

WRECK OF THE *ARMANTINE*

REFERENCE: FOR THE FIRST 20 PAGES READ H10 AS H8

Wreck of the French Ship
Armantine

JANE CAMERON NATIONAL ARCHIVES
VOLUME H10 - Armantine

Government House, Stanley
Falkland Islands
13th September 1851

On Tuesday the 9th instant,
the third officer of the French Ship
"Armantine" came into the settle-
ment and reported to me that that
ship, bound from Havre to Lima
with a valuable cargo, had been
lost on the Coast (as he described)
near Cape Carysfort. I immedi-
ately gave orders for the schooner-
boat Sophy to proceed according
to the Officer's directions to ascertain
the Captain's wishes respecting
any assistance or protection he
might

might require, to save the Cargo, hull,
and appurtenances of his vessel.

Fearing that depredations and
irregularities might take place,
I, at the same time, gave orders

for publishing a notice, warning
all persons from appropriating
any of the Cargo or articles be-
longing to the Ship, which no-

tice was gazetted on Thursday the
11th instant. - On Friday the 12th

Captain Tache J. P. and Mr. Picketts,
two gentlemen of the Colony,

who had met some of the Crew

at Anson and had proceeded to

the Wreck guided by one of them,

returned

returned to Stanley and informed me of the exact situation of the ship which was found to be nearly 40 miles westward of the place indicated by the officer who had given me the previous information. Captain Tache stated also that great destruction of property had taken place, - lots of silks and fine cloths &c. being strewed on the beach, and the ship an entire wreck.

Supposing that the boat Sophy would be unable to reach the wreck from the erroneous description received by the third officer

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officer of its situation, and learn-
ing that the Captain urgently
desired protection and assistance
to save such portion of the Cargo
as could be recovered, - I im-
mediately gave directions for
a party consisting of Mr Longden,
Acting Colonial Secretary and
J.P., Mr Dean Agent to
Stoyds and J.P. with the Chief
and four special Constables
to accompany me to the Wreck.

The party leaving Stanley next
morning at day break arrived
at the Wreck same evening, Satur-
day the 13th September.

Guy Rennie
Govr.

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Memorandum of Pro-
ceedings at the wreck
of the French Ship
"Armantine" near Cape
Trehel and of a State-
ment made by the
Commander, Captain
Estebe, in answer to
questions by the Gover-
nor.

Governor's tent,
at Cape Trehel
Sunday 14th September 1851.

On arriving at the Wreck
Captain Estebe and the Mr. Sam-
uel 2nd Captain met the Gover-
nor

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nor who requested to know what assistance he could give them. The Captain wished to have aid, & protection to save the Cargo, and stated that since the Wreck took place, the Crew had been employed in landing provisions, sails for tents, &c, and that these operations required much time from the bad weather. The ship having shifted her place, and the provisions mingled with the Cargo, it was necessary to break open the deck to get out the Provisions and sails. The night of the Wreck, which took place at $\frac{1}{2}$ past 8 on the evening

evening of the 26th of August last,
was employed to get up provisions;
at low water. Mr. Lambert and
Mr. Ohi swam ashore to see the
Coast, and if there were any in-
habitants, to obtain assistance.
on the 27th it blew hard from the
west with a heavy sea, - the Cap-
tain sent on shore from the
deck some barrels of biscuit, some
sailors also went ashore on a raft.
On the 28th the weather became
worse, the ship opened, there re-
mained on board 6 men; the Cap-
tain, seeing it was impossible to
stay longer on board, made another
raft

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raft and put the six men on
board with himself and allowed
it to drive ashore, where they
reached with great difficulty, in
consequence of the heavy surf;
notwithstanding, all were saved.

The Captain stated there was
an error of 20 leagues in the
reckoning, there having been
several days before the Wreck
on which the thick weather
prevented observations, and
he thought that he was near
the Coast of Patagonia, and in-
tended to pass to the westward
of the Islands, but the current

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as he supposed had carried him
to the Eastward.

The Governor then enquired of the
Captain whether any Colonists had
visited the wreck before his (the Go-
vernors) arrival? Captain Estle
replied only Captain Luche and
Mr. Ricketts.

