

(Never published - J. H. R.)

FIGURE HEAD

It was In the time long gone, when our little Nova Scotia town built wooden ships for the world's seas, and there was a dollar in every pocket, Albert Danglely lived across the harbour at Cow Cove. Old men say he was the finest wood-carver in the province. *the best* certainly he was *the best* in Malton. In a town of ship-carpenters, each of whom could turn his hand to fine work when he chose, that is saying something. His father was lost in the barque Warema in 1848, and at fifteen Albert was apprenticed to a ship-builder in Malton. Each morning he rowed across the mile of water to work, and each evening he returned to Cow Cove, where the silent tragic woman his mother kept the lonely wooden house. He was a lanky boy, with the bemused gait of an ox-teamster, with a ~~yellow~~ *yellow* lick of hair always hanging over one eye, and his eyes a pale blue with something *mysterious* ~~queer~~ *queer* about them, as if he were forever staring at something far in the distance *and beautiful*. He was gifted with tools. "Touched", *some* said; for he could do things with wood that seemed uncanny -- as if he ^{had} turned the hard fibre to clay and moulded it. It was not long before Will MacDonald, at the shipyard, put him on fine work, scrolls, mouldings, and such-like.

One fine Sunday, driving around the harbour past Cow Cove in his shining gig, big Alexander Dawson saw him at work in a shed by the house. He pulled up at once, for he was a pious man, was Dawson, and ^{already} something of a feudal lord in Malton, and here was young Albert breaking the Sabbath. But when he ^{saw} the work, he changed *his* the text of his sermon. Albert was putting the finishing touches to a human figure in wood, and on a bench sat his model, a sleepy negro from the back street of Malton, stripped to the waist, the afternoon sunshine pouring past the dusty windows to shine on the smooth black skin. Figure and model were one. Albert had even worked into those wooden features the bored expression of the sitter. It wasn't canny, Dawson said; but he offered Albert a job ~~making~~ *making* figureheads in his yard, and Albert refused.

When he was twenty, Albert Danglely, gave up the shipyard work in Malton and returned across the harbour to Cow Cove -- for good. He announced ^{ING} that he would do wood-carving by the job. People thought it queer ~~to have~~ to drive all the way around the harbour, or row a mile in a boat, to consult a wood-carver, at a time when wood-carvers grew on every bush. But they brought him their work. You can see some of that work in Malton ~~to~~ *to* this day; the fine mahogany lectern, the oak pulpit with its elaborately figured canopy, and the pew ends, in ~~our~~ *our* small church of Saint Matthias on the hill; the wardens' chairs in the Masonic lodge; the ~~the~~ *the* painted pine statue of Captain Black Hugh Tarrel which stands in the hall of the old Tarrel house, and scares child-visitors out of their wits; and here and there in attics and barns a bit of scroll work, carefully stowed out of harm's way "because 'twas made by Albert Danglely in the old time." But Albert Danglely's best work is lost and gone. For fifteen years he made the figureheads for the ships that came out Malton yards and vanished over the horizon, never to return. He made the last when he was thirty five, at the height of his powers, and the Reverend Neal Thompson ~~was~~ calling him a "Michael Angelo in wood." That was in 1868, the year which brought a sudden end to Malton's golden age.

In the spring of that year, on a fine April afternoon, lean Alexander Dawson drove ~~around~~ *around* to Cow Cove with his wife and daughter. They were in the phaeton drawn by Dawson's bays, famous the country round; and young Shaddock Watkins, seventeen, Dawson's stable-boy, was at the ~~the~~ *the* reins. The winter's snow was still hanging on in the shady ^{woods} woods, but the dirt road was bare, and the frost coming out of it. The carriage wheels whirled in mud. The sun shone and it was warm. The ~~the~~ *the* brooks were ~~running~~ *running* bank high. In the shore fields, where the ~~fishermen~~ *fishermen* had spread their fish-compost and ~~seed~~ *seed* ready for spring ploughing, the ~~foraging~~ *foraging* flocks of herring gulls rose and settled in raucous white clouds.

Cow Cove was ~~no more~~ *no more* than a nick in the steep east shore, surrounded by thick second-growth spruce and fir, except the small knoll where the Danglely house stood. Only small boats could use it, for the great rock we call the Cow sits in the narrow mouth of it, and ~~beyond~~ *beyond* ~~are~~ *are* others, showing only at low tide, which sailormen call The Calves.

