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### **BODIES ON THE LAWN NEAR RIVERSIDE HOSPITAL**

As fast as the bodies were brought in, their faces were covered with a bit of skirt or a wet handkerchief and laid upon the grass plot in front of the hospital. There are no men in the above group, nothing but drowned women and children with not a mark of fire on them.



### AN INNOCENT VICTIM

Eyewitnesses stated that it was enough to appall the stoutest nerve to stand on the shore of North Brother Island and see body after body rising out of the swelling water. In the above picture a drowned girl has been dragged from the river and is being carried to the stretcher in waiting. Her own father happened to be on the shore where the body was found.



**POLICEMEN CARRYING INJURED INTO THE AMBULANCE**

The police did heroic work on the day of the disaster. Nearly every ambulance in the city was pressed into use and the injured and burned were conveyed to hospitals, where they were tenderly cared for by the physicians and nurses.



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### HAULING BODIES OVER THE WALL.

It so happened that many of the bodies were washed ashore at the foot of a high stone wall that surrounds the hospital grounds on North Brother Island. It became necessary to raise the bodies to the lawn above by means of ropes. In the above picture a little child is being hauled over the wall.



*"One touch of Nature makes the whole world kin"*

# New York's Awful Excursion Boat Horror

TOLD BY

Survivors and Rescuers

EDITED BY

JOHN WESLEY HANSON

The Ghastly Story of the Heart-Rending Tragedy at  
Hell Gate Vividly Portrayed by Pen and Picture.

Every Harrowing Detail of the World's Most Appalling  
Holocaust Accurately Described by Eye-Witnesses.

The Self-Sacrificing Heroism of Mothers. The  
Wholesale Cremation of Little Children.

The Noble Deeds of Brave Life-Savers.

The Thrilling Scenes on the Flame-Swept Decks of the  
Ill-Fated Pleasure Boat, General Slocum,  
Truthfully Delineated.

ILLUSTRATED

WITH VIEWS TAKEN DURING AND AFTER THE CALAMITY

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## INTRODUCTION

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One beautiful day in June an excursion steamer, with twelve hundred Christian souls on board, set forth upon a pleasure trip. The boat was gay with multi-colored bunting; the happy voices of care-free women rang across the dancing waters; happy children were romping over the decks and—as if in mockery of the predestined catastrophe that was to follow—the band was playing a sacred hymn, “Our God Is a Mighty Fortress.” Then the brutal hand of Fate swept the picture from the canvas and in its place supplied a fiendish nightmare vision of horrid anguish and frantic terror.

No artist, unless he dipped his brush in the colors of hell, could portray the awful scene of a majestic vessel, wrapped in great sheets of devouring flame, speeding to a haven of refuge, while the grim helmsman Death wrestled for supremacy with the heroic captain at the wheel. And it would need the genius of a Dante to word-paint the dreadful spectacle of helpless children roasted alive before their mother’s eyes or swept by fear-crazed hundreds over the burning rails of the boat into the hungry jaws of the devouring tide—of gentle women and feeble old men crushed beneath the falling timbers of the decks or hurled to a swifter and, possibly, less terrible death, in the rushing waters of the river.

“There is purpose in pain—otherwise it were devilish,” and

may not the fact that this sacrifice of human life was permitted to take place be only another proof of an all-seeing Providence that, "deep within the shadow, keepeth watch above His own"? For this is the lesson to be drawn from the disaster on the East River: The human family is traveling toward the same goal—"the ways they are many, the end it is one"—but each is the way of the Cross.

Terrible was the suffering on board the General Slocum, but, in the midst of the agony of body and spirit of the doomed passengers, one great familiar truth stood revealed in all its sublimity and grandeur: "Love conquereth all things." The love of a mother for her child, which even death cannot appall; the love of husband and wife, which fire doth but purify; the love of brother and sister, were illustrated hundreds of times during that fiery ordeal. But greater than these were the splendid examples of man's love for his fellow man that inspired scores of courageous hearts to sacrifice their lives for the sake of strangers, drawn to them, in those awful moments, by the tie of universal brotherhood—for the sight of suffering is the "one touch of nature that makes the whole world kin."

What, then, was the purpose of the Hell Gate horror? It was to soften the heart and chasten the spirit of man. The very thought of a thousand people suddenly given the choice of two horrible deaths—burning or drowning—is fearful to contemplate, but, when the majority of them are little children, it becomes a sacred tragedy, thrilling, intense and pathetic. But, after all, it was the number of victims, sacrificed to human cupidity and carelessness, that intensified the wave of sympathy that swept the country. If, when the news

of the disaster had been flashed over the world, it had recorded the death of one little baby, what would the effect have been? The world would have shuddered and then forgotten—and yet some mother's heart would have been made desolate thereby. Therefore, much good will come from the very immensity of the holocaust. We needed the lesson, hard as it was, and the storm of public sentiment that the calamity has aroused will mean that, for a long time, the lives of women and children will be more zealously safeguarded.

“Example is a living law, whose sway  
Men more than all the written laws obey.”

Surely those little ones, whose lives went out in the smoke and flame of the burning steamer, did not die in vain. And that army of mothers, who suffered glorious martyrdom that the inhumanities of commercialism might be exposed, were part of the same salutary plan. So, too, the splendid example of those heroes and heroines whose deeds of daring and self-sacrifice are recorded in the pages of this book, will do much to curb the avaricious spirit of the times—the lust for blood-money—that reached its climax when the wrecked hull of the General Slocum was beached on the shore of North Brother Island.

JOHN WESLEY HANSON.

## The Passengers' Death Song

*"Ein Feste Burg Ist Unser Gott," the great hymn of the Lutheran church, which the mighty Martin and his followers sang as they entered the diet at Worms to stand trial for heresy, and which the Pan-German army chanted on the battle-fields of France in 1870, was the hymn sung by the ill-fated passengers of the General Slocum when they started on their last voyage.*

*This English version is by Frederic Henry Hedge:*

### A Mighty Fortress is our God

*A mighty fortress is our God,  
A bulwark never failing;  
Our helper he amid the flood  
Of mortal ills prevailing.  
For still our ancient foe  
Doth seek to work us woe;  
His craft and power are great  
And armed with equal hate,  
On earth is not his equal.*

*Did we in our own strength confide,  
Our striving would be losing;  
Were not the right man on our side,  
The man of God's own choosing.  
Dost ask who that may be?  
Christ Jesus, it is he,  
Lord Sabaoth his name,  
From age to age the same,  
And he must win the battle.*

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## CHAPTER I

### THE COUNTRY HORRIFIED

**Hundreds Roasted Alive or Drowned—Passengers Panic-stricken—A Carnival of Terror—Women and Children with their Hair and Clothing on Fire—Wailing Children and Old People Trampled under Foot—Crowded into the Water—The Fall of the Hurricane Deck—Rotten Life Preservers—Heroic Captain and Pilots—The Cause of the Fire—Story of Cruel Selfishness—The Tide Gives Up the Dead—Ghastly Evidence.**

On Wednesday, June 15, 1904, occurred one of the most horrible catastrophes in history. A steamer, the General Slocum, filled with happy excursionists, burst into flames near Hell Gate, in the East River, New York, and hundreds of people, mostly Sunday school pupils and their parents, were consumed by fire or hurled to a watery grave in the seething flood.