The Governor explained to the Cap-
tain, the different means which of-
-fered to realize the greatest value for
the underwriters, either by re-export-
-ing the Cargo, or disposing of it in
the Colony; and fully pointed out
to him, that if a large portion of
the Cargo, which the Captain sup-

posed

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passed might have cost a million of
frances were saved, in an undamaged
state, the small community of the
Falkland Islands would be
unable to purchase at an adequate
amount, so large a quantity of
valuable goods.

The Captain replied to the Governor
that, as there was an agent of Lloyd's
here, he thought it would be best,
in concert with him to engage
men to save the Cargo, and pre-
pare it for public sale in the
Colony.

The Governor in consequence
introduced Mr. Dean to the Cap-
tain, with whom all ulterior ar-
rangements

arrangements respecting the said ship
will be made. - This arrangement
is understood between Mr Dean
and the Captain to be for the en-
tire cargo, but not for the ship, her
appurtenances, and the provisions
and Stores necessary for the Crew.
The Captain informed the Govern^{or}
that the Crew had lost all their
clothes and effects, having been
obliged to throw them away to float
on shore, and that they had no
wages due to them at the time of
the wreck, having received three
months advance in Kauri,
and sailed on the 2nd June last.

Also

Also that he, the Captain, had been obliged to throw his Chronometer and Barometer with his Chest into the sea to float on shore, - that they are in consequence totally destroyed as well as a gold watch which was in the box: the other Chronometer which he had hired at Home had been saved.

The Governour asked the Captain if he had reason to believe that the Crew had concealed any property or were in possession of any valuables belonging to the Cargo?

The Captain replied that he had no reason to believe so - and

added

added, he himself had succeeded
in saving a case of jewellery.

(The Governor conversed with and
interrogated the Captain and
heard his statement in the French
language, which he at once trans-
lated, the second Captain (who
understands English) being pre-
sent, and concurring in the inter-
pretation.)

(signed) Le Cap^{te} du navire
St Estebé

(signed) J. R. Longden
Acty Coll. Secretary

(signed) Lambert

(signed) J. M. Dean
Agent for Lloyd's

Government House
 11th December 1851

Captain Estebé, being about to proceed to Monte Video in the Brig ^{Eliza}, came to the Governor's office, and stated to His Excellency, in presence of the Acting Colonial Secretary, that all his affairs had been concluded and the sale of the provisions of the Cargo &c saved had been conducted regularly, and realized the following amounts

Sold at Cape Fochel, less Commission	405.4.9
Do Do Do Ship's Stores	87.5.10
Sold at Stanley, less Commission	1186.11.0
	<hr/>
	1679.3.7
Less Portage and expenses	392.14.0
	<hr/>
Net amount	\$ 1286.9.7

The whole of which (except 200 dollars) he takes with him in Government bills. The Captain added that he was very well satisfied with the results of the sale and the arrangements made since the wreck. Captain Estebé wished also to add that he had arranged with Captain Bennett for the

passage of himself and Crew to Monte
Video at the following rates.

For himself 20 dollars
For Mr. Lambert 2nd } 20 do
 Captain }

For Penouët, Cheval, each 12 do
Noël, and Vileain }

For the Coloured man 10 do

Of the rest of the Crew (10 in num-
ber) received a passage in H. M. S. Fly
to Rio de Janeiro, four shipped as sea-
men on board the Windsor of Liverpool
Captain Chilton and the other three
received a passage to Liverpool on board
the barque Circassian Captain Win-
chester.

J. C. M. B.
1797

In presence of A. C. the Governor

Whorester
Colonial Secretary

I hereby certify that Captain
Estebé, according to the best
information I have received,
has done every thing in his
power to realize the largest
amount possible for ~~which~~ the
goods wrecked in his ship
the Armantine which the
Married State they were
found in permitted.

Jose Rumi
Gov.

