

The Danish West Indies & the Montagne Pelée Eruption of 1902

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Research Paper for the Caribbean Genealogy Library

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The St. Pierre Cataclysm

For three months a smell of rot had been emanating from the Montagne Pelée, when on Monday, the 23rd of April 1902, at 8 a.m. three loud shocks were heard and felt in the city of St. Pierre. Wednesday, the 25th, the Montagne Pelée started smoking for the first time in 50 years. This was followed by low rumbles, ending in a sudden cannon shot with lightening, and a shower of white ash spreading down wind of the spewing volcano. A week later during the night of Friday the 2nd and the next day, Saturday the 3rd of May, the volcano belched a tremendous volume of smoke with flames and rumbling noises. At 5:30 a.m. flames were seen again as St. Pierre became covered with fog and ashes a quarter of an inch thick.

Monday the 5th of May at noon, the volcano spewed an enormous quantity of lava and boiling mud, which rushed down the Rivière Blanche, a few miles north of St. Pierre, at a speed estimated at 130 miles per hour, and wiped out the GUÉRIN sugar plantation with its factory, four members of the GUÉRIN family, some 20 employees, and a crowd of about 100 onlookers.

On Thursday the 8th of May at eight o'clock, the south-west side of the Montagne Pelée, facing St. Pierre, blew up and the awesome conflagration created a shock wave that traveled at the speed of sound. In about one minute, it leveled the city and its outskirts, sunk or disabled 18 vessels in the roadsted, and killed some 29,000 persons, including Governor M. L. MOUTTET, his wife and staff, Mr. Roger FOUCHÉ, mayor of St. Pierre, Mr. Thomas T. PRENTISS, U.S. consul, Ms. Amédée TESTART, U.S. vice consul, Mr. James JAPP, British consul, Mr. M. E. S. MEYER, Danish consul, Mr. Joseph PLISONNEAU, Italian consul, Mr. E. DUPRÉ, Mexican consul, and Mr. Gustave BORDE, Swedish consul.

The repair steamer *Pouyer-Quertier* of the French Cable Company stationed eight miles out suffered only minor damage, while the British steamer *Roddam* was heavily damaged, but was able to escape to St. Lucie. The Canadian steamer *Roraima* of the Quebec Line lost all deck structures and spars. The Italian barks *Theresa Lo Vico* and the *Maria di Pompeii*; the German *Korona*; and the French *Gabrielle* were all smoldering hulks. Finally, the French vessels *Tamaya*, *Clementina*, *Diamant*, *Fusée*, *Biscaye*, *R. J. Morse* and the repair steamer *Grappler* of the West India and Panama Telegraph Company at St. Thomas, Danish West Indies, were sunk rapidly with all crews on board.

Danish Rescue Operation

Upon hearing the news of the loss of 150 lives at the Usine Guérin, on the 7th of May, the Danish cruiser *Valkyrien* was ordered at sea to offer assistance to the French population in the vicinity of the Montagne Pelée. Captain HOLM was in command and was joined by the consular agent of France, Mons. J. HALLER, to facilitate coordination with the French authorities. The *Valkyrien* left St. Thomas on the 9th of May with 46,000 lbs of foodstuffs and a supply of medicine and surgical dressing for the surviving victims; she was the first foreign ship to arrive at the St. Pierre roadstead at 11 pm on the 10th of May. The city of 26,000 souls was lying in ruins engulfed in smoke and flames. Visibility was so poor that rescue operations could not be started until 9 o'clock the following morning. Only 40 badly burned sailors and passengers could be found alive at the main pier, or on floating hulks and debris. A shore patrol found only dead bodies. Later that day, the *Valkyrien* proceeded a few miles north to Le Prêcheur where she removed 500 trapped refugees to transport them south to Fort-de-France for safety and medical care. By then, other navy cruisers had arrived on the scene to lend further assistance: the French cruiser *Suchet*, the German cruiser *Folke*, and the American tug *Potomac*. Thus, having completed its mission, the *Valkyrien* returned to St. Thomas on the 17th of May after receiving many thanks from the French. On June 18, Consular Agent J. HALLER, announced that the President of the French Republic had awarded the medal of Commander of the Legion of Honor to Governor HEDEMANN and Officer of the Legion of Honor to Commandant HOLM of the *Valkyrien* for their help, as sincere thanks for prompt assistance in Martinique.

The Loss of the *Grappler* & the List of the Victims

(*St. Thomæ Tidende*, 10 May 1902)

“It is with the most profound regret that we record the loss of the cable steamer *Grappler* and her whole complement of fifty-three souls.

The deplorable calamity occurred at Martinique and is due, as already known, to the volcanic eruption there. So far, only the bare, heartbreaking reality of the ship’s loss has come to hand and that not one remains to tell the tale!

