

1

00:00:04,301 --> 00:00:20,921

This series presents information based in part on theory and conjecture.

2

00:00:20,921 --> 00:00:25,425

The producer's purpose is to suggest some possible explanations but not necessarily

3

00:00:25,425 --> 00:00:30,208

the only ones to the mysteries we will examine.

4

00:00:35,947 --> 00:00:40,132

The 5th of December 1872.

5

00:00:40,132 --> 00:00:42,125

Ship from the Salvatow!

6

00:00:42,125 --> 00:00:45,393

The captain of the Brigantine Dei Gratia

7

00:00:45,393 --> 00:00:52,448

cites a ship in the Atlantic 800 miles off the Portuguese coast.

8

00:00:53,444 --> 00:00:57,430

It appears to be unmanned and steering wild.

9

00:01:03,409 --> 00:01:06,398

Ahoy, there!

10

00:01:06,398 --> 00:01:09,387

Captain Brig!

11

00:01:13,373 --> 00:01:15,366

Ahoy!

12

00:01:15,366 --> 00:01:18,355

Anyone aboard?

13

00:01:19,351 --> 00:01:23,337

The only reply is an eerie creaking.

14

00:01:23,337 --> 00:01:26,326

No one appears on deck.

15

00:01:26,326 --> 00:01:29,315

The ship is completely forsaken.

16

00:01:32,305 --> 00:01:39,280

What happened to the crew of the Mary Celeste is one of the enduring mysteries of the sea.

17

00:01:39,280 --> 00:01:44,262

The ship is completely forsaken.

18

00:01:46,255 --> 00:01:49,244

We represent the government of the United States of America.

19

00:01:49,244 --> 00:01:52,233

We have permission from your government to board your vessel.

20

00:01:52,233 --> 00:01:56,219

Today, Coast Guardsmen are accustomed to finding abandoned vessels.

21

00:01:56,219 --> 00:02:01,201

The first boarding is tense and dangerous.

22

00:02:10,169 --> 00:02:14,154

Modern abandoned ships usually mean only one thing.

23

00:02:14,154 --> 00:02:18,140

They're being used for illegal drug traffic.

24

00:02:18,140 --> 00:02:21,129

In the days of the Great Sailing Vessels, however,

25

00:02:21,129 --> 00:02:24,119

heroic ships were not so easily explained.

26

00:02:24,119 --> 00:02:30,097

And no abandoned vessel has remained as mysterious as the Mary Celeste.

27

00:02:30,097 --> 00:02:34,083

Theories abound as to why the Mary Celeste was abandoned.

28

00:02:34,083 --> 00:02:37,072

It might have been the result of a pre-arranged salvage fraud,

29

00:02:37,072 --> 00:02:41,058

pirates, mutiny, a burst of deadly marine gas,

30

00:02:41,058 --> 00:02:46,040

or even a homicidal maniac killing the rest of the crew one by one,

31

00:02:46,040 --> 00:02:50,025

dumping their bodies, and then committing suicide.

32

00:02:52,018 --> 00:02:56,004

To try to unravel the web of intrigue surrounding the Mary Celeste,

33

00:02:56,004 --> 00:02:59,990

we must examine a reenactment of that fear of suicide.

34

00:02:59,990 --> 00:03:03,975

To try to unravel the web of intrigue surrounding the Mary Celeste,

35

00:03:03,975 --> 00:03:08,957

we must examine a reenactment of that fateful voyage, the winter of 1872.

36

00:03:17,925 --> 00:03:22,907

On November 2, in New York Harbor, the Mary Celeste completed loading her cargo,

37

00:03:22,907 --> 00:03:25,897

1700 barrels of alcohol.

38

00:03:29,882 --> 00:03:32,871

During the loading, two of the kegs slipped,

39

00:03:32,871 --> 00:03:37,854

damaging the longboat so severely it was put ashore as useless.

40

00:03:37,854 --> 00:03:40,843

A replacement could not be found,

41

00:03:40,843 --> 00:03:44,829

but the Mary Celeste still carried her yaw on deck.

42

00:03:45,825 --> 00:03:51,803

If absolutely necessary, it could accommodate the entire ship's company.

