

Ocracoke Island has been the final resting place for many an ill-fated vessel caught in a storm off our coast.

Shipwrecks of note include the Steamboat "Home" (1837), the "Black Squall" (1861), the "Pioneer" (1889), the "Richard S. Spofford" (1894), the "Ariosto" (1899), the "George W. Wells" (1913), the "Carroll A. Deering" (1921), the "Nomis" (1935), and many others. Look for full-length reports of some of these wrecks in future newsletters)

### The Wreck of the Nomis, 1935:



Dale Mutro recently shared the following information with me. These hand-written notes about storms and shipwrecks were discovered in Myra Wahab's papers after she died last year. Myra's mother-in-law was Martha Ann Howard Wahab.

These notes were almost certainly written by Miss Martha Ann or, less likely, by one of her siblings.

I have made a few editing corrections, and added several historical references in brackets for clarification. I have also created links to previous newsletters that have more information.

Enjoy!

"Storms

In the year 1846, July, [a] gale cut Hatteras Inlet out. My father [this would have been Robert Howard, 1845-1878] was one year old. My grandmother, Caroline Howard, when he [Robert Howard] was a year old, brought him from Hatteras, across where the inlet is now cut, [and they] traveled on dry land.

1861, March, a schooner by the name of Black Squall was wrecked on Ocracoke beach, First Hammock Hills, loaded with sugar. The crew all saved. The Capt. got his leg broken. Dr. Dudley [the surgeon at the marine hospital on Portsmouth Island] set the bone.

1870, April the 1<sup>st</sup>, another schooner name[d] Irelina [?] Jane was wrecked on the beach

near the Knoll.

July 1872, a schooner by the name Johnson was wrecked on Ocracoke beach loaded with dry goods, crew all saved.

July 1887, a schooner was wrecked on Ocracoke beach loaded with pineapples.

Another storm, August 1887, not much damage. The dining room owned by a man Miriam washed down, and the furniture came across the creek [Cockle Creek, also called today Silver Lake].

Oct. 1889, a storm. A steamer by the name Pioneer went to pieces and her cargo was on the beach. Loaded with general cargo, everything. [While everyone else on the island was gathering up “useful” items like canned goods, hoop cheeses, and bolts of cloth, the young Thomas Wallace Howard, Martha Ann’s brother, was picking up books. Although his mother was disappointed with what he brought home, he loved to read, which eventually led to his employment as Ocracoke’s postmaster for 40 years.]

1899, Aug. 17<sup>th</sup>, a terrible hurricane wrecked the island and destroyed homes, boats and blew down many trees. No lives lost. [This is referred to as “The Old August Storm” and is remembered as one of the three worst hurricanes to batter Ocracoke. The others were in 1933 & 1944.]”

**The Wreck of the Ariosto, Christmas Eve, 1899:**



**Launching of the Carroll A. Deering (“The Ghost Ship of the Outer Banks”), 1921:**



Look for more stories of storms, shipwrecks, bravery, and heroism in future newsletters.

Until next month,

Philip and the entire crew at Village Craftsmen

(Photos above are from the book *The Story of Ocracoke*. The photos of the *Nomis* & the *Carroll A. Deering* are from the Mariner's Museum. The painting of the wreck of the *Ariosto* was made by Charlie Ahman.)