

## THE EVENING NEWS.

Tuesday, - NOVEMBER 15, 1872.

### TERRIBLE FIGHT WITH A SHARK

An officer on one of the ships of the United States Survey Service relates this instance of his own narrow escape with his life. He waded in to the harbor of Charlotte Harbor, (Fla.) to catch a stingaree, a fish like a flounder, but with a curious rat-like tail:

I had started up a good sized stingaree, probably about three feet in width, two in length, with a "beauty of a tail," and soon the hunt became interesting. Twice had I pierced its body with my barbhook, and the water in the immediate neighborhood became dyed with blood.

The shoals extend out a mile in many directions in Charlotte Harbor, and I, in my excitement, had waded out full half that distance from the shore at least a mile away from my men. The thought of danger never once entered my mind, though the shark had fallen silent, many of them twelve to fifteen feet in length. My feet and legs were bare, my trousers being rolled up as high as possible. But I had gone out some distance from that depth, the water being only my waist, and the danger of peril upon the capture of the fish I was pursuing.

Suddenly, but why, I could never comprehend, I turned my eyes from the stingaree, and saw myself into the harbor. I saw that shark again, and I held my heart almost ceased to beat, as I beheld a monstrous shark that no doubt had scented the blood of the wounded fish coming in a direct line for the place where I was standing.

A feeling of horror pervaded me at once. Powerless, death struck me, and seemed I gave out yell-shouts and giving vent to my agonies, looking towards my men a mile away. I turned my eyes, almost starting from their sockets, upon the monster from which I expected the most horrible death. The agony and mental torture of that fearful moment can never be described or forgotten; it makes me shudder to recall it. As the shark approached me he lessened his speed, evidently reconnoitering the position. His grisly evolutions; the perfect ease with which he glided through the water, the under jaw dropping just enough to let the glistening rows of teeth, sharp as razors, carelessly, lazy movement of that powerful tail; and above all, the cold, horrible glare of those small yellow eyes, fascinated me with a deadly terror.

In those moments I lived years of horrors. To see the human demon so leisurely confident of his power, and I almost powerless, waist-deep in water, and no weapon of defense but a common boat-hook! I seemed to shrink into nothingness when compared to my enemy.

He gave me but a few seconds to think or prepare for death, for quick as a cat he faced directly for me, and seemed almost to spring clear from the water as he dived for my legs. I could scarcely hold the boat-hook in my trembling hands, and with a curse and a groan, I struck at it with the energy and despair with which a drowning person would at a straw.

In a breath I committed my soul to God, and for the next few seconds became nearly unconscious. Whether the monster felt the point of my spear or not, or whether he could tell, I presume, however, that he did, for he passed me, his ponderous jaws coming together with a rush and snap.

Passing full around me, he dashed out into the harbor again, but not far, when he turned and began the same maneuver.

My feelings as he sprang for me, and the revulsion consequent upon my unlooked-for respite, seemed to inspire me with new courage, and I felt that the cowardly shark might yet be balked of his prey. I gained an astonishing feeling of coolness and nerve and determined to present a firm front when he attacked me again, which I knew he would.

I began a retreat, stepping cautiously backwards, with my eyes fixed on the shark. Stealing a look towards the boat, I saw with joy that the men had got it off the beach, and were manning the oars.

That look nearly proved my last, for I had hardly turned towards the shark before he was upon me.

I cannot describe minutely what occurred, for I was taken completely by surprise, and lost my wits as well as nerve. I saw the glare of those terrible eyes, the white, shining surface of the belly as it was partially turned upwards, and the waters dashed in my face.

A deadly cold feeling went over me like an electric shock, as I felt the chilly body dash over my bare legs; something struck me in the back, and for an instant I believe I became unconscious. The shark seemed to twist his body completely around me, the boat hook dropped from my hand, and I fell over the monster's back, my feet and legs being thrown entirely out of the water, as my head and body were wholly submerged.

My escape from death was wonderful. The shark failed for the second time in catching me between his massive jaws. The water restored me a little. I scrambled to my feet, and, almost wild with terror, looked for the shark, and none can imagine the joy I felt as I saw him swimming at full speed towards the entrance of the harbor.

I turned my face to the shore and staggered along till within a few yards of the beach, when I was wholly overcome and swooned from the effects of the dreadful ordeal I had undergone. Falling in water only food for deep, awful death. I came within hair's breadth of drowning. The boat's crew arrived not a second too soon, as it was over an hour before I was reanimated, and then only after the most unweary exertions.

**LOSS OF THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE.**—The original manuscript of the Declaration of Independence is rapidly fading away, and judging from the past, but a few years will elapse before the naked parchment will be the only remaining evidence of that bold manifesto of a few Colonists who, with their lives in their hands, dared to proclaim themselves freemen. Already nearly all the signatures are entirely effaced, and the rest cannot last much longer without something is done to restore the writing.

The sacred Declaration, together with George Washington's copy of it, as "General and Commander-in-chief of the Colonial Army," which is in about the same condition, have been for years on exhibition in the Patent Office, and it is a matter of surprise that no effort has been made by the government to save them from being lost forever posterity. This is susceptible of being done, as we are credibly informed that the British Museum is constantly restoring old manuscripts to almost their original condition. Do we not possess like knowledge which can be put to such valuable use?

Here is an opportunity for our American scientists to distinguish themselves, and we trust they will signify their ability and willingness as publicly as this urgent request is made.

SEMI-OCCASIONAL.  
Washington, D. C., August 22, 1872.

—Washington Star.

I HAVE ON HAND & FOR SALE,

A Choice Collection of

Flowering Plants!

FLOWER POTS.

For sale: pottery price.

RICHARD MASTERS,

North Temple Street, Salt Lake City.

## RAILROADS.

### UTAH CENTRAL RAILROAD

#### Pioneer Line of Utah.

#### GOOD

#### OR AND AFTER

#### MONDAY, JULY 17th

#### 1872.

#### IN ADDITION TO THE ABOVE

#### MIXED TRAINS

#### WILL RUN

#### DAILY SUNDAYS EXCEPTED

#### Leave Salt Lake City 10:30 A. M. and

#### Arrive Ogden 12:30 P. M.

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