

# Jane Green - Disaster Survivor

The SS Princess Alice was a paddle steamer which ran a ferry service between London Bridge and Sheerness which was a popular day trip for holiday makers. On 3 September 1878 (the Ely Standard is a bit out

## CAMBRIDGESHIRE TIMES

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 13th, 1942.

### **SURVIVOR OF 1875 THAMES DISASTER.**

### **Downham Lady's 95th Birthday.**

Believed to be the only survivor of the ill-fated pleasure steamer, The Princess Alice, which foundered in the Thames 67 years ago, with the loss of 600 of the 700 souls on board, Miss Green, of Little Downham, celebrated her 95th birthday yesterday (Thursday) week.

Miss Green, who resides with Mrs. John Miller, of Lawn-lane, enjoys fairly good health and beyond lapsing into short periods of forgetfulness, possesses all her faculties.

At the time of the Princess Alice disaster, Miss Green had been on a river trip to Southend. She was accompanied by her fiancé who, unfortunately, was included among those who lost their lives.

with its date), she was making a "Moonlight Trip" to Gravesend and back. By 7:40 PM, the Princess Alice was on her return journey and within sight of the North Woolwich Pier when she sighted the Newcastle bound vessel SS Bywell Castle.

On the bridge of the Bywell Castle, Captain Harrison observed the port light of the Princess Alice; he set a course to pass to starboard of her. However, the Master of Princess Alice, Captain William R.H. Grinsted, followed the normal watermen's practice of seeking the slack water on the south side and altered Princess Alice's course to port, bringing her into the path of Bywell Castle. Captain Harrison ordered his ship's engines reversed, but it was too late. Princess

Alice was struck on the starboard side; she split in two and sank within four minutes. Between 69 and 170 people were rescued while over 650 died. It remains Britain's worst public transport disaster in either peacetime or war.

**Robin Pearl**