
ANNUAL REPORT,
OF THE
PILOT COMMISSIONERS
OF THE
STATE OF NEW JERSEY,
FOR THE YEAR 1869.

BOARD OF PILOT COMMISSIONERS.

Capt. HENRY W. MILLER, U. S. N., of Morris county.
Capt. DAVID COX, of Hudson county.
Commodore CHARLES S. BOGGS, U. S. N., of Middlesex county.
Capt. ANDREW J. DRAKE, U. S. N., of Essex county.
— GEO. W. JOHNSON, of —
Capt. WILLIAM S. HORNER, of Monmouth county.
Capt. THOMAS B. ENDICOTT, of Atlantic county.

PRESIDENT,

COMMODORE CHARLES S. BOGGS, U. S. N.

SECRETARY

CAPT. HENRY W. MILLER, U. S. N.

REPORT.

OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF
NEW JERSEY PILOT COMMISSIONERS,
JERSEY CITY, Dec. 16th, 1869.

To His Excellency, the Governor of the State of New Jersey :

SIR :—In accordance with the laws of the State, the Board of New Jersey Pilot Commissioners herewith present their annual report.

During the past year the Board have entered one pilot apprentice and have examined and recommended to be licensed three deputy pilots and one full branch pilot.

They have revoked the license of Pilot James T. Watson, who was tried before them and found guilty of habitual drunkenness.

The license of Michael P. Nerney, as Pilot for the Bar of Sandy Hook has been revoked by the Board for violation of their by-laws, in not being attached to a boat, also for non-usage, or not having acted under his license for five years. Being keeper of the Passaic light, he could not leave his duties as such, to perform those of a pilot. Mr. Nerney also held a license as pilot for Passaic bay and river ; this he has resigned.

The New Jersey and Sandy Hook pilots, numbering forty pilots and nine apprentices, with six commissioned pilot boats, have, during the year, piloted into the harbor of New York and Jersey City, one hundred and thirteen steamers, ninety-one ships, two hundred and sixty-three barks, two hundred and ninety-three brigs, and one hundred and two schooners ; and out of the same harbor, one hundred and five steamers, eighty-nine ships, one hundred and seventy-two barks, one hundred and forty-eight brigs, and thirty-nine schooners, making the total number of vessels of all classes, piloted during the year ending December 31st, one thousand four hundred and fourteen.

The Newark, Raritan, and Elizabeth bay pilots have performed the usual annual work, but as most of the vessels have been towed through these waters, this work has been very light.

The Board has to report the loss of the pilot boat "A. T. Stewart," No. 6, by collision with the steamship "Scotia," on the evening of the 3d of November. The boat has become a total wreck, and her loss is severely felt by the pilots who manned and owned her.

As far as the Board has been able to ascertain, the accident was caused by what appears to have been bad management on the part of the "Scotia," and it is hoped that the owners of the pilot boat will be reimbursed for any loss they may have sustained.

At the request of the Board, duplicate licenses have been issued to the pilots who lost their licenses by the destruction of the boat.

The Board find themselves embarrassed to know what disposition to make of fines inflicted upon delinquent pilots. The laws of the State evidently contemplated the organization of a society for the relief of the widows and orphans of pilots, to the benefit of which such fines should be devoted. No such organization exists, but the Board are taking steps to initiate such a society, and would respectfully suggest that in order to give stability to the project, a legislative act be passed, directing and aiding it.

The Commissioners have endeavored to transact all business which has been brought before them, at their stated monthly meetings, but it has been found that their meetings should be more frequent to meet all requirements.

Being directed by the law to hold their meetings in New Jersey, while the business office of the pilots is obliged to be—for the sake of convenience to shipmasters and owners—in New York, the Commissioners are brought but seldom in contact with the pilots.

In view of these facts, and in order that they may transact their business more promptly, the Board have appointed an Executive Committee, consisting of their Secretary and three other members of the commission, directing them to hold perpetual sittings, in order to receive reports and hear complaints, with limited authority to act or report to the Board at its regular meetings. This plan, it is believed, accommodates and gives satisfaction to the pilots as well as to their employers.

The Board take pleasure in bearing testimony to the general good conduct and energy of the New Jersey pilots. Their boats will frequently be found cruising from two to four hundred miles from our coast, and always on the alert for vessels needing their services. As an "off-shore" cruiser, the loss of the "A. T. Stewart" will be particularly felt, as she was one of the largest boats in the service, and manned by some of the oldest and most daring pilots.

It is hoped and believed, however, that the energy which has always characterized her crew will enable them, at an early day, to replace their vessel by one as serviceable.

The question as to when our pilots are entitled to "off-shore" pilotage, has frequently come before the Board during the past year.

It is a question which the courts in this state, and in that of New York, have as yet failed to meet, and as the Board have no power to

enforce their decisions, it is hoped that the Legislature of the State will favorably consider the matter to the advantage of the pilots.

On our stormy coast, where the weather is seldom to be relied upon, it is assuredly a great relief to the mariner to know that he can boldly approach his haven, feeling confident that he can place his vessel in the hands of a skillful pilot, far enough from a dangerous shore to ensure his approach with safety. And it is commendable in men to jeopardize their lives and their vessels in order to give the mariner this assurance. Yet it has frequently been brought to the notice of the Board that these persons whom the pilot seeks to succor, refuse to pay the legal compensation of "off-shore" pilotage, on the ground that the pilot's services were not needed until their vessel was within the line designated as "in shore."

The amended laws regarding pilots, passed at the last session of the Legislature of the State, have been found useful and beneficial to all concerned.

During the year the following changes have occurred in the Board:—Henry W. Miller appointed, vice William M. Gamble, and George W. Johnson, vice Peter Metzgar.

The Board have the painful duty to report the death of Pilots Robert M. Stocking, January 2d, and of Joseph H. Chapman, January 7th, 1869.

Pilot Chapman was, at the time of his death, the oldest pilot in active service, having held his license for thirty-two years. He was beloved and esteemed by all who knew him, and his loss is deeply felt by his associates.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

By order of the Board.

(Signed,)

CHARLES S. BOGGS, *President,*
Commodore U. S. N.

HENRY W. MILLER, *Secretary.*