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The SS William Lawrence: The Builders, Owners and Wrecking Account

Lynn Harris

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THE SS WILLIAM LAWRENCE: "38 80 709."
THE BUILDERS, OWNERS AND WRECKING ACCOUNT

Lynn Harris
South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology
February 23, 1995
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The Shipbuilders and Ownership of the SS William Lawrence

Newspaper Reports of Wrecking (Transcribed by Judy Woods, US Army Corps of Engineers, Savannah)

Waterlines of the SS William Lawrence
The SS *William Lawrence* was built by the Atlantic Ironworks in Boston in 1869. She was ordered by the Merchants and Miners Line, whose passenger and cargo steamers had been running up and down the East Coast since 1852.

**THE BUILDERS: ATLANTIC IRON WORKS SHIPYARD**

The Atlantic Ironworks in Boston was one of the principal iron shipbuilding yards in the country during the latter half of the 1800's. The Civil War had in many respects been disastrous to shipping and shipbuilding industries. In one aspect it was advantageous: the iron-clad warships produced during the War did much to stimulate the rolling of iron plates, the development of tools to work them and the education of workmen in their fabrication. Thus, much wider use of this material for shipbuilding became possible. The SS *William Lawrence*, built by the Atlantic Ironworks, is an excellent example of the small iron screw steamer of this post-war period.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Vessel</th>
<th>SS <em>William Lawrence</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tonnage:</td>
<td>1049 gross tons, 576 net tons register</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length:</td>
<td>207.8 feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beam:</td>
<td>25.1 feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depth of Hold:</td>
<td>20 feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engine:</td>
<td>Single Expansion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place Built:</td>
<td>East Boston, Massachusetts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date Lost:</td>
<td>February 11, 1899</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place Lost:</td>
<td>South Carolina Coast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Captain:</td>
<td>A.L. Willis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bound from:</td>
<td>Baltimore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bound to:</td>
<td>Savannah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agent:</td>
<td>J.J. Carolyn of Savannah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cargo:</td>
<td>General Merchandise</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source of Information: Savannah Morning News (Microfilm, Bull St., Chatham County Library)  

THE OWNERS: MERCHANT AND MINERS TRANSPORTATION LINE

In the latter part of 1852 the Maryland Legislature passed a bill authorizing the incorporation of the Merchants and Miners Transportation Company, an east coast shipping concern. The Company was involved primarily in shipping water hides from leather tanneries in Baltimore, mine products and various raw materials from the manufacturing plants of New England; and to bring back from Boston the finished products. These products, particularly shoes and clothing, were absorbed by the southern markets in large quantities.

Many Bostonians invested and profited in the coastwise protected trades during the 1800's. Business men were simultaneously involved in both shipping and railroads. Families such as the Whitneys invested in the Merchants and Miners Transportation Company as well as the Maine Central Railroads. Since the basis of Boston's early wealth was shipping, it is evident to an important degree that shipping financed the railroads. The gradual transformation of deep water shipping from small speculative enterprizes into a large utilitarian industry utilizing steamboats after 1850's created even greater profits.

Under the guidance of the Merchants' and Miners' first president, Thomas C. Jenkins, the Company purchased its first two ships, the Joseph Whitney and William Jenkins. They were both wooden side-wheelers of about 1000 tons. The competent management and successful operation of these first two steamers,

2. Merchants and Miners Transportation Company, Tales of the Coast and a Brief History of the Merchants and Miners Transportation Company, 1852- Seventy Fifth Anniversary-1927, 1-2. (Georgia Historical Society, 2nd Floor, Collection Item No. F 106 M552.) Hereafter cited as Merchants and Miners, A Brief History.


with a record free of marine accidents, made it possible for the company to increase its capital and win public confidence and encourage further investments. Business improved and with the completion of more new ships, Providence and Savannah were added as ports of call.

The Civil War temporarily suspended shipping operations in the south. The Company's affairs were rather uncertain after the war and many ships were chartered or sold. In 1862 Solomon R. Spalding became the president of the Company. The Maryland Legislature in 1869 authorized an increase of the Company's capital to $600,000. H.A. Whitney of Boston, one of the Company Directors at the time wrote:

For a year after the war owing mainly to the unexpected course of the government, the the prospects of the Company were far from encouraging, and it's fortunes and property were at low ebb. By exertion and perseverance, unanticipated drawbacks have been overcome.