Young Shad pulled up outside Albert Danglely's workshop and jumped down to the horse's heads, and Dawson got out. Mrs. Dawson, a plump ~~solid~~ ^{and} caustic and fifty-two, called after him, "Mind, there's to be no more posin' an' modelin' than can be helped." ~~Long~~ ^{Long} Sandy Dawson nodded. He had a gaunt Scots face with bushy pepper-and-salt ~~whiskers~~ ^{side-whiskers}, and grey twinkling eyes that could see a dollar a mile away. He ~~owned~~ ^{owned} the busiest shipyard in the county, and operated four big barques in the timber trade to Britain, and owned a third of the Malton Banking Company; but when Lizzie Dawson spoke, he ~~listened~~ ^{listened}.

Albert was ~~working on~~ ^{working on} a carving for the stem of one of the Anderson schooners, absorbed as usual, and Dawson had to give him a ~~heavy~~ ^{heavy} tap on the shoulder to get ~~his~~ ^{his} attention. ~~Fifteen~~ ^{Fifteen} years had not changed Albert much; the lean gawky figure., the lustreless yellow hair, the day-dreaming eyes were those of the boy Dawson had found carving the wooden negro.

"Albert", said Sandy Dawson, "I've a commission ~~of~~ ^{for you} some importance. Ye ~~knew~~ ^{you seen} the barque I'm buildin'?"

Albert nodded slowly, and the yellow lock swung. Everybody knew the barque Dawson was building. Not the biggest, she was certainly the finest vessel ever to come out of a Malton yard. ~~She had been~~ ^{She had been} a-building since early in '67, and ~~was~~ ^{was} to be launched in September.

"I'll ~~let ye into a secret~~, Albert. I'm namin' her after my daughter; and for the figurehead I want ye to model Kate her self. Ye can set your own price."

"I never modelled a woman," Albert muttered. He had made Indian chiefs (modelled mostly from old Noel Knock Wood, who lived by the salt marsh with his squaw) and rajahs and African princes from Malton negroes, and Melville merchants from their important selves, stiff in Sunday cloth; and he had made females by copying one or two of the old figureheads lying about Malton wharves; but he had never modelled a woman alive, and the eyes he truned to Sandy were bleak with refusal. He had shunned women all his ~~queer~~ ^{queer} life.

Dawson did not let him get as far as No. He was quick and shrewd, was Dawson.

"Kate's out in the carriage now. Ye ~~can~~ ^{can} take a few measurements an' make a sketch, can't ye? ~~\$\$\$~~ ^{\$\$\$} No need o' modelin', man. Look -- this is the finest vessel that ever came out o' Malton. ~~It may~~ ^{It may} be the last, shippin' ~~made~~ ^{made} the way it is. There's no wood-carver like you in the world, Albert. Will ye stand by an' see a foreigner from outside do the figurehead? Will ye have my ship followin' a bit a foreign work about the sea?"

Albert shuffled, and ~~truned~~ ^{truned} the chisel over and over in his hands, ~~He would not meet that bright compelling eye of Dawson's. But he gave in. When Kate entered, she saw him standing at his bench, clutching the chipped edge with his long hands behind him, as if for support. She was a tall girl with Dawson's nose and eyes and her mother's brown hair, She was a lively smiling girl, and when she smiled there was a dimple in one cheek and her teeth had a moist and healthy shine. She had a figure to brighten any sculptor's eye, even in hoops and four petticoats. She had been a baby when Albert Danglely carved his first figure, and she was now twenty two and the belle of the county. She went up to Albert and put out her hand, smiling, and Albert gasped -- and surrendered. He thought he could do the sketch, in two or three sittings, he said.~~ ^{avoiding}

But after four or five sittings he announced solemnly, in his flat monotonous voice, ~~that~~ ^{that} and looking up at the dusty rafters, that she must come ~~often~~ ^{more}, even when the sketch was done. She must come at least twice a week until the figurehead was finished. There were things that couldn't be set ~~down~~ ^{down} on paper, that must be carved into the wood, he said.

~~This did not please Lizzie~~ ^{for a time} news made Lizzie Dawson sniff. She had ~~that~~ ^{that} ~~black~~ ^{black} sense of respectability that a later generation knew as Victorian. So with a generalship no less Victorian she saw that Kate had an escort on her visits to Cow Cove. This was the son of John Thorpe, manager of the Malton Banking Company. Roy Thorpe was a slender young fellow of five-and-twenty, with black hair and curly black side-whiskers and fun-warmed brown eyes. He had been away to college ~~for a time~~, without learning enough to dull his good humour, and he was ~~now~~ ^{now} supposed to be learning the banking business; though he spent most of his time driving a smart gig about Malton's streets in summer, and in winter, was the life of Malton's ~~stiff~~ ^{stiff} drawing rooms.

