

## **Loss of a Leith Steamer**

### **Shetlanders among the Crew**

### **Lifeboats and Wreckage Found**

There seems no reason to doubt that the Leith steamer Moravia (1388 tons) has been lost with all hands. The vessel, which was owned by Messrs James Cormack & Co., Leith, left Burntisland with coal on 29<sup>th</sup> January for Flensburg, in the Baltic, a voyage that is usually accomplished in four days. On the day following her departure she was sighted by the Danish steamer, Scot, about 90 miles east of May Island, apparently steaming about nine knots an hour. The trawler Petersburg left Leith for Revel on the same day as the Moravia, and the captain has written home that he encountered a hurricane in the North Sea, and that loaded steamers, in his opinion, would fair badly in the storm. The trawler's captain also stated that he saw a quantity of wreckage about. On Monday the owners were informed by the Receiver of Wrecks at Grimsby, that a trawler had arrived with ten copper tanks taken from two lifeboats, marked 'Moravia, Leith'.

The Moravia was a new twin-decked screw steamer, built at Glasgow in 1885, with passenger accommodation fitted on the deck saloon amidships. She was also provided with refrigerating machinery and an insulated hold, and had for many years been running regularly between Leith and Riga. The vessel was of the highest class at Lloyd's, built of steel, and has always been kept up to a high standard of efficiency. She carried a crew of nineteen, and so far as can be ascertained 15 of that number were fully insured under the Shipping Federation (Limited) Benefit Funds.

### **List of the crew**

The following is a list of the crew:-

W. S. Banks, captain (44), 4 Lismore Terrace, Edinburgh.  
Wm. Bie, first mate, (34), 16 Albany Street, Leith.  
James Morison, second mate (43), 11 Brunton Place, Edinburgh  
James Oliphant, cook and steward, (28), South Muirton Cottages, Perth.  
James Georgeson, boatswain, 17 Citadel, Leith.  
Geo. Robertson, chief engineer (45), 7 Hermitage Terrace, Edinburgh  
James Hunter, second engineer (25), 5 Picardy Place, Edinburgh.  
Frank A. Trommer, third engineer (23), 30 Hawthornvale, Leith.  
Chris. Neilson, donkeyman (37), Elsinore.  
Neil Anderson, fireman (27), 12 Wilkie Place, Leith.  
James Nelson, fireman (30), 39b Salamander Street, Leith.  
Gustav Schvenderling, fireman (41), Sailor's Home.  
Neil M'Murray, engineer steward.  
Robert Thomson, seaman (48), 7 Bridge Street, Leith.  
Fred. Bunberg, seaman (25), Stockholm.

Chris. Christopherson, seaman (27), Sailor's Home.  
James Davidson, seaman (25), 124 Bonnington Road, Leith.  
Harry Wilson, seaman (30), 35 Fountainbridge, Edinburgh  
Laurence Gordon, seaman (25), Cunningsburgh, Shetland.

Writing to us regarding this disaster, Captain William Halcrow, of the ss. Princess Alexandra, states that there are several Shetlanders among the crew of the ill-fated steamer Moravia. He specially mentions Laurence Gordon, Cunningsburgh, who was a hand on board the Princess Alexandra in January last. It will be remembered that the Princess Alexandra had a very stormy passage from Stettin to Liverpool, and was badly knocked about on the voyage. On the evening of the 2<sup>nd</sup> January, a barque was sighted with foremast carried away, and showing signals of distress. Volunteers were called for, and among the first to heroically offer his services was Laurence Gordon, and a boat was launched and proceeded to the barque. Unfortunately, however, the heavy sea made boarding impossible, and the boat returned to the Princess Alexandra, where she was smashed alongside, and the men only saved with great difficulty. Deep sympathy is felt for Gordon's friends, who mourn in him a generous and kindly son and brother.

Including Gordon there were some half dozen Shetlands among the crew of the ill-fated Moravia. James Georgeson belongs to Sandsound, and leaves a widow and five young children to mourn his loss.

Shetland News – 23<sup>rd</sup> February 1907

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#### **Shetlanders Drowned**

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The Moravia was a fine twin-decked screw steamer, built at Glasgow in 1885, with passenger accommodation fitted on the deck saloon amidships. She was also provided with refrigerating machinery and an insulated hold, and had for many years been running regularly between Leith and Riga. The vessel was of the highest class at Lloyd's, built of steel, and has always been kept up to a high standard of efficiency. She carried a crew of nineteen, and so far as can be ascertained 15 of that number were fully insured under the Shipping Federation (Limited) Benefit Funds.

Several of the crew of the Moravia were Shetlanders. The second mate was George Morison, husband of Mrs Morison, South End, Lerwick. A seaman named Robert Thomson (48), residing at 7 Bridge Street, Leith, belonged to Gulberwick; Laurence Gordon, seaman (25), to Cunningsburgh. The boatswain James Georgeson, 17 Citadel, Leith, and James Davidson, seaman (25), 124 Bonnington Road, Leith, are also stated to be Shetlanders; Georgeson being a native of Sandsound.

Thomson leaves a wife and seven of a family and Georgeson, who left Shetland to join the Moravia only a month ago, leaves a wife and family of four.