In February 1869, the Company commissioned the Atlantic Iron Works shipyard to build the SS William Lawrence. Like the other ships belonging to the Company, this ship was named after one of the directors. The SS William Lawrence was the first to be equipped with a surface condenser and the company's first iron screw steamer. At the time the SS William Lawrence was wrecked in South Carolina waters 1899, the steamer was the oldest vessel employed by the Company, and the first commissioned to be built by it. She had made 1,040 east coast voyages which is a record equaled by few other coastal steamers.

5. Taylor, Merchants and Miners, 25.

6. Merchants and Miners, A Brief History, 46.


8. Savannah Morning News, Tuesday, 14 February 1899, 8.
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Savannah Morning News (Microfilm, Bull Street, Chatham County Library, Savannah, Georgia.)
William Lawrence
Steamship

**********************************************************************************************************************************************
SMN, Wed, 02/15/1899, pg 8, col 1 and 2, pg 6 col 2

LOSS OF THE LAWRENCE

Thirteen of the Ill-Fated Steamer’s Crew Saved.

Capt. Willis and Fourteen Others Missing.

LITTLE HOPE OF THEIR RESCUE.

Terrible Suffering of the Survivors.

Seven Picked Up Off Paris Island.

Were Helpless From Starvation and Exposure.

THEIR FEET AND HANDS FROZEN.

Saved by a Sailor’s Pluck.

Rescue Tugs Cruising for the Missing Boats.

The Wrecked Ship Off Her Course.

BROKEN IN TWO ON A SHOAL.

Thirteen of the crew of the wrecked steamship William Lawrence of the Merchants’ and Miners’ Transportation Company arrived here yesterday afternoon on the steamer Clifton from Port Royal. Seven were suffering so greatly from exposure that they were taken at once to the St. Joseph’s Infirmary, where they received immediate treatment.

The William Lawrence is a total wreck in the north breakers off Port Royal bar, about two miles from the Paris
Island naval station. Her hull is broken in half and only her smokestack and a portion of the deck work are showing above water.

Capt. A.L. Willis, First Officer E.L. Hooper and thirteen of the crew are still missing and there is little hope that they are still alive. A thorough search was made in the neighborhood of the wreck yesterday by the tugs Cynthia No. 2 and McCauley, but both returned last night without having discovered any signs of the missing men.

An account of the wreck of the William Lawrence and the fact that six of the men had arrived at Port Royal station was published in yesterday’s Morning News, having been telegraphed by Second Engineer A.J. Morrissey to the company’s agent, Jr. John J. Carolan. The seven additional men who were brought in by the Clifton were picked up yesterday morning off Paris Island by pilot boat No. 3 of Port Royal, and turned over to the Clifton, which was already on her way to Savannah.

The seven men had been exposed to the fearful weather of Sunday and Monday without food or drink and were in a state of utter exhaustion when taken aboard the pilot boat. They were given food and drink and ate ravenously in spite of their sufferings from frozen and frost bitten limbs. Chief Engineer Edward Roach, Second Officer Robert L. Beale and Steward Frank Tindle are in a critical condition, their feet and legs being badly frozen and hands frost bitten.

The William Lawrence left Baltimore Wednesday morning and should have arrived in Savannah Saturday. The fact of her non-arrival did not occasion any particular anxiety on account of the rough weather, and it was not until Monday afternoon when Agent Carolan received a dispatch from Second Engineer Morrissey at Port Royal, giving an account of the wreck, that anything was known of the disaster. It seems that the dispatch was filed the day before, but was only gotten through Monday. Mr. Carolan at once notified President Michael Jenkins of the Merchants’ and Miners’ Company at Baltimore. On account of the generally demoralized condition of the telegraph service, due to the weather conditions, it was not until 3:30 o’clock yesterday
William Lawrence
Steamship

SMN, Wed, 02/15/1899, pg 8, col 1 and 2, pg 6 col 2, cont.

afternoon that President Jenkins' reply was received. It
directed Mr. Carolan to secure a steamer or tug and proceed
at once to the scene of the wreck. He was directed to spare
no expense in finding the missing men.