The terrible nature of the catastrophe at Martinique, which makes the stoutest and coldest heart stand aghast, staggered us all in its horror and elicited our deepest regrets. But the lamentable wreck of the familiar *Grappler* has touched us in a sense more keenly. From her worthy captain right down to the humblest in her gallant crew all were, by birth or otherwise, connected with St. Thomas, therefore the disaster can for us be regarded as a domestic calamity, and as such it has naturally called forth the deepest sympathy of friends, acquaintances, all.

To the families, widows, and other relatives so overwhelmed with grief at their sudden bereavement, we most sincerely tender our heartfelt condolence in their terrible affliction.

In token of respect, flags were put at half-mast in town and in the harbour.

The following comprise the officers and crew of the ill-fated *Grappler*:

OFFICERS [Alphabetized]

A.J. BOREHAM, Master, married.
E. BOYS, 1st Officer.
E.R. BROOME, 2nd Engineer.
E.J. CALOUT, 2nd Officer.
T. HOLLAND, 3rd Officer.
J. MARSHALL, 1st Engineer, married.
A. MEGGS, Purser, married.
W. MURPHY, Electrician.
A. SMART, Joiner.
J.T. TORRY, 3rd Engineer.
D.R. YOUNG, 4th Engineer.

CREW [Alphabetized]

W. ARENDALL, Leading Able Seaman.

T. BASTIAN, Ordinary Seaman.
W. BLYDEN, Quartermaster.
D. BRANDON, Ordinary Seaman.
James BROWN, Able Seaman, married.
J. CREQUE, Fireman, married.
A. EDWARDS, Boatswain's Boy.
H. ENGLAND, 2nd Cook, married.
W. FREDERICKS, Ordinary Seaman.
W. HAYWOOD, Donkeyman, married.
M. HOLOM, leading Able Seaman
Jos. JAMES, Boatswain and cable Foreman, married.
A. JOHNSON, 2nd class Ordinary Seaman.
E. JOHNSON, 2nd class Ordinary Seaman.
A. KING, Able Seaman and Quartermaster, married.
J. KING, Able Seaman, married.
R. LETSOME, Leading Able Seaman, married.
LINNARD, Ordinary Seaman.
C. LOUIS, Able Seaman and Storekeeper, married.
Peter LYNCH, Ordinary Seaman.
McCriger WELLS, Able Seaman, married.
V. McDONOUGH, 2nd Steward.
W. MALLOON, Able Seaman, married.
MOLLON, Fireman, married.
D. MULCARE, Fireman, married.
G. NORMAN, Carpenter's mate.
F. PRINCE, Engineer Steward.
S. RALEIGH, Quartermaster, married.
A. RAMSAY, Carpenter, married.
James RICHARDS, Able Seaman
A. ROYES, Chief steward.
E. SEWER, Ordinary Seaman.
J. SMITH, Fireman, married.
SPARK, Fireman.
E. SPRAUVE, Fireman, married.
J. STEPHENS, Pantryman.
J. VANTERPOOL, Quartermaster.
M. VANTERPOOL, Captain's Boy.
R. VANTERPOOL, Able Seaman.
W.B. VANTERPOOL, Chief cook.
Leo VILLAIN, Ordinary Seaman.

W. WILHELM, alias PLANTZ, Able Seaman and Blacksmith.”

IN MEMORIAM

(*St. Thomæ Tidende*, 10 May 1902)

“Mr. & Mrs. James D. LAMB, Senr. and family tender their gratitude and heartfelt thanks, for sympathy shown by many kind friends on their severe bereavement, the unexpected violent disappearance at sea on the 8th of May 1902 of their son-in-law, Captain Arthur James **BOREHAM**, of London, 34 years of age.”

“In loving memory
of

CAPTAIN ARTHUR JAMES **BOREHAM**
Commander of the Steamship *Grappler*
her officers and crew

(57 in all),

who perished at their posts of duty, performing the orders of their Company’s General Superintendent at St. Thomas, on the 8th of May 1902, by the volcano’s fatal eruption, at St. Pierre, Martinique.

R. I. P.

Plaint of the Relatives of the gallant deceased, charred at sea.

God’s will be done.”

James Donald LAMB

St. Thomas, 10th May 1902.

Relief for the Families of the *Grappler*’s Crew

(*St. Thomæ Tidende*, 10 May 1902)

“We are glad to learn that the subscription list for the Martinique survivors under the patronage of His Excellency Governor HEDEMANN, J. P. THORSEN Esqr., and Consul HALLER, started yesterday, has met with liberal response from our kind-hearted townfolk.

With the view of aiding the surviving relatives of those lost on the cable steamer *Grappler*, subscriptions are being taken up for them through the medium of a list circulated publicly. The loss of the breadwinners of the

numerous families resident here will be most keenly felt by them and we appeal strongly to the generosity of sympathizing friends on their behalf.