43

00:03:52,800 --> 00:03:56,786

The master, Captain Benjamin Spooner Briggs,

44

00:03:56,786 --> 00:04:01,768

brought his wife Sarah and two-year-old daughter Sophia on board for the voyage.

45

00:04:01,768 --> 00:04:05,753

In his final letter to his mother, he wrote,

46

00:04:05,753 --> 00:04:08,743

It seems real home like since Sarah and Sophia got here,

47

00:04:08,743 --> 00:04:10,735

and we enjoy our little quarters.

48

00:04:10,735 --> 00:04:13,725

Sophia has got over the bird cold she had when she came,

49

00:04:13,725 --> 00:04:16,714

and has a first-class appetite for hash and bread and butter.

50

00:04:16,714 --> 00:04:19,703

I think the voyage will do her lots of good.

51

00:04:19,703 --> 00:04:23,689

Our vessel is in beautiful trim, and I hope we shall have a fine passage.

52

00:04:26,678 --> 00:04:29,667

To this, Sarah added,

53

00:04:29,667 --> 00:04:33,653

Benjamin thinks we've got a pretty peaceable crew this time all around,

54

00:04:33,653 --> 00:04:36,642

if they continue as they have begun.

55

00:04:43,617 --> 00:04:45,610

The night before the Mary Celeste sailed,

56

00:04:45,610 --> 00:04:50,592

Captain Briggs dined with Captain David Reed Morehouse of the Dei Gratia.

57

00:04:53,581 --> 00:04:56,571

The two ships were moored side by side at the dock.

58

00:04:59,560 --> 00:05:03,546

In light of subsequent events, this was a strange coincidence.

59

00:05:03,546 --> 00:05:06,535

The two men knew each other well.

60

00:05:06,535 --> 00:05:08,528

What did Captain Morehouse think of Briggs?

61

00:05:08,528 --> 00:05:11,517

Briggs was a teetotaler and a God-fearing man.

62

00:05:11,517 --> 00:05:14,506

He could be stern when occasionally he was in the ship.

63

00:05:14,506 --> 00:05:17,496

He could be stern when occasionally required it,

64

00:05:17,496 --> 00:05:20,485

and was not a man to be intimidated or imposed upon.

65

00:05:20,485 --> 00:05:24,470

But he was just and considerate towards the men serving under him,

66

00:05:24,470 --> 00:05:28,456

just as he was gentle and affectionate in his family relations.

67

00:05:28,456 --> 00:05:30,449

One, two, three, four!

68

00:05:30,449 --> 00:05:32,442

One, two, three, four!

69

00:05:36,427 --> 00:05:41,410

On November 5th, 1872, the Mary Celeste set sail.

70

00:05:45,395 --> 00:05:49,381

One month later, she was sighted by the Dei Gratia.

71

00:05:54,363 --> 00:05:59,345

The Mary Celeste was drifting, unmanned, 800 miles off the Portuguese coast.

72

00:06:01,338 --> 00:06:05,324

She would be sailed by a skeleton crew from the Dei Gratia to Gibraltar,

73

00:06:05,324 --> 00:06:08,313

where the official inquiry was held.

74

00:06:08,313 --> 00:06:10,306

At the British Admiralty Court,

75

00:06:10,306 --> 00:06:13,295

the proceedings opened with Captain Morehouse's description

76

00:06:13,295 --> 00:06:16,284

of his first sighting of the Mary Celeste.

77

00:06:16,284 --> 00:06:19,274

I reckoned the way the yards were square.

78

00:06:19,274 --> 00:06:22,263

She was running before the wind when she was abandoned.

79

00:06:22,263 --> 00:06:26,248

It's possible the storm that we met at four o'clock that morning

80

00:06:26,248 --> 00:06:29,238

might have sent her round had she also met it.

81

00:06:29,238 --> 00:06:34,220

First time I saw her, two o'clock afternoon, her head was westward.

82

00:06:34,220 --> 00:06:37,209

The jib was trimmed on the port side.

83

00:06:37,209 --> 00:06:40,198

Although she was on a starboard tack.

84

00:06:40,198 --> 00:06:44,184

She was yawing, coming up to the wind then, falling off.

85

00:06:44,184 --> 00:06:46,177

I judged something was amiss.