The disaster exceeded in numbers and wholly matched in pitifulness and horror the Iroquois theater fire in Chicago last December. It was appalling in its immensity, dramatic in its episodes, and deeply pathetic in the tender age of most of its victims.

#### VICTIMS MOSTLY WOMEN AND CHILDREN

As in the Iroquois fire, most of the victims were women and children. They were members of the Sunday school of St. Mark's German Lutheran church, bound for their annual excursion up Long Island Sound, happy, gay, care free, and full of joyous expectations of their day of all days in the year.

They went to their death with bands playing, flags whipping in the breeze, and under as fair a sky as was ever vouchsafed to a picnic crowd. The four hundred children were singing, dancing, and waving handkerchiefs and flags in answer to the salutations of those on shore or from passing steamers.

#### MADE THE HEART SICK

The scenes during and after the catastrophe were the kind that make the heart sick. Mothers hugging their children to their breasts in love and terror were forced to choose between certain death in the flames and almost equally certain death in the water.

Some, made frantic by their sudden peril, threw their babes into the whirling waters of Hell Gate, hoping doubtless for improbable rescue, while many were not allowed the poor privilege of choosing, but were forced overboard by the mad rush of the panic-stricken passengers in their efforts to get away from the flames.

#### ROASTED ALIVE

It was a spectacle of horror beyond words to express—a great vessel all in flames, sweeping forward in the sunlight, within sight of the crowded city, while its helpless, screaming hundreds were roasted alive or swallowed up in the waves; women and children with their hair and clothing on fire; wailing children and old men trampled under foot or crowded over into the water—and the burning steamboat, its whistle roaring for assistance, speeding for the shore, with a trail of ghastly faces and clutching hands in the tide behind—gray-haired mothers and tender infants going down to death together.

Members of the crew endeavored to extinguish the flames. Their efforts were unavailing and in an incredibly short time the fire gained uncontrollable headway. Clouds of smoke rolled back through the crowded decks. The flames followed instantly and a wild panic ensued.

#### **WILD PANIC AMONG PASSENGERS**

Hemmed in by the rocks of Hell Gate, the captain was unable to turn his vessel in the channel, and crowding on all steam he made for North Brother Island, directly ahead.

With the first rush of smoke and fire those on the forward deck were driven back and many persons were crushed against the rail and pushed overboard.

As the panic spread, many sprang over the rail, at first by twos and threes, and then as the fire rushed aft they went over by dozens.

#### **MOTHERS THROW BABIES OVERBOARD**

Crazed parents threw children overboard and followed themselves, only to drown in the swift waters of Hell Gate. As with her engines driving her at full speed the big vessel churned toward the beach at North Brother Island she left a train of dark forms in her wake, and how many thus perished probably will never be known.

#### **FALL OF THE HURRICANE DECK**

Before she was beached the crowded hurricane deck gave way and threw hundreds into the fiery furnace 'tween decks, already choked with a struggling, panic-stricken mass of women and children.

Continuous blasts of the Slocum's siren brought dozens of tugs and small craft to her side, and the work of rescue was

quick and daring. Some of the tugs stuck to her side until they themselves were afire or were driven off by the leaping flames.

#### USELESS LIFE PRESERVERS

To add to the unspeakable hideousness of it all, the extent of the disaster might, in the view of many, have been lessened if better judgment had been shown in the crisis by those in charge of the boat.

Also ominous facts came to light which tended to show that proper safety appliances were not provided on the boat. Rotten, useless life preservers, out of reach, and filled with cork dust, were the mocking instruments of salvation with which the vessel was furnished.

It was established that a man's thumb nail was a weapon that would rip many of the life preservers on the ship wide open, and that the things were filled with granulated cork, which quickly becomes water-soaked and loses buoyancy.

#### CAPTAIN AT A LOSS FOR REASON

Captain William H. Van Schaick of the Slocum explained as best he could the horrible disaster that had come to the company under his care and direction. He was a man sixty-one years old, of long experience in commanding pleasure craft in the waters around New York. Captain Van Schaick said that though he heard the alarm of fire early he made up his mind at once that there was no certain place where it could be beached in shallow water south of North Brother Island.

The tide was running up to the sound with terrific velocity, and he was sure that he would lose time trying to turn his