The list, signed by the Committee, Messrs. THORSEN, C. LABEET, and L. NOLTE, was taken round today and well patronized.

Mr. A. SIXTO was busy today and collected over \$25 in penny contributions for the unfortunate relatives of the lost bands of the *Grappler*.”

Memorial Services for the Victims of the Martinique Catastrophe

(*St. Thomæ Tidende*, 14 May 1902)

“Yesterday was a day of general mourning in St. Thomas. At all places of worship special services were held in memory of the unfortunate thousands of human beings who perished in the Martinique calamity. Bells were tolled, flags half-masted, people dressed in mourning attire, and altogether there were general signs of sorrow. All the churches are crowded and the people all deeply moved, many to tears.

In the Lutheran church—the Danish state Church—Pastor KRAG at both the Danish and English services prayed for the victims of the calamities both on land and sea, he invoked God’s help for the relatives, both here and abroad, of those that had perished, and rendered thanks for the mercy shown this place by sparing it from such calamities. He requested the congregation to send him whatever they could in the line of clothing to be sent to Martinique and notified that a collection would be taken up next Sunday among the church members in aid of the sufferers there.

At the Saints Episcopal church a special service was held by Archdeacon HUTSON at 4 pm in memory of the late Captain BOREHAM, commander of the *Grappler*, and her gallant officers and crew. The service was most impressive, and the hymns specially appropriate to the sad occasion.”

Martinique Subscription Lists

(*St. Thomæ Tidende*, 25 May 1902)

“The following contributions were received towards the relief of the distress in Martinique caused by volcanic eruption:

Ludv. ANDERSEN	\$5.00
R. BAUMANN	\$10.00
C. CALLWOOD	\$15.00
D.	\$5.00
J. ELIASSEN	\$2.00
S. FISCHER	\$3.00
D. E. FRANCIS	\$1.00
A. GJELLERUP	\$3.00
N. GJELLERUP	\$3.00
H. HANSEN	\$1.00
J. B. HANSEN	\$1.50
Martin HANSEN	\$1.00
N. HANSEN	\$2.00
P. HANSEN	\$2.00
Governor HEDEMANN	\$100.00
Wilh. JENSEN	\$2.00
J. P. JÖRGENSEN	\$20.00
N. A. KJÆR	\$10.00
KRAG	\$10.00
KRAGH-HANSEN	\$3.00
T. KRUSE	\$8.00
Government Secretary LARSEN	\$20.00
C. LINDEMANN	\$5.00
Lutheran Church per C. KRAG	\$35.00
J. A. MESCOS	\$1.00
Moravian Church per E. C. GREIDER & A. B. ROMIG	\$25.00
Moravian Church collection per E. C. GREIDER	\$12.00
MORTENSEN	\$2.00
P. MORTENSEN	\$15.00
J. NIELSEN	\$2.00
M. PAULSEN	\$3.00
PELLESON	\$2.00
PETERSEN	\$5.00
Carl PETERSEN	\$5.00
J. PETRUS	\$1.00
R. RASMUSSEN	\$1.00
H. RISOM	\$1.00
Th. ROSSING	\$1.00
K. C. SANDBERG	\$0.30
A. SCHMEDES	\$1.00

A. SÖRENSEN	\$1.00
A. THYBOE	\$1.00
V. A.	\$4.00
WELIEJUS	\$10.00
A Sympathizer	\$0.20
?	\$0.20
<hr/>	
G. BERETTA	\$10.00
BOSCHULTE	\$5.00
Chs. Aug. BREWER	\$5.00
Th. BRONSTED	\$100.00
Chr. DANIEL	\$5.00
Ch. DÉLINOIS & Co. pp. David PRETTO	\$100.00
L. DÉLINOIS	\$20.00
J. H. FECHTENBURG & Co.	\$100.00
Floating Dock Co. of St. Thomas, Ltd.	\$25.00
D. G. FONSECA	\$5.00
Hamburg American Line	\$100.00
J. M. JONES	\$20.00
D. H. JURGENSEN	\$2.00
J.E. KUNTZ	\$4.00
Carl V. LABEET	\$50.00
Jos. LEVI & Sons	\$25.00
I. LEVIN	\$25.00
G. LEVITI	\$10.00
Alice LÉVY	\$5.00
A. H. LOCKHART	\$25.00
LUGO & Co.	\$10.00
A. LUGO & Co. (by W.I.S.)	\$50.00
H. MICHELSEN	\$10.00
J. B. M. MONSANTO	\$2.50
Edward H. MORON	\$10.00
J. MÜLLER	\$10.00
Morris O'NEAL	\$5.00
Joseph PETRUS	\$1.00
Jos. RIDGWAY Jr.	\$5.00
A. H. RIISE	\$100.00
E. SCHRÖDER	\$10.00
Jules H. SOUFFRONT	\$5.00
Th. SUFFRAIN	\$5.00

J. P. THORSEN

\$100.00
Total: \$1338.90
or Fr.6694.50

Which amount has been remitted by His Excellency the Governor to the Governor of Martinique and the Committee beg to thank the givers for the handsome way in which the appeal was responded to.”