86

00:06:46,177 --> 00:06:49,166

I thought I saw a flag of distress at her yard,

87

00:06:49,166 --> 00:06:53,152

but subsequently it turned out to be a flapping sail.

88

00:06:53,152 --> 00:06:57,137

By three o'clock, we were about 350 yards off.

89

00:06:57,137 --> 00:07:01,123

I hailed her, but got no reply, and I couldn't see anyone on deck.

90

00:07:01,123 --> 00:07:05,109

So I sent Mr. Devereaux, my friend, to the port.

91

00:07:05,109 --> 00:07:09,094

And in due course, he signaled me to come over myself.

92

00:07:17,066 --> 00:07:21,052

When I got on board, Mr. Devereaux had already sounded the pumps

93

00:07:21,052 --> 00:07:24,041

which showed she made little or no water.

94

00:07:24,041 --> 00:07:28,026

During the next hour, Captain Morehouse would carefully inspect

95

00:07:28,026 --> 00:07:30,019

every inch of the ship.

96

00:07:30,019 --> 00:07:32,012

The ship was perfectly sound.

97

00:07:32,012 --> 00:07:35,998

Her hull, masts, and yards were in good condition.

98

00:07:38,987 --> 00:07:41,976

Her cargo, which was barrels of alcohol,

99

00:07:41,976 --> 00:07:43,969

was properly stowed and hadn't shifted.

100

00:07:43,969 --> 00:07:46,958

But the forehatch had been lifted off.

101

00:07:46,958 --> 00:07:50,944

This was only one the many enigmas Morehouse would encounter.

102

00:07:55,926 --> 00:07:59,912

I came to the conclusion that she'd been left in a panic.

103

00:07:59,912 --> 00:08:03,898

The main sole was lying loose, as if it had been run down.

104

00:08:03,898 --> 00:08:06,887

The laser attach was also off.

105

00:08:06,887 --> 00:08:09,876

But there were plenty of provisions and water in there.

106

00:08:10,872 --> 00:08:12,865

Anybody below?

107

00:08:13,862 --> 00:08:16,851

The glass on the compass was smashed.

108

00:08:20,837 --> 00:08:23,826

The compass glass is smashed.

109

00:08:23,826 --> 00:08:26,815

Together, we searched the ship from stem to stem

110

00:08:26,815 --> 00:08:29,804

At first we were worried that she was a fever ship

111

00:08:29,804 --> 00:08:33,790

and the crew had died of cholera, but there wasn't a sole on board.

112

00:08:33,790 --> 00:08:37,776

Nor were there any visible signs of there having been any trouble.

113

00:08:38,772 --> 00:08:42,758

In the folks' home, oil skins, boots, and pipes were scattered about

114

00:08:42,758 --> 00:08:44,751

as if abandoned in great haste.

115

00:08:44,751 --> 00:08:46,744

And among the dunnage were articles of value

116

00:08:46,744 --> 00:08:49,733

who might have supposed their owners would have taken

117

00:08:49,733 --> 00:08:51,726

if abandoning ship.

118

00:08:51,726 --> 00:08:54,715

In the galley, everything was scattered.

119

00:08:54,715 --> 00:08:57,704

In the galley, everything was in good order,

120

00:08:57,704 --> 00:08:59,697

as it would be between meals.

121

00:08:59,697 --> 00:09:03,683

There was no wine, beer, or spirits on board.

122

00:09:05,676 --> 00:09:08,665

A child's clothing and toys were strewn about.

123

00:09:08,665 --> 00:09:11,654

And on the table was a sewing machine

124

00:09:11,654 --> 00:09:13,647

with a baby's pinnifor on it

125

00:09:13,647 --> 00:09:17,633

and a number of small items lying on the table alongside.

126

00:09:18,629 --> 00:09:20,622

There were books and charts

127

00:09:20,622 --> 00:09:23,611

that the chronometers and the ship's log were missing.

128

00:09:24,608 --> 00:09:28,593

The slate log had an unfinished letter beginning Franny,

129

00:09:28,593 --> 00:09:31,582

my dear wife, Francis, and I,

130

00:09:31,582 --> 00:09:35,568

which I took to be the start of a message scribbled by the mate.