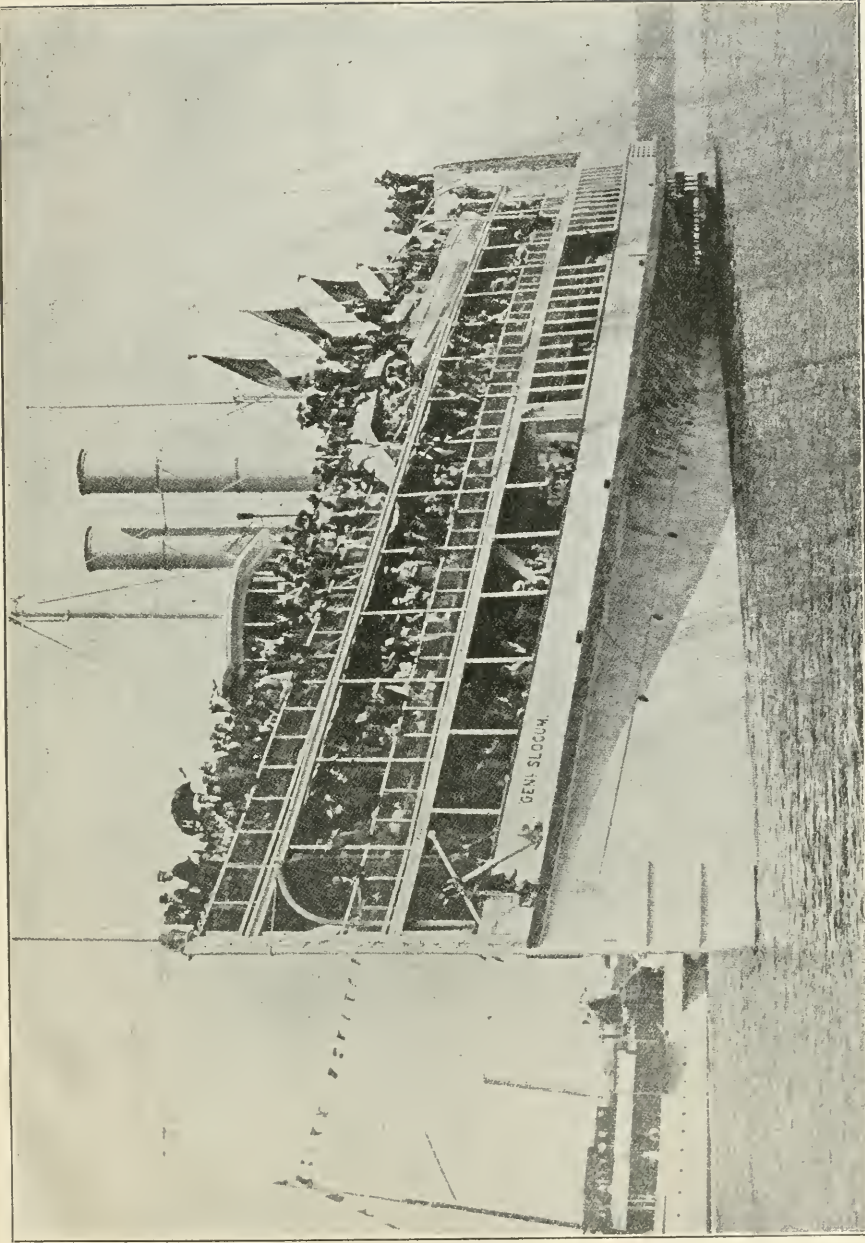
#### INTERIOR VIEW OF THE MORGUE

This picture shows the interior of the New York Morgue, where the bodies of many of the General Slocum's victims were laid side by side for purposes of identification. It was one of the first places that the bereaved relatives sought for tidings of loved ones who had left their homes earlier in the day for a happy June outing.



#### RECOVERING BODIES

Rowboats were manned by willing hands, after the General Slocum drifted away from the shore, and the task of dragging for bodies was carried on. It was stated that at one time on Wednesday afternoon bodies were recovered at the rate of one a minute. More than fifty boats patrolled the beach until darkness set in.



### THE GENERAL SLOCUM JUST BEFORE THE FIRE BROKE OUT

There was not a cloud in the sky when the steamboat started on her fateful trip. The children were dancing about the decks and cheering to the spectators on the pier; the women were chatting merrily together, and the band was playing the favorite hymn of the Lutheran Church: "Our God Is a Mighty Fortress." The fire started about the time the boat reached Hell Gate.



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### **BODIES OF VICTIMS STREWN ALONG THE SHORE**

In spite of the efforts of brave human hearts the misery and horror of the disaster went on unabated. The above picture shows the steamer burning in the distance while living men and women were still rolling from her decks. Among the bodies found at this point was that of a woman clasping a baby to her breast.

boat into a proper beaching place south of the island. He stuck to his post, although the flames scorched his clothing, until the boat was hard and fast ashore. Pilot Van Wart staid with him.

River men generally were divided as to the good judgment shown by Captain Van Schaick in trying to go so far. It was nearly an even division. The captain himself admitted that it was not until after the fire had been going some time that he realized its fierceness and its rapidity.

#### **INFLAMMABLES IN THE FORE CABIN**

There was a compartment in the hold of the General Slocum known as the second cabin. It was forward just aft the forecastle. In this room were kept the lamps and the oil for them, the gasoline and brass-polishing liquids, and all the other inflammable supplies. It was not determined at first whether the fire started in this cabin. But it was known that the flames were fed there to reach their greatest and most murderous intensity. From that cabin the fire swept back through the boat with a fierceness that no fire-fighting apparatus could hold in check.

#### **SCENES OF FRIGHTFUL HORROR**

There were scenes of horror on the General Slocum and on shore beyond the ability of any one to describe.

It was a boat load of women and little children. For the last mile when the steamer, spouting flames high into the air, was shooting swiftly out of the sound with the tide, people on shore and on other steamers could see the women and children fluttering over the sides into the water in scores.

The river is swift there at flood tide. The waves grab for-

ward at one another with hungry white fingers. A strong man would have but little chance. The women and the children had no chance.

There were also heard such stories as often come out after a disaster—stories of cruel selfishness by members of the crew, of cold disregard of the Slocum's distress signals and most evident need by pleasure and business craft in the harbor.

In the end came the story that there had been looting of the bodies of the dead. Some of these things were more or less true.

#### **GLORIOUS RECORDS OF HEROISM**

But there was a glorious record of self-sacrifice and of bravery to be set over against all that was evil or unmanly. Of such were the bravery with which the old captain and his pilots staid at their posts, the noble efforts of the policemen who were on the burning boat, to save the lives of those intrusted to their care; the beautiful recklessness of the women nurses and the convalescent patients from the hospitals on North Brother Island, risking their lives to dash into the water around the burning boat, to pull out drowning children and women; the brave deeds of the men on the city's boats, the Franklin Edson and the Massasoit, and on the tugs Theodore and Wade.

#### **HELP RUSHED TO THE SCENE**

Some day some one will fittingly dress out the deeds of the daring rescuers, but there was no time for the glorying in heroes. For every one whose deeds were seen and mentally registered in the flying moments of horror and peril, there were hundreds of others in which the rescued were too much

scared to appreciate what was being done for them and the rescuers too busy to take note for themselves.

Ambulances and patrol wagons from nearly every corner of the city were sent to points along the Bronx shore nearest the wreck. Physicians and nurses came by hundreds not only from hospitals, public and private, in all the boroughs of the city, but singly, from their private offices, from as far away as Newark and Paterson.

Bodies were sent down to the Bellevue morgue from North Brother Island as fast as they were recovered until there was no more room there. Most of them were unidentified.

#### LOW TIDE GIVES UP DEAD

At about five o'clock, when the tide was low, there was a sudden increase in the rapidity with which bodies were recovered. They were brought out of the water near where the Slocum had been grounded at the rate of about one a minute.

A temporary morgue was established on the island, and the work of identifying the bodies commenced. Some of them, however, were so badly burned that they could not be recognized.

All the afternoon and night great, silent crowds, thousands and thousands of people, stood in front of the church in Sixth street, in front of the morgue, and the Alexander avenue police station, and along the East River shore opposite North Brother Island—wherever the bodies of the victims were laid or where news of them could be learned.

#### MEANS OF IDENTIFICATION

On the shore of North Brother Island scores of bodies of women and children, of young girls with disordered hair shrouding their pale faces, and of tiny babies, lay on the lawn cov-

ered with sheets or blankets. Here was the body of a mother, with the child she had tried to save still clasped in her arms. Beside her would be a little form, which the lifted sheet disclosed to be that of a boy, perhaps her son. Only now and then could there be any other identification, except by numbers. So there remained nothing for the coroner and the police to do except to place a numbered tag upon one body after another before it was lifted into one of the wagons and transferred to a boat, which bore it to one or the other of the city morgues.

In a paper bag, with its corresponding number, was laid away such jewelry or other means of identification as could be found.

"No. 64. Woman. One gold watch. One gold guard ring," was a characteristic inscription for one of these bags. Piled one above another in a basket, which followed the coroner on his rounds, the bags accumulated in increasing numbers, as the first estimates of the loss of life had to give way to what at first had seemed to be absurd and exaggerated guesses as to the number of victims of the disaster.

