

The Evening Star, Tuesday, August 12, 1873, p. 4

The Wawaset Calamity

Latest From the Scene of the Disaster

Arrival of Dead Bodies in this City

Seventy-two Bodies Recovered So Far

The anxious crowd at the steamboat wharves in this city was not near so large yesterday as on the two previous days, except about the hours when boats were expected from the scene of the disaster to the Wawaset. It was rumored during the day that the bodies of Mrs. J.W. Reed and her remaining child had been recovered and were on their way up, and, as the tug was expected in the evening, the waiting crowd at the wharf rapidly increased as the sun neared the horizon. About 6:40 o'clock p.m. the tug Johnson Brothers, with her colors at half-mast, made fast to the wharf, and the body of little Marian (Manie) Reed, the second daughter, enclosed in an ice-box, was brought off the boat and carried to the residence of the afflicted father, who came up from the scene of the disaster with the remains. He was accompanied on his sad journey by Mr. Robert Reed, his brother, and Mr. William Reed, his cousin.

A Generous Deed

The bereaved father, after returning from the funeral of his aunt, niece and two children at the Congressional cemetery on Sunday evening, being anxious to do all he could to recover, if possible, the bodies of his wife and remaining child, sent a friend to Messrs. Johnson and Brothers to charter their tug. They generously placed the vessel at his disposal, stating that for no amount of money could a person so afflicted as Mr. Reed charter the boat, but he could have its use gratis at any time, and for as long a period as he should require it for his melancholy errand. Captain Cornelius Johnson, Engineer Crumpton and the crew volunteered their services, and the boat left her wharf about 9 o'clock on Sunday night and reached the scene of the disaster about 6 o'clock. Here Mr. Reed learned that

The Body of Mrs. Reed

Had been recovered on Sunday and taken to her father's (Mr. Walker's) who resides about five miles distant from where the Wawaset was burned. When her body was brought in Mr. Robert Reed and Mr. George Walker (the latter the brother of the deceased) at once recognized it, and took possession of it. They found her watch, chain and pocket book safe, but the chain had parted a few links from the watch. It is likely from what had heretofore occurred that had none of her friends been present nothing of any value would have been recovered with the body. Mr. Reed and his brother Robert immediately started to Mr. Walker's residence, and there found the remains of the wife, but they were (with the exception of her dress and some peculiarities about the teeth) past recognition. The funeral took place yesterday morning, Rev. Mr. Boggs officiating, and the body was interred at Hollywood cemetery, about six miles distant from the steamboat landing.

The Body of Manie Reed Recovered

On returning to the scene of the disaster, the afflicted father learned that Capt. Johnson, who had been steaming back and forth from the point of the disaster to a few miles below, had about daylight yesterday morning picked up a body answering the description of little Manie Reed, and shortly afterwards he picked up the body of a large, portly colored woman. The latter body Capt. Johnson landed and it was buried; but so certain was he that the child was the remaining lost little one of the Reed family, that, notwithstanding those on the beach clamored for it for burial, he refused to land it. The father and others identified, and leaving the scene of the disaster between 2 and 3 o'clock, the part arrived here in the evening, as above stated. The funeral of the child, Marian Reed, will take place from her father's residence this afternoon at 3 o'clock.

Arrival of More Bodies

The tug Mary Lewis, which left here early yesterday morning, arrived about 10 o'clock last night, bringing up to Alexandria the bodies of the son and daughter of Mr. Griffin, whose wife was lost at the same time, and whose body was brought up on Saturday and buried in Alexandria on Sunday evening, the funeral being largely attended. Rev. Mr. Beyer, of the M.E. church officiated on the mournful occasion. The tug Mary Lewis also brought to this city the bodies of Willie Muse, aged 10, and a colored woman whose body was disfigured beyond identification. The latter was taken in charge by Burgdorf, the undertaker, while the former was removed to the home of the parents of the deceased, at the corner of 7th and G streets southwest.

The tug Mary Lewis left again this morning for the scene of the disaster, and will return this evening. The ferry company intend to send down – perhaps tomorrow – coffins for the bodies temporarily interred, and will likely bury all permanently near the scene of the disaster not claimed by relatives.

Recovery of the Body of Miss Marbury

The steamer Pennsylvania, used in Georgetown as a ferry boat to Analostan Island by Mr. Anthony Rodier, Captain Busnell, has just returned there from the wreck of the Wawaset, and Mr. Rodier reports that on Sunday evening last about four o'clock p.m. they recovered the remains of Miss Marbury, which were identified by a pair of gold bracelets on her wrists with the initials M.V.M.; also, by four gold rings which were on her fingers, two of them with the same initials. The body – decomposed – was delivered to her grandmother, Mrs. Grimes, who will attend to the burial. The rings and bracelets were delivered to Mr. Tolson.