131

00:09:48,522 --> 00:09:50,514

The ship's boat was missing.

132

00:09:50,514 --> 00:09:53,504

You could see where the boat had been lashed across the main hatch,

133

00:09:53,504 --> 00:09:56,493

but that was not the right place for her.

134

00:09:56,493 --> 00:09:59,482

There were no signs of any tackle to launch her,

135

00:09:59,482 --> 00:10:02,471

but we usually launched our boat from the rail

136

00:10:02,471 --> 00:10:04,464

with only a tow rope to secure her.

137

00:10:04,464 --> 00:10:08,450

I saw no remains of painter or boats rope fastened to the rail.

138

00:10:08,450 --> 00:10:11,439

Captain Morehouse's observations were detailed,

139

00:10:11,439 --> 00:10:14,428

but they raised more questions than they answered.

140

00:10:18,414 --> 00:10:22,400

The man responsible for the official inquiry was Mr. Solly Flood,

141

00:10:22,400 --> 00:10:25,389

from Majesty's Advocate General,

142

00:10:25,389 --> 00:10:28,378

Proctor for the Queen in her Office of Admiralty,

143

00:10:28,378 --> 00:10:30,371

and a legal bloodhound.

144

00:10:34,357 --> 00:10:39,339

A new age of belief in science, invention, and technology was dawning,

145

00:10:39,339 --> 00:10:42,328

and the ability to seek and find cold, hard evidence

146

00:10:42,328 --> 00:10:46,314

in order to solve any mystery was reaching a golden era.

147

00:10:47,310 --> 00:10:50,300

Was there any evidence to indicate foul play?

148

00:10:53,289 --> 00:10:55,282

The only facts available so far?

149

00:10:55,282 --> 00:10:59,267

A ship in good order, yet abandoned in a hurry.

150

00:11:01,260 --> 00:11:04,249

The investigation about to take place in Gibraltar

151

00:11:04,249 --> 00:11:07,239

would propel the Mary Celeste to her place

152

00:11:07,239 --> 00:11:11,224

as the most infamous abandoned ship in the history of the sea.

153

00:11:17,203 --> 00:11:20,192

MUSIC

154

00:11:26,171 --> 00:11:28,164

Advocate General Solly Flood

155

00:11:28,164 --> 00:11:32,149

boarded the Mary Celeste to examine it in minute detail.

156

00:11:36,135 --> 00:11:39,124

There was no appearance of fire or explosion

157

00:11:39,124 --> 00:11:42,113

or any other assignable cause of abandonment.

158

00:11:42,113 --> 00:11:44,106

She was well provisioned,

159

00:11:44,106 --> 00:11:48,092

and it seems had encountered no seriously heavy weather.

160

00:11:52,078 --> 00:11:55,067

She was thoroughly sound, staunch, and strong,

161

00:11:55,067 --> 00:11:58,056

and in every way, seaworthy and well-found.

162

00:11:58,056 --> 00:12:04,035

But both bows had been recently cut by a sharp instrument.

163

00:12:04,035 --> 00:12:07,024

MUSIC

164

00:12:11,010 --> 00:12:13,002

On the starboard top gallant rail,

165

00:12:13,002 --> 00:12:15,992

there were marks, apparently, of blood,

166

00:12:15,992 --> 00:12:18,981

and a mark of a blow, apparently, by a sharp axe.

167

00:12:18,981 --> 00:12:21,970

MUSIC

168

00:12:30,938 --> 00:12:33,927

A sword appeared to me to exhibit traces of blood

169

00:12:33,927 --> 00:12:37,913

and to have been wiped before being returned with scabbard.

170

00:12:40,902 --> 00:12:44,888

In the forehatch, a barrel, ostensibly of alcohol,

171

00:12:44,888 --> 00:12:46,881

appeared to have been tampered with.

172

00:12:48,873 --> 00:12:51,863

My object is to move the board of trade

173

00:12:51,863 --> 00:12:54,852

to take such action as they may think fit

174

00:12:54,852 --> 00:12:57,841

to discover, if possible, the fate of the master,

175

00:12:57,841 --> 00:13:00,830

whose name was Briggs, his wife and child,

176

00:13:00,830 --> 00:13:02,823

and the crew of the derelict.