#### BODIES ARE TAGGED

Trip after trip was made by the Massasoit to the morgue at the foot of East Twenty-sixth street, but at nightfall so constantly were the bodies being lifted over the sea wall to their temporary resting places beneath the trees of North Brother Island that there were as many as ever to be disposed of.

When a few more than one hundred bodies had been recovered and the task of numbering and tagging them was well under way, it seemed that the end was in sight, though there were still hundreds of persons to be accounted for.



Many of the bodies had already been taken aboard the *Massasoit*, and mournfully the watchers admitted that the near-by waters held no more of the dead—the missing must have been buried in the hull of the ill-fated steamboat when she sank off Riker's Island.

#### DEAD IN EACH OTHER'S ARMS

But about this time a small boat, which had been lying off the spot where the *Slocum* had first grounded, was pulled to the sea wall with the bodies of two little children clasped in each other's arms. So strong had death fastened their hold upon each other that together they were lifted into the boat, and still with arms interlocked they were brought to the shore.

Soon other bodies began to come to the surface. Other small boats went to the rescue. A couple of tugs for hours continued steaming about the spot where the hundreds of unfortunates had plunged into the water to save themselves from death by fire. Again the force of hospital attendants and policemen was called to the work of lifting the bodies from the water, as the boats brought them near enough to shore so that outstretched hands could reach them.

#### MANY IN THE SUNKEN HULL

And so the work went on until more than one hundred bodies had been recovered, after it had been hoped that the river had already given up the most of its dead—after the watchers and workers had sighed with relief that the worst was over, except for the recovery of bodies from the hold of the sunken vessel.

All the while men in search of wives, children or sisters were picking their way from one covered form to another, and as a face was uncovered and the sheet turned back upon it

there was renewed hope that after all those sought might be saved, or at the worst were only suffering in one or another of the hospitals.

#### **PITIFUL SCENES**

Now and then a search was sadly rewarded. A man would be seen to fall upon his knees beside one of the forms under the trees, but it was seldom that one could hear more than a stifled groan. Most pitiful of all was the grief of one who found not one but two or three of his family among the dead, as happened on several occasions; for many a man was left not only a widower but childless when the General Slocum blazed and sank.

Early in the morning boats were still patrolling the section of the stream where bodies might be found, and though fewer were recovered as the search continued, the work was by no means finished. It was days before there was any certainty that no bodies remained to be given up by the river.

#### **THE TRAGEDY NOT EXAGGERATED**

At the first the scope of the Slocum disaster was underestimated, and the awful truth as later revealed seemed almost impossible of belief. Bodies of men, women and children who embarked on the boat on the fatal morning of June 15th, were recovered hourly from the charred sunken wreck and from the water along the shores of North Brother Island. Others were washed ashore on the Manhattan side all along the river front. The captains of the various precincts had men patrolling the water front from the Battery to Bronx Kills to look out for these bodies, and even on the Astoria shore there was a long line of policemen watching the beach for what the waves might wash up.

As the bodies were recovered they were taken to North Brother Island, where they were laid out, numbered and the valuables removed, and then sent on one of the city's boats to the temporary morgue in the Charities Pier at the foot of East Twenty-sixth street, whose floor was covered with long rows of the dead in rough pine coffins.

#### THE SEAT OF GRIEF

Throughout the city there was mourning, but the seat of grief lay in a wide section of the lower East Side, centering about St. Mark's Lutheran Church, in East Sixth street, in which the majority of the victims lived. As quickly as the bodies were identified at the morgue by families or friends, they were removed to their homes, and in this section there was scarcely a house without its somber sign of mourning at the door. There were few persons in the streets, which presented the appearance they might have on a quiet Sunday. Life there seemed at a standstill. When the survivors left their houses it was to go to the morgue or to the church itself, where a bureau of information had been established, to ask for tidings of the missing; for in many families more than one went to death on the General Slocum; in many instances four or five, in some as many as nine, from a single household. In a block of sixteen houses, eight were counted with flags draped with crape at half mast.

#### SCHOOLS IN MOURNING

Superintendent Maxwell, of the Board of Education, after receiving a report of the pupils of the school who went on the ill-fated excursion, ordered that the graduation exercises in the lower East Side schools be abandoned and that memorial exercises be held in their stead.

**AN INVESTIGATION SET ON FOOT**

Mayor McClellan, Commissioner McAdoo and Dr. Darlington, who were in the places where they were most needed immediately after the holocaust, were busy the following day seeing that the best arrangements under the circumstances were made to handle this unlooked-for situation.

The Mayor at once began making a careful inquiry as to the causes of the disaster. The District Attorney set on foot an investigation, and Secretary Cortelyou, of the Department of Commerce and Labor, left Washington to take a hand in fixing the blame.

**FINDING MORE BODIES HOURLY**

With dawn there was no diminution in the activity of the workers on North Brother Island. Divers of the dock department made descents into the wrecked hold of the Slocum. They reported that there were still many bodies burned beyond recognition in the waist of the boat, where the victims were buried when the superstructure and the upper decks, their supports burned away, collapsed and carried all the excursionists in that part of the boat into the seething hull. Divers Rice and Russell, who worked in the hull with only small intervals for rest two day and nights, reported that they could not tell what number the dead amidships would reach. Diver Rice recovered eighteen bodies and most of them were so burned and mutilated as to make identification a fortunate chance.

**THE SEARCH CONTINUED**

The word "Hope" was engraved in the ring of a pretty woman whose body was received at North Brother Island. The early light glinted upon handsome solitaire diamond earrings, a diamond ring and a costly pearl brooch that testified

practically to some one's devotion to the woman whose body had been rescued. From midnight until dawn the workers rested.

A woman of thirty-five, a man of thirty, a little boy of eight, and a girl of seven were brought from the waters when rescue work was resumed. Then came the body of a baby of ten months. Working with grappling hooks, the men continued the search all day.

#### **THE CURIOUS TURNED AWAY**

Boat after boat of morbidly curious came to the island. They were ordered away by the police. Two piles of coffins stood near the scarlet fever hospital—the one for children and the other for adults.

River men said that many of the bodies would be washed down the river and would not come to the surface for days. The tuberculosis patients who exposed themselves in the rescue work of the day before, and whose lives were thereby endangered, were found not to have suffered. The physicians said that the treatment at the island had protected them.

#### **LIFE BELT DROPS TO PIECES**

With a small portion of a rotten life preserver about her neck, the body of a woman was brought ashore at North Brother Island. There was every evidence that the life preserver had been so rotten that it fell from her in pieces.

Volunteer workers came willingly to the aid of the officials. Fully fifty small boats brought crews of citizens who assisted in the search for bodies.

Seeking souvenirs of the disaster, half a hundred rowboats came to North Brother Island. The persons in them started to take bits of clothing and any other portable relic. Disgusted, the police drove the ghouls away.

