to be a steady and a rising wind. It blew straight from shore, and I put in my paddle with wonder whether I had strength to make head against it blown enough to save myself from being blown out to sea."

"I was in good condition, for I had been paddling on the Riverside reach six or eight miles almost every day since April, but pretty soon I began to see that I could not make the shore."

"The wind was no gale, you understand, but it was dead against me and its pressure was as steady as a jackcrew's. The Yvonne is one of these 'girling' canoes, made on the bark canoe model, and too high in the sides and ends for work in wind. Perhaps you know how hard it is to keep a canoe of that model straight into the wind's eye?"

"Well then, you can fancy how she fell off first to this side and then when I corrected her to the other, as her nose caught the wind on coming up over wave after wave."

"The sea was rising. It was not high, it was not yet dangerous. I was under no fear of capsizing or being swamped; my fear was only that I could not make head against wave and wind. Not to do so meant being blown out to sea."

"I could, I soon saw, get through the water more quickly by steering half-across seas instead of dead against them, but I was sure the Yvonne drifted aside where I gave her quarter at all to the breeze. The wide-bottomed canoes have no such hold on the water as a Rob Roy or a Peterboro. Of course I could gain nothing by running quickly at an angle to the shore if I were drifting out from it at the same time, so I doggedly stuck to my straight-at-the-wind paddling."

"My one hope was that some yacht or catboat would come to me before my strength went; but not a vestige of canvas could I see except the sprit-sail of some boat running to and fro in the river inside the Kennepunkport pier. I could see many people ashore, like puppets moving about, but I well knew that they were so accustomed to the sight of Wales at sea that they would never imagine me to be in danger in waves much smaller than the Englishman played with."

"Sea and wind gradually rose till I doubted whether I was gaining an inch. Little white caps began to break near me and greater ones in the northern and southern distances. If waves with

formidable crests arose I was sure they would pour over the Yvonne's sides.

"All the time I was thinking of the fate of Wales, fancying how his body was drifting down and down far behind me and imagining the same ending for myself. Twice I had turned to glance behind without making out his low-sided, red canoe, so I was the more convinced she had been rolled upside down in the squall."

"Hello! Is this Brighton station? I shall have to hurry up with the story. Well, I suppose I struggled in that situation for three-quarters of an hour without gaining fifty yards. All the time the waves were coming up higher till the crests ran past me in a swirl of bubbles. As the boys say, I thought my name was Dennis, and then I heard a distinct 'Ahoy, there.'"

"I turned to the north to see Wales not more than two hundred yards away. He was easily making head against the sea though not running into the eye of the wind, but half across seas. I never saw anything prettier."

"Up he would climb lightly; on the crest his bow hovered in a boil of white water which he took always on his quarter with a movement that seemed to tip his canoe away from the crest; then out would shoot the red witch of a Peterboro till half her length seemed to glisten clear of water and down she went with the careless sweep of a gull."

"But Wales was not making as if to reach me. His course was northward, at an angle away from mine, and from the peculiar swing of him it was plain that he was in a state of high satisfaction."

"'Ahoy there!' he shouted again. 'Ahoy!' I answered. 'Are you all right?' 'No, all wrong.' 'That so? Then I'll come to you.' 'With one stroke of his long paddle he turned to the left in the trough, rose, taking the next crest on the north quarter and in a few minutes was close alongside.'"

"Are you making headway?" he asked me. 'I told him I thought not. 'Let me see,' said he, and kept even pace with me for a minute. 'No, you're losing,' he said, 'I wondered why I was overhauling you so fast. Of course she drifts if you give the wind her quarter. It's a bad scrape. Are you doing all you can?' 'Every pound,' I said. 'Well, what are you going to do about it?'"

"Nothing to do. I might as well let her drift, but for the shame of giving up so. 'Gammon,' he said, and laughed. 'I thought this rather heartless, but said nothing. 'I might get ashore and send out a catboat,' he said, doubtfully. 'I wish to goodness you would, then,' I answered. 'But then no catboat might be ready. Or it might miss you. No, one of us must lose his canoe.'"

"That's pretty clear, and myself, too," said I. 'Gammon! The question is shall I get in with you or get in with me?' 'Gracious, you can't change into my canoe in this sea. And your canoe won't carry us both.'"

"She won't, eh?" he said, as if annoyed. 'I suppose my remark decided him, for he was extremely proud of his canoe. Next instant he ran her bow close alongside of the Yvonne and spoke with an air of settling the whole matter. 'Now do exactly what I say. When my canoe touches the side of yours grab it and hold the two—both rails, mind—hold them together. Then rise up quickly, keep both hands on the two edges—the canoe will steady one another that way—then step right into my bow in front of the forward thwart. You understand? All right then! In the moment you're on your knees in my canoe let yours go and we'll daddle this old sea yet,' he concluded, with a queer burst of exultation."

"On going up the next crest I did exactly as he said. The Yvonne took the curl on her quarter, and sheltered his red canoe so perfectly that she didn't ship a dippel. As I knelt, Wales shifted back to his canoe's stern and cried, 'Let go!'"