177

00:13:02,823 --> 00:13:07,805

My own theory, or guess, is that the crew got at the alcohol,

178

00:13:07,805 --> 00:13:10,795

and in the fury of drunkenness murdered the master,

179

00:13:10,795 --> 00:13:13,784

and his wife and child, and the chief mate,

180

00:13:13,784 --> 00:13:16,773

that they then damaged the bows of the vessel,

181

00:13:16,773 --> 00:13:19,762

and was to give it the appearance of having struck on some rocks

182

00:13:19,762 --> 00:13:21,755

or suffered some collision,

183

00:13:21,755 --> 00:13:24,745

with a view to inducing the master of any vessel

184

00:13:24,745 --> 00:13:27,734

which might pick them up, if they saw her at some distance,

185

00:13:27,734 --> 00:13:30,723

not to think her worth attempting to save.

186

00:13:30,723 --> 00:13:34,709

And that they did, sometime between the 25th of November

187

00:13:34,709 --> 00:13:37,698

and the 5th of December,

188

00:13:37,698 --> 00:13:40,687

escape on board some vessel bound for some south

189

00:13:40,687 --> 00:13:43,677

or north American port or the West Indies.

190

00:13:46,666 --> 00:13:49,655

Is this the real story, mutiny and murder?

191

00:13:49,655 --> 00:13:54,637

The Advocate General was convinced he was on the trail of a sensational crime.

192

00:13:54,637 --> 00:13:57,626

Soon, the story spread to the newspapers of the world

193

00:13:57,626 --> 00:14:00,616

and began to read like a modern detective yarn.

194

00:14:00,616 --> 00:14:03,605

As the inquiry proceeded, however,

195

00:14:03,605 --> 00:14:06,594

it became increasingly evident that the Advocate General

196

00:14:06,594 --> 00:14:09,583

had let his imagination run wild.

197

00:14:10,580 --> 00:14:15,562

Blood was later found to be wrong on almost every statement he made.

198

00:14:15,562 --> 00:14:19,548

The forensic tests proved that the sinister bloody sword

199

00:14:19,548 --> 00:14:22,537

was really an old bayonet used to mix paints,

200

00:14:22,537 --> 00:14:26,523

and the blood on the rail was only rust.

201

00:14:27,519 --> 00:14:31,505

The final results of the inquiry cleared Captain Morehouse

202

00:14:31,505 --> 00:14:34,494

and the Dey-Gratia crew of piracy,

203

00:14:34,494 --> 00:14:38,480

and in fact, the Dey-Gratia was awarded a portion of the salvage fund.

204

00:14:38,480 --> 00:14:41,469

There, the story might have ended,

205

00:14:41,469 --> 00:14:45,455

but for an amazing discovery, 30 years later.

206

00:14:48,444 --> 00:14:53,426

A young apprentice sailor was sent ashore to collect some sand at St. Paul's Rocks,

207

00:14:53,426 --> 00:14:57,412

a tiny island in the middle of the South Atlantic.

208

00:14:59,404 --> 00:15:03,390

He found a skeleton dropped in the shade of a rock.

209

00:15:09,369 --> 00:15:13,354

And beside it, a bottle stuffed with a soiled and faded letter.

210

00:15:26,308 --> 00:15:29,297

A letter which told an amazing tale.

211

00:15:29,297 --> 00:15:33,283

My ship struck these rocks at dawn three days ago.

212

00:15:33,283 --> 00:15:35,275

She sank immediately.

213

00:15:35,275 --> 00:15:39,261

Only one of all her crew reached the shore alive.

214

00:15:39,261 --> 00:15:41,254

I am dying of thirst.

215

00:15:41,254 --> 00:15:44,243

It has been a voyage of disaster,

216

00:15:44,243 --> 00:15:47,233

three deaths in two days.

217

00:15:47,233 --> 00:15:51,218

Then came the poison on the seventh day out.

218

00:15:51,218 --> 00:15:55,204

Ship helpless, and so for three days we lay.

219

00:15:55,204 --> 00:16:00,186

Knew we must ask assistance to take us to Gibraltar for crew.

220

00:16:01,182 --> 00:16:05,168

Early morning sighted small Brig become.