St. Thomas, 20 May 1902

The Loss of the *S.S. Grappler*
by Samuel INDUSTRIOUS of St. Thomas
(*St. Thomæ Tidende*, 28 May 1902)

“Oh *Grappler* boys who left our land
Truly they were a loving band;
Duty sent them to foreign sands
To fall by death’s relentless hands.

When last this crew in joy had met
Can either you or I forget?
‘T was at the wedding of a friend
Who never dream’d of such an end.

On Monday’s eve the fifth of May,
When forth she went on duty’s way,
Many and bitter were the tears
From those who cherished doubts and fears.

Yet when she went behind the hills,
None did expect so many ills,
When all of us did lose the view
Who thought ‘t was our last adieu?

But so it was, and so ‘t will be
Until the deep and greedy sea
Shall yield from out her bosom deep
Lov’d ones, who now in her do sleep.

For cable ends they went to seek
Close to the shores of Martinique;
Where fate, alas, had seal'd their lot,
And doom'd just there, their resting spot.

From Mount Pelée's tremendous height
Came flames and rocks with speed and might,
Destroying lives and mansions dear
Which just before were bright and fair.

How awful must have been the sound
Which came from that destructive mound,
While helpless souls sent mercy cries
To Him who dwells above the skies.

Let neither wives nor mothers weep
For them that rest within the deep
The time will come when every heart
Will meet, no more, no more to part.

The *Grappler* and her gallant crew
Are all forever lost from view,
BOREHAM's command will never more
Guide ship nor friends to our shore."

ANNOUNCEMENT

(*St. Thomæ Tidende*, 28 May 1902)

"Mr. HALLER, Consular Agent for France, has the honour to thank very sincerely the inhabitants of St. Thomas for all the marks of sympathy, which were tendered on the occasion of the terrible catastrophe, which has befallen the island of Martinique. He also thanks them for the donations, which were so promptly and generously given to alleviate the sufferings of his unfortunate compatriots.

Personally, he is grateful to all those who so spontaneously interested themselves on behalf of the victims of our neighbouring island."

St. Thomas, 24 May 1902

The Grappler Fund

(St. Thomæ Tidende, 31 May 1902)

“Following is a list [alphabetical] of names of subscribers to the fund started here for the crew of the late steamer *Grappler*, which list is still open”:

Ludv. ANDERSEN	\$3.00
ARNECKE	\$0.50
A. BÆRENTZEN	\$5.00
R. BAUMANN	\$10.00
Brandmajor C. BERG	\$10.00
Geo. B. BLAKE	\$1.00
Barth. BORNN	\$3.00
David O. BORNN	\$5.00
BOSCHULTE	\$5.00
Cha. Aug. BREWER	\$5.00
T. BRÖNSTED	\$25.00
A. H. BRYAN	\$3.00
C. BÜGEL	\$5.00
A. BURNET	\$5.00
Clifford CALLWOOD	\$15.00
Rev. Od. CARDOZE Jr.	\$1.50
H. CHRISTENSEN	20.00
M. V. CID	\$10.00
F. M. CORNEIRO	\$5.00
H. O. CREQUE	\$10.00
Remember the poor orphans (J.D.)	\$1.00
Chr. DANIEL	\$5.00
Jos. DANIEL	\$2.00
Ch. DÉLINOIS & Co.	\$25.00
L. DÉLINOIS	\$10.00
Captain van DEURS	\$5.00
A. DUURLOO	\$1.00
C. EGGERT	\$3.00
E. D. ELLOI	\$3.00
Theo. ESTORNEL Jr.	\$2.00
H. F.	\$5.00
Robert FABIO	\$0.50