Mr. Carolan had already taken action on this line. Two
of the best tugs in the service of the Savannah Towboat
Company, the Cynthia No. 2 and the McCauley, had been
dispached to the scene early in the morning, and Mr.
Carolan was preparing to follow on the Cambria when word was
received that the Clifton had passed Tybee bound for the
city with thirteen of the crew of the wrecked steamship
aboard. Mr. Carolan and several of the employes [sic] of
the company met the steamer at her wharf at the exchange
dock. Some of the men, who had suffered most, were well
known to the employes [sic] and other helping people, who
met them, and there were some affecting scenes as the hands
of those who were supposed to have been lost were grasped by
their friends from on shore. The other half had evidently
experienced severe suffering. This was easily understood
when the story of their exposures to seventy-two hours of
the [start column 2] worst weather ever known on the coast
had been told.

Although giving evidence of severe suffering, the men
who had been rescued yesterday morning by the Port Royal
pilot boat managed to tell their story in disjointed
phrases, which was completed by those who had shared with
them the dangers of the shipwreck, but who had escaped
greater hardships by reaching Port Royal a day ahead of
their companions.

The Vessel Off Her Course.

Second Officer Beale said that on Saturday morning when
the ship was wrecked the fog was so thick that one could
hardly see across the deck and there was a heavy gale
blowing. The weather was intensely cold. The ship's
compass was evidently not in proper working order, and
something seemed to be wrong with the machinery of the ship.
Some time before she struck it was realized that she was off
her course, and soundings were taken. These showed that the
vessel was in shallow water and she was ordered slowed down. Before the proper course could ascertained the vessel struck hard upon a reef or shoal.

Every effort was made to get the vessel off, but without avail. A considerable portion of the cargo was thrown overboard in the effort to lighten the ship. The men remained by until Sunday morning, when it was seen that she was breaking up. Capt. Willis then ordered the men to leave. There were four boats and the disembarkation was performed in an orderly manner under the direction of Capt. Willis and the other officers. Capt. Willis remained to the last, and it is said took the poorest boat for himself and companions.

Seven men got off in the first boat, in charge of Second Officer Beale, and seven more in the second boat, in charge of First Officer Hooper. In the third boat there were six, including Second Engineer Morrissey, who was in charge. Capt. Willis had command of the fourth boat, in which there were six or seven men, beside himself, one being a steerage passenger.

Boat No. 3 in charge of Engineer Morrissey made the main land at Paris Island station Sunday afternoon at 4:30 o'clock. The men with him were John Conway, W. Sifert, Charlie Green, Frank Bowler, John Donahue and L. Grundgren. While they had had a severe experience they were in good condition. From the naval station they were taken across on a tug to Port Royal were Mr. Morrissey addressed a telegram to Agent Carolan notifying him of the disaster. He was informed at the telegraph office that the wires were down and that it was doubtful if the message could be gotten through. It reached Savannah early Monday night. After sending the dispatch Mr. Morrissey took his men back to Paris Island were they spent a rather uncomfortable night. Monday night, however, they were cared for aboard a tug and were made very comfortable, and were able to make a good appearance on arriving here.
SMN, Wed, 02/15/1899, pg 8, col 1 and 2, pg 6 col 2, cont.

Tied Up to a Buoy.

No such good luck was in store for the men of boat number 1. Having some idea of the lay of the land they endeavored to make Port Royal harbor, but their frail craft was buffeted by the icy blasts for many hours. They finally made buoy No. 3 at the mouth of Port Royal harbor. Their strength was exhausted, and they could go no further. They managed to tie up to the buoy, where they remained about two hours hoping that a boat would rescue them. The sea was so rough, however, that it was dangerous to remain at the buoy and they were compelled to cut loose. Helpless now, they drifted back towards the scene of the wreck and the boat soon ran aground. An oar was jammed into the mud and the boat made fast. The seven men made their way ashore so exhausted and benumbed that they could hardly totter to a place of safety when they fell exhausted. Here their situation was but little better. The prospect of immediate death had merely been exchanged for that of a lingering one. The were without food or shelter and exposed to the icy blasts of the storm which raged over the island. Their only hope was to wait until the storm had subsided when they might be seen by some passing boat. Their situation was so desperate that some of the party talked of suicide, and threatened to throw themselves into the sea from which they had recently escaped, to end their sufferings.