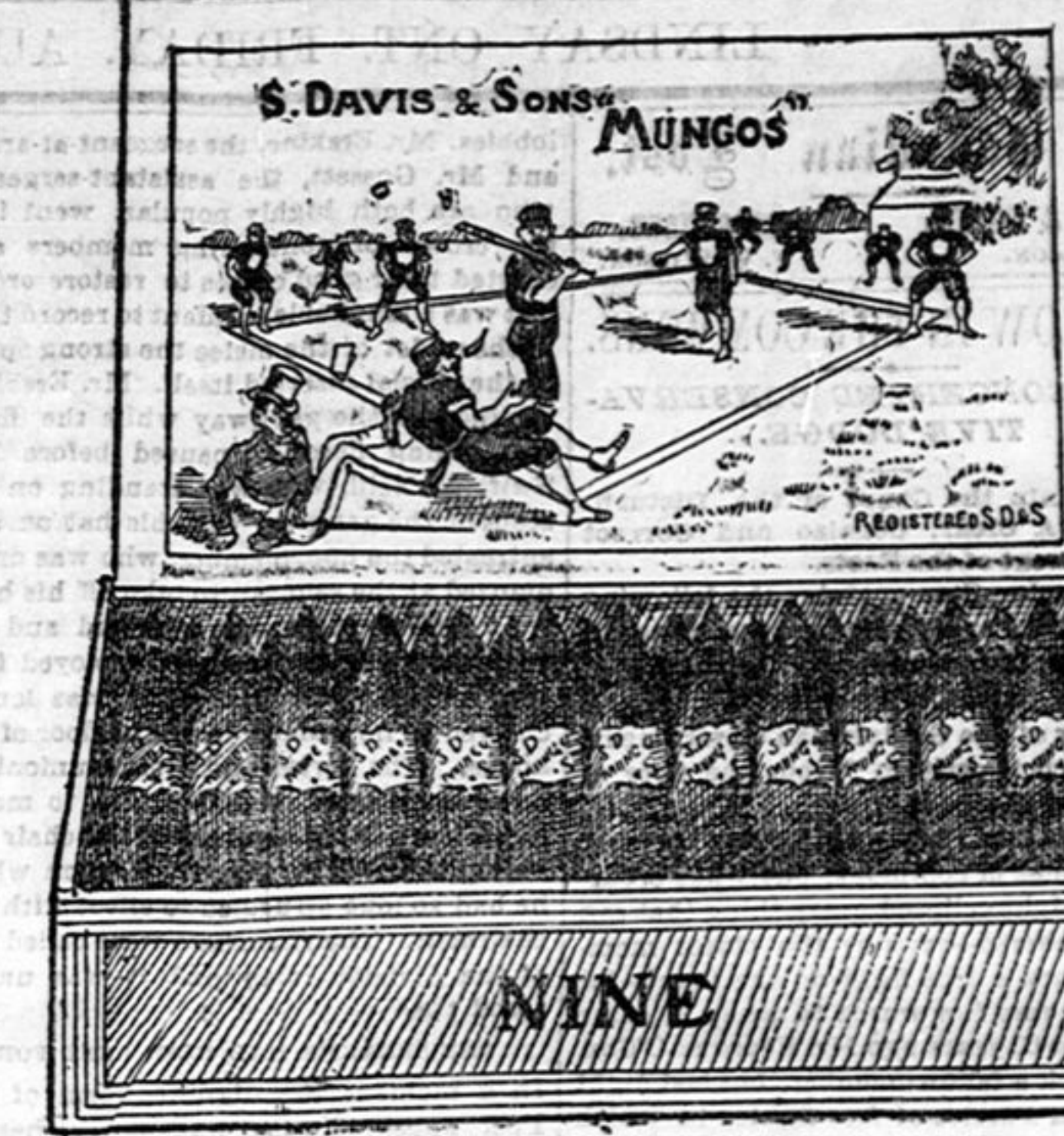
"Next instant we were rising up a wave. My Englishman was so clever that he somehow shouldered off that crest without wetting me at all and so went on up and down, up and down, every wave threatening to swamp us and every crest thrust away as by a sort of miracle."

"After my nerves had got a little used to this sort of thing—mind you, we hadn't more than six inches of free board, and but for his dexterous tipping her away from the crests any one of them would feel a bit easy I said: 'Hang it all, I forgot my watch and sweater.'"

"Well, I don't think we can turn back safely," he said, as if he seriously thought of doing so. 'Turn back! Not for all the watches at Waltham and all the sweaters in America,' I said. 'Well, we're almost at Huntingdon-ave. There's nothing more to tell, except that we got into the lee of the shore in half an hour and landed all right. When we did so I turned to Wales—I was pretty grateful, you may be sure—and I said, holding out my hand:

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Let Friday night a Toronto man went to No. 4 police station, Montreal, for protection. He said he had come to Montreal in a very strange manner. He was a farmer. On Tuesday he had gone to the Toronto market with a load of farm produce. Two friends met him soon after he reached the market and asked him to come and have a drink. He went. He drank and drank till his wife came after that he remembered having a long ride and ending up in a Montreal railway station. His pockets had been picked. What worried him most was the fact of the horse he had left at the market while he went to get a drink. He is now back to Toronto next night thoroughly disgusted.

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