J. H. FECHTENBURG & Co.	\$250.00
Rev. A. FINOULLET	\$10.00
S. FISCHER	\$1.00
D. O. FONSECA	\$5.00
Officers, German Cruiser <i>Gazelle</i>	\$10.00
A. GJELLERUP	\$2.00
T. E. GRAHAM	\$5.00
Bishop GREIDER	\$9.00
Bishop E. C. GREIDER	\$5.00
HANSEN	\$1.00
Martin HANSEN	\$1.00
N. HANSEN	\$3.00
Dr. HASSAGER	\$10.00
J. A. HASSEL	\$1.00
C. A. HAY	\$1.00
His Excellency Governor HEDEMANN	\$100.00
HEIDMANN	\$0.50
S. HESTRES	\$5.00
Mrs. E. HIGGINS	\$4.00
Sophia HOLM	\$5.00
J. HOOPER	\$5.00
Mahlon van HORNE	\$10.00
A. C. HUNTINGTON	\$2.50
Archdeacon E. HUTSON	\$5.00
Rev. Edw. HUTSON	\$5.00
Fiöken JACOBSEN	\$5.00
Postmaster JENSEN	\$25.00
W. JENSEN	\$1.00
J. P. JÖRGENSEN	\$20.00
W. M. JONES	\$30.00
D. H. JURGENSEN	\$2.00
Geo. KELLAND	\$10.00
N. A. KJER	\$10.00
E. KRIGGER	\$0.50
T. KRUSE	\$5.00
J. E. KUNTZ	\$3.00
C. V. LABEET	\$50.00
O. W. LABEET	\$1.00
James Donald. LAMB Jr.	\$5.00
Governor Secretary LARSEN	\$20.00

Misses de LEON	\$2.00
Jos. LEVI & Sons	\$25.00
I. LEVIN	\$25.00
G. LEVITI	\$10.00
Alice LEVY	\$5.00
Commander LOBB, R. N.	\$10.00
A. H. LOCKHART	\$20.00
p.p. A. H. LOCKHART & Co., H. MARDENBOROUGH	\$5.00
Collected by Jeanette LORENTZEN from friends	\$3.40
LUGO & Co.	\$10.00
Phm. C. M.	\$3.00
J. B. M.	\$1.50
W. J. M.	\$3.00
McDOUGAL & Co.	\$50.00
L. MAUPÉ	\$1.00
Revd. MEANWELL	\$2.00
H. MICHELSEN	\$5.00
W. MILLER, 2 books	
Moravian Church collection	\$10.00
Mor. Church Bishop GREIDER & Rev. ROMIG	\$25.00
Ed. H. MORON	\$10.00
J. H. MORON	\$5.00
R. MORRELL	\$40.00
N. MORTENSEN	\$3.00
Dr. P. MORTENSEN	\$10.00
J. MÜLLER	\$10.00
A. NEWTON	\$1.00
Betjent NIELSEN	\$0.50
Leroy NOLTE	\$10.00
O. P. O. Store	\$5.00
M. O'NEAL	\$5.00
J. PAIEWONSKY	\$3.00
Miss E. PARDO	\$5.00
E. PERCIVAL	\$1.00
Mrs. E. PEREIRA	\$0.50
Revd. PERLEE	\$1.00
PETERSEN	\$2.00
Jens PETERSEN	\$1.00
Jos. PETERSEN	\$1.50
M. POULSEN	\$3.00

PRINCE	\$0.50
Geo. P. RECKE	\$1.00
Reformed Dutch Church Committee	\$6.24
Collected by Anita E. RICARDO	\$3.51
Chas. RICARDO	\$1.00
Wardroom Lighthouse Tender <i>Richmond</i>	\$15.00
Jos. RIDGWAY Jr.	\$5.00
A. H. RIISE	\$50.00
Collected by Ellen RIISE from schoolmates	\$2.75
Rev. ROMIG	\$8.00
L. A. S.	\$1.00
Widow Abm. SASSO	\$3.00
E. SCHRÖDER	\$10.00
A. SIXTO's penny subscription	\$68.36
SORENSEN	\$0.50
J. H. SOUFFRONT	\$5.00
L. E. STAKEMANN	\$5.00
Staff of the Telegraph Co.	\$54.00
J. THESTRUP	\$1.00
E. M. THOMAS	\$2.00
James THOMAS	\$0.10
Jas. THOMAS	\$0.50
L. A. THRÆN	\$2.00
Officers of the <i>Valkyrien</i>	\$80.00
W. & L.	\$1.00
WELIEJUS	\$10.00
WESSELHOFT	\$0.50
Captain WILLIAMS	\$1.00
Judge ZIELIAN from the people of St. John	\$68.36
Cash	<u>\$0.20</u>
Total	\$1,643.82

EDITORIAL NOTES

(*St. Thomæ Tidende*, 31 May 1902)

“Mr. William CORWIN, who we reported previously as going on to Martinique as commissioner from the New York Chamber of Commerce and National Relief Association, arrived here yesterday on his way home via Porto Rico. We are glad to learn, from an interview we had with Mr.

CORWIN, that he, in his capacity of Secretary of the Relief Association of the United States, he has cabled to New York for \$2,500 for the *Grappler* sufferers. This very kind and practical interest shown by Mr. CORWIN is worthy of all praises and of which we must express our admiration.”