There was one hero who sustained the failing spirits of his companions, a tall, rawboned Irishman, John Montgomery by name. He alone of all the crowd never lost heart. When others cried Montgomery laughed. He told stories and jokes to keep his companions awake when sleep would have meant death. When despair had settled over some, and they wished for death to end their sufferings, Montgomery claimed to see a light in the distance, and predicted the approach of boats for their rescue. He had that indispensable companion of the soldier and sailor, a pipe, whether of the dhuuden variety is not known, and a supply of tobacco. With his pipe between his teeth, he walked constantly on the lookout for a sail. It was Montgomery who saw the pilot boat and signaled her to come to the assistance of himself and companions.
Two Days Without Food.

Some of the men had to be lifted bodily and carried to the boat, and this was repeated when at noon they were transferred to the Clifton. Until then they had not tasted food since leaving the ship on Sunday morning. They were given both food and drink, and doubtless it seemed to them the sweetest that ever went down their throats. They were made as comfortable as possible in the cabin of the Clifton, until their arrival at Savannah, when they were transferred to St. Joseph’s Infirmary.

The seven men, who underwent this experience, were Second Officer Beale, Chief Engineer Edward Roach, Steward Frank Dingle, Harvey Kelley, chief cook; Oscar S. Bowler, quartermaster, and L. Grundgren and John Montgomery, sailors. Montgomery was the only one of the seven who looked as if he had not suffered any particularly [sic] hardship. He went to the hospital with the others, however, Chief Engineer Roach, Second Officer Beale and Steward Dingle all had to be carried to the carriages which were awaiting them on the wharf. All three were suffering severely with their feet and legs, which were badly frozen. The condition of Engineer Roach and Steward Dingle is said to be quite serious. Cook Kelly was also suffering severely with his feet, and Quartermaster Bowler’s hands were badly frostbitten. At the hospital the men received every attention, and if careful nursing will bring them around again their friends need have no fears. Assistant Engineer Morrissey and the men who accompanied him were quartered at the Pulaski.

No sooner had Agent Carolan disposed of the shipwrecked men than he was informed that a message had been received from Tybee that the Cynthia No. 2 was bound for the city flying the Merchants and Miners’ flag at half-mast. This was taken to indicate that she also had members of the shipwrecked crew on board, though the fact that the flag was reported to be at half-mast was taken to indicate that her news was the reverse of good. With a determination to know the full extent of the disaster at once, Mr. Carolan boarded the Cambria and went to meet the Cynthia. The two tugs
EVERY ONE WAS SAVED

Capt. Willis and His Men
Rescued.

LANDED ON CAPERS’ ISLAND.

Two Days Without Shelter On a Barren Sandspit.

AROUND FIRES OF WRECKAGE.

Finally Reached Hilton Head,

CARED FOR BY SOLDIERS

Until Taken Off by the Tug Cambria.

CAPT. WILLIS’ STORY OF THE WRECK

Capt. A.L. Willis and the thirteen members of the crew of the shipwrecked steamship William Lawrence are all safe. The tug Cambria arrived at the city yesterday afternoon at 5 o’clock, bringing Capt. Willis, First Assistant Engineer Hooper and eight members of the crew. First Officer L.E. Hooper, Quartermaster A. Bergerson and two seamen were left at Hilton Head to look after the effects of members of the crew. The tug Cynthia, No. 2 will bring them up with such things belonging to the crew as can be found. Nearly every man aboard the Lawrence took with him his bag containing his clothing and other personal possessions when the ship was abandoned. Some of the bags were lost, however, and all the others were left behind.

Capt. Willis and the men who were with him were all well and apparently none the worse for the hardships which they had suffered during the last few days. It is needless to say that they were overjoyed to get to Savannah, and to
greet the comrades with whom they had parted at the wreck Sunday morning and of whose subsequent fortunes they knew nothing.

The tugs Cynthia, No. 2, and Cambria left the city early in the morning to cruise in the vicinity of the wreck for the missing men. Agent Carolan was aboard the Cambria, which was to make the search among the islands while the Cynthia cruised along the coast. They had better luck than they expected. In fact, after the severe weather of Sunday and Monday they hardly hoped to find the missing men alive.