In those days the ~~people~~ had a social rating beyond that of provinces

Roy Thorpe was the most eligible young man in Malton town

On the first trip to Albert Dangle's shed, Roy sat on one of the carpenter's benches, smoking cigars and talking in his easy, amused voice while Kate posed and Albert busied himself with pencil and calipers. The wood-carver was irritated and nervous. After that Kate made her escort wait outside, and he sat, bored, in the gig, looking down on Cow Cove from the rise of the harbour road, and watching the shipping a mile away across the water at Malton wharves.

On one of those thundery July afternoons, when a mass of piled white cloud, black-tipped, moved restlessly about the horizon and the sea shimmered in the heat, while Kate sat in the shed under Albert's blue eye, and Roy in the seat of the gig, on one of those days the directors of the Malton Banking Company held a meeting. The bank was a single storey wooden building on Main Street, next to the Lord Raglan Hotel, with a false front giving it added height and dignity, and with a flagstaff on the flat roof. On that flagstaff, morning and evening, one of the clerks hoisted and lowered the old flag of the province of Nova Scotia, the blue St. Andrew's cross on the white field, made by the directors' womenfolk; Nova Scotia had entered into a confederation with the other Canadian provinces the year before, under promise of a federal subsidy, and towns like Malton, which took their politics seriously, believed firmly that Nova Scotians had been sold into bondage "for forty cents a head -- the price of a sheep skin." Standing outside the bank you could look along Main Street under the arching elms to the place where it curved a little by the Dawson house. Main Street ran close to the harbour there, with Dawson's humming shipyard on one side and Dawson's mansion sitting white and square on the other, sheltered by old and mighty trees. The bowsprit of the new barque was thrust over the street, so that teams drove underneath, and the flying jib-boom reached high over Dawson's fence into the shade of Dawson's tall trees. Dawson was going to launch her fully rigged, contrary to Malton custom. Her masts had arrived but were not yet stepped. They were of southern pine, the only wood in the ship that had not come out of the local forest. Men were busy with palm and needle in Miller's sail loft, in Castor's, in Hewlett's, make two complete suits of sails for her. McHarg the blackmaker had fashioned all the blocks and dead-eyes; and all her ironwork was coming from Pell's foundry, on the lane running up the hill, where only a pasture is now.

The men in the directors' room were talking of those things. They were merchants and shipbuilders and ship owners, with a finger in every Malton pie, and both thumbs in the Malton Banking Company. They sat about the long table, perspiring in the heat, under wood-panelled walls hung with paintings of Malton ships, half over the world; men with fine homes along the shady end of Main Street -- Dawson, Enslow, Pakenham, Millock, Finucane -- the merchant aristocracy of the time long gone. Some of the houses are summer hotels now, and strangers live in all. These men in the bank were holding a wake over Malton's golden age, but they did not know, even then. John Thorpe was speaking. A heavily built man, with a grey indoor face, rigid and grey and cold as ice, he was avoiding Dawson's eye and talking to the rest in the manner of a man who has made up his mind to something unpleasant and will have it out now, hell or high water.

"You've gone against my opinion on our last three loans. On this, you haven't even asked it. But I will tell you, asked or not, that the bank can't safely loan another dollar to Mr. Dawson on the new barque -- or any other -- at the present time."

"A temporary drop in ocean freights. Och, man!" Dawson cried out, rolling his r's magnificently.

"We've weathered depressions before," said Enslow.

"And weathered 'em," declared Millock, with a pull at his whiskers.

"This is different," John Thorpe said. "You've never seen depression yet. Or you've forgot what times were like, fifteen or twenty years ago."

"Ah, that!" snapped the handsome red-faced white-haired man Finucane. "Ancient history. No significance today. None."

"I wish to God I could feel so sure," said Thorpe. "This bank commenced business in '54. That year came the war in the Crimea, and the British government buying and chartering every ship it could find. That lasted till '56. Then, in '57, came the big mutiny in India, and troops and supplies to be carried around the Cape, and sustained there through a long campaign. After that, things subsided a while, working down

towards ^{normal}, if you want the truth. ^{But} Then came the war across the border, the war between the States, and for five years shipping and shipbuilding climbed to the skies. At the war's end it dropped like a stone. ~~It's been dropping ever since.~~ We haven't seen bottom yet. I'll tell you why. ~~We've laughed at the steamers for years;~~ but ~~out~~ of the American war ^{came} a lot of fast steamers, built for blockade running, and they're on the trade routes now. They make quick runs from port to port. They can give a definite sailing date -- no waiting for winds; they can give a date for arrival and hit it ~~pretty~~ close. They're getting all the freight they can handle -- ~~with more steamers being built.~~

"You're not suggesting that steamers will ever replace ~~the sailing ships?~~" ^{snorted} Enslow.