It having been decided that Coroner Berry should conduct the inquest, the latter, assisted by a staff of clerks, at once set about issuing subpoenas. He wished to obtain the testimony of as many adult survivors as possible, and of all who were in a position to throw any light upon the destruction of the General Slocum. He believed that the investigation before him should be as thorough as possible.

#### THE WORK OF THE CORONER

In the following words Coroner O'Gorman, who waived his right to conduct the inquiry, summed up an important part of his first day's labor on North Brother Island and around the wreck of the Slocum:

"Evidence before me so far indicates an appalling failure on the part of the crew of the General Slocum to assist the helpless passengers during the tragic half hour. I have examined eye-witnesses of the disaster, none of whom remembers to have seen any efforts made by the crew, although the witnesses themselves were among those to risk life in rescue work. Standpipes for the fire hose, taken from the wreck to-day, show that on the side of the boat farthest away from the flames no attempt was made to use the fire-fighting apparatus. Valves are found unturned and caps are still in place. There is nothing to show that the crew did not look out for itself alone. Only one member appears to have perished, and that one was a steward."

Early on Thursday the coroner called before him the crews of the tugboat Wade and the Franklin Edson, the island ferry. Blistered paint and woodwork on both boats show where they were while the fire raged, and of each member of the crew the coroner asked what work, if any, was done by the crew of the Slocum.

**TESTIMONY OF EYE-WITNESSES**

Following this he called before him the staff of the North Brother Hospital corps, including every one from Dr. Stewart to the humblest orderly. Physicians and nurses, as well as patients who had risked their lives wading and swimming out into the swift tide, were asked to tell of their observations. Not one of them could relieve the impression first produced by the testimony.

At the wreck the coroner had John M. Rice, a diver employed by the department of docks, busy at work collecting the silent evidence of standpipes, reels, nozzles and the like. Rice had not been working an hour on the starboard side of the boat aft of the paddle box when he came up with a section of a standpipe, the cap of which had not been removed.

"It shows that no attempt whatsoever was made to attach the hose," was the official comment.

Later in the day Rice brought up another standpipe twelve feet long, on one end of which was a wheel valve. Burnt shreds showed that a hose had been attached to this pipe, but further investigation showed that the valve had never been turned. Then, too, came a reel with shreds of unbound hose, and a nozzle which had not been removed from its place.

**A FEDERAL INVESTIGATION**

George B. Cortelyou, Secretary of Commerce and Labor; George Uhler, Supervising Inspector General of the Steamboat Inspection Service, and Robert S. Rodie, Supervising Inspector for the Second District, met and discussed the disaster of the General Slocum and mapped out the programme of the Federal investigation. The conference was held in the Supervising Inspector's office, and to Secretary

Cortelyou, who had arrived from Washington a few hours after the catastrophe, Mr. Rodie told the circumstances and result of the calamity. As far as possible the details of the disaster were gone over and the causes which led to the loss of life thoroughly canvassed. President Roosevelt took a keen interest in the inquiry by the federal authorities. Before Secretary Cortelyou left Washington he had a long conference with the President, who ordered that the investigation be made most searching and thorough.



## CHAPTER II

### A DAY OF BRIGHT PROMISE

The Boat Starts—An Eager Crowd—An Ideal Day for a Picnic—Big Family Parties on Board—"Our God Is a Mighty Fortress"—Hell Gate Passed—The First Burst of Smoke—Warning Whistles from Passing Craft—Children Thought the Fire Alarm a Joke—The Captain Heads for the Shores of North Brother Island—Hemmed In by Fire—Mothers Fight for their Children Like Wild Beasts.

The General Slocum spent Tuesday night at the foot of Fiftieth street. It started around the battery at about seven o'clock Wednesday morning. The crew of twenty-seven men were aboard. It reached the foot of Third street in the East River, where there is a pier, at about twenty minutes past eight o'clock.

#### CROWD EAGER TO GO ABOARD

There were several hundred excursionists already on the pier when the Slocum arrived. There were mothers full of pride in their lusty German-American babies, and full of anxiety for fear some of them would fall overboard in their anxiety to get on board the Slocum before anybody else did. A band came and went to the after deck and began booming out melodies dear to the German heart.

#### PASTOR SEES THEM GO ON BOAT

The mothers and children kept pouring across the gang plank and scurrying for good places about the decks. The

Rev. G. C. F. Haas and his assistant, the Rev. J. S. Schultz, stood on opposite sides of the gang plank and welcomed the mothers and the Sunday school scholars.

Policemen Kelk and Van Tassel, full of experience in the handling of Sunday school excursions, took posts on the off side of the steamer, ready to dive after any child who by mistake should fall overboard.

It was as fine a day for a picnic as ever dawned. The sunlight made the blue water seem as bright as though it lay anywhere but between the piers of the biggest city of this nation. The ugly factory walls were set off by masts and flags, and big boats and little boats seemed rather to be skittering over the river for their own amusement than for any purpose of sordid profit.

#### **BIG FAMILY PARTIES THERE**

The excursion was late in starting. Lutherans are great folk for going to family picnics in big family parties. Greta and Wilhelmina and August's wife gather from the corners of Manhattan and Brooklyn and bring all their children to combine their luncheons, so that it shall be served to ten or fifteen hungry mouths in proper proportions. And if any one of the whole family circle was late, then all the rest went to Pastor Haas and besought him by all that was dear and sweet not to let the boat go until sister and her little ones came.

Pastor Haas was good natured, and it was well along towards ten o'clock when the Slocum started, the band on the upper deck playing "Ein Feste Berg Ist Unser Gott."

#### **DAY ONE OF BRIGHT PROMISE**

The children tugged at their skirts, held down by their smiling mothers and big sisters and grandmothers, and

cheered at the departing pier. There was not a chill in the air. There was not a cloud on the blue sky. Pastor Haas went up and down the decks, and the matrons loudly communicated their congratulations to him.

Hell Gate, where the tide was rushing out to the Sound with the utmost violence, was passed safely. There is not a steamer captain in this harbor, no matter though he be as old as Captain Van Schaick, who is not glad when he has passed through Hell Gate without a collision and without being sloughed out of his course against its rocky sides.

#### **HIDDEN FIRE ALREADY AT WORK**

Though Captain Van Schaick did not know it, the steamer must even then have been on fire. Just back of the crew's quarters, up in the bow of the steamer, under the main deck, is what is called the second cabin.

On the Slocum this cabin has been used as a sort of store-room. Spare hawsers were kept there, and paint and oils. Gasoline was kept there, and it was there that Albert Payne, a negro steward, kept the ship's lamps when they were not in place, and cleaned and filled them.

#### **LAMPROOM OPEN TO INQUIRY**

Payne, his face all ashy with the horrors he had been through, stated, upon oath, that he finished cleaning all the lamps before the boat left the dock at West Fiftieth street, and that he had not been in the room except to see that everything was all right.