As the Cambria neared the military reservation at Hilton Head about 9 o’clock, a small party of men was seen on the beach making signals to the tug. It was soon realized that these were the missing men, of whom the tug was in search. They did not wait for the tug to come to land, but came out in their boat. They were soon aboard, and were given a warm reception. Agent Carolan was delighted to find that there was not a man missing, and that furthermore they were all in good condition, not being in need of medical assistance.

Their story was soon told. The two boats left the ship together, Capt. Willis being the last man to leave. The Captain was in charge of one boat and First Officer Hooper of the other. By orders of the captain, the two boats were kept together. The effort was made to reach Port Royal harbor, but with little success. After being at sea for over twelve hours, the boats were finally beached through the breakers. It was a dangerous attempt. The party got through safely, but both the boats were stove in. The land which they had made they afterwards learned to be Capers Island, a small bare sand spit off the Carolina coast, some distance from Port Royal. Here they remained until Tuesday morning. Their situation was not the pleasantest in the world. They were without food and water, the small stock of crackers and the keg of water which they brought with them from the ship having been ruined by the salt spray. The lack of food was not their worst inconvenience. The island afforded no shelter, and they were forced to remain exposed to all the bitter weather of Sunday night and Monday and
Monday night, their only protection being a low sandspit, which only partially shielded them from the wind, and not at all from the sleet and snow. They were fortunate in having a supply of matches, and by the aid of these a fire was made from the wooden seats of the lifeboats, which was kept up by such driftwood as could be gathered. There was little comfort in a fire under such disadvantages, but it kept them from freezing and saved them from the sufferings which befell Second Officer Beale and his party in boat number 2.

Tuesday morning, the weather having moderated, one of the boats which was less damaged than the other was patched up and in this the party made its way to the military camp on Hunting Island, a distance of some eight or nine miles. Here they were warmly received by the soldiers who extended them the most generous hospitality and showed them every kindness. Sergt. Smith, who is in charge of the station, was very kind to the shipwrecked mariners. Tuesday night was the first they had spent in comfort since the ship struck ground Saturday morning. Having been so kindly treated at the post they were naturally in much better condition than they would have been, had they awaited the rescuing party on Capers' Island.

The party was taken aboard the tug, after which the Cambria joined the Cynthia at the wreck. There was nothing to be accomplished there, so First officer Hooper with three men, was put aboard the Cynthia to gather up the scattered effects of the crew and bring them to Savannah.

The Cambria passed Tybee inward bound [begin column 2] shortly after 3 o'clock, Capt. Van B. Avery, who was in command of the tug, signaled to the telephone station that he had the crew of the William Lawrence on board, and the message was promptly transmitted to the city.

In passing the quarantine station shortly after, the tug was run close in and Capt. Avery shouted the same message to Dr. Linley, quarantine officer, who also telephoned the news. It spread rapidly, and gave general relief, and to none more so than the members of the crew who had already safely arrived here. As the tug was sighted
coming up the river crowds gathered on the balconies of the business houses on the Bay, and hats and handkerchiefs were waved at rescuers and rescued. Every vessel along the river saluted as the Cambria passed, and Capt. Avery responded vigorously to the salutes with the siren of the Almirante Oquendo, which he brought back with him from Santiago bay.

The tug stopped at the Baltimore steamship wharf, where the party speedily disembarked. The other seamen of the Lawrence’s crew, with the exception of those in the hospital, were at the wharf, and there were some warm handclaps as they exchanged greetings.

The first man of the rescued party to leave the wharf was Louis Vleeschouwer, a stowaway, whose presence on the boat was discovered shortly before the wreck. Capt. Willis knew nothing of the presence of the man with the unpronounceable name until the wreck occurred. Louis took his bundle and hustled from the wharf as soon as the party had landed. His sister, Mrs. James Davy, who lives at 507 York street, east, was on hand to greet him. The young fellow was a former resident of Savannah, but has been in Baltimore for the last eight or nine months. His sister, he said, had sent him money to return home on, but he had spent it, and was forced to beat his way home.

