

The Wreck of the Brig of Columbus

(from *The Orcadian*, November 4 1976)

From Leith Roads with a pleasant gale
The Brig Columbus she set sail
For the West Indies she was bound
But she never reached her distant ground

The wind blew hard from the south-south-east
Which hurled her on, bound for the west
For Longhope she was to run
Thinking the dreadful storm to shun

Under Liddle's Ayre she was seen to be
Under close reefed topsails and hard to be
When she thought the Skerries clear
Free from all danger, she had no fear

But alas she struck the Lothar rock
And the waves around her mountains broke
And in the wind and maddening main
Where the Pentland rapids stream

The Storm it raged with dreadful view
On the Columbus gallant crew
But soon the tottering frame gave way
The stern is gone by a heavy wave

The main mast's gone now by the board
The Captain's killed by that heavy sword
Which made their gallant hearts to sigh
While with their eyes no land could spy

The foremast's gone cried every tongue
While to that mast so long they clung
Then one by one was washed away
Into the ocean's furious spray

The boat put off from Burwick's Bay
The storm was fierce they could not stay
But thrice they strove with maddening view
To save some of the Columbus crew

But alas only one was saved
Who through the dreadful storm had braved
But now alas he gained the shore
With happiness and wont of yore

He turned him round and viewed the spot
Where his dear shipmates cast their lot
He viewed the same with tearful eye
At last, he burst into bitter cry

The wreck was strewn from land to land
But most upon the Burwick sand
A mournful load the rigging bore
The carpenter he was washed ashore

In Burwick Church yard he was laid
The rest all found a watery bed
All rolling in the Pentland stream
Alas on them no sun can beam

Their friends in bitter silence weep
For those that's buried in the deep
For those that never will return
To view the friends they left to mourn

Extracts of Deaths

1862 PG 1 #2 Carpenter of the Brig Columbus of Leith [Lowther/age]
Married spouse's name not given in records
Parents not ascertained
Informant Donald Thomson – 'watcher'
Plus information given by a lone survivor of the shipwreck, David Huntie - seaman