

THE CAPSIZING OF THE SCHOONER REED CASE'S YAWL.

The third instance of loss of life within the scope of Service operations, occurred near the Ship-Canal Station, (Tenth District,) Lake Superior, on October 20, 1888. The captain of the schooner *Reed Case*, of Chicago, Illinois, was drowned.

The vessel was bound, light, from Duluth, Minnesota, to Portage Lake, Michigan, with a crew of eight men. When she arrived off the canal the morning of the 19th, the wind was blowing a gale from the southwest, with a heavy sea running, yet she attempted to pass in between the piers. The keeper first observed the vessel some five miles offshore, and knowing the danger and difficulty she would encounter in trying to enter the canal, he hastened to the station to make prepara-

tions to go to her assistance. One of the surfmen on watch in the lookout, which is situated near the canal entrance, saw the schooner at about the same time and ran out on the pier-end in readiness to take a line when she arrived. She kept constantly sagging to leeward, and it soon became evident that she would miss the entrance. She continued on, however, and struck the end of the east or leeward pier with such force as to stave a hole in her bow. The sudden impact caused her to rebound, but the sea swept her a second time against the pier. She then managed to get clear and, standing a short distance into the lake, let go both anchors. One of the chains parted, and the remaining anchor failing to hold she commenced to drag down the lake and towards the shore. After going some four miles she reached shoaler water, where the single anchor fetched her up. She was now about half a mile from the land and five miles northeastward of the station.

The keeper on reaching the station caused the life-boat to be launched, and the crew pulled up the canal to the entrance. Here a five-gallon can of oil was suspended from the bow of the boat and another from the stern, in such a manner that the contents flowed slowly from the cans and spread over the surface of the water. The foresail was reefed and set and the boat headed down the lake towards the schooner, but it was not long before the sail had to be taken in to prevent the mast from breaking. The surfmen then took to the oars, and at 11 o'clock, two hours from the time of starting, they arrived alongside the vessel, which was rolling and pitching heavily. The captain informed the life-savers that the schooner was leaking badly and that he wanted the assistance of a tug. The keeper replied that it would be impossible to induce a tug to venture out, but that he and his men would remain by the craft and render all the aid they could. The captain, however, in spite of the keeper's advice, insisted on sending one of his crew ashore, but, after making arrangements to lower the yawl, he was finally prevailed upon to allow the surfmen to land the steward in the life-boat. The schooner's yawl would certainly have been swamped the moment it touched the water. The man was taken into the boat and the life-savers made for a small sand beach not far distant. They were soon confronted with the danger of being capsized in the trough of the breakers and were obliged to keep off before the wind and seek a landing farther down the shore, under the lee of a reef and a bluff some thirty feet high. While crossing the reef a huge comber knocked one of the men from the thwart and washed his oar overboard. Before he had time to recover himself the boat struck the beach head on, where another sea swept over it and turned it broadside against the bank with such force as to stave it badly. The life-savers succeeded in hauling it clear of the surf, whereupon the steward started off in search of a tug. It was now about 1 o'clock, and the men proceeded to the station. The wind, meantime, had veered to the north, from which quarter it was blowing strong, accompanied by heavy snow-

squalls. It was thought best as a measure of precaution to transport the beach-apparatus to a point abreast of the vessel, and so a team of horses was obtained for the purpose. Snow and slush covered the ground, and with mire-holes and roots of trees obstructing the way, it was with great labor and difficulty that the cart was drawn to a favorable position opposite the schooner. A fire was built on the beach and kept burning brightly, and the surfmen maintained a vigilant watch throughout the night. At 2 o'clock in the morning (20th) the steward returned and said that he could not get a tug to venture out in the storm. At daylight the vessel was pitching heavily in the trough of the sea, and at times it seemed as though she would capsize. An attempt was made to reach her with a line, but she was entirely beyond range and the shot fell short. It was then decided to go to the station for the surf-boat. The latter being procured was rowed to the entrance of the canal, but the breakers there were so high that it was deemed best to haul it across the land to a spot near the schooner and make an effort to reach her by pulling head to the sea, instead of taking the risk of going out between the piers and down the lake. A team of horses was accordingly obtained, and with the assistance of the crew of the steamer *City of Fremont*, which was in the canal waiting for the gale to moderate, the wagon containing the boat was started on its journey. At a point about half a mile from where the vessel lay the road became impassable for the wagon, and the boat was removed and dragged over the ground the rest of the way. It was then discovered that a hole had been stove in the bottom.