Along the Astoria shore, where there are many yards for the building of small boats, the trouble was known sooner than it was on the steamer itself. As the Slocum passed

Broadway, Astoria, John E. Ronan, a dock department employee, was struck with the gayety of the steamer, with its flags, its music, and its load of hilarious children, and called to a companion: "Look at the Slocum. Don't it make you hate to work when you see a crowd having as good a time as that?"

#### FIRST PUFF OF SMOKE IS SEEN

But a quarter of a mile further on, William Alloway, the captain of a dredge, saw a burst of smoke puff out from the lower deck of the Slocum just forward of the smokestack. He let off four blasts of his dredge whistle. At the same moment other boats on both sides of the river began to toot shrill warnings. Alloway and his men could see a scurrying on the decks of the Slocum. They wondered why Captain Van Schaick didn't back his boat right into the Astoria shore.

"It seemed to me," Alloway said, "as though he was having some trouble with his wheel, and as though it wasn't minding it, and as if he could not get his signals into his engine-room. But, anyway, he went right ahead."

#### LONG IN REALIZING DANGER

From the first understanding of the situation which could be gained from those who were left alive when everything was over, it was quite a while after the Slocum was first found to be on fire that the seriousness of the situation was understood by all of the officers and crew. Few of the passengers knew anything of the real danger they were in until the burning and drowning had begun.

Eddie Flannagan was the Slocum's mate. On excursion steamers the safety and comfort of the passengers are delegated to the mate, while the captain is in the pilot house properly, while the boat is in motion.

To Flannagan there came a deckhand and Steward McGann. He caught Flannagan by the shoulder and said:

**MATE WARNED OF FIRE**

"Mate, there's a fire forward, and it's got a pretty good headway."

Flannagan jumped down through the dark space in the middle of the boat and turned the lever of the fire drill alarm. He sent McGann to warn Captain Van Schaick. The crew was not enough to handle so many passengers.

**BURNS THROUGH DECKS**

The fire crackled up through one deck after another, licking out far on the port side. There was a rush for the stern.

Some of the children thought the whole alarm was a joke and laughed and pummeled one another as they ran. The mothers didn't. They lumbered after, trying vainly to keep hold of some one garment on the bodies of each one of their youngsters.

**FIRE DRILL PROVES FUTILE**

Captain Van Schaick ran back from the pilot house and saw that Flannagan had two lines of hose run from the steamer's fire pumps toward the second cabin, and that the water was already spouting through them. The fire drill on the Slocum was always well done. It was held without any requirement of law once every week. But this fire was beyond any mere fire drill. It took Van Schaick only a minute to see that he ought to get his passengers ashore as soon as ever he could. He determined on the shore of North Brother Island.

It takes time to read of all these things. It took almost no time at all for them to happen. The yells and screams of the

few people who were caught on the decks below the hurricane deck forward were ringing horribly across the water. The roar and crackle of the oil-fed flames shut these screams off from the frightened mass of Sunday school people aft.

Kelk and Van Tassel had leaped into the crowds when the fire gongs rang. It was due to them that more women and children were not caught forward of the fire. They herded the people back like sheep until nearly the whole company were huddled together on the broad after decks.

#### **FIRE HEMS IN THE CROWDS**

The fire was eating its way back steadily. The people were getting more and more frightened. Mothers whose children had been separated from them in the rush were getting frantic, and dashing madly through the crowd. Confusion grew almost as fast as the fire at the other end of the boat was growing. Van Tassel took to the rail side of the boat.

#### **POLICEMAN DOES HIS BEST**

"Now everybody keep quiet," he shouted again and again, waving his big arms reassuringly at women who were grasping the rail and already leaning over and trying to make up their minds to jump.

Pastor Haas had found his wife and his twelve-year-old daughter Gertrude and had put them near the back of a companionway, where he was sure he would find them. He, too, tried to calm his people.

He might as well have tried to calm the whirling tide that was bearing the burning steamer along to its end. They were fighting now. Mothers who had started side by side with an endless fund of sympathy for domestic difficulties, were fighting like wild beasts.

Screams came from the water. A woman looked over and saw three children floating by on the starboard side. The head of one of them was covered with blood where a blade of the paddle wheel had wounded it.

#### **WOUNDED CHILD IN WATER**

The woman screamed just once, so loud that for a moment all the other horrible sounds of the boat seemed hushed. She pointed a finger at the little bodies that were floating back from the forward decks.

"Frieda!" she screamed. "Mein Frieda!"

#### **MOTHER LEAPS TO HER DEATH**

Before a hand could have been raised to stop her, if, indeed, there was any one there cool enough in that moment to raise a hand, the mother jumped on the seat and threw herself over the rail. She sank, whirling over and over in the swift current. So did the children.

But other bodies came. As the flames worked upward and backward more and more people were being driven to jump to escape being burned.

Mercifully, the pilot house, away forward and up in the air, was in a position which the flames found it hard work to reach. The captain and his pilots were able to keep steering.

It seemed to be the captain's purpose as he came up past One Hundred and Thirtieth street to try to find a berth on the Bronx side of the stream. There are a number of coal and wood yards along there and some factories. River men said that he might well have carried out his plan. The land forces of the fire department could have reached him there. But he said that a tug warned him off, telling him that he

would only be setting fire to the shore buildings, and would not be helping his people in the least if he ran in there.

#### TUGS CHASE AFTER BLAZING BOAT

At any rate the Slocum, observed now by hundreds of horror-dazed people on both sides of the stream and on the islands, turned again toward North Brother Island. Steamers and tugs from far down stream were making after it. The department of correction boat Massasoit was on the far side of North Brother Island. Its captain lay in wait for the Slocum, not knowing through what channel it would come. From down stream came the slim white Franklin Edson, the health department boat.

Thence, too, came the sturdy little Wade with its great-hearted little captain, Jack Wade. There came also the tugs Theo and Easy Time, tooting their whistles, headed for the burning steamer.

#### BIG BOAT A SCENE OF HORROR

On board the Slocum horror was being piled on horror too fast for any one to keep track of them. The fire leaping now high above the frame work of the steamer's hog back and roaring with a smoky glare of red tongues up thirty feet over the tall brown smokestacks, had begun to scorch the edges of the compact mass of women and children who were crowding back out of its way at the rear end of the boat.

"The first I knew," said one of the survivors, a young woman, "was when I heard a cry of 'Fire!' raised. We heard a wild scramble of feet overheard and saw a little cloud of smoke curl upward. I asked a man, who was in a near-by stateroom hurriedly putting a lot of money into a small bag, if there was any danger. He assured us there was none at all,



but he took his money and hurried away. I since learned that he was the purser.

#### **RUSH TO THE STARBOARD SIDE**

"All of a sudden everybody seemed to be rushing toward the starboard side of the steamer. When the starboard railing of the second deck gave way, hundreds of women and children and a few men fell into the water, which was black with human forms packed so densely that we might have stepped out and walked over them as on a floor. Most of them seemed to be paralyzed with fear the moment they struck the water and made hardly any effort to save themselves from sinking.