"I suggest ~~nothing.~~ I tell you we've been living in a fool's paradise ~~these fourteen years,~~ ~~sustained by a succession of wars now ended.~~ And I tell you the bank is ~~in no position to meet further demands,~~ deep water as a result of it; all our funds in local ships and shipyards and the like. They've all been losing money hand over fist since '65-- even Mister Dawson--"

"That's a lie!" Dawson roared.

Icily Thorpe said, "It's what you've told me, ~~at any rate,~~ whenever I've asked for a payment on ~~account of principal,~~ ^{on the old loan.}

"I've paid my interest," Sandy Dawson said virtuously. "On the date. Every cent."

"Yes. Some of ~~them~~ haven't even done that. ~~Most of them are shareholders in the bank.~~ They ~~tell me,~~ 'After all, I'm a shareholder' -- as if that made everything right. That's the worst of a bank like ours -- all the eggs in one basket. Well, I say it's time to face the truth ~~and begin to secure ourselves,~~ ~~do something about it.~~"

The voices ~~booke~~ out in a storm, with John Thorpe in the midst like the Cow Rock in a south-easter. The directors were all active in shipping and shipbuilding, but much of the bank stock was held by retired merchants and captains or their easy-going heirs. All of Thorpe's own savings were in the bank. He saw the thing as a monster suddenly determined to devour ~~them all.~~ But the men in the room over-ruled him, shouted him down, as if the heat of the July day had got into their blood. Lean Sandy Dawson's loan was put to a vote and passed -- \$40,000 to finish the barque and pay debts already incurred in the building. Thorpe went home with a look of death on his face. Dawson never spoke to him again; and Kate was forbidden to see his son.

The figurehead was finished in August. There was some debate about the figure part of it, Dawson wanting the customary flowing robes, and Lizzie ~~retorting~~ ^{saying} sharply ~~that~~ she would have "no ~~figger~~ ^{image} of Kate in a wet sheet put up where men could see". Red Hugh Tarrel settled the matter. He was the best of Dawson's captains, chosen for the new barque. People called him Red Hugh to mark him from Black Hugh his cousin. "Don't give us a wumman wi' clo'es an' hair all blowin' aft, as if we'd an everlastin' head wind," growled Red Hugh Tarrel. So Albert modeled Kate in the little jacket and bodice she favoured that summer, with the outward sweep of hip and hoops melting away into the line of the stem-head, every fold, every hair in order, as if there ~~would~~ ^{were to} be no winds in her life, fair or foul.

Kate liked to watch Albert at work. He had made most of his tools himself, nearly a hundred; chisels of many widths, some short, some long, some with straight shanks, some with shanks bent for difficult places; and gouges whose edges ran all the way from a deep U to an edge that seemed straight to the unknowing eye. These he kept sharp with a variety of special stones. For blocking out he ~~struck the tool~~ with a mallet that looked like a swollen potato masher; but after that he struck the butt of chisel or gouge with the hard palm of his ~~hand~~ right hand. The tools for immediate use were always laid out ~~carefully~~ on a strip of baize, with their glittering edges towards him, and it was fascinating to ~~see~~ see his slim clever fingers going out to pick ^{ONE} ~~them~~ up, ^{ONE} swiftly, exactly, as if there were eyes in their tips, or a brain that knew which was wanted. Albert never looked. His strange eyes were always on the wood, with swift under-glances at ~~the sitter,~~ ^{Kate.}

The wood was a balk of English elm, specially imported by ~~one of the~~ ^{home-bred} a Dawson ship making a rare voyage home. White pine was usual, being easily worked and durable and taking paint well; but Dawson would have nothing common for the vessel that all Malton was now calling The Kate.

She tried to get ^{Albert} ~~him~~ to talk at first, and failed. ^{But} He could not work under such a handicap. So she talked, to pass the time, and because it amused her, the belle

of the county, to prattle her prettiest and get no response. And one day, after making some touches with a fine tool held in the very tips of his fingers, he laid the thing down very carefully and said, without looking up, "It's finished."

"It's much better-looking than I am," said candid Kate.

"~~When the wood came,~~ "It is you," he answered quietly. "When the wood came I saw you alive in the heart of it. I have set you free, ~~that is all.~~"

"It's beautiful," Kate said, standing before it.