Government House
Stanley Falkland Islands
11 December 1857

Amount of Goods Sold at Cape Fubel

Wm Cameron	405. 4. 9
Wm Fubel Ship Store	87. 7. 10
Wm Stanley 30 + 31 st Oct	1186. 11. 0
	<hr/>
	1679 " 3 " 7

Portage & Expenses	£ 374. 00	}	392. 14. 0
Wm Fubel	18. 14. 0		
			<hr/>
			£ 1286 " 9 " 7

Falkland Islands

Stanley 24th Nov^r 1857

Received of the Colonial Govern-
ment the following Provisions
for the subsistence of six distressed
seamen on a voyage to England

- | | |
|-----|---|
| 600 | Six hundred pounds of Biscuit |
| 500 | Five hundred Pounds of Salt Pork |
| 196 | One hundred and ninety six }
Pounds of Flour } — |
| 200 | Two hundred pounds of Beef |
| 75 | Twenty five pounds of Sugar |
| 75 | Twenty five pounds of Coffee |
| 13 | Thirteen Gallons of White Peas. |

The price of which, namely £28.10.0 is
to be paid for, out of the allowance of
1/6 a day per man, to be paid by the
Government. —

W. Winchester
acting Master

I hereby acknowledge that the crew
 of the Armantine, wrecked on the
 Coast of these Islands in August last,
 have been subsisted by the local Govern-
 ment since their arrival in Stanley
 up to the period of their departure, du-
 ring which time they received from
 the Government stores the provisions
 and clothing undernamed

716	pounds flour	4	Tons Meal
318	do biscuit	19 1/2	Gallons peas
844	do beef	1	do Seal oil
354	do salt pork	1/4	do Cotton wick
17 1/2	do sugar	6 1/2	dozen bottles Beer
122	do Coffee	10	lbs Salt
121	do Rice	4	pairs shoes
14	do Candles	3	do trousers
18	do Soap	2	ugs and 2 blankets
8	do Tea		

The crew numbered 17 in all, the first
 portion arrived at Stanley on the 9th
 September 1851, and the last received
 rations up to the 13th December instant.

J. J. Stebbins

Government House Stanley Captain of the Armantine
 Falkland Islands
 11 December 1851

Memorandum of Stores, clothing, Hospital comforts and incidental expenses incurred in the relief of the distressed crew of the Armantine, Chance, and Levenoid, referred to in Governor Pennie's despatches to Earl Grey &c. dated 10th March 1852 -

Crew of the French Ship "Armantine."

	Amounts			Totals
716 pounds flour 42/- per barrel	7	13	5	
318 do Biscuit 4 1/4 per lb	5	12	6 1/2	
354 do salt lark 25/- " barrel	9	4	4 1/2	
844 do beef 2 " " —	7	0	8	
177 1/2 do sugar 4 1/4 " " —	3	2	10 1/2	
122 do Coffee 3 " " —	2	10	10	
121 do Rice 3 " " —	1	10	3	
8 do Tea 16 " " —	0	10	8	
14 do Candles 9, 18 lbs soap 5 —	0	17	2	
10 do salt 2 —	0	1	8	
19 1/2 Gallons peas 14/- per gallon	1	2	9	
1 do seal oil —	0	3	0	
4 Tons coal at 20/- gr. ton	4	0	0	
6 1/2 Ogun Porter 12/- —	3	18	0	
2 Blankets 7/- ea: 2 bags of ea —	1	6	0	
3 1/2 Trowsers at 4/- Shirts at 4/-	2	10	0	
Cooking utensils —	1	19	3	
Man sent in search of the wreck	4	8	2	
"Armantine" Total	£ 57. 11. 7 1/2			
Carry forward				£ 57. 11. 7 1/2

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Her Majesty's Sloop "Sib",
St. Paul's, Harbour, 29 Sept. 1851

Dep. 1.

Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge
the receipt of your Excellency's
letter of to days date, acquainting
me of the wreck of the French Ship
"Armantine", and requesting the
conveyance of four men and
two boys part of her crew to
Rio de Janeiro, or England. -
In reply, I beg leave to state
that it will give me much
pleasure to accede to your

His Excellency

George Peume Esq.
Governor of the
Salkland Islands

Your request in this urgent
Case, altho, Her Majesty's Ship
under my Command is
already crowded with passengers,
and the accommodation that I
can afford them will be
but indifferent.

