

# PREACHER GUILTY; SIX OF FLOCK DEAD

**'It is God's Will,' He Says as  
Jury Returns Verdict in  
Holy Ghoster Case.**

**Minister's Plea of Almighty  
Guidance Fails to  
Save Him.**

BY PLAIN DEALER'S LEASED WIRE.

PORTLAND, Me., Dec. 9.—Rev. Frank W. Sandford, prophet of the Holy Ghost and Us society, and skipper of the yacht Coronet, was found guilty this afternoon of causing the deaths of six members of the sect during the vessel's remarkable voyage.

"It is the will of God," was Sandford's only comment after the verdict was returned by a jury in the United States district court, where Sandford will be sentenced Dec. 18.

When the government concluded the presentation of evidence, Sandford was instructed that he might call witnesses, offer evidence and an argument in his defense. Sandford, who has refused to employ counsel, told the court that he had no evidence to offer, but that he desired to make a short statement. This Judge Hale permitted him to do when court opened today.

**Says Heaven Watches Trial.**

Having made the affirmation allowed to those who object to being sworn, and addressing the jurors, Sandford declared that high heaven was watching to see that a fair trial was being given.

Sandford said God was always with the Coronet until members of the flock rebelled. Then they were chastised. The sickness and death on board, he said, was an act of God.

"I believe heaven is watching this scene now," said Sandford. "I am talking before a God who listens and knows when I commit perjury, and who will deal with me on high. God instructed me to continue on the voyage.

"I said, 'Father, what next, now that we have this company on board?' I received this answer and I make this statement advisedly, knowing what I am doing. I received this answer: 'Continue.'"

Asked why he did not put into some American or Canadian port, Sandford said:

"God told us not to. We were not to go back to the countries we had visited.

"We ought to obey God rather than man," he continued. "If God had told me to do it, I would have sailed the Coronet into hell. I do not suppose that you understand that I had a chart to sail from green water into sulphur, from the ocean into the lake of fire. No matter at what cost, I would obey God."

Sandford then explained that the destination of the yacht Coronet was always thoroughly discussed by members of the crew, men and women, and frequently the children's opinions were asked. They prayed over the decision for hours and days and sometimes it was weeks before a conclusion was reached.

In closing Sandford said that on the west coast of Africa they had the greatest manifestation of the goodness of God which modern man had received. It was when the African fever afflicted them. Of the forty members of the party who were afflicted with this disease all were healed, in some cases instantly, in others it was a matter of hours or days.

Throughout his statement, Sand-

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short of food and six members of the party died. Sandford, it was charged, refused them proper rations.

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respondence with the mysterious Sandford's manner was that of a preacher rather than a witness.

Apparently little affected by Sandford's remarkable plea, the jury was out less than an hour and returned a verdict of guilty on each of the six counts. The penalty for each of the offenses is a fine not exceeding \$10,000 or imprisonment not exceeding ten years or both.

Sandford was released on \$10,000 bail.

The Coronet put into Portland in October of this year after having drifted about since June, 1910, when Sandford and his converts started out to establish Holy Ghost stations all over the world. The expedition ran

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