"I can't bear for them to come and take it away," Albert said ~~dully~~.

"Why?"

"Because it's so beautiful. Because you are so beautiful, and your voice is like water running in the woods in April."

"Why, Albert," she said laughing, "how nice of you to say that." And suddenly Albert was on his knees in the chips and shavings, pressing her skirt to his cheek and weeping that he loved her. Her face went scarlet. ~~She~~ She had a notion to call out for young Shad Watkins, sitting ~~in the gig outside.~~

"Albert," Kate said sharply, "don't be so silly. Albert -- Albert Dangley!"

When she said "silly" he got on his feet and stood very straight. A passion burned in his pale blue eyes where there had never been anything but a dream, and it was startling, like seeing a face in the window of a house long empty.

"You say 'silly'! But you are going to marry that young loafer who knows nothing but horses, and stinks of cigars -- that Thorpe!"

"I'm not", very coldly. "And it's none of your business. Now, let me pass, please." He moved aside, dragging his worn boots, as if very tired of a sudden, and when she reached the door he called out to her.

"Ah, that Thorpe! No good! None of them! They live by the work of people like me -- them and their great houses and fine horses, and the daughters of honest shipwrights waiting on their tables -- ah!" She was going out ~~through~~, head in air.

"It's rotten. Rotten!. Rotten! All of it! You'll see!"

Kate paused. "I'll see -- what?" ~~curiously~~.

"The rot -- the rot!. I don't know." He was whining like a beaten boy, but with that ~~graver~~ bewitched look on his pale face. "Like a rotten stump in the woods, that looks sound, and goes to dust at a kick. I see it like that. And I see you -- you! -- down on your knees somehow -- with your face ~~lifted~~ to me, fresh and beautiful. On your knees to silly Albert. You!. It makes me cry."

"You make me laugh," snapped Kate, and she laughed to prove it. *He screamed after her.*

"When you come to me on your knees," Albert said, "I shall laugh. I shall laugh then! You hear?"

But she did not hear. She was stepping into the gig and telling young Shad to make a fast pace for Malton, and when Albert reached the door he saw nothing but her parasol floating away over the brown dust rising from the road. He looked towards the house then and saw his mother's white face and ~~haunted~~ eyes. They stared at each other for a long time.

The launching was a gala affair. Soon after daylight people began to arrive in buggies and wagons from the country, and before noon all the stables were full, and the hitching racks outside the stores on Main Street; and in the vacant lots behind the Lord Raglan Hotel and Murphy's bakery the horses were tethered in rows, with a bounty of hay strewn all about their feet. There was no work in the shipyards and stores, there was silence in the sail lofts and rigging lofts, no smoke in the foundry chimney. Main Street was a mass of people in Sunday clothes, wandering up and down, talking excitedly, calling out to each other in passing. The shadows of trees crept in towards their trucks, as if for shelter from the noon sun. It was a hot still September day, and the ~~ceaseless~~ *wandering* tramp on the town's plank sidewalks sent up a dull sound of thunder, but there was no cloud in the high blue sky. The green of the lawns and shrubs was jaded after the summer drouth. Half the wells of the town had gone dry. The dust of the street had caked on the shop fronts and on the neat picket fences that guarded the big houses past Dawson's yard, and the clothes of the country people were grey with the dust of the road.

All the ship-carpenters were out with their families, and the caulkers and riggers, ~~and~~ the shop-clerks and stevedores, the loafers, the crews of ships in port; fishermen from Entry Cove and Deep Cove and the little fish stagings that clustered under the ramparts of East Head; ~~lumbermen from~~ hands from the sawmills at Grenville, and farmers and lumberjacks from all the ~~wandering country roads~~ back country. ^{round} And the object of all eyes was the beautiful thing in Dawson's yard, a-flutter with bunting from stem to stern by way of the mastheads. She ~~seemed~~ ^{looked} immense aloft, for she carried three royals and the wide yards went up like steps to heaven, and the hull ~~seemed~~ was slim below. ~~Her lower yard arms~~ She dwarfed the tall trees of Main Street, and the glitter of her paint and varnish made a shabbiness of all about her -- the littered yard, the sheds and warehouses with their unpainted sun-curved shingles, the thick dust of Main Street, yes, and the dusty hot-faced people in Sunday clothes now gathering like a sea under her forefoot. The launching platform was set up, and draped in bunting, and there was a white sheet over the figurehead that all Malton was eager to see.