221

00:16:05,168 --> 00:16:08,157

Mate said, take her crew.

222

00:16:08,157 --> 00:16:10,150

Went aboard.

223

00:16:10,150 --> 00:16:12,143

Captain asked why we came.

224

00:16:12,143 --> 00:16:15,132

His wife and child were with him.

225

00:16:15,132 --> 00:16:18,122

We left no one on board.

226

00:16:18,122 --> 00:16:21,111

The Brig was called Mary Celeste.

227

00:16:21,111 --> 00:16:25,096

Years later, this tragic letter was brought to public attention

228

00:16:25,096 --> 00:16:28,086

in the London Daily Express.

229

00:16:28,086 --> 00:16:32,071

Was this at last the real clue to the mystery of the Mary Celeste?

230

00:16:32,071 --> 00:16:37,053

If so, why did the young sailor wait nine years to publish the letter?

231

00:16:37,053 --> 00:16:40,043

Many people doubt its authenticity.

232

00:16:40,043 --> 00:16:45,025

It is just one of the hundreds of theories proposed during the last century.

233

00:16:49,011 --> 00:16:53,993

There is a universal sailor's superstition about ships born unlucky.

234

00:16:53,993 --> 00:16:57,978

And the Mary Celeste lived up to that superstition.

235

00:16:57,978 --> 00:17:02,960

From all the evidence collected, in search of, proposes a logical explanation.

236

00:17:02,960 --> 00:17:06,946

The Mary Celeste had been at sea for eight days.

237

00:17:06,946 --> 00:17:11,928

The hatches had remained closed because at first the weather was stormy.

238

00:17:11,928 --> 00:17:15,914

Gradually though, the ship was not in the air.

239

00:17:15,914 --> 00:17:18,903

The ship was in the air.

240

00:17:18,903 --> 00:17:21,892

The ship was stormy.

241

00:17:21,892 --> 00:17:25,878

Gradually though, the cold November chill of New York

242

00:17:25,878 --> 00:17:29,864

gave way to the milder latitudes of the Azores.

243

00:17:29,864 --> 00:17:34,846

The cargo of alcohol was stored in barrels made of red oak,

244

00:17:34,846 --> 00:17:37,835

and extremely porous wood.

245

00:17:37,835 --> 00:17:42,817

At least eight of the barrels leaked badly during the voyage.

246

00:17:43,814 --> 00:17:48,796

Battened down under the hatches, the fumes mingled with the foul air of the hold.

247

00:17:48,796 --> 00:17:52,781

Was a potentially explosive mixture of gas forming?

248

00:17:56,767 --> 00:18:01,749

Off the Azores, the wind dropped to a gentle breeze.

249

00:18:01,749 --> 00:18:04,738

Taking advantage of the calm weather,

250

00:18:04,738 --> 00:18:07,728

Briggs probably ordered the ventilation of the hold,

251

00:18:07,728 --> 00:18:11,713

which may have set off a fateful chain of events.

252

00:18:13,706 --> 00:18:18,688

An upward rush of fumes, perhaps even an explosion.

253

00:18:18,688 --> 00:18:23,670

Then steam, looking like smoke, poured out of the hatch.

254

00:18:23,670 --> 00:18:25,663

Abundance ship!

255

00:18:25,663 --> 00:18:28,652

Some of the men began to take in sail.

256

00:18:28,652 --> 00:18:33,635

Convinced that the ship was about to blow up, Briggs ordered the boat lowered.

257

00:18:33,635 --> 00:18:38,617

A sailor broke out a coil of rope as a tow line from the lazarette.

258

00:18:42,602 --> 00:18:46,588

Someone grabbed some tins of preserved meat.

259

00:18:46,588 --> 00:18:48,581

Briggs snatched up his chronometer,

260

00:18:48,581 --> 00:18:53,563

and any of the ship's papers he could quickly lay his hands on.

261

00:18:53,563 --> 00:18:56,552

Feeling certain that time was of the essence,

262

00:18:56,552 --> 00:19:00,538

he urgently herded his family and crew to the yaw.

263

00:19:13,491 --> 00:19:18,473

According to meteorological reports, a sudden squall blew up that day.

