

The Star of the East

The Scotsman and Musselburgh News in November 1891 carried detailed reports of the loss of "Star of the East." ----- The 1891 season had been patchy. After a very successful start, catches from September were disappointing. Many boats fishing into Scarborough, Shields and Sunderland caught few fish, lost gear in the bad weather, and came home in debt. However, three boats, the "Mary Caird", "Jehovah Jireh" and the "Star of the East" decided to try further south, at Lowestoff. They were large sturdy Fifies well able to withstand heavy seas. They set off on the 29th September for Lowestoff. Bad weather hampered operations; their first "shot" was not made till they had been three days at sea. However, conditions gradually improved. On Tuesday, the 10th of November the "Star" left Lowestoff for the fishing grounds, and hauled about thirty barrels of fish. This was a reasonable catch, and she sailed for port at midnight. By 4.30 am, however, a gale had reached it's height and a wary approach was made to the harbour. Lowestoff in these days was regarded as dangerous to navigate. There were two lighthouses at the harbour entrance---one on a northern cliff and another to the south. These were intended to guide vessels through the port's channel which had dangerous sand-banks on either side. But the heavy rain prevented the crew from seeing the lights properly, and to make matters worse there was a break-water to avoid. Indeed , before they could take evesive action a huge wave bore down on the boat, threatening to throw it on to the break-water. They tried their utmost on the helm to guide her to safety, but sadly she was dashed with tremendous force on the masonry and quickly broke up. In a few minutes all had disappeared except James Bonthorn who lived to tell the sad tale. The other crew members, Walter Brown, 55 {Skipper}, Walter Brown, 28 (son) James Brown, 26 (son) James Ritchie, 38 John Williamson, 29 Alex Brown, 45 Robert Dickson, 27, were all drowned. The disaster evoked an enormous amount of sympathy. In previous sinkings more of the victims were single and had fewer dependants. Services were held in churches at North Esk Parish, U.P. Bridge street, and the New Street Mission. All were well attended. There has of course always been a deeply religious element in fishing communities. The "Star" sailed to Lowestoff with the Mission flag (blue ground, white star) proudly flying from the mast head. In port, fishermen often attended local church services, lustily singing the Sankey hymns with their fine harmonies.

 **EstherPrentice** originally shared this to [Brown Family Tree](#)

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 **harvey802** added this to Binnie

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In this tree



Walter Brown

1839 -

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Falconer Family Tree



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