

## SEAQUAKE ENCOUNTER

The **Carl** was bought in America by the firm of S. Schilling. She was a full-rigged ship, 1,303 British register tons, built in 1869 in Bath, Maine. She was commanded by Captain E. Backhaus. She was used by Schilling as an oil carrier. The crew experienced a seaquake on a voyage from New York to Triest in 1884. Captain Backhaus, of Vegesack, reported it as follows.

"During the night of December 21st, 1884, at about 20 minutes past 2, we suddenly felt a strong rocking or shaking of the ship, lasting about 5 minutes. The shaking was so strong that the oil barrels in the top layer between decks were thrown around, and the lamp chimneys fell to the deck. The sea in the neighborhood of the ship turned white. The first mate and his watch were thrown to the deck; he and the carpenter had been standing on the afterdeck, one sailor on the port side as lookout. I rushed on deck, as did the watch below, as we all thought the ship had met with an accident. After the shaking stopped I immediately had the pumps started, and repeated pumping every ten minutes; however, the depth of bilge water did not change. The ship was at 35, 40' N. lat. and 22,26' W. long. The sea was calm, the wind easterly and light, the ship's speed was three nautical miles per hour. Several days later, in very calm weather and a glassy sea, we lowered a boat and rowed around the ship but did not find any damage."

Newspapers mentioned a heavy earthquake in Spain at that time, so it is presumed that this quake moved under water and caused the shaking. The same shocks were felt by another ship that was in the same degree of latitude. The Carl was sold in 1891.

[THE STORY OF THE HANOVERIAN WESER RIVER FLEET OF SAILING SHIPS By Friedrich Spengemann and edited and translated by Chester R.F.Cramer](#)