

SHIPWRECKS AND INDIAN ATTACKS: 1838

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LATEST FROM FLORIDA. By the U.S. revenue cutter *Madison*, Capt. Howard, which arrived just as the impression of this day's paper was completed, we hear of a more extensive loss of life and property than was ever before effected in a single hurricane upon the southern coast. Between thirty and forty vessels are said to have been lost upon the Bahama Banks on the 7th of September, and the hurricane is represented to have been more terrific than was ever before known in these latitudes. No particle of canvas [sic] could withstand the force of the gale, and the survivors represent that the bare masts and spars were blown out of stanch and new vessels. And besides the extraordinary horrors of shipwreck upon a desert shore, many of the numerous survivors of the wrecks upon the Florida coast, after their escape from the horrible battle of the elements, only reached the land to meet a more frightful death in massacre by the Indians of Cape Florida.

We give the following, which are all the few particulars of the wrecks that we have as yet ascertained.

The ship *Kentucky*, New York and New Orleans packet, was lost on Gun Key, Bahamas; a total wreck, but passengers and crew all saved.

The hermaphrodite brig *Victory*, Dunham, master, was also lost on Gun Key; a total loss of vessel and cargo. Crew and passengers saved.

We have the following from the *South Floridian* of the 15th ult.

The French brig *Courier de Tempico*, Jule Julian, from Havana, bound to Bordeaux, with a cargo of sugar, segars, &c. was driven ashore in the night of the 7th, about twelve mile north of Cape Florida light; only seven out of sixteen souls saved — brig and cargo totally lost. The survivors, rescued from the devouring ocean, were soon visited by a large party of armed Indians, who spared their lives because they were Frenchmen, saying that they only killed Americans. The captain and the six other survivors were taken from the beach after the gale was over, by a smack from the north, bound to this place [Key West].

The brig *Alma* [*Alna*], Thomas, of Portland, Maine, from St. Jago, went ashore about the same time, and near the same place. Every man on board except one, a Dutchman, was massacred by the

Indians. He was spared at the time of the general slaughter, and subsequently hid himself in the hold of the brig. During all one day and night the Indians held a pow wow board the brig; they were about fifty in number. The next day the Indians left the brig for a short time, when the poor man crept out of his hiding place, discovered and hailed the wrecking sloops *America* and *Mount Vernon*, and by them was taken off; the Indians again appearing in sight after he had left the brig. The Indians will wreck the brig.

(We are happy to be able to state that there are two more survivors of the wreck of the *Alma*, who are now on board the *Madison*, at this port, viz., Eleazer Wyer and Samuel Cammett, both of Portland. Wyer was shot through the thigh and hand, but has nearly recovered.)

The brig *Export* and a ship went ashore at the same time nearly off Caesar's creek. The master and crew of the brig have arrived at this place in the wrecking sloop *Globe*.

The sloop *Globe* and the smack *Splendid* have saved about 300 boxes of sugar from the brig.

(We are informed by Captain Howard, of the *Madison*, who examined the wreck said to be the *Thracian*, that he is of opinion that sufficient evidence does not exist of its identity with that vessel. None of the crew of the ship in question were saved. She was evidently a new Boston-built ship. She had on board a locomotive engine named *Camden*, directed to Hyde and Comstock, New Orleans. The rest of her cargo seemed to consist of domestic goods, bar, and tire iron, a carriage, saddles and harness, nails and machinery.)

The sloops *Alabama*, *Dread*, and *Caution*, of Mystic, bound to this port [Key West], drove ashore and lost in the same gale. The only survivor yet ascertained is Joseph Noble. They went ashore near the French brig *Courier*. Noble escaped from the Indians and joined the French crew. When the Indians came up with the French crew, he passed himself off as one of their number and thus saved his life. Noble has arrived at this place, and gives the names of the persons on board the sloops — all of whom are doubtless lost except himself. On board the sloop *Alabama* — Captain Prentice Parks, Samuel Welcher, Jr., John Parker, John Dean, and Joseph Noble. On board the *Dread* — Francis P. Helmers, Solomon

Burner, George Fish, James Reynolds, Benjamin Phillips, and Charles, a colored man. On board sloop *Caution* — Captain D.P. Helmes, Geo. Richmond (lost overboard before the gale), Nat, a Portuguese, Albert Spaulding, Nathan Fish, Latham Brightman, and Tom Crandle, a mulatto.

The schooner *Caroline* of Key West, lying at anchor at Caesar's creek, during the gale drove from her moorings out on the reef, struck, and sunk. Master and crew all lost. The following are their names: Joseph B. Williams, master, Henry Packer, mate, John St. Martin, John Murphy, James Bennet, John Gray, James Savy, William Dillinow.

The schooner *Caledonia*, from Havana, bound to New Orleans, with a cargo of sugar, coffee, and segars, was totally lost on the *Colorados*, on or about the 8th Sept. Fate of the crew unknown.

The revenue cutter *Campbell*, and the United States schooner *Wace*, then lying in our harbor [Key West], immediately upon hearing of the disastrous intelligence above given, got underway and proceeded for the *Cape*. It is hoped, if there should be any wandering survivors left, they may speedily be restored to their friends.

The boats of the United States schooners *Madison*, *Wace*, and *Campbell* examined the Keys in the vicinity of the *Cape*, in the hope of rescuing survivors, but we regret to say that, with the above exception of the two survivors of the *Alma*, none are known to be saved. The boats of the *Wace* and *Campbell* attacked a party of fifteen Indians, who were plundering the French brig, but succeeded in killing but four of their number.

The *Madison* brings further intelligence of the loss of the schooner *Forrest*, of Lubec, loaded with live oak. She struck a reef about the 18th ult. one day out of Key West, and sunk. The crew and passengers returned to Key West in her boats.

The works left by the troops at Key Biscayne were burnt by the Indians about the last of August. The government hospitals and barracks on Cape Sable have also been burnt.

The *Madison* is now on her way from Pensacola to her station at Portsmouth, N.H. Officers and crew all well. She has stopped at this port for wood and water, and sails immediately. —*Advocate*