The keeper had hastened on in advance to select a good launching place, and on coming in view of the schooner saw that her yawl was being lowered. Thereupon he ran to the beach-wagon, took off the canvas cover, and marking upon it in large letters, "Boat is coming," stretched it up between the trees so that it could be seen by the crew of the vessel. He then hurried back to urge on the men in charge of the surf-boat. In five minutes the latter arrived at the shore, when it was found that the schooner's yawl was swamped in the breakers and two men were clinging to it. All the shore party, except one surfman who remained on the bluff, ran down the hill and up the beach to assist the imperiled sailors. The surfman who remained behind soon saw another man struggling in the water a little ways from the yawl, and he at once hurried to the surf-boat and procured two life-belts, but on returning found that the man had disappeared. While the station crew were going along the beach the steward of the vessel informed them that the captain was in the yawl when it left the schooner, but that he had been washed out when the boat first filled. Gaining a spot opposite the yawl, which the undertow was keeping from the shore, the life-savers joined hands and wading into the surf as far as they could, got hold of the boat and hauled it out. One of the men was sitting on the bottom grasping the thwarts, and the other was clinging to the stern from the outside.

This man, who was losing his hold, was rescued just in time by one of the surfmen, who, with a life-belt on, rushed in and caught him. The two survivors were chilled through and so completely exhausted that they were unable to stand. The life-savers quickly carried them to the fire, removed their wet clothing, and covered them with their own garments. They then briskly rubbed them to increase warmth and circulation, and administered stimulants that had been provided from the station medicine chest. Meanwhile a surfman had been dispatched to the station for dry clothing, material to repair the boat, and a conveyance for the transfer of the rescued men. As it was growing late and the situation momentarily becoming more precarious, it was decided to make an effort to reach the vessel with the surf-boat before dark. It was first necessary to lower it down the steep bank by means of a line, one end of which was made fast to the stern and the other part taken around a tree. On getting the boat to the water's edge the keeper directed Surfman Jeremiah Hanly to get into the bow and be ready with his oar to keep the craft from being thrown broadside on the beach. This Hanly refused to do, saying that he would not endanger his life in such a sea. He was promptly discharged on the spot by the keeper, and the crew thereby became short-handed by the loss of two members, the man who had been sent to the station not yet having returned. Nothing daunted by lack of numbers, the remaining men waited their chance, effected a launch, took to the oars, and succeeded in pulling clear of the shore. The first comber they met half filled the boat and compelled them to hold it in check until one of the oarsmen got to bailing. It was evident, however, that the water could not be kept out on account of the leak in the bottom, and so the surfmen bent their united energies to the oars, and by a powerful effort reached the vessel. They speedily took off the four men, and without wasting a minute's time put back to the beach and fortunately made a safe landing. These results were accomplished in the face of the greatest peril and under difficulties that appeared insurmountable, and the successful termination of the undertaking was greeted with cheers by the spectators who had gathered at the scene. The sailors were immediately conducted to the station where they were provided with food and shelter. The surfmen returned to the shore for their apparatus and made search for the captain's body, but did not then find it. They recovered it the next morning (21st) at the water's edge a mile and a half from where the accident happened. The remains were properly cared for until evening, when a relative arrived and took charge of them.

The shipwrecked men left the station for their homes the same day. The schooner filled and rolled over on her side, becoming a complete wreck. Attempts by the surfmen, in conjunction with tugs and a wrecking company, to save her proved futile. The clothing furnished to alleviate the privations of the sailors was drawn from the supply donated by the Women's National Relief Association.

The foregoing narrative shows that the life-saving crew did all they possibly could to prevent the loss of life at this disaster. The captain, Charles L. Green, of Chicago, Illinois, perished in a rash attempt to make the shore in a frail and unfit boat, while if he had remained on the vessel until assistance could have reached him he would undoubtedly have been saved with the others.