At two o'clock in the afternoon there was a burst of martial music, and the Malton brass band came down from the fire hall, with the red coats and gleaming Enfield barrels of the militia company behind, and the crowd parted to let them through. They formed a square about the launching platform and fixed their long glittering bayonets, as if determined to prevent this ~~beautiful~~ monster from following her bowsprit into Dawson's house. And at that moment the big front door of the Dawson mansion opened, and ~~out came~~ in decorous pairs, conscious of their worth and virtue, and full of sherry and biscuits, forth came the aristocracy of Malton, a stately procession of stovepipe hats and ~~lacy~~ parasols. They marched out of the Dawson gate ~~under~~ in the very shadow of the jib-boom, and took their stations, with much fluttering and hitching, and giggling ~~and~~ about the launching platform, surrounded in their turn by the ~~martial~~ ^{red coat} figures of ~~the militia company~~ in red. And on the platform stood Sandy and Lizzie and Kate, with a select company, creme de la creme, of Enslows and Finucanes. There were speeches, which everybody heard raptly. Oratory flourished in the small towns in those days -- ~~and where is it now?~~ Then rose the clamour of ~~the~~ mauls under the hull, where under Dan Fordyce's sharp eye and sharper tongue, men began ~~splitting~~ ^{splitting} out the ~~blocks~~ keel blocks. On the barque's deck Red Hugh had gathered a gang of volunteers to attend the anchors and lines, ~~these~~ assisted by ~~in~~ turn by the usual ~~swarm of small~~ mob of small boys, who had swarmed aboard from the road by the dolphin-striker.

Then ~~at~~ a nod from Fordyce, Dawson touched his daughter's arm, and Kate stepped ~~forward~~ to the dangling champagne bottle. ~~The~~ ^{people} cheered. She was in blue silk from bonnet to hems, and people could not help comparing ~~her~~ with the ship that was to sail under her name. Both ~~were~~ slim and handsome; ~~a bit over-sparred~~ perhaps, but none the worse for that. ~~And~~ Kate swung the bottle, and it gave a gentle bump on the hull and came back. She caught it and swung again. ~~The~~ ^{time} it struck harder but not hard enough. There were loud ~~singing~~ ^{warning} cries from below, where the block-splitters were jumping clear, and the hull gave a distinct shudder of life. "Quick!" snapped Dawson, ~~snatching~~ ^{snatching} away the shroud from the figurehead. Kate grasped the bottle by the neck and with an unladylike swing brought it hard on the now moving stem. Glass and champagne flew in a shower, but nobody ~~saw~~ ^{noticed} that. All eyes were turned in ~~delighted~~ ^{delighted} alarm to the towering mast-heads. Would she behave herself? Would she jam on the ways? Would she topple on her side and ruin the Dawsons, the day and herself in one earth-shaking crash? She did none of these things. She went into the harbour with a swoop, and in a minute there was silence and sunlight where she had been born, and all the people staring at Kate, the flesh-and-blood blue-silk Kate. A chunk of the flying bottle had gashed her hand and the blood was dripping down her ~~slim~~ fingers. Gallant old Finucane bound it up with a handkerchief, in a thin babble of female alarm, and Kate was smiling. But the sailors and stevedores shook their heads at an omen.

As the barque ~~took~~ the water there was a great surge, and the planks of the launching ways spewed out underneath, ~~a~~ ^{was} a wet tangle of wood. The gang on the bow let go both anchors and paid out a good length of chain to give her a spring to bring up on, and the stern line, passed beforehand to the head of the packet wharf, was now heaved in mightily, to keep her stern off the flats.

Monday

Two days later she was at McGarry's wharf, loading deals for England; and that evening young Shad Wtkins saw Kate and Roy Thorpe in the warm dusk under the young locust trees beyond the stable. The ~~the~~ bandage on Kate's hand shone white in the murk, and Shad saw Roy lift that whiteness to his lips. Their voices were very low, and presently they stood ~~close~~ close, and the pale glimmer of their faces became ~~one~~ *one*, and Kate's hat fell to the ground, ~~unheeded~~. Shad Watkins preserved that secret more than seventy years. "I was young then," he ~~cooed~~ said in his old dry rustling voice. "Seventeen -- eighteen, mebbe. ~~It struck me~~ ~~so~~ dumb, p'raps. I was crazy about her -- everybody was, come to that. Roy Thorpe wasn't good enough for her, but he loved her, that I know; and may the good Lord rest them kindly wherever ~~they~~ it was they went. For Malton never saw 'em again. The West, some say. A hard life then -- and neither of 'em had ever done a hand's turn. ~~before~~ But they were in love and well away, and the sunshine had gone from Malton forever."

