



WEBFOOTER EXTRA

April-May 2020

The Shipwrecks of Manzanita & Neah-Kah-Nie Mountain, Oregon by Art Larrance and Mark Beach



Mayer postcard view of the shipwreck of the British Ship Glenesslin at Neah-Kah-Nie Beach dated October 6, 1913.

WEBFOOTERS POST CARD CLUB

PO Box 17240

Portland OR 97217-0240



www.thewebfooters.com

The Shipwrecks of Manzanita & Neah-Kah-Nie Mountain, Oregon by Art Larrance and Mark Beach

Through the centuries, the beaches of Manzanita and Neah-Kah-Nie have had the mystery of shipwreck stories with buried treasure, beeswax deposits, red-headed natives, tribal chiefs with Negro heritage, and oriental castaways. Sailors worldwide knew the Graveyard of the Pacific included the Oregon coast. Dense fogs, rocky headlands and shallow sands extending far under the surf could spell disaster in the age of sail.

Two ships grounded on the Nehalem Spit during the second decade of the 20th Century: the Mimi in 1913 and the Oakland in 1916. A third vessel, the Glenesslin, ran into the end of Neahkahnie Mountain.



The shipwreck Mimi at Neah-Kah-nie Beach from a post card dated February 13, 1913.

The German square-rigged bark Mimi ran aground on February 13, 1913. It's told the Captain lost his course thinking the Nehalem River was the Columbia River due to the weather. The beached the ship was on an even keel and at high tide in the water but able not enough to float.

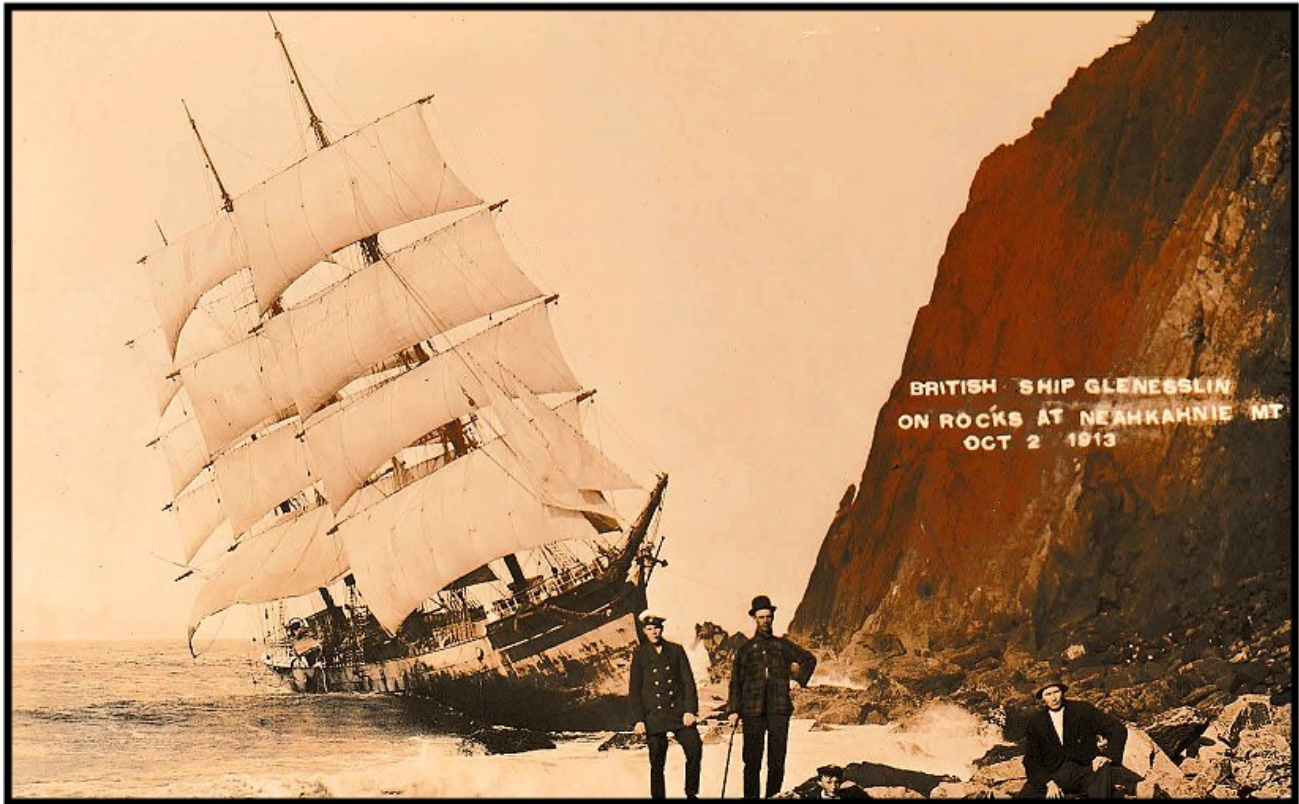
Representatives of the insurance company and German ship owners developed a salvage plan to float the ship and sail to Astoria for repairs. Bids were taken to tow the ship off the beach into the ocean on April 6, 1913. There was much local debate as to the safety of such after 1300 tons of ballast has been removed. Captain Westphal was warned by the keeper of the Tillamook Life Saving Station, Captain Robert Farley, that taking a ship of this size over the breakers without ballast would capsize the ship!