EDITORIAL NOTES

(St. Thomæ Tidende, 4 June 1902)

“We are glad to learn that in accordance with Mr. CORWIN’s promise, Mr. CORWIN, the esteemed Superintendent of the Telegraph Co., has received \$2,500 from New York for the Grappler Fund, which sum is now in the Colonial Bank. Mr. MORRELL has also received \$100 from PETER & Co., St. Lucia, to be divided between two funds (families of officers and crew of the *Grappler*). The Telegraph Manager at Demerara reports that he has been promised \$250 for the Grappler Fund from the Demerara Relief Fund. This is all welcome information and shows how genuine is the sympathy felt in the disaster.”

West India & Panama Telegraph Co. Ltd.

Meeting of 14 May 1902

(St. Thomæ Tidende, 7 June 1902)

“The 50th ordinary general meeting as held on 14 May at the Winchester House.

Mr. W. B. KINSFORD, who presided in the absence, through illness, of Mr. Vis. ANDREWS (the chairman of the Company), said that the appalling catastrophe, which has shattered the lovely island of Martinique, cast over the meeting its black and baleful shadows. Their neighbours across the channel might be well assured that they had the profound and heartfelt sympathy for their own fellow countrymen in the stricken island of St. Vincent. In addition to the immense destruction of crops and buildings, and all sorts of other property, over a large district of the islands, he regretted to see it announced that the deaths there were already reported to have reached no fewer than 2,000 [sic], and it was much to be feared that even that sad roll was as yet very far from being completed. In the dangers, disasters, and distressed by which they were surrounded, their brethren beyond the sea might be certain that their fellow-subjects at home bore them

in their thoughts continually, and are looking eagerly and anxiously, with wiggled hopes and fears, for tidings of what might befall them. Their Company too, found a conspicuous place in the melancholy story of sorrow and disaster. On the fatal morning of the 8th inst., while she was in the roadstead of St. Pierre, engaged in repairing one of the broken cables, their ship the *Grappler*, with her captain and all hands, were utterly destroyed, stationed as she was, closely by the foot of the mountain, it appeared that she was the first of many ill-fated vessels which perished when the fiery deluge fell on the doomed city, and overwhelmed the shipping in the harbour. At the moment of the great explosion the crew of a schooner standing out at sea, and making for Dominica, actually saw the vessel suddenly wrapped in a sheet of flame and consumed. She had on board, including the captain, 11 Englishmen and 45 West Indians—her full complement. Captain BOREHAM entered the Company's service in 1891, and, save for one interval of some duration, he had been with them ever since. He has acted in turn as second officer and as chief officer, and about two years ago he was promoted to the rank of captain. He was a good and efficient officer. Mr. MARSHALL, the chief engineer, had been with them also about twelve years. He was known for always manifesting a keen personal work, which he performed thoroughly well. Mr. MURPHY, the chief electrician, joined them so recently as April last, and this was in fact, his first expedition. There was no need for him to take the shareholders further through the sad catalog of names. It would suffice for him to say, briefly and generally, that the ship's Company was throughout a good one. On shore, the destruction of the city, they had lost in Mr. MILLER, their clerk in charge, a much valued official. He was sure that it would be the wish of the shareholders that on behalf of the board and themselves, there should be conveyed to the relatives and friends of these poor fellows, who had perished in this most terrible disaster, an expression of very deep sympathy in their sorrow and bereavement. Dealing with the accounts for the half year ended December 31 last, he said that out of the available balance of £14,448 the directors recommended the payment of 6s a share on account of arrears of dividend on the first preference shares, leaving a balance of over £4,000 to be carried forward. At the last meeting Mr. ANDREWS expressed a hope that the Submarine Cable Committee, then in session would in their report make some representation to the Imperial Government in favor of this Company. It was gratifying to find that the committee ascribed the position of the Company to what was entirely beyond the board's control—namely, the paucity of traffic in the regions served by the Company's cables. He regretted to say, however, that the committee had not made any such

recommendation as the directors had hoped, but it appeared to them that, in the present circumstances, which had greatly changed of necessity the Company's position, some such help as they had long endeavoured to obtain might even yet be given. He concluded by moving the adoption of the report and the payment of the proposed dividend.

Mr. Henry HOLMES, in seconding the motion, also referred sympathetically to the loss of the Company's employees in the disaster, which had overtaken St. Pierre, and said he thought that they should show their sympathy in a more substantial manner than by mere words (Hear, hear!).

A shareholder inquired whether much of the Company's cable system had been destroyed.

Mr. R. T. BROWN (the manager) replied that four of their cables were interrupted, but it was hoped that these were not destroyed. Their communication was cut off with all stations north of St. Lucia but the lines of cable to the south—to Barbados, Grenada, Trinidad, Demerara, were in perfect working order. Messages were now being sent by chartered schooner and by steamships from the best available points. A delay of only 24 to 48 hours was occasioned.

Mr. THORPE said that as a first preference he was prepared that any dividend due to him should be entirely, or partially, applied to the widows and orphans of those officers and men of the Company who had lost their lives. He knew personally that St. Lucia and Dominica were very volcanic, and he would like to ask whether any private information had been received by the board as to the position of affairs on those islands.

