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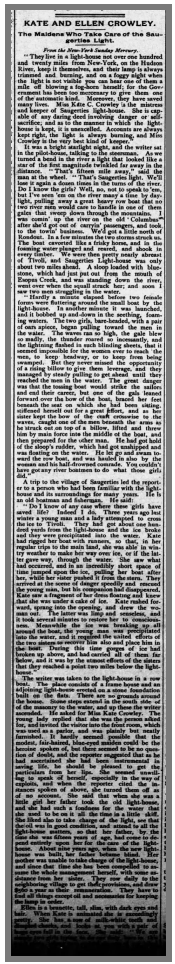

KATE AND ELLEN CROWLEY.

The Maidens Who Take Care of the Sau-gerties Light.

From the New-York Sunday Mercury.

"They live in a light-house not over one hundred and twenty-five miles from New York, on the Hudson River, keep it themselves, and their lamp is always trimmed and burning, and on a foggy night when the light is not visible you can hear one of them a mile off blowing a fog-horn herself; for the Government has been too mercenary to give them one of the automatic kind. Moreover, they have saved more lives than any life-saving crew on the coast," said keeper of Saugerties light-house. She is capable of any daring deed involving danger or self-sacrifice, and as to the manner in which the light-house is kept, it is unexcelled. Accounts are always kept right, the light is always burning, and Miss Crowley is the very best kind of keeper."

It was in the pilot-house of a steamer the writer sat in the pilot-house, talking to the steersman. As we turned a bend in the river a light that looked like a star of the first magnitude twinkled far away in the distance. "That's fifteen mile away," said the man at the wheel. "That's Saugerties light. We'll lose it again a dozen times in the turns of the river. I've been on the river for the last thirty years, but I've seen 'nit on the river many a time by day-light, pulling away a great heavy row boat that no two river men would care to handle in one of them gales that sweep down through the mountains. I was 'comin' up the river on the old 'Columbus'" after she'd got out of carryin' passengers, and took a trip to the barges with coal for the Albany and Rondout. In a few minutes the two steams crouch sat. The boat cavorted like a frisky horse, and in the foaming water plunged and reared, and shook in every timber. We were then pretty nearly abreast of Tivoli, and Saugerties Light-house was only about two miles ahead. A sloop loaded with blue-stone, which had just put out from the mouth of Esopus Creek, and was standing down the river, was about a mile astern of us then, and soon I saw two men struggling in the water.

"Hardly a minute elapsed before two female forms were fluttering around the small boat by the light-house. In another minute it was launched, and the two girls were pulling toward the struggling waters. The two girls, bare-headed, with a pair of oars apiece, began pulling toward the men in the water. The waves ran so high, the gale blew so madly, the thunder roared so incessantly, and the lightning flashed in such blinding sheets, that it seemed impossible for the women ever to reach the men. Time and again the row boat was nearly swamped. But they were seized the opportunity of a rising billow to give them leverage, and they managed by steady pulling to get ahead until they reached the men in the water. The great danger was that the tossing boat would strike the sailor, and end their career, but one of the gals leaned over the stern and caught the drowning man by the beneath the coat on which she had been sitting, stiffened herself out for a great effort, and as her sister kept the bow of the craft crosswise to the waves, caught one of the men beneath the arms as he struck out on top of a billow, lifted and threw him by main force into the middle of the boat, and then assisted the other man in. He had a piece of the sloop's rudder, which had got unshipped and was floating on the water. He let go and swam toward the row boat, and was hauled in also by the women and his half-drowned comrade. You couldn't have got any river boatmen to do what those girls did."

A trip to the village of Saugerties led the reporter to a person who had been familiar with the light-house and its surroundings for many years. He is an old boatman and fisherman. He said:

"Do I know of any case where these girls have saved life? Indeed I do. Three years ago last winter a young man and a lady attempted to cross the ice from the light-house to the mainland. Steel runs from the light-house and the ice broke and they were precipitated into the water. Kate had rigged her boat with runners, so that, in her regular trips to the main land, she was able in winter to reach her home before the crew left, or if the latter gave way, through the watery, that she was in a hurry to get home, and the ice was thick enough at times jumped upon the ice, pulling her boat after her, while her sister pushed it from the stern. They arrived at the scene of danger speedily and rescued the young man, but his companion had disappeared. They saw his hand appear above the ice, and knew that she was under a cake of ice. Kate rushed forward, sprang into the opening, and drew the woman out. The latter was limp and senseless, and it took several minutes to restore her to consciousness. Meanwhile the ice was breaking up all around the boat, the young man was precipitated into the water, and the women, finding that they had the two unless he also and place him in the boat. During this time gorges of ice had broken up above, and had carried all of them far below, and it was by the utmost efforts of the sisters that they reached a point two miles below the light-house.

The writer was taken to the light-house in a row boat. The place consists of a frame house and an adjoining light-house erected on a stone foundation built on the flats. There are no grounds around the house. Stone steps extend in the south side of the house, and a boat was moored to the lowest step ascended. He asked for Miss Kate Crowley. The young lady replied that she was the person asked for, and invited the visitor into the front room, which was used as a parlor, and was plainly but neatly furnished. It hardly seemed possible that the modest, fair-haired, blue-eyed maiden could be the heroine of the stirring adventure. Under the circumstances of doubt, and the reporter suggested that as he had ascertained she had been instrumental in saving life, he should be pleased to get the particulars from her lips. She seemed unwilling to talk about the matter, but on the way of reports, and when the reporter called attention to the orders of above, she turned them off as of no account. She said that when she was a little girl her father took the old light-house, and she had such a fondness for the water that she used to be on it all the time in a little skiff. She still was a good deal on the water, as all the light-keeper's duties, so that her father, at the time she was fifteen years of age, had come to depend entirely upon her for the care of the light-house. About nine years ago, when the new light-house was built, her father became blind. They moved into the new house, and he died a year after, and since that time she has been compelled to assume the whole management herself, with some assistance from her sister. They row daily to the neighboring village to get their provisions, and draw their pay as their remuneration. They have to do all things except oil and mountains for keeping the lamps trimmed.

Ellen is a brunette, tall, slim, with dark eyes and hair. When Kate is mentioned she is exceedingly pretty. She has a rose of milk-white teeth and dimpled cheeks, and looks as you with a pair of large eyes full of life and fun. She is a little