Sandy Dawson was a thrifty man and never shipped a crew until ~~the~~ sailing day, so when the "Katherine M. Dawson" was drawing sixteen feet, and had to be taken over the bar to complete her loading, ~~it was~~ a gang of Dawson's longshoremen ~~who~~ took her out, under Red Hugh's tongue and eye. They anchored her opposite Fish Point, and her deck cargo was towed out in rafts by Paddy Mahan's paddle-wheel tug. ~~When that~~ *deck cargo was done, and the lashing planks in place, and the skipper, the mates and the cook already settled in their fine new quarters, Sandy Dawson signed a crew in the old shipping office at the corner of Dock Street and Wentworth Lane. They all had a drink* They stopped for a last drink here and there in the little sailors' rum shops along Dock Street, and went off in the tug with their sea-bags and straw-sacks, roaring a song about ~~the~~ *fat Tressie Muldoon's boarding house that everybody has forgotten* now.

"Ye'd better weigh first thing in the mornin'," Dawson told Red Hugh. "The whole town'll want to see how she feels her canvas." "What about my papers?" Red Hugh said. "I'll fix 'em up before breakfast. There's the insurance, too. All in good time. We've had a long day."

Red Hugh gave him a shrewd glance. Dawson looked old. The news of Kate's elopement had hit him harder than he cared to admit. It was rumoured in town that Dawson had ~~accused~~ *was* John Thorpe of a hand in it, and there had been high words. Some said Thorpe had been discharged by the bank directors, and some that he had resigned; but the truth was that the man was down with a stroke, ~~and dying~~, complaining of a great weight on his chest, as if the top-heavy bank itself had settled there.

It was a fair September evening when the sun went down, with a light breeze off the blue hills to the west. People worked long in those days and slept ~~hardly~~ *hardly*. By ten o'clock ~~the town was dark and dead, and I think it was~~ *all Malton* and the air as still as death. It was still like that when John Thorpe died, at two o'clock in the morning, with his wife and Doctor Barnaby at ~~the~~ bedside. At thr e ~~o'clock~~ *o'clock* it was blowing a whole gale from the south-east. It came as quick as that -- the famous Line Gale of ~~the~~ '68. The town awoke in a clatter of unfastened shutters and doors, and trees ~~whipping~~ *whipping* the air ~~in a fury~~, and loose objects blowing about the streets, and rain ~~blown~~ *blown* to a mist that filled the air like something solid. Women scurried from window to window. But the men pulled on boots and trousers and came running in little ~~shouting~~ *shouting* groups along Main Street, past Dawson's, past the ~~other~~ mansions, heading for the lane to Fish Point. South-east the narrow harbour pointed like a gun, with the wind thrusting ~~down the muzzle~~ straight up the barrel. The storm had found the fatal weakness of Malton Harbour and howled its triumph to the hills.

Fish Point was crowded soon with half-dressed men staring ~~out~~ *out* over the water. The barque was riding to both bowers, a shape, a mere presence in ~~the~~ furious dark. They could fancy Red Hugh and his language, caught as he was between the storm and the bar. They talked confidently of the new cables, ~~of~~ the good holding ground, of Red Hugh's famous luck; but mostly they talked of the anchors, made in Pell's foundry on the hillside. Each was of wrought iron, with shank, crown and flukes in one piece, the shank six feet from shackle to crown, and a span of six feet from fluke to fluke, and each fluke fifteen inches long, with a four inch point. The heavy wooden stock was of yellow birch, in two pieces, each nine feet long, and bound together with six iron

bands to form a solid balk twelve inches through. They weighed a ton apiece, the best bit of anchor work ever turned out of Pell's, and men thought of them, and the new hemp cable made fast to each great iron ring, and the cable end parcelled and served against chafe, and said that "The Kate" was safe enough. Some of them believed it, even when a great sea began to roll into the harbour, and the "Katherine M. Dawson" surged and surged in the dark howling dark. The bar was breaking ~~all~~ ^{the whole} the way across, now, ~~and~~ roaring under the ~~steep~~ ^{steep} piled seas. And the sea drove the watchers back from the shore at Fish Point. It ran high up, ~~tearing~~ ^{beat about & tore} at the grass sod, and sucked back ~~with~~ ^{with} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~sound~~ ^{sound} ran back, ~~down~~ ^{down} ~~right~~ ^{right}, into the darkness, with a sucking, roaring sound that deafened the ears; and then without warning it sprang out of the dark again, a wall, white-foamed, leaping at what ~~seemed~~ ^{ab} eye level, breaking into ~~white~~ ^{white} thunder and hurling ~~the~~ ^{the} cobblesstones at their heads. ~~low~~ ^{low} ~~down~~ ^{down} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~feet~~ ^{feet}.

