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The Wreck of the Ariadne A LONG INTRODUCTION The following story was written by Lillian Crewe Walsh, remembered by Cape Bretoners as the author of such poems as "The Ghost of Bras d'Or," "Kelly's Mountain," and "The Lady of the Loom" • the latter the poem that inspired the Cape Breton Tartan. We found this story in manuscript form in a trunk of her papers and we went to Neil's Harbour to photograph the communion chalice and the graves of the men of the ARIADNE buried in the churchyard looking out to the sea. We met the Rev. David Reid, the Rector of St. Andrew's Church, and we learned more about the wreck of the ARIADNE, which we offer here as an introduction to Mrs. Crewe's recollections. On October 7th, 1896, with a terrible gale blow- Atkinson Smith was at a second story window in the old rectory that has since been torn down with a new building very near the same spot, was writing a sermon or reading or just en- on a miserable day is not certain, but he look up and out to sea and noticed a piece a fragment of the mast of some vessel. And recognized that this was not old wood but recent wreck and something worth bothering ran outside and got some fishermen, sending and south to search for the wreck. The ARI- located wrecked on MacKinnon's Point. Rev. some fishermen tried to get to her on foot impossible to get down in that weather. So dressed in oilskins and hip boots and set fishermen in a dory on that rough sea. They hours. They took aboard two survivors and of three dead men. Lillian Crewe Walsh in her story below speaks of the ARIADNE buried at Neil's Harbour. The " correct. But the dead men were not all found the same day. From the two survivors Rev. Smith wrote in the record book of "Burials in that Mission of Baddeck lying within the limits of South Bay, Ingonish, Cape Breton," the names, rank of the crew. Rev. Smith wrote: "Bark 'Ariadne' of Paulsen, from Greenock Scotland, for Bay Vert, Nova ing. Rev. Robert the rectory • and replaced Whether he joying a fire happened to of driftwood, he somehow wood from a about. He them north ADN?? was Smith and but it was Rev. Smith out with two were out 36 the bodies of five men number is or buried on learned and part of the Neil's Harbour, and age of some Chrishana, Capt. Scotia, foundered at North Bay, Ingonish, Cape Breton. Oct 7th 1896. Ten lives lost." So the ARIADNE must have carried 12 men in all. She wrecked on the 7th and the burial service Mrs. Walsh describes actually took place on October 11th, 1896. But at that time only 3 men were buried: Captain Martin Paulsen, age 50; First Mate Samuel Torkilsen, age 24; Gustav , a Russian Seaman of unknown age. Some time later two more bodies were washed ashore--a Negro cook and another name? less seaman • and these men were buried February 3rd, 1897, bringing the total to 5. The plot containing the 5 graves was fenced in wood from the wreckage. It may be presumed that the two survivors had already left for their homes in Norway, and were not there to further identify these men; or it may be that no further identi? fication was possible. What is certain is that the survivors did go home and told the story of Rev. Robert Atkinson Smith and the people of Neil's Harbour • for one year later, on the anniversary of the wreck, the king of Norway sent a communion chalice in a fine oak box, as a token of thanks for



the kindnesses to the living and the burial of the dead. It was certainly a gift to the people of Neil's Harbour and it is still in use today. Rev. Reid takes it to the homes of anyone who desires communion and cannot attend church. But the communion set (the paten, the chalice and the cruet) was also and singularly a gift to Rev. Robert Atkinson Smith. And it is the chalice itself that makes us believe the story of his 36 hours on a stor? my sea is more than legend • for engraved on the chalice are these words: "Rev. Robert Atkinson Smith, For aedel Daad" • which means, for a noble deed and are the highest words a monarch of Norway can bestow upon a civilian. And it is a private communion set. Cape Breton's Magazine/l6