

Daily Morning Chronicle, August 9, 1873, p. 1

Horror

Holocaust On The Potomac

A Steamer Destroyed

The Wawaset Burned

Fifty Lives Lost

Women and Children Burned and Drowned

An Appalling Calamity

Particulars Of The Disaster

Partial List of the Lost and Saved

About 11:30 o'clock last night a fearful commotion was produced in the city by a rumor that the well-known steamer *Wawaset* had been burned on the Potomac, and that most of the passengers on board had lost their lives. With the rapidity of lightning the terrible story flew from mouth to mouth, and even at that late hour crowds gathered at the corners of the streets to hear some intelligible account of the

Dreadful Disaster.

It cost but a moment's investigation to be convinced that, in the main, the rumor was true. The assertion of this fact added greatly to the excitement.

It being the excursion season, and the *Wawaset* being well known as an excursion boat, it was only natural to suppose that she had on board a party of excursionist from this city. The suspense for a few moments was terrible, and the crowds returning from the Scheutzenfest swelled the crowds in the street and added intensity to the stories, which had now assumed tangible but exaggerated forms.

As the news flew through the city people got out of their beds and hurried to this office and other places hoping to get some reliable account.

Fortunately for our readers,

An Attache Of The Chronicle

Was on board the steamer *Express*, and from him we are enabled to give the following true and intelligent account of this horrible disaster.

He says: Yesterday evening, as the steamer *Express*, Captain James T. Barker, was returning from Point Lookout to Washington, with a party of excursionists, composed of the "Painters' Union" and their friends, she signaled

A Burning Steamer.

Instantly a response was made by the steamer *National*, which had gone to the relief of the ill-fated vessel. In a few moments the *National* steamed alongside the *Express*, having on board all of the crew and passengers that had been saved from the *Wawaset*, except those who had gone up to Stewart's landing. Among others, the bartender of the *Wawaset*, Doc. McKenna, was saved. Mr. McKenna states that the *Wawaset* left Washington for her regular rip to Cone river, and that all was well until near her arrival at Chatterton landing, in King George's county, Va. When about to land for passengers

Flames Were Seen Issuing

From the hold of the vessel, and before anything could be done to extinguish them the entire steamer was consumed. Never did the fire do its fearful work quicker or more effectually, and when the *Wawaset* sunk, about two hundred yards from the shore, nothing was left of her but a broken shaft and her smoke-stack to mark the

Place Where She Went Down.

The number of passengers registered on board the *Wawaset* is estimated when she left Washington at one hundred and ten, and she took on others at various landings on the Potomac. The crew numbered twelve. Out of this number probably fifty passengers and two members of the crew perished in the water and in the flames.

Among those who are known to have been lost is the estimable wife, two daughters, and a niece of Officer Reed, of the Metropolitan police force. Mr. Reed had accompanied his wife and children as far as Alexandria, and bade them there

An Affectionate Farewell,

Little dreaming that that adieu and kiss would be the last he should give his family on earth. Private Joseph Reed is a brother of ex-Captain Reed, of the police force, and is well known as a faithful officer.

Miss Marbury, of Glymont; Adeline Jenkins, chambermaid of the *Wawaset*, and a deck hand, name unknown, are also among the missing.

Messrs. Dummer and McGuigan, employees in this office, were saved, as also Mr. Massey and a son of Mr. Wise, of this city, No. 221 Four-and-a-half street. Miss Bettie Saunders and child, from Currioman, were recognized among the dead.