"Unless they were strong swimmers there was nothing to save them after they reached the water, for there was not a single one in that mass of humanity that had a life belt. These were so high overhead that they could not be reached in a hurry, and besides, were fastened with strong wires. I tugged at one for a long time, but to no purpose, for it broke, and I found then that it was filled with ground cork instead of with the solid cork, which I have been told is required by law. Others must have had the same experience, for the stuff was scattered all over the deck. When the tug Sumner came up they threw a rope to my father, and we jumped together, holding on to the rope, and were pulled on board the tug.

#### **THE PREACHER A HERO**

"Pastor Haas showed himself a real hero, and received most of his injuries while seeking to save a number of children whom he had ushered into the cabin to protect them from the flames which were then rapidly eating their way toward the stern. He tried to close the forward door to shut off the

flames from where the little ones were. The door would not budge, and Dr. Haas was terribly burned in the effort. The next moment I saw him rush toward his wife, who was standing near the railing, and jump overboard with her hand clasped in his. I noticed another woman fall on top of them, which made him lose his hold, and that was the last I saw of the pastor and his wife."

## CHAPTER III

### HARROWING DETAILS

No Chance for Rescue—Into the Racing Tide—Writhing Figures in the Burning Wreckage—Ablaze from Stem to Stern—The Captain and Pilots at their Stations—A Heroic Coxswain—Brave Jack Wade—Fireboats Sound the Alarm—A Boy's Brave Fight—The Burning Hulk Sinks—Refuse to Lend a Helping Hand—Over Four Hundred Dead on North Brother Island—Divers Begin the Search for Bodies—Statement of the Pilot—Sad Features.

The greater number of these people by far were on the Bronx side of the decks. They seemed to feel, poor creatures, that, small as their chance for rescue was, when it came it would come from the thickly populated shore rather than from the bleak, rocky, bare spaces on the islands on the star-board side.

The Slocum was now opposite One Hundred and Thirty-eighth street, heading partly across the river towards North Brother Island.

### PEOPLE ON SHORE HELPLESS

On the contagious diseases landing the fire fighting force of the island, under the direction of Superintendent of Outdoor Work Doorley, was drawn up, with two lines of heavy hose connected with the island's salt water pumping station.

To have gone to them, according to men who are familiar with the run of the tide along there, would have been worse than useless. The getting of the boat's broadside against the

stream, they say, would have whirled it helplessly out into the stream.

#### **WHAT THE SPECTATORS SAW**

But as they watched and waited, this is what the onlookers saw:

With a crack and a choking volley of screams that set on edge the teeth of men hardened to almost any form of death or evidence of pain, the port rail of the Slocum's after deck gave way and all the people near it slipped and slid, over one another, into the water.

#### **VICTIMS Poured INTO THE RIVER**

It had hardly gone 200 yards further on—indeed, by ones and threes and twos and sevens gayly-dressed women and little ones all in white were seen whirling down from the deck into the racing tide—when worse came.

The steamers and tugs in pursuit were catching up one woman here or a child there, but it was not much they could do. The tide was too swift and there was too much work to be done ahead to warrant any delay over individuals.

#### **DECKS FALL INTO THE FLAMES**

There was a puff like a great cough down in the Slocum's vitals. A red, starry cloud of sparks, and smoke, and angry flames shot up and the greater part of the superstructure aft plunged forward into the flames.

How many hundreds of lives were snuffed out in that one instant nobody will ever know. Outsiders could see writhing, crawling figures in the burning wreckage, slipping down farther and farther into the flame whirl until they were gone. As bees cling along a branch when they are swarming, there

was a thick clustering of women, all screaming, and boys and girls around the edges of so much of the superstructure as was still standing.

#### HURLS INFANTS TO SAFETY

Farthest back, Kelk, the policeman, was standing, catching up some of the smallest children and hurling them out at the decks of the nearest following steamers. Mothers threw their children overboard and leaped after them. When the stanchions burned out and the superstructure fell, families were separated.

Thus it happened to Dominie Haas. He had given up as hopeless any effort to get the people quiet, and had just found his wife and daughter. The crash came and he lost them.

#### STEAMER NEARLY ALL ABLAZE

Now the big steamer, ablaze for more than two-thirds of its 250 feet of length, was rounding the point of North Brother Island. The flames were reaching out for the pilot house. The door toward the fire was blackened here and there and the paint blisters were bursting with little puffs of fire. But the hundred nurses and the tuberculosis patients—all the others had scarlet fever and other contagious diseases and were kept indoors—gathered eagerly on shore waiting a chance to help, saw old man Van Schaick and his pilots at their wheel straining forward as though by their own physical efforts they could make the boat go faster.

It was at no moment certain that the pilot house would not shrivel up and vanish in a puff of smoke. If it did, the *Slocum* would never get close enough to the shore to make it

possible for help to be given to the passengers who were still living.

#### SAILORS BENT ON SINGLE PURPOSE

And the two old men and the younger, with never a look backward, whirled their wheel and braced it, and, with their teeth set close together and never a word, kept their eyes fixed on the one little stretch of rocky beach where it was possible for a steamer as big as the Slocum to be beached accurately and safely.

They succeeded in the fight that they had been making all the way from the sunken meadows, where the Seawanhaka was beached years ago. Captain Van Schaick was past the sunken meadows before he knew that he had a fire on his boat, and the tide was too strong to let him turn back to beach it there, even had there been any way of rescue out there in the middle of the river.

#### SWIMS TO THE RESCUE

The Massasoit, which was the closest boat behind the Slocum when it struck, drew so much water that it was impossible to get its bow within fifty feet of the Slocum. It made no difference to Carl Rappaport, the coxswain. He took a running jump forward over the bow and swam toward the burning steamer. Like a big red-headed St. Bernard he grabbed two babies and swam back to his own boat.

Meantime the captain of the Massasoit was putting boats overboard as fast as he knew how. When these were out, picking up people from the water wherever they could, Rappaport was floundering around helping from the water side.

The Franklin Edson, with its new, clean coat of white and gilt paint, drew less water than the Massasoit and went right

up to the Slocum's side so that people jumped from the burning decks and were dragged back to safety. For safety was not on the forward deck of the Edson. It needs a new coat of paint. The forward windows were cracked by the heat and there are marks of the flames on the forward thirty feet of its superstructure.

#### **JACK WADE THE HERO**

Jack Wade, master and owner of his little tug, was pitching his life preservers over, turning loose his boats, and pushing up so close to the burning decks that the hair on his brawny arms frizzled, and his men, John McDonnell, Ruddy McCarroll, and Bob Brannigan, had their shirts burned off their backs. It was not worth while afterward to attempt to get this crew to tell how many lives it saved. They had been too busy to count.