The other members of the party besides the stowaway were Capt. Willis, first Assistant Engineer Horace Hooper and Paul Quaniz, William Hauntz, Michael Hayes, Thomas Bohlan and Jake Vardey of the engine room, and Sailors Frank Fuller and Charles E. Baldauf. Quartermaster A. Bergerson and Sailors Frank White and John, "the Baptist" were left with First Officer Hooper at Hilton Head. It was not necessary to send any one to the hospital and Capt. Willis and his men were quartered at the Pulaski.

Capt. Willis, when seen and asked as to the cause of the wreck, replied he had nothing to say on that subject. In answer to questions he said that the compass was evidently out of order, but that nothing was the matter with the machinery of the ship at the time she struck. Although not choosing to offer any explanation of his mishap, Capt.
William Lawrence
Steamship

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Willis evidently attributed it to the stress of weather, which he said, was the worst in his experience of twenty years on the coast.

"It was the worst weather I have ever experienced," said Capt. Willis. "There was a heavy gale, but the worst feature was the very heavy mist which made it impossible to see anything twenty or thirty feet away. The cold was very severe. It was 8:10 o'clock Saturday morning when the vessel struck, and we remained aboard until 9:30 o'clock the following morning, when the last boat left the ship. We made efforts to get the vessel off, and with this in view began heaving the cargo overboard Saturday night. We continued this until the steam pipes of the engine broke and then we were helpless. It was evident the next morning that the vessel was going to pieces, so I ordered the men to the boats. The ship's crew was divided into two parties of thirteen each, with two boats to each party. Each party was directed to keep together. Second Officer Beale and Second Assistant Engineer Morrissey were in charge of the first two, while First Officer Hooper and myself had charge of the second two. The disembarkation was accomplished in an orderly manner. The first two boats had disappeared when I got off. Mr. Hooper and myself managed to keep our boats together. We kept rowing until late at night, endeavoring to make Port Royal harbor, but were unable to do so. We then ran ashore through the breakers, damaging our boats in doing so. It was intensely cold, and we suffered a great deal, both in the boat and after getting on the island. Yesterday morning we patched up one of the boats and made our way to Hilton Head, where we were kindly received by Sergt. Smith, in charge of the government post there."

Capt. Willis spoke highly of Sergt. Smith and also of Dr. Edwin P. Shattuck, the government surgeon at Hilton Head, who spent some time attending to the wants of the men. One of the men, Frank Fuller, had his ears badly frostbitten, and it is probably due to the attention given him by Dr. Shattuck that he still has those useful members in their natural form.

The heroic measures which Capt. Willis adopted in the treatment of his men on the island explains how it is that
they are now but little the worse for their experience. In
talking of the matter last night Capt. Willis said: "I made
them keep moving. Had they been allowed to lie still they
would have been as badly frozen as the men who were in the
second officer's boat. When the men wanted to give up and
cease their efforts I urged them on with language that I
would never have used to them under other circumstances.
The only way to keep from freezing under such circumstances
is to keep the blood in circulation, and to do this you must
keep moving. That is all that saved us, in my opinion."

"There is Grundgreen," said Capt. Willis, pointing to
one of his men. "He is the only man of the second officer's
party who is not in the hospital, and he does not appear to
be at all hurt. He kept moving all the time, and urged the
others to do the same thing. He sung them songs and
stories, and did everything he could to keep their courage
up."

Grundgreen is a short, stout man with red mustache. He
is a German, but the imperfect manner in which he speaks is
due to a difficulty of utterance and not to his German

"I kept moving," said Grundgreen when asked how it was
that he had escaped when others of his party had suffered so
severely. "I would sleep a little when I got tired, but as
soon as I began to feel cold I would get up and run along
the beach."

The members of the crew all spoke very highly of the
coolness and good judgment shown by him and the care which
he exercised for his men. The captain was the last man to
leave the ship and took the wooden boat for himself and
party, the other three boats being of steel.