The Chairman replied that the directors had no information as to St. Lucia, but he saw it reported that the volcanic district of Dominica was steaming.

Several shareholders expressed their sympathy with the widows and orphans of the Company's officers and men, and their readiness to vote in favour of granting them such relief as the board might consider desirable to make.

The Chairman, replying to a question, stated that it was too early to say anything definite as to whether the insurance money would cover the loss of the *Grappler* or whether it would be necessary to encroach on the reserve fund in order to meet the loss of the vessel and also of the broken cables.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

Mr. RABONSON seconded the resolution, which was agreed to.

The Chairman said that the Company's staff at St. Vincent were all right. He added that the board would be happy to receive any contribution toward the relief of the widows and orphans of the Company's men, which any individual shareholders might feel inclined to give."

West India & Panama Telegraph Co. Ltd.

(*St. Thomæ Tidende*, 14 June 1902)

Board Minutes: "...Mr. BIRKS: ...We carry forward £4,000 odd, and I do not know whether it would commend itself to the shareholders generally if I were to propose a resolution that £1,000 of that should be applied for the relief of the families of our servants who have perished.

Mr. CHURCH: I think the matter should be left entirely to the Board.

Mr. HOLMES: We do not want a large amount but sufficient to relieve any cases of distress that we may find. If you leave it to us, I think we shall be able to do what is right and necessary.

Mr. THORPE: I will move, then, that the Board be authorized to expend such sums as they think desirable for the relief of the widows and families of those of our men who have lost their lives.

The resolution was then carried unanimously."

ANNOUNCEMENT

Grappler Relief Fund

The Late Captain Arthur J. BOREHAM

(*St. Thomæ Tidende*, 21 June 1902)

"To the surviving relatives of the ill-fated, doomed cable steamship *Grappler* of London.

Reverting to my intimation in my letter of 30th May 1902, which appeared in the *Tidende* and the Bulletin of 31st May 1902, in connection with the appalling unprecedented *Grappler* cataclysm—it is hereby made known—in confirmation of what I then stated, that substantial aid has reached here from abroad.

Applications for relief: —from widows and orphans, and aged parents,—relatives of the deceased breadwinners,—destroyed, at sea by the deplorable *Grappler* disaster,—off Martinique,—containing the requisite information and duly certified, may be delivered to: Archdeacon, the Rev.

Mr. HUTSON, the Rector of All Saints Episcopal Church,—to Bishop E. C. GREIDER, of the Moravian Church,—or to Henry O. CREQUE, Esq.,—or to Consul Chr. DANIEL,—or to Consul G. LEVITI,—or to the undersigned,—until,—latest,—Tuesday, the 15th of July 1902.

The Committee of six gentlemen will,—after considering the merits and circumstances of the different suppliants,—shortly afterwards, decide on the distributions of money, according to the ratings of the men on the Ship's Articles of Agreement,—their occupation and position on board, in their various capacities, and length of service, at the date of their sudden death at sea."

James D. LAMB
St. Thomas, 21 June 1902

EDITORIAL NOTE

(*St. Thomæ Tidende*, 2 July 1902)

"We are glad to learn through a letter from Mr. MORRELL to Mr. THORSEN, Chairman of the Grappler Relief Committee, that the total sum subscribed by the Telegraph Co.'s staff in the West Indies, including substantial donations from the Mirror Relief Fund, Trinidad, and the Mayor's Fund of Georgetown, Demerara, amounts to \$1,118.12. This amount Mr. MORRELL has divided equally between the crew fund and the officers' fund, in London. His cheque for \$559.06 has accordingly been received by the treasurer, Mr. C. LABEET, and placed in the Colonial Bank with the contributions previously deposited, say \$3,402.42, making together a total to date of \$3,961.48."

EDITORIAL NOTES

(*St. Thomæ Tidende*, 12 July 1902)

"The cable steamer *Newington*, chartered by the W. I. & P. T. Co. to replace their lost ship *Grappler* left last evening. Mr. MORRELL, the Company's superintendent, went away with her. The ship has gone on a cable repairing expedition the volcanic eruptions having done considerable damage to the lines to Windward.

Mr. BEST, assistant superintendent, will act during Mr. MORRELL's absence."

“The Grappler Relief Fund has been increased by \$30, of which Mr. Frederick N. MARTINEZ has very generously given \$25, “Cash” gave \$5. Total to date \$3991.48.

The difference to round of the sum to \$4,000 has been given by Mr. F. N. MARTINEZ on behalf of Messrs John DEWAR & Sons.”

Grappler Crew Relief Fund

(St. Thomæ Tidende, 19 July 1902)

“A meeting of the above committee was held Wednesday afternoon at the All Saints’ vestry to decide upon the distribution of the relief fund collected from various sources.