I have the honor to be

Your Excellency's

Most Obedient Servant

Christoph Commander.

Government House
Stanley 30th September 1851

Sir, I have the honor to acquaint you that the French ship Armantine Captain (sic) from Havre to Lima with a crew of 17 men (all included) was totally wrecked near Cape Trench on this Island on the night of the 26th August without loss of life. Four of the seamen took service on board of the ship Windsor bound for Valparaiso on the 22nd Inst. Five along with the Captain and first Officer are engaged in salvage at the wreck about 50 miles distant from Stanley and cannot be communicated with previous to your sailing. There remain four men and two boys now living in this settlement at the charge of the Local Government, being entirely in a destitute state. I have therefore to request that you will give a passage in H. M. S. Fly under your command to the above four men and two boys, either to Rio de Janeiro where they can be handed over to the French Consul or Naval Officer commanding on the land as may be convenient.

I have &c
George Renne
your
Capt. Oliver R. N. (signed)
Commanding H. M. S. Fly
Stanley Harbour

Government House
Stanley Falkland Islands
30th September 1851

Sir I was with great regret that I have the honor to inform your Excellency of the total wreck of the French ship *Armantine*, Captain Esté from Havre with a valuable Cargo, on the shores of this Island near Cap de Petet. I have however the satisfaction to acquaint your Excellency that the Officers and Men amounting to seventeen were all saved, and there being no French Consul in this Colony I felt that as the representative of His Majesty in these Islands I should only fulfill Her Majesty's wishes in adopting the most prompt measures to afford assistance and protection to the Captain and Crew in saving such portions of the Cargo as could be recovered.

I have the honour to enclose a summary of the proceedings which I instituted with the declaration of Captain Esté in my presence at the scene of the wreck about 50 miles distant from this place, and to which I proceeded personally to employ the best means in my power for the succour of your unfortunate countrymen.

To His Excellency
The Minister of
The French Republic &c. &c.
at Rio de Janeiro.

Yours

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Four of the Seamen of the "Armantine" have taken service on board of the English Ship "London" Captain Chilton with the approval of Captain Osstebe bound from this place to Valparaiso and afterwards to England; the Captain with his Lieutenant and seven others, are employed at the Wreck with a large party which I have sent to aid them in saving the Cargo the remainder consisting of one man and two boys have been provided with a passage to Rio de Janeiro at my request by Captain Oliver of the "H. M. S. Fly".

I have been unable to communicate with Captain Osstebe during the short stay which H. M. S. Fly made at this port, but as it is his duty to stay here until the Agent of Lloyd's Insurance, to whom he has committed the charge of the disposal of the Cargo shall have completed his duties, he would have been unable to avail himself of a passage by this opportunity. - I have only in conclusion to assure your Excellency that I shall continue the assistance which may be required by your Countrymen for their support, and for the realization of the Wrecked property, to the greatest advantage which the disagreeable circumstances will permit. - As I have not for-

warded

warded any accounts of the above un-
fortunate event to the French Government,
I have the honor to request (in the case
of your Excellency thinking it desirable
to do so) that copies may be transmitted
to the proper department.

I have the
honor to be
signed
George Penne
governor

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Wreck of the French Ship "Armantine"

Government House
Stanley Settlement Islands
13th September 1851

On Tuesday the 9th instant, the third officer of the French Ship "Armantine" came into the settlement and reported to me that that ship, bound from Havre to Lima with a valuable cargo, had been lost on the Coast (as he described) near Cape Caryfort. I immediately gave orders for the schooner boat, to proceed according to the Officers' directions to ascertain the Captains wishes respecting any assistance or protection he might require, to save the Cargo, hull and appurtenances of his vessel.