"I have been seafaring since I was 14 years old," said
Capt. Willis, "and this is the first wreck I ever had. I
have been with the company twenty years, mostly on the
William Lawrence, and have filled almost every position on
the boat. I have commanded her before, but took charge of
her again a few months since."
The injured men at the St. Joseph’s Infirmary are not doing as well as their friends would like, Chief Engineer Roach, Second Officer Beale, Steward Tindle are suffering severely, and there are grave fears that some of them may have to undergo amputations before they can be relieved of their sufferings. To-day will probably decide whether this resort will be necessary. Dr. Foster, marine hospital surgeon, is attending the men, the care of all sick and injured seamen being a part of the work of the marine hospital service.
William Lawrence
Steamship

*******************
SMN, Thurs, 02/16/1899, pg 6, col 7

MERCHANTS AND MINERS' TRANSPORTATION CO.

Tickets of sale at company's office to
the following points at very low rates:

ATLANTIC CITY, N.J.
Baltimore, MD.
Buffalo, N.Y.
Boston, Mass.
Chicago, Ill.
Cleveland, O.
Erie, Pa.
Hagerstown, Md.
Harrisburg, Pa.
Halifax, N.S.
Niagara Falls, N.Y.
New York, N.Y.
Providence, R.I.
Rochester, N.Y.
Trenton, N.J.
Wilmington, Del.
Washington, D.C.

First-class tickets include meals
and state room berth, Savannah to Baltimore.

Accommodation and Cuisine Unequaled.

Freight capacity unlimited; careful han-
dling and quick dispatch.

The steamships of this company are ap-
pointed to sail from Savannah to Balti-
more as follows (standard time):

Alleghany, Capt. Billups, Saturday,
Feb. 18, 1 p.m.
William Lawrence
Steamship

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*Steamship Wm. Lawrence does not carry passengers.

And from Baltimore every MONDAY
WEDNESDAY AND FRIDAY, at 4:00 p.m.

J.J. CAROLAN, Agent.
Savannah, Ga.

W.F. TURNER, G.P.A.
A.D. STEBBINS, A.T.M.

J.C. WHITNEY, Traffic Manager.
General Offices, Baltimore, Md.

******************************************************************************
William Lawrence  
Steamship

SEAMEN DOING WELL.

Condition of Men at St. Joseph’s Infirmary Improving.

The members of the shipwrecked crew of the steamship William Lawrence who are at the St. Joseph’s Infirmary, were reported yesterday to be doing as well as could be expected. Only two are now considered to be seriously ill. These are Chief Engineer Roach and Steward Frank Tindle, whose cases have not yet progressed sufficiently to determine the results.

Capt. A.L. Willis will leave for his home in Baltimore to-day by rail. Those members of the crew who are able to travel will leave for their home port by the next steamship of the company’s line. Capt. Willis’ cool judgement and brave conduct in disembarking his-crew from the wreck without loss and conducting the party under his own charge safely to land, and without undue hardship on their part has won him many econiums here.
FROSTBITTEN MEN IMPROVING.

Agent Carolan to Visit Wreck of the Lawrence To-day.

Capt. A.L. Willis of the wrecked steamship William Lawrence left for Baltimore by rail yesterday. The members of the crew who are able to travel will leave for the North in a day or two. The injured members of the crew at the St. Joseph’s Infirmary were reported yesterday to be very much improved. It is believed now that no amputations will be necessary in the cases of those most severely injured.

No salvage has yet been recovered from the wreck. Mr. John A. Carolan, agent of the company, will leave this morning on a tug to visit the wreck for the purpose of ascertaining what opportunity there is for salvage.
WILL BE NO SALVAGE.

Cargo of the William Lawrence Reported to Be a Total Loss.

Agent J.J. Carolan of the Merchants and Miners’ Transportation Company spent Saturday at the wreck of the William Lawrence, going over in the tug McCauley. Mr. Carolan reports that both vessel and cargo are a total loss. This being the case, it is not likely that any attempt will be made by the company to obtain salvage.

Mr. Carolan’s object in visiting the wreck was to ascertain if there were any chance for salvage. After a close examination he concluded that the cargo, which consisted of general merchandise, was so badly damaged that the salvage would not pay the expenses of getting it out. The wreckers had been at work, however, and several boat loads of stuff were seen being taken away from the wreck. The boats visited the wreck at low tide and were able to get hold of a good deal of stuff which had been loosened from the cargo in the breaking up of the vessel.

