

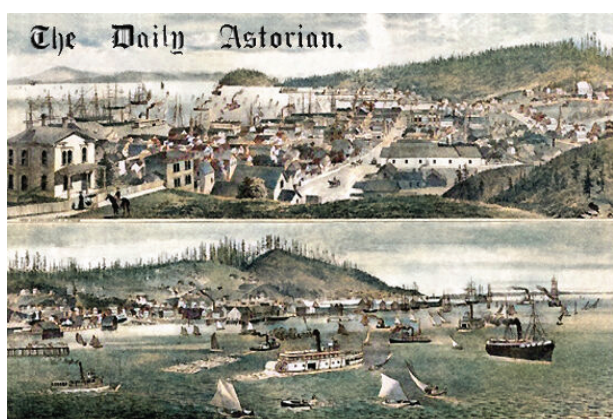
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IN ONE EAR • ELLEDA WILSON

MARITIME JOTTINGS



Tidbits from **The Daily Astorian**, Saturday, April 23, 1881:

• The resurrected **Clatsop Chief** is again ready for business. Who'll say now that dead things never crawl.

Note: If ever there was an unlikely resurrection, it was this one, as the **Chief**, while towing a barge, had been cut in half on the Columbia River by the steamship **Oregon** on March 2, 1881, and quickly sank.

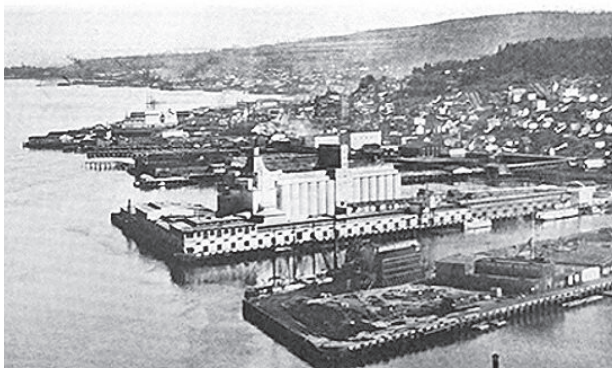
On March 16, the **Clatsop Chief** was raised. She'd been lying bottom up, with her bow and boilers missing. Her engines were fine, though, so a bow and new boilers were added, and she was "in splendid condition to return to her labors."

• Cooks' mess house was got off the beach and towed to a safe place under shelter of Cape Hancock (later known as Cape Disappointment), yesterday.

Note: The **J. W. & Y. Cooks' scow** had broken loose from her moorings on Thursday at Sand Island, and pandemonium ensued, as the crew was terrified the river would take them out over the Columbia River Bar. The scene aboard at the time was deemed "indescribable," yet an attempt was made, nonetheless.

"Everything breakable on board was broken by the wild pitches which the boat made, and the men, fearing that they would go to sea, were in a furious state of excitement. It is said that it was one of the largest prayer meetings ever assembled on board of a scow in the Columbia River ..."

GRAND PLANS



A bit of local history is available online: A report prepared for the **1920 National Foreign Trade Convention** in San Francisco to attract business to the **Port of Astoria**.

The Port was bustling with commerce then. The waterfront had two railroad terminals, at 20th and 14th streets, and three privately owned wharves: the Ninth Street Dock (Eighth through 11th streets), the Elmore Dock (Third and Fourth streets), and the Callender Dock (14th Street).

The Port had piers 1, 2 and 3, and commercial wharves abounded, consisting of fish canning and cold storage, oil companies, grain and flour mills, coal bunkers, warehouses, marine repair plants, lumber mills and more.

The Port's final selling point was wanting to build a **Belt Line Railway** to "touch every industrial site" for 20 miles of water frontage. It was a grand plan, indeed.

BESIEGED BY BOVINES



The residents of Gearhart may have their elk, but the folks living in **Peoria, Arizona**, have been besieged by **bovines** for about a month now, Fox10Phoenix.com reports.

"We just have cows everywhere," Julie Caputo said. "Yesterday, I counted 14 of them at the new clubhouse in Northpointe. They like to walk along this dirt road along Vistancia Boulevard. We've had police officers out here trying to get them out of the streets."

The owner of the delinquent cows, who is believed to be a rancher in the area, hasn't come forward. Meanwhile, there must be a cow pie pile up.

David Suslenskiy, who takes a lot of walks in the area, recently spotted the herd. "It's pretty weird," he noted.

HE WOULDN'T LISTEN



The 380-foot steamship **Great Republic**, probably the largest U.S.-built commercial vessel at the time, with about 1,250 passengers aboard, became, instead, one of largest shipwrecks on the lower Columbia River, on April 16, 1879. Why? Because of a stubborn pilot.

"I gave the steamer over to pilot **Thomas Doig** at the automatic buoy at 11:30 Friday night," **Capt. James Carroll**, the ship's master, said in his statement, which appeared in *The Daily Astorian* on April 22.

"... The first and third officers, freight clerk and myself were on the lookout. I had a pair of glasses, and was the first to discover **Sand Island**, and found the bearing all right. I reported Sand Island to the pilot; he had not seen it.

"We ran along probably two minutes. I told the pilot (I) thought he was getting too close to the island, and he had better haul her up. He replied, 'I think we are not in far enough.'

"A minute after, I told him to port his helm, and put it hard a-port, as I think you are getting too near to the island. He made no reply, but ran along about five minutes then he put his helm hard a-port.