With the view of obtaining good assistance in the final agreement as to the disposition of the funds, the committee, composed of Messrs. J. P. THORSEN, C. V. LABEET, and Leroy NOLTE, secured the kind cooperation of the following gentlemen, viz.: His Honor Government Secretary LARSEN, Mr. H. BEST, Assistant Superintendent of the Telegraph Co., U.S. Consul M. van HORNE, His Lordship Bishop GREIDER, Venerable Archdeacon HUTSON, Rev. ROMIG and Rev. MEANWELL. The whole committee, as enlarged for consultative purposes, thus consisted of \$10.

The meeting was convened at 4 o’clock and opened punctually.

It was unanimously agreed that the Hon. Mr. LARSEN act as chairman, who selected Mr. NOLTE as secretary.

In response to the chairman’s request, Mr. THORSEN submitted the subscription list, which, he was glad to say, had exceeded all expectations. He praised Mr. LABEET for his diligence in taking up the local collections, and suitably expressed the committee’s thanks for the valuable contributions from the United States, from the Windward Islands, St. Croix, etc. The total sum collected to date is \$4,005 and the list of all who had applied for aid.

After some discussion following the reading of the list, it was decided that sweethearts, not dependent on any of the crew for support, should not be included in the distribution.

A question was next raised as to whether the whole sum should be divided at once, and this was decided on the adoption of a proposal from Archdeacon HUTSON.

An exchange of items as to the division ensued, whereupon:

Archdeacon HUTSON submitted a plan, which was unanimously approved and adopted. It is simple and practical and worked out on the basis of a certain sum per child. Thus, a child gets so much, a mother 4 children's shares, a widow 5 children's shares plus so much per child under 15 years, (which was suggested by the chairman and adopted as the age limit) sisters count as one child's rate, and so on. From this, it will be seen that a widow—under which head all parties having children will receive her own portion (5 children's shares) and each child its share besides—children as stated to be under 15 years. Mothers, as said, will receive 4 children's shares. The larger the number of children the greater of course will be the sum given such families.

On the above basis the apportioning of the amounts to be distributed gives some 234 shares, which number divided into \$4,005 gives a little over \$17 per share.

There being a difference of opinion as to whether the amount be paid out in a lump sum or by monthly allotments, the latter mode the payment was adopted—the committee to use its discretion in paying out a lump sum in special urgent cases.

It will be understood that in reaching this decision the meeting acted to the best of its knowledge and ability in settling this somewhat difficult and complicated matter. The original committee, it may be mentioned, remains in control until the final winding up.”

“The allotments for July were paid out by Mr. THORSEN at his store today. The allotments are calculated to be paid at a rate that will occupy several months.”

Grappler Relief in Denmark

(*St. Thomæ Tidende*, 23 July 1902)

“It is with much satisfaction that we learn from the latest Copenhagen newspapers to hand by mail that a committee of influential and representative men has been formed in Denmark for the purpose of collecting funds in aid of the surviving families of the unfortunate crew of the steamer *Grappler*.

The notice in the papers refers to the sad calamity at Martinique, by which the *Grappler* perished with its whole crew and mentions that the

largest part of its officers and crew belonged to St. Thomas, where most of them had families dependent upon them.

It consequently requests the public to assist those families.

The Committee consists of:

Professor Georg BRANDES, Doctor of Philosophy,

J. H. FECHTENBURG, former merchant at St. Thomas,

Former Policemaster FISCHER at St. Thomas,

Professor H. MATZEN, Chairman of the Landsting,

M. MELCHIOR, well known in St. Thomas for his philanthropy,

Holger PETERSEN, a rich merchant & manufacturer of Copenhagen,

Admiral RICHELIEU,

Karl K. RIISE, formerly of the Apothecary at St. Thomas,

Councillor Claus L. SCHMIDT, of the old house of SCHMIDT &
LEMAIRE,

Chamberlain E. SUENSON, Dir. of the Great North. Telegraph Co.,
& Professor E. A. TSCHERMING, Head Surgeon at the Communal
Hospital in Copenhagen.

A more representative Committee could scarcely have been formed, as it consists of men of different parties all representing important and varied interests. We are indeed glad to see such influential men in the Mother Country showing interest and sympathy for us out here in this awful calamity.”

Grappler Relief from Denmark

(St. Thomæ Tidende, 6 September 1902)

“We learn with much pleasure that the Relief Committee in Copenhagen collected amounts to the sum of 4,000 kroners (\$1,110). The amount received by cheque has been placed by Mr. C. LABEET, Treasurer of the Grappler Relief Fund, in the Colonial Bank, to be apportioned between relations of officers and crew.

On behalf of the Relief Committee in St. Thomas and all concerned, we desire to thank most heartily the generous donors in the Mother Country for their handsome subscription.”

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