

Benj J Willard Called.

I have been in the habit of piloting the steamers in. At ^{some hour} 7 o'clock I anchored ^{point} in my pilot boat under Bays Island. Saw no rockets — was watchig for the steamer. Have no particular position of waitig for steam usually between Port. light & the bulwark. Bulwark is about 6 miles from light. I did not see the steamer before she sunk. I was then near Bays Island. Weather was foggy. My man reported that he thought he heard a gun — I came on deck and heard guns firig for the celebration of W birthday and came to conclusion that ^{could also see glare of tar buckets and fires on the islad and near cape cottage} and came to conclusion that this was what he had heard.

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Date: 1864

Description: Pilot Benjamin J. Willard gave testimony about the February 22, 1864 when the steamer *Bohemian* crashed into ledge off Cape Elizabeth and 40 passengers and two crew members were killed.

2
Come in as the fog shut
down, could just see C.E. light from
the buoy on Trundys reef dist 2 to 2 1/2
miles. C.E. light is 4 to 4 1/2 m from Port
light in straight line. We usually lay
near the bulwark to take the steamers
as they sometimes come near inside
and sometimes outside. I have
seen steamers come in from as
far and farther to south as this
^{the way of them didn't wait for me to come to me}
^{one} I think branch pilots ~~is~~ needed
as much here as to other ports.
Had it been clear weather I should have
been out farther. Had I been aboard
that ship and got good bearings ^{all three of the} of the
lights I should have tried bring her in.
I am acquainted with coast
If the Str were in position with C.E.
light N.N.W. 10 miles off a N. by E. course
would carry me clear of Aldens rock.
If eight miles off I might go clear
but ^{it} would bring me very near the
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3

It is impossible to judge of distance of lights in fog when you get no cross bearings. The Cape lights are a very poor guide in foggy weather when they only are visible, it is much safer to follow the Port light. I could see ^a buoy about 40 yards ^{from 6 to 7 o'clock that night at velocity but a very short distance} ~~that night~~ ^{direction} and at the rate the Bohemian was sailing and seeing the buoy at 40 yards I cannot say tell whether it would have been possible to stop her. ^{or not} I did not think it safe for a steamer to approach the coast that night. Have heard it stated that it was clearer ~~than~~ outside than near the land. In a clear night a buoy can be seen much better when looking ^{the reflection of} toward the moon than looking from it. Have piloted Capt Borland in to this port several times. Think He understood the harbor well and ordinarily could bring a ship into the harbor He was very

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light. I could see ^a buoy about from 6 to 7 o'clock that night at 8 o'clock but a very short distance

40 yards ^{that night}. If sail in the direction and at the rate the Bohemian was sailing and seeing the buoy at 40 yards I cannot say tell whether it would have or not

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^{the reflection of} better when looking toward [^] the moon than looking from it. Have piloted Capt Borland in to this port several times. Think He understood the harbor well and ordinarily could bring a ship into the harbor He was very

particular about his bearings. Never
 take bearings ^{myself} when pilot her but
 get them from the officer of the deck.
 Capt. B. was very correct.
 Had I been aboard the ship I should
 have depended on my judgment and
^{more particularly on} the lead. I have taken ⁱⁿ all ships
 I have gone aboard for 8 years except
 one and that one I kept off for 24
 hours. At ^{low} water the shoalest
 water I ever got ^{on Aldens rock} was 4 ft. The buoy
 is in about 8 fathoms, outside the
 rock. The shoal water is sufficient
 to pick up a ship dragg 18 ft for
 about 40 yards. At high water
 the B would clear the ~~whole~~ ^{part} all
 of the rock except the shoalest.
 The draft of the B from ^{according to cargo, coal &c} 16 to 19 ft.
 We have no regular pilot system here
 but make an agreement in the first
 of season with the agent of the line
 to look out for ships and bry them in.
 The man on my deck reported
 a whistle blowg - I went on deck
 and had horn blown, fog so thick
 could not see 15 yards. Found by

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the whistle that it was the tug
^{chief officer} of Bohemian & Lieut of cutter
^{came} chief officer ^ on board near
^{asked if it was the tug} whistle ^ they came at side ^ and
¹ asked if it was [?] I replied it was
 ^ [?] the ship was ashore and
 wanted me to ^{to go down with} pilot them down.
 This was towards evening I went
 down passengers were all off. I found
 the capt there with some of his men.
 From where I was at anchor it is 4
 miles to where ste'r lays. I was about
 3/4 mile from Port light. I have
 answered rockets 22 miles. I was
 in my usual place of waiting for
 rockets or guns in thick weathr. Always
 keep man on lookout. My brother
 & Capt Olive had charge of tug. They
 did not go as fast as I wished on
 acct of the ^{effect} attraction on the compass
 entry. I took small boats with Lieut
 of the cutter - went on till found
 Trundy's reef buoy - then blew for
 tug to follow on after us. Rockets
 can be seen but very short dist in foggy
 weather, when weather cleared up the
 position where I lay was a good one
 to see rockets. The buoy on Aldens
 rock is a largest size Nun buoy, larger

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 to see rockets. The buoy on Aldens
 rock is a largest size Nun buoy, larger

than a hoghead. That buoy has not
 been charged since the bell boat went
 adrift ^{some 2 years since} this buoy or one like it has been
 there ever since bell ^{boat} went ^{adrift} away
 Had the bell boat been there the ship
 would never have gone ashore. In the
 sea that night a bell could have been
 heard ^{one} ^{have heard it 4 miles in foggy weather} miles ^{much farther than}
 the bell at the cape light the sound of
 which is killed by noise of the surf.
 The bell on Alden's rock was very useful
 but went adrift several times & 2 yrs ago
 was replaced by a buoy. A lightship
 should also be stationed East of bulwark
^{maby seguin or monhegan lights}
 then ships ^{run} for Port would be safe
 because they would come to the light
 ship before coming to dangerous rocks.
 It is the duty of the Board of Trade to establish
 Branch Pilots. Insurance companies
 sometimes have something to do with pilotage.
 When you can see ^{you can} it is safe to come into
 Portland harbor with perfect safety never
 going in less than 9 fathoms of water.
 This is the easiest harbor of access
 on the coast. There are rocks in ^{the}
 harbor which are dangerous to these large

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and have no buoys
 ships. As long ago as when Lieut Franch
 I reported them to him and he had them
 buoyed. Since then they have been carried
 away and I have frequently reported
 them to the Lt house Inspectors, but
 they have done ~~don~~ nothing about them
 and there is nothing now to mark
 them. Last summer I got up a
 petition and got some of the merchants
 to sign it, to be sent to Washgtn to
 see if buoys could not be placed
 on some rocks which have never
 been down on any chart till last
 summer. ~~I~~ Last summer told Lieut
 Capt Phelps of U.S. Survey Sch Comm, who
 surveyed them for the first time by US
 authority. Fishermen & Pilots have
 always known of them. Some of ^{those without buoys} them
 are as shoal as 11 ft and others from
 18 to 33. ~~That shows~~ The newly ^{discovered} shoals
 from 18 to 39 ft. Tylers rock is S.E. by
 S. from Cape light dist ^{3/4} mile, ^{at low water} water
 11 ft. a buoy has been ^{was} there but has gone
 3 to 4 years. This rock is laid down on
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 These rocks are more apt ~~to~~ trouble

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