The Merchants and Miners’ Transportation company will not suffer quite so great a loss from the recent storm as was first thought. While the William Lawrence is a total loss the State of Texas, which sank on the same day in Chesapeake bay, is reported to be only slightly damaged. Preparations for raising the vessel are under way, and it is expected that she will be on the line again within two weeks. It is also reported that the company expects to raise the steamship Fairfax, which sunk on the line between Baltimore and Providence about three months ago. This work will not be undertaken until summer, however.

The six members of the crew of the Lawrence, who suffered so greatly as the result of their exposure to the weather after leaving the wreck reported from St. Joseph’s Infirmary as progressing favorably. Three of the number—Quartermaster Bowler, Cook Kelly and Sailor Montgomery—are reported to be rapidly improving and are expected to soon be able to leave the hospital. While the condition of of Chief
Engineer Roach, Second Officer Beale and Steward Tindle is much improved, the outcome of their cases is still uncertain. While no fatal results are anticipated it may be that some of them will be maimed for life as the result of their injuries, and it is very much feared that such will be the case.

Steward Tindle is a very bright young fellow and was very popular with the officers and members of the crew. His case excites much sympathy. He is the oldest of a family of six brothers and has been the chief support of the family.

The son and daughter of Chief Engineer Roach arrived from their home in Baltimore Friday, and have done much by their presence to cheer and brighten their father.
William Lawrence
Steamship

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An Americus merchant was notified Saturday that a large consignment of goods, ordered several weeks ago, had been lost at sea. The goods were shipped by the William Lawrence, belonging to the Merchants’ and Miners’ Steamship Line, operating between Baltimore and Savannah, which sank off the coast of South Carolina a few days since. He immediately duplicated the order, and will endeavor at once to recover the loss for the steamship company.
Edward Roach, chief engineer of the wrecked steamship William Lawrence, died last night at 8 o’clock at the St. Joseph’s Infirmary, where he had been since Feb. 14, when he was brought to Savannah, with other members of the crew, by the steamer Clifton.

His death was due to exposure incurred after leaving the wreck, on Feb. 12, the party being exposed to the severe cold of the recent snow storm and cold wave for over fifty hours without food or shelter.

It was evident on the arrival of the party here that Engineer Roach was the most seriously affected. On account of his age and the fact that he was of portly build, he was less able to resist the cold than the younger members of the party. The twelve or fifteen hours which were spent sitting in a cramped position in the boat in the storm of Sunday and Sunday night, left him in such a condition that he was unable to regain the use of his limbs after reaching land on Paris [sic] Island. When he arrived here Tuesday afternoon, his lower limbs were black from the knees down and his hands were also seriously affected.

The physicians realized that Mr. Roach’s injuries were serious from the first, and it was admitted by them privately that amputation of one or both limbs would be necessary, even should he rally from the effects of the cold.

The deceased was over 50 years of age, and was well-known in marine circles, having been in the employ of the Merchants and Miners’ company for a number of years. He has a family in Baltimore, and a son and daughter were with him here at the time of his death. The remains were turned over to Coroner Goette last night, and will be sent to Baltimore to-day for interment, accompanied by his son and daughter.
Second Officer Robert A. Beale and Steward Frank Tindale of the shipwrecked crew are still in a serious condition, and none of the six men who were sent to the hospital on their arrival here has yet been discharged.
-William Lawrence
Steamship

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SMN, Thurs, 02/23/1899, pg 8, col 5

THE LAWRENCE’S CREW.
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Officer Beales Out of His Mind and
Taken North.

The body of the late Chief engineer Roach was sent North by Undertaker Goette yesterday morning, accompanied by the son and daughter of the deceased. The interment will be in Baltimore. The deceased was over 70 years of age, which accounts no doubt for the fact that he is the only one so far of his party to succumb after the exposure to the severe weather of the recent blizzard.

Second Officer Robert A. Beale, who has been at St. Joseph’s Infirmary since the arrival of the shipwrecked crew at Savannah, has been taken North to Baltimore for treatment, his sufferings having affected his mind. Mr. Beale is well advanced in years. —

John Montgomery, a sailor, is the only one of the six men of the crew sent to the hospital, who has recovered sufficiently to be discharged. Steward Frank Dingle, Quartermaster Oscar Bowler and Cook Harvey Kelly are still at the hospital.

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Waterlines of the *SS William Lawrence*

(Peabody Museum, Salem, Massachusetts)