Fearing that depredations and irregularities might take place, at the same time, gave orders for publishing a notice, warning all persons from appropriating any of the Cargo, or articles belonging to the ship, which notice was gazetted on Thursday the 11th instant. On Friday the 12th Captains Pache J. P. and Mr. Ricketts two gentlemen of the Colony who had met some of the Crew at Anson and had proceeded to the Wreck guided by an

of

of them returned to Stanley and informed me of the exact situation of the ship which was found to be nearly 40 miles westward of the place indicated by the Officer who had given me the previous information. Captain Sacke stated also that great destruction of property had taken place; bales of silk and fine cloth, being thrown on the beach, and the ship an entire wreck.

Supposing that the boat Sophy would be unable to reach the wreck from the erroneous description received by the third officer of its situation, and learning that the Captain earnestly desired protection and assistance to save such portion of the cargo as could be recovered, I immediately gave directions for a party consisting of Mr Longden Acting Colonial Secretary and J. P. Mr Dean Agent to Lloyd's and J. O. Smith the Chief and four Special Constables to accompany me to the wreck. The party leaving Stanley next morning at day break arrived at the wreck same evening, Sunday the 13th September.

(Signed) George Pennie
Governor

Memorandum of Proceedings at the
Wreck of the French Ship "Armantine"
near Cape Tchet and of a statement
made by the Commander, Captain Estebé,
in answer to questions by the Governor.

Governor's Tent Cape Tchet

Saturday 11th September 1851

On arriving at the Wreck Captain Estebé
and Mr. Lambert 2nd Captain met the
Governor who requested to know what as-
sistance he could give them. The Captain
wished to have aid and protection to save
the Cargo, and stated that since the Wreck
took place, the Crew had been employed in
landing provisions, sails for tent &c, and
that these operations required much time
from the bad weather. The ship having
shifted her place, and the provisions min-
gled with the Cargo, it was necessary to
break open the deck to get out the provisions
and sails. The night of the wreck which
took place at 2^{1/2} past 8 on the evening of
the 26th of August last, was employed to
get up provisions; at low water Mr. Lambert
and Mr. Che' swam ashore to see the Coast,
and if there were any inhabitants, to obtain
assistance: on the 27th it flew hard from the
West with a heavy sea, the Captain sent on
shore from the Wreck some barrels of Biscuit,

some

some sailors also went ashore on a raft. On the 28th the weather became worse, the ship opened, there remained on board six men, the Captain, seeing it was impossible to stay longer on board, made another raft and put the six men on board with himself and allowed it to drive ashore where they reached with great difficulty, in consequence of the heavy surf; notwithstanding, all were saved.

The Captain stated there was an error of 20 leagues in the reckoning, there having been several days before the wreck on which the thick weather prevented observations, and he thought that he was near the Coast of Patagonia, and intended to pass to the westward of the Islands, but the current as he supposed had carried him to the Eastward.

The Governor then enquired of the Captain whether any Colonists had visited the wreck before his (the Governor's) arrival? Captain Esteban replied only Captain Pucke and Mr. Ricketts.

The Governor explained to the Captain the different means which offered to realize the greatest value for the underwriters, viz. they by re-exporting the Cargo, or disposing of it in the Colony; and fully pointed out to him, that if a large portion of the Cargo
which

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which the Captain supposed might have cost a million of francs were saved, in an undamaged state the small community of the Falkland Islands would be unable to purchase at an adequate amount, so large a quantity of valuable goods.

The Captain replied to the Governor that, as there was an Agent of Lloyd's here, he thought it would be best in concert with him to engage men to save the Cargo and prepare it for public sale in the Colony.

The Governor in consequence introduced Mr. Dean to the Captain, with whom all ulterior arrangements respecting the said ship will be made. This arrangement is understood between Mr. Dean and the Captain, to be for the entire Cargo, but not for the ship, her appurtenances, and the provisions and stores necessary for the crew. The Captain informed the Governor that the crew had lost all their clothes and effects, having been obliged to throw them away to float on shore, and that they had no supplies due to them at the time of the wreck, having received three months advance in pay, and sailed on the 2nd of June last. Also that he, the Captain, had been obliged to throw his Chronometer and Barometer with his Chest into the sea to float on shore, - that they are in consequence totally destroyed as well as a gold watch which was

in the box the other Chronometer which
he had hired at Havre had been saved.
The Governor asked the Captain if he had
reason to believe that the Crew had con-
cealed any property or were in posses-
sion of any valuables belonging to the
Cargo!