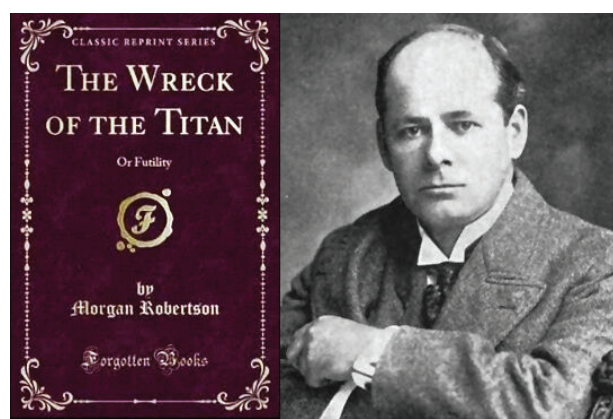
"The vessel was swinging up, heading toward Astoria, but the ebb tide caught her on the starboard bow, and being so much nearer the island than expected, set her on the spit ...

"We had no chance to get the vessel off that night." Or at any other time, for that matter, despite the best efforts of several tugs, and the heavy seas broke her up.

No passengers were killed in the incident, but 11 crew members drowned who were in the last boat to leave the ship; pirates looted the stranded vessel before soldiers could arrive to guard it; and luggage floated off and was found as far away as Oysterville, Washington. The ship's treasure of millions in silver and gold from mines and mints is still lost.

And all because the pilot wouldn't listen.

TALE OF A TITAN



While many are probably aware of the 110th anniversary of the sinking of the "unsinkable" **Titanic** on April 15, most probably don't realize its demise was eerily predicted in a short novel, "The Wreck of the Titan: Or, Futility," by **Morgan Robertson**.

The **Titan**'s tale was originally written in 1898, when the **Titanic** was not even on the drawing board yet. It wasn't until 1907 that the **White Star Line** decided to build the biggest and grandest luxury liners on the seas — with fewer lifeboats, to make deck space room for their passengers' enjoyment.

The parallels between Robertson's imaginary ship and the **Titanic** are uncanny. The **Titan** was 800 feet, **Titanic** was 882.5 feet; they were both made of steel, had two masts, three propellers, a 3,000 passenger capacity and not enough life boats (24 on the **Titan**, 20 on the **Titanic**). Both ships hit an iceberg on the starboard side, near midnight, in the month of April, and sank.

"She was the largest craft afloat," Robertson wrote of the **Titan** (which could also describe the **Titanic**), "and the greatest of the works of men. In her construction and maintenance were involved every science, profession and trade known to civilization." Sadly, the iceberg didn't care.

NORWEGIAN WINE IS FINE



Nautical writer Peter Marsh suggested this little gem, something good (and tasty) evolving from climate change: The **Slinde Vineyard**, on a fjord in **Slinde, Norway**, is probably one of the last places you'd expect to find grapes growing, at 61 degrees north of the equator.

BBC.com, in a story about the owner, **Bjørn Bergum**, and his partner, **Halldis**, noted that the normal grape-growing range is from 30 to 50 degrees latitude. Nonetheless, now it's warm enough in **Slinde** to grow grapes.

Bergum is passionately dedicated to the vineyard, the culmination of a longtime dream to make wine from grapes grown locally. But the problem isn't the growing part, it's convincing people that a Norwegian wine is not only possible, it's good. Since many oenophiles won't even try a Norwegian wine, **Slinde** wines have been entered into blind tasting competitions, and are winning awards.

"Since 2014 we have been hard at work," Bergum says on the vineyard's website, "creating what will soon become the northern-most commercial vineyard in the world — and we have done it with our own two hands."

"So far," he noted, "many of our efforts have produced excellent results." Skål! (Photo: **Slinde Vineyard**)

BASE INHUMANITY

The **Daily Morning Astorian** of April 23, 1893, ran a disturbing story about fisherman **Jens Nielson**, "a steady, industrious man," who previously had "no conception of man's base inhumanity to man."

On April 20, Nielson and his boat puller were anchored at **Megler** station in Washington state with several other fishermen. They all decided to leave at once that morning, so they could help each other, if needed.

Nielson set sail, but a squall struck, and the boat quickly went bottom up. "We managed to climb on top," he recalled, "and then saw two boats ... I thought there was hope of being picked up, as the boats tacked toward us. We shouted for them to come; but no, they did not ... (and) left us to our fate."

By then, they were in the middle of the river, being pulled out to sea by an ebb tide. "I stood up and waved my hat, hoping to attract attention," he said, "as that was the last show we had for our lives. As good luck would have it, **McGowan's** men ... happened to see us."

Upon returning to **Astoria**, Nielson was horrified to learn that the fishermen who hadn't helped him had, indeed, reported seeing him in trouble. "I would like to know how such men would feel placed in similar circumstances," Nielson fumed. "... What are such made of, or have they any feeling of humanity?"

Nielson's boat and net were found, as was another boat, which was empty. "The occupants of the boat were brothers named **Marcella**," the newspaper reported. "Nothing has since been heard of them." Were their cries for help ignored, as well?

BEACHED BEAVER



On Friday, we had the pleasure of rescuing this feisty **beaver**, **Tiffany Boothe** of the **Seaside Aquarium** reported. "First reported as a sea otter, it took us a few trips up and down the beach to finally locate him.

"He was originally spotted up by **Sunset Beach** but before we could get to him, he got startled and went back out into the surf. He swam all the way to **Gearhart beach** before hauling back out.

"... While beavers can tolerate brackish water, salt water can cause some major issues for beavers, especially if ingested ... We were able to successfully capture the beaver and get him to the **Wildlife Center of the North Coast**."

Note: To donate to help the wildlife center, which needs funding for a new seabird enclosure, go to coastwildlife.org

"If all goes well," Tiffany added, "once he gets a clean bill of health, he will be released back into the wild. Good luck, little buddy!" (Photos: **Tiffany Boothe/Seaside Aquarium**)