There was a thin sound of wheels and hooves, and the men turned and saw Alexander Dawson in his gig, with young Shad ~~riding~~ ^{riding} ~~reins~~ ^{reins}.
 "Does she hold?" cried Dawson in a voice they had never heard before.
 "She holds!" they bawled, but even as they cried this reassurance they saw the barque's anchor lights swivving. ~~The Kate's anchors, those sound things from Pell's, held faithfully enough, but the overburdened cables parted~~
 "Hold! Hold!" Sandy Dawson screamed, as if cables and anchors could hear, The lights moved ~~at~~ ^{at} ~~a~~ ^a ~~speed~~ ^{speed} ~~that~~ ^{that} ~~gathered~~ ^{gathered} and left no doubt in their minds.
 "There goes your barque!" said one, with that easy half-triumphant tone He had not meant to sound triumphant, but triumphant he sounded, and Dawson turned upon him harshly. "There," he said, thrusting a bony finger out into the hissing dark, "goes all Malton!" ~~They did not know what he meant, but they remembered it~~ Afterwards they knew what he meant, but not then.

"God help Red Hugh and his men if she strikes on the bar!"
 Red Hugh was making, at that ~~very~~ ^{very} moment the decision that saved him ~~and~~ ^{and} ~~some~~ ^{some} ~~of~~ ^{of} his men ~~at~~ ^{at} ~~least~~ ^{least}. A bellow sent men scurrying aloft to let fall the stiff new fore topsail. That brought the barque stern-towind and sea and gave her steerage way. Dead to leeward thundered the bar. Four points off the starboard bow he could see the tall spouts thrown up by the Cow, ~~at~~ ^{at} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~mouth~~ ^{mouth} ~~of~~ ^{of} ~~Cow~~ ^{Cow} ~~Cove~~ ^{Cove} and he steered for it, ~~and~~ ^{and} ~~sent~~ ^{sent} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~Kate~~ ^{Kate} ~~into~~ ^{into} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~gap~~ ^{gap} ~~between~~ ^{between} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~rock~~ ^{rock} ~~and~~ ^{and} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~shore~~ ^{shore} risking the Calves on the height of a full moon tide and ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~sea~~ ^{sea} ~~apiled-up~~ ^{apiled-up} sea brought in by the wind. She touched one, and staggered, but fled on at a speed they could only guess. Red Hugh with his own great paws on the wheel, ran her dead into the gap between the Cow and the shore. Before she struck he called all hands aft, expecting the masts to go. But the new rigging held. She struck ~~and~~ ^{and} ~~fetch~~ ^{fetch} ~~ed~~ ^{ed} up at once, nipped between rock and shore, and the great seas breaking over the stern. Red Hugh and the ~~rest~~ ^{rest} ~~others~~ ^{others} on the half deck were swept off their feet and washed along the deck, and ~~some~~ ^{some} were never seen again. The ~~rest~~ ^{rest} clambered into the fore rigging, out along the fore yard arm and slid down the brace into the woods. It was as neat as that. They would not desert their ship, even then, but stayed by the shore. One man had dry matches, the quaint stinking card-matches that Charles Olsen made in his little factory on Queen Street, and they lit a great fire, ~~for~~ ^{for} ~~comfort~~ ^{comfort}, I suppose, though the gale blew the smoke and flame all about them, and would have fired the woods if it had not been for the rain.

In the small house above Cow Cove, Albert Danglely heard the crash of Red Hugh's berthing, and ran out into the storm-beaten woods and down to the shore. And as he ~~peered~~ ^{peered} ~~blundered~~ ^{blundered} ~~through~~ ^{through} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~trees~~ ^{trees} out of the trees, the fire flamed suddenly, and ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~whole~~ ^{whole} ~~shuddering~~ ^{shuddering} ~~showed~~ ^{showed} up the barque, ~~enormous~~ ^{enormous} appeared, enormous and frightful in that narrow space, with spars towering up into nothingness. But Albert saw ~~these~~ ^{these} ~~thin~~ ^{thin} one thing alone-- the ~~one~~ ^{one} ~~bright~~ ^{bright} figure of Kate, serene in jacket and bodice, kneeling at the very edge of the bank, lit by the red flicker of the fire. When Dawson and the others arrived by the harbour road, they found him there, gibbering.
 "What's he say?-" Dawson bellowed.
 "Something about a prophecy."