

The Waubuno

Last Updated Wednesday, 23 July 2008

The Waubuno

Location:

Sound Southern tip of Bradden Island, north of Wreck Island, between the Musquash River and Parry

Coordinates:

N 45 07' 15", W 80 09' 58"

Depth:

15 feet max

(4.5 metres)

Visibility:

6 - 15 feet

(1.8 - 4.5 metres)

The Waubuno, perhaps the most famous wreck around the Parry Sound area, is somewhat of a mystery. On November 22, 1879, the Waubuno set sail for Parry Sound loaded with freight and passengers, never to arrive in port.

The following spring a washed up hull was found, although no bodies were ever recovered. There is actually speculation that this wreck is not the Waubuno.

Transcript from the Parry Sound North Star

November 28 1879

TERRIBLE DISASTER

Wreck of Str. 'Waubuno' on Georgian Bay. 24 PERSONS MISSING. The Proprietor of the "North Star" on board. The Georgian Bay Transportation Co.'s Steamer "Waubuno" left Collingwood at 4 a.m. on Saturday morning last for Parry Sound. At ten a.m. the Steamer "Magnetawan" also left for this place and arrived here at noon on Monday, having laid up at the Christian Islands till the weather grew less furious. She reported having seen nothing of the "Waubuno."

Accordingly the tug "Mittie Grew" was despatched in search of her, and returned the same night, reporting that they could find no trace of the crew, but picked up several articles that they knew belonged to the missing vessel, consisting of a metallic life boat turned bottom up and stove in at both ends, a life-preserver with the ships name on it, several articles of furniture out of the cabin, the ships ledger, and a part of the paddle Box with the letters W.A.

on it. Barrels of apples, flour, and different articles of freight were distributed along the shore in abundance.

Tuesday morning the tug "Mittie Grew" again sailed for the scene of the wreck, which is supposed to be Moose Point, and there she met the wrecking tug "Mary Ann" sent out from Collingwood, also the tug "Rescue" belonging to the contractors of the Georgian Bay Branch of the Canada Pacific Railway. She had left Collingwood for French River on Friday, but had laid up at Penetanguishene for shelter. All three scoured the east shore, but notwithstanding their efforts to discover some clue to the persons who were missing by visiting all the neighbouring islands, they had to leave with some of the freight, which the Indians had collected, and from whom they took it away.

The tug "Mittie Grew" took a scow out with her, and hands were hired by the different owners to pick up what freight they could, for whom the tug will return. Mr. Starkey also went with the searching party and provided himself with his yacht and a small skiff with which he intended to visit all the points where the crew and passengers would be likely to drift to. It is to be hoped his efforts will be rewarded with success.

The following is a list of the crew and passengers as far as we can ascertain at present: Crew: - J. Barkett, Captain; S. Ford, Mate; J. Rowland, Purser; J. McQuade, Engineer; Patrick O'Grady and Robert Cook, Firemen; -- McMurchy and James Harris, Wheelmen; Miss Hiot, Lady's Maid; George Bass, Steward; Banks Wylie, Porter; J. Hall, Cook; J. Wingrove and Jamieson, Deck Hands. Passengers: - Mr. B. Noel Fisher, editor and proprietor of this paper; Dr. Doupe and wife, of Mitchell, going to settle in McKellar, and had only been married three weeks; Mr. Sylvester and wife; a man named Griffin, from Gananoque, and three others unknown, supposed to be father and two sons, farmers. All the crew lived in Collingwood, and great anxiety is felt by the relatives and friends of the missing ones. Five of them were married men with families, viz: the Captain, McQuade, McMurchy, Harris and Hall. Mr. McQuade is very much respected in this part of the country, being engineer on the "Waubuno" for **** years. He has two sons on the "Magnettawan," one engineer and the other a deck-hand.

The value of the vessel is estimated at \$14,000 and she is not insured. The [cargo] consisted of general goods and is valued roughly at \$10,000. There are a great ***** opinions afloat as regards to how the "Waubuno" was wrecked whether she had struck some sunken rock near the mouth of the channel, or whether she foundered in the rough sea outside.