

## BRIGHTON CAPTAIN FEATURED IN STORY

The following story of the wreck of the schooner Tranchemontagne at Oswego in 1880 appeared in Schooner Days in the Toronto Telegram last Saturday. It is of interest to local readers in that her captain, the late William Sherwood, was a native of Brighton.

The F. E. Tranchemontagne was one of three vessels built at the port of Lanoraie on the St. Lawrence River in 1864 and found employment in the great lumber trade out of Port Hope. She was noted for the luxurious fittings of her cabin, which would have suited a yacht.

She was fast, but perhaps because of her shallow hold and considerable deadrise, somewhat under. Above Port Credit in a hard north-west puff she capsized once when Capt. James Jackson had her, and her cook was drowned in the cabin, though all on

deck escaped with their lives.

This was probably when she was owned by H. B. Rathbone, of Hastings, lumber merchant. She did not sink, either because of the buoyancy of her cargo or her tamarac construction, and Sylvester Brothers of Toronto became her owners. Capt. William Sherwood of Brighton sailed her in the Sylvester's employ; a God-fearing mariner who would not pull out on a Sunday, however fair the wind and weather. Yet, his season's record of trips was always as good as anyone else's.

The Tranchemontagne was coming along some miles astern of the Flora, bound for Oswego, on October 31, 1880. Like the Flora, she was reefed, but being a larger vessel and holding up well to weather of the entrance, Capt. Sherwood did not think it necessary to pile on more canvas to drive her in. He remembered too that she had once capsized.

She hesitated, and could not stem the turmoil at the critical spot. She broached to, and wind and wave cast her, head on, against the breakwater west of the entrance, which she had thus vainly weathered. She cracked like an egg.

Legend has persisted that she leapt the breakwater on one mountainous sea and plunged into the inner harbor. The same story is told of the Two Brothers at Oswego, and of the B. W. Folger at Sodus or Charlotte, sixty years ago, but still lacks confirmation.

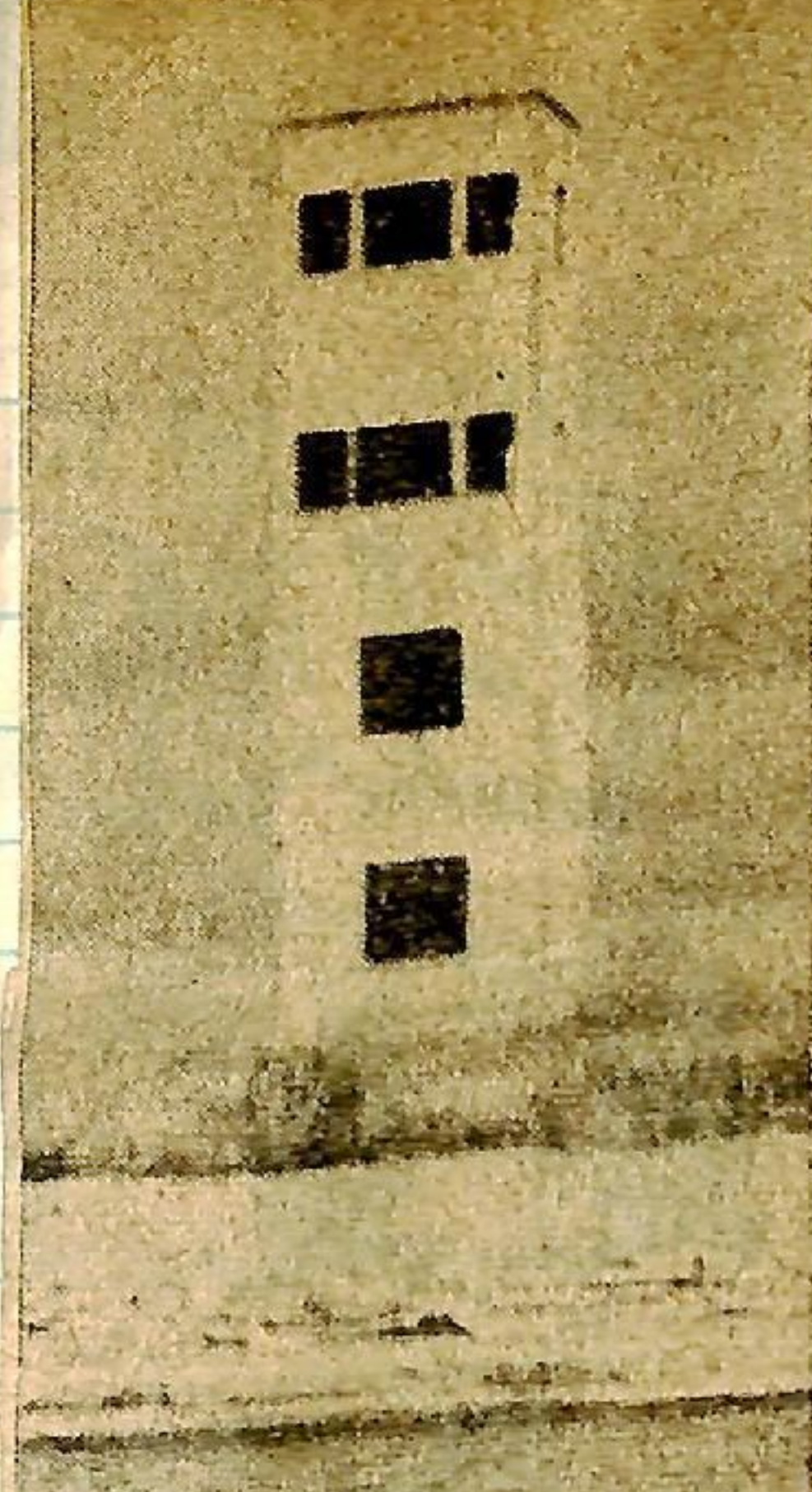
It was everything above deck in the Tranchemontagne, perhaps even the deck itself, eventually, that washed over the breakwater — including the crew.

There is also a legend that Ed Cook, later Captain Cook, rode over

trunk-like provision box which stood on deck, forward of the galley, in those pre-refrigerator days. Five others were hurled over the breakwater, amid the crash of falling masts, rending hatches, burst bulwarks and the stove-in cabin.

Sylvester Brothers lost \$10,000 property in ten seconds. Marvelously, not one life was lost. Capt. Sherwood and his whole crew were picked up by the tugs that huddled inside, waiting for an easy fee when by courageously plunging out into the

lake they might have saved the ship herself from death.



**WAR REMINDER** — Bombing range observation towers still stand on "The Bluff" off Prince Edward County west of Consec. The old wood towers were used during World War 2 to sight practice bombing manoeuvres.