264

00:19:18,473 --> 00:19:20,466

Under the impact of a violent gust,

265

00:19:20,466 --> 00:19:23,456

the vessel may have lunged forward with a suddenness and force,

266

00:19:23,456 --> 00:19:26,445

which broke the improvised tow line.

267

00:19:26,445 --> 00:19:29,434

They may have tried to row after the merry celeste,

268

00:19:29,434 --> 00:19:33,420

or they may have turned toward the island of Santa Maria,

269

00:19:33,420 --> 00:19:36,409

a jagged inhospitable coastline.

270

00:19:36,409 --> 00:19:39,398

The ship was then taken to the coastline,

271

00:19:39,398 --> 00:19:42,387

a jagged inhospitable coastline,

272

00:19:42,387 --> 00:19:47,370

where a small boat and her occupants would easily be smashed to pieces in the surf.

273

00:19:52,352 --> 00:19:54,345

The wind shifted, however,

274

00:19:54,345 --> 00:19:58,330

so it seems more probable that the small boat was blown southeast,

275

00:19:58,330 --> 00:20:03,312

away from the island and out into the vast reaches of the Atlantic,

276

00:20:03,312 --> 00:20:05,305

disappear forever.

277

00:20:06,302 --> 00:20:09,291

When the merry celeste was found on December 5th,

278

00:20:09,291 --> 00:20:14,273

the last entry on her log slate was for the morning of November 25th,

279

00:20:14,273 --> 00:20:16,266

eleven days earlier.

280

00:20:16,266 --> 00:20:21,248

This entry was the merry celeste six miles north of the island of Santa Maria,

281

00:20:21,248 --> 00:20:23,241

in the Azores.

282

00:20:23,241 --> 00:20:26,230

With the set of her sails and with no one at her helm,

283

00:20:26,230 --> 00:20:30,216

her natural course would be roughly at right angles to the wind.

284

00:20:31,212 --> 00:20:35,198

This presumably was how, over the ten days,

285

00:20:35,198 --> 00:20:40,180

she covered the 750 miles between the last entry in the log

286

00:20:40,180 --> 00:20:44,165

and the position where she was first sighted by the de Gratian.

287

00:20:44,165 --> 00:20:48,151

What has been reenacted seems to be the most likely explanation,

288

00:20:48,151 --> 00:20:51,140

but whatever the cause of the panic,

289

00:20:51,140 --> 00:20:54,130

Captain Morehouse was certain of one thing.

290

00:20:54,130 --> 00:20:58,115

Captain Briggs bore the highest character for seamanship and correctness,

291

00:20:58,115 --> 00:21:02,101

and would not, I think, desert his ship except to save his life.

292

00:21:04,094 --> 00:21:07,083

The merry celeste became a marked ship.

293

00:21:07,083 --> 00:21:09,076

Sailors being superstitious,

294

00:21:09,076 --> 00:21:14,058

no one wanted to own, sailor, or have anything to do with her.

295

00:21:14,058 --> 00:21:20,037

She was sold and resold rapidly at well below her commercial value.

296

00:21:20,037 --> 00:21:24,022

Thirteen years after the events we have described,

297

00:21:24,022 --> 00:21:30,001

she was deliberately wrecked by her owners in a failed insurance fraud scheme.

298

00:21:30,001 --> 00:21:33,986

On Rochelle's reef off Haiti, she quickly broke up.

299

00:21:33,986 --> 00:21:36,976

And today there is no more trace of her

300

00:21:36,976 --> 00:21:43,951

than there is of Captain Briggs and his crew of that fateful voyage of 1872.

301

00:21:46,940 --> 00:21:51,922

Coming up next, voyage with a team of psychics in search of shipwrecks.

302

00:21:51,922 --> 00:21:54,911

Then agents hunting down a ring of drug dealers

303

00:21:54,911 --> 00:21:59,893

get help from a courageous father on FBI The Untold Stories.

304

00:21:59,893 --> 00:22:04,875

Log on at veterans.com, a new website brought to you by the History Channel.

305

00:22:04,875 --> 00:22:08,861

Veterans.com, a place where veterans, their families, and others can connect,

306

00:22:08,861 --> 00:22:12,847

share stories, and pass on the legacies of all American veterans.