The Captain replied that he had no
reason to believe so- and added, he himself
had succeeded in saving a case of Jewellery.

The Governor conversed with and
interrogated the Captain and heard his
Statement in the French Language,
which he at once translated. The se-
cond Captain who understands En-
glish being present, and concurring
in the interpretation.

(signed) Le Capitaine du Navire
St Estève

(signed) Lambert.

(signed) J. R. Longden
Acting Coll. Secretary

(signed) J. M. Dean
Agent for Lloyd's

Deputé Com. Armantine

JANE CAMERON NATIONAL ARCHIVES
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Government House
Stanley 23rd October 1851.

Sir
When on Saturday the 11th Inst. I went on your way to the sale of the Wreck and portion of the Cargo of the French Ship. Armantine, you stopped me to propose that I should let you have a few hundred pounds out of the public money chest of the Colony, in order that you might be enabled to purchase goods to a greater extent than you had means in available Cash to effect. I felt so completely surprised and shocked at a project which up to that time I had never contemplated the possibility of any person venturing to hint at, much less openly and pertinaciously to urge on me, that I partly repuffed the feelings which prompted me at the moment, partly that I might deliberately consider how I should make you most fully aware of the great undecorium which, as the Representative of my Sovereign and Guardian of the public money entrusted to me by the British Parliament your proposition involved.

I regret to say that this request does not seem to have been made inadvertently or through ignorance, as I have

S. A. Williams Esq
Stanley

been

been subsequently informed by Mr. Longden that you had the day before viz on the 10th Inst. applied to him and elicited a full explanation of the impropriety of your wishes.

3. Having fully and seriously considered the subject I feel that it is due to myself to place on record in the Colonial documents, my communicated surprise, and deep regret, that any person holding the rank of gentleman in this settlement should for an instant have thought of proposing to an Officer entrusted with the high functions which I have the honor to hold, a breach of trust alike dishonorable to a public administrator as well as a private gentleman for the sole and undisguised purpose of enabling him by the aid of the public funds of the Colony, to outbid and prevent the Colony at large, from participating in the advantages to be derived from the sale of the Goods, he wished to secure for his exclusive gain.

I have
signed
G. Rennie
Govr.

Government House
Stanley 24th. November 1851

Sir

I have to request that you will receive on board your vessel and convey to England three English seamen named — Robinson, William Knowles, and John Hooper, who were formerly passengers of the Chance of Liverpool which foundered at sea.

Also 3 French sailors belonging to the "Armantine" which vessel was wrecked on the coast of these Islands in August last. The above men are all distressed seamen and have been hitherto supported by the local Government.

The price of the provisions with which you have been furnished from the Government I do here namely 20 £ will of course be deducted from the passage money of these men. — A list of these provisions is annexed.

I am
signed,
George Rennie
Gov^r.

Captain Winchester
Barque Circassian

List of Provisions supplied to Cap:
tain Winchester from the Govern:
ment Store Falkland Islands for
the subsistence of the seamen herein
before named

600 pounds of Biscuits
500 do of Salt Pork
200 do " Fresh Beef
196 do " Flour
175 do " Sugar
175 do " Coffee
113 Gallons of Spirit Seal.

In payment for which the
sum of 285 sterling is to be de:
ducted from the passage money
of the men.

Government House
Stanley 24th November 1851

Sir

I have to inform you that I have sent sufficient provisions for the distressed seamen named in my letter of this day's date to afford them the following rations namely for 100 days

- 1 pound of Biscuit per day a man
- 2 ounces of Sugar " " " "
- 1 oz of Coffee " " " "
- 1 pound of Salt pork " " " "
- 1/2 do of Fresh beef " " " "
- 1/2 do of Flour per man per week
- 1 pint of Peas " " " "

The men will of course cook their own rations.

I am Sir
Your Obedt Servt
Wm Winchester
Barque Circassian
J. M. Munnie