A Female "Dead-Beat"

The woman, Margaret Lewis, an account of whom was given in The Star of yesterday as having walked from Laurel to Washington in search of her four children, who were passengers on the ill-fated Wawaset, is now reported to be an imposter. She came to police headquarters early this morning, and told a pitiful story about having been robbed on the street cars this morning of two dollars, (which she said was all the money she had,) and a gold cross belonging to one of her lost children. Mr. Edelin, in charge, busied himself to make her comfortable, and procured a hot breakfast from Dubant's, and later in the morning a collection was taken up among the officers and reporters, amounting to \$8.50, which was paid over to her, and others started off to take up further collections about town to afford her means to go to Chatterton in search of her children and return to Laurel afterwards. Her story and her appearance could not fail of exciting sympathy from every one, but it was discovered that her stories to different persons did not agree, and soon Lieut. Kelly came in and recognized her as a professional "dead beat." She had imposed upon him two years ago by telling him about her husband being crushed to death on a railroad, and he raised \$25 by subscription and gave it to her. Other officers came in and at once recognized her as a confidence woman. The case looked so suspicious that Chief Clarvoe took the money from her. Finding herself caught she begged to be let off, but Mr. Clarvoe sent her to Gardner's to have her mug taken and she will be sent to Police Court under charges. Her name is Bridget McGarvey.

The Additional Death Roll – Seventy Two Victims

During yesterday three bodies were found near the Maryland shore, and up to the departure of the Lewis the total number of bodies recovered was 72!

The following is an additional descriptive list of unknown bodies found and buried by Mr. C.G. McClelland, commencing where our sad record of yesterday left off:

Colored Females—1. Red and white calico body and gaiter shoes. 2. Supposed to be about 25 years of age, and having nine rings on the left hand. 3. Light purple calico dress. 4. Red skirt and striped. 5. Child, about 6 years of age, calico dress and gaiters. 6. Girl, about 13 years of age, striped calico dress and purple basque. 7. Supposed about 30 years of age, black striped dress, light calico apron, plain ring on right hand; thought to be Fannie Taylor. 8. Black skirt and striped calico basque; one plain ring on left little finger. One also on right hand, with square seal. 9. Yellow calico dress, overskirt trimmed with black. 10. Calico dress, brown stripes, with white buttons down the front. 11. Supposed to be about 35 years of age; black skirt and black and white basque. 12. Supposed to be about 20 years of age; red skirt, striped body. 13. Black dress, light calico apron, ring on middle finger of right hand.

Colored Males—1. Black cloth coat, gray pants, hair mixed with gray. 2. Gray coat, blue cloth vest, with brass buttons, and silver watch in the pocket. 3. Black cloth coat and pants and vest, and calfskin boots. 4. Black cloth pants and white linen jacket. 5. Black cassimere pants and vest, and linen coat. 6. Identified as Simon Bland.

Another Washington Victim Fatal Wedding Trip

Our special correspondence from Chatterton's Landing in yesterday's Star contained the following paragraph:

"About this time another body was seen to rise near the same place. On being brought in it was found to be that of an aged white man. On one little finger was a plain gold ring, and in his purse was found \$9; a briarwood pipe, some smoking tobacco, vial of medicine, leather bag containing two keys, one of brass, the other of iron, but no papers by which his name could be identified. On one foot was a boot, and the other foot naked, having the appearance of a sore on it; the hair was quite gray, with short beard of the same. The body was buried yesterday afternoon above Chatterton."

A well-known business man of this city called at The Star office today to say that the friends and acquaintances of Daniel Lynch, a tailor, doing business in the Intelligencer building, on 7th street, are certain, from the description here quoted, that it was his body recovered and buried. The sore on his foot was caused by a hurt received last week while helping a young man to remove a portable printing press in one of the rooms of the Intelligencer building. On Thursday Lynch called on Mr. Downman, real estate agent, and paid his rent before leaving on his trip. It is reported that the unfortunate man was married on Thursday to a widow lady with two children, and that she and her little ones were also among the lost.

The Official Investigation

The investigation into the cause of the disaster will begin tomorrow, and will assume the form of a suit against the owners of the Wawaset by the supervising inspector of steamboats of the Treasury department. It appears that on her last eventful trip the owners of the Wawaset failed to ask or receive a special permit to carry more passengers than her certificate of inspection allowed. If the owners had been granted such a request, they would have been compelled to have procured an additional outfit. In the matter of an extra license, the owners having neglected to procure that necessary paper, have violated the law. The penalty is a fine of ten dollars per passenger, and to refund the passage money. It is stated the owners will also be prosecuted for carrying excursions without a license.

It is hardly probable that the investigation will be begun tomorrow, inasmuch as Commodore Rose, inspector of hulls, who is stationed at Savannah, and who is to conduct the investigation, cannot reach the city in time for that purpose. Mr. Rose will be assisted in his investigation by John E. Edgar, inspector of boilers at Norfolk, both of whom are old and experienced inspectors and entirely disinterested in the case.

In this connection, the following order was issued today:

TREASURY DEPARTMENT, Aug. 12, 1873

SIR:--In view of the fact that the local inspectors at Baltimore made the last inspection of the ill-fated steamer Wawaset, and, in order that the government may avail itself of their services as witnesses in the investigation to be made concerning the disaster to the steamer in question, it is deemed expedient that one of the other local boards of your district be detailed to conduct such investigation. You will please be governed accordingly. Very respectfully,

W.A. Richardson, Secretary

John Menshaw, Esq., Supervising Inspector, Baltimore, Md.

It is probable that the investigation will be held in the office of the supervising inspector general of steamboats in the Treasury department, and will continue several days.