Then to compound the operation there was an approaching storm. In spite of this and the doubts of many locals, the operation continued. With the use of off-shore anchors and on-shore donkey engines as the tide came in the cables began to tow the ship slowly over the sand.



Another postcard view of the shipwreck of the Mimi at Nehalem Spit dated February 13, 1913.

The surf was high and the previously ignored storm and winds began to impact the Captain's plan. As the ship began to float in deeper water it rolled suddenly on its side. 17 lives were lost from the ship's crew and the salvage company staff aboard during the failed salvage operation. To this day, over 100 years later, the remains of the Mimi rest under the sand off shore from the Nehalem spit.



Another postcard view of the shipwreck of the British Ship Glenesslin at Neah-Kah-Nie Beach dated October 2, 1913.

Perhaps one of the most photographed shipwrecks is the Glenesslin. On October 1, 1913, the Glenesslin was a month overdue to pick up a load of wheat in Portland when she emerged from an ocean haze and ran under full sail in the rocks at the base of Neahkahnie Mountain. The crew reached safety on a line to the shore as the ship settled into the water. Sails continued to take the wind as waves pounded the hull and locals salvaged souvenirs. Finally the heavy seas of winter battered the ship until it slipped under the waves. Owners received their insurance claims after a maritime court declared the event an accident.

Legend says the crew of the Glenesslin was drunk. An article by a professional historian as well as experienced seaman disputes that claim. He says no ship a month overdue would still have a drop of alcohol on board.



In 1914 the steam schooner Leggett encountered a gale 50 miles south of the Columbia River bar and 14 miles off the coast. The cargo on deck included bolts and railroad ties bound for San Francisco. When lumber on deck broke loose, the vessel capsized and sank. Sixty passengers and crew died. As cargo from the Leggett drifted onto the beach at Manzanita, locals salvaged the wood for construction projects. Old timers claim builders used Leggett lumber for four houses in Manzanita. One of those houses survived 100 years until a tornado in 2016 tore off its roof and damaged the interior beyond repair.





Postcard view of the Schooner Oakland.

The Oakland was a lumber schooner with three masts, 393 tons, built in 1902 by W.F. Stone and Sons of Oakland, Ca. In April 1916 the vessel became waterlogged and unmanageable at sea, so went ashore on the Nehalem spit. For almost a year locals and tourists visited the Oakland resting peacefully on the sand. Finally locals towed her across the spit into Nehalem Bay. The ship was refloated and taken to Portland, where repairs put her back into coast-wise service in 1918. Re-named the Mary Hanlon, she foundered off Mendocino on June 24, 1924.



THE TWO MIKES FROM SEATTLE
are interested in purchasing POSTCARD COLLECTIONS,
any size, any location.
Also buying ephemera, maps, photographs and posters

Call: Mike Fairley 206-499-7413 fairlookantiques@gmail.com
Mike Maslan 206-587-0187 oldphoto4u@aol.com

(paid advertising)