#### **RUDDY McCARROLL IS USED UP**

Ruddy McCarroll was plainly beaten out for the first time in his life. The effort which finished him was getting a heavy German woman over the side single-handed. When she was aboard she began to scream. Ruddy laid himself out flat, face down, along the rail, and was sure he was going to die, he was so exhausted. He heard the fat woman say:

"Wake up! You, wake up!" but he didn't know she was talking to him.

"There is my Claus in the water!" she screamed. Without more ado she shoved Ruddy overboard. He floundered around, caught the boy, and managed to get aboard again. The fat woman grabbed Claus and started down the boat with him. Ruddy shook his head with a look that was almost a smile, and then fell on his face in a faint.

**FIRE ALARMS RING ON SHORE**

Along the shore as the burning steamboat had come along the stream on the breast of the tide, fire alarms had been rung. One alarm at the foot of One Hundred and Thirty-eighth street was rung three times. There was nothing the firemen could do when they came except just one thing, which was done at once. The captain of the first company to arrive at the river's edge telephoned for the fireboat Zophar Mills. It came up the river, screaming, with a voice that outscramed all the other whistles which were being blown in every factory and yard from which the blazing steamship could be seen.

The captain of the Mills saw that the Slocum was beached and that rescuers were more needed than pumpers of water. He ran into One Hundred and Thirty-eighth street and took aboard Captain Geohagan and all the reserves of the Alexander avenue station and took them over the river to help in the work of picking people out of the water from rowboats and tugs. There is a big marble works opposite North Brother Island. The boss, when he saw the Slocum, knocked off all work and sent his 150 men across in any and every sort of a craft that they could lay their hands on.

**GOOD WORK DONE**

Even though relieved by these evidences—but one or two out of hundreds that happened unrecorded—of the working of good and brave human hearts, the misery and the horror were going on almost undiminished. The great hulk was still burning like a furnace on top of the water. Living men and women were still rolling out from the decks. Hundreds sought shelter from the heat under the paddle boxes, which



seemed slow to burn. In there, among the wet paddle blades, the rescue boats were filled again and again.

#### **BOY TRIES TO CLIMB FROM FIRE**

Long after every one had given up any idea that there was a human life in the forward part of the boat, except those of Captain Van Schaick and his two pilots, there was a shout of surprise and agony on shore.

A small boy—he seemed about six years of age—climbed up to the flagstaff and began to make his way up, as though to get away from the deck, which was burning under him.

He climbed a little higher and a little higher with each jump of the tongues of flame from below until he was almost at the top. He was a sturdy looking little chap, and each time he found he had not gone far enough he would shake his yellow curls determinedly and work his way a few inches more. It was a brave fight. He lost it.

The flagstaff began to tremble just as a boat was getting in position to get at the child. The staff fell back into the floating furnace and the boy with it.

#### **PHYSICIANS DO GOOD WORK**

As fast as the dead and living were brought ashore the weaker of the convalescent patients took them and carried them up on the lawn. There was a constantly increasing number of physicians coming over from the mainland, some of them in rowboats. Every burnt woman or child who showed any signs of life was carried into the buildings. The nurses' quarters and the doctors' quarters and the stables and every place that had a roof where cots could be erected was filled—except those in which there were contagious diseases.

**DEAD LAID ON THE GRASS**

The dead were laid out in long rows on the grass. The living walked or were carried by them. Heart-rending recognitions were there, women throwing themselves on the bodies of their children, children catching at their mothers' hands and begging them to "wake up," and screaming inconsolably when they realized that there would be no waking up.

There was too much to be done at once for any list to be kept of those who were rescued. The Rev. Mr. Haas was pulled out of the water, in which he had fallen soon after the boat beached, and found not to be badly injured. But it was more than an hour before he could be found and identified.

**HARDLY ANY COULD SWIM**

One reason for the heavy loss of life ascribed by those who assisted in the work of rescue was the apparent inability of all the passengers of the Slocum to swim. Scores were drowned within a few steps of firm footing. Not a few were drowned who might have saved themselves by standing up. Captain Van Schaick and his pilots and all the rest of his crew except Steward McGann and Chief Engineer Conklin swam ashore without much difficulty after they once got safely into the water away from the flames.

**HULK TOWED OUT OF WAY**

When the Zophar Mills' commander was satisfied that there was no more chance of saving any lives he ordered that the burning hulk be got out of the way. With the help of several of the other tugs it was yanked out into the stream and floated, ablaze from stem to stern, over to Hunter's Point, a mile away, where it grounded again and burned to the water's

edge and sank, with its yellow smokestacks tilted over to the south and one of the big yellow paddle boxes visible.

#### **WRATH FOR COLD-BLOODED CRAFT**

There was great wrath expressed by all the people who watched the steamboat's blazing progress up the river because of the actions of one or two of the craft which did not go to the rescue. The captain of the ferryboat Bronx, which crossed from One Hundred and Thirty-fourth street, right under the stern of the Slocum, without going close enough to catch any of those who were jumping from its decks, got a great share of the blame. Then there was a steam yacht which bobbed along within a cable's length through almost all of the Slocum's pitiful journey, and never once went close enough to lend a hand. The same accusation was made against a black steam yacht with yellow funnels.

#### **DEAD IN WORTHLESS CORK JACKETS**

On many of the bodies which were recovered were life preservers, which seemed to have been perfectly worthless. Assistant District Attorney Garvan's attention was called to a collection of the Slocum's life preservers which had been made by Captain Jack Wade. These life preservers were covered with such flimsy stuff that they could be ripped open by a scratch with one's thumbnail. They were filled with ground-up cork, instead of with solid chunks, which would retain their buoyancy. Captain Wade, who threw \$100 worth of really good life preservers to the Slocum's passengers, was highly indignant over the matter.

#### **STEADY WORK RECOVERING BODIES**

The work of recovering bodies went on steadily from the time when all hope of saving more lives ended. Nearly a

hundred policemen, assisted by men from all the hospitals and morgues, went out in small boats and waded out and worked from the shore and from the decks of the tugs with grappling hooks, dragging up all that was left of the victims of the disaster. The bodies of some of those who were burned were in indescribably horrible condition.

#### **BODIES TOWED BEHIND ROWBOAT**

In the rush and confusion there were many things which in the face of a disaster less appalling would have shocked the sensibilities of the most hardened man who witnessed them; such, for instance, as the sight a newspaper tug encountered on one of its trips across to North Brother Island, a rowboat, with two men at the oars, and a small boy, who was holding a line by which were towed the bodies of three women, dressed all three in flimsy white dresses. Nobody was to blame. The boat would have been swamped with the three bodies inside.

#### **OVER 400 DEAD ON ISLAND ALONE**

Two hours after the disaster 436 corpses had been recovered at North Brother Island. Fifty had been recovered at other points. They included a dozen that had first been landed at Oak Point. More were coming in at the rate of twenty an hour. The police of the harbor squad, assisted by volunteers, were wading and rowing about the shore, picking them up with grappling hooks. So numerous were the corpses that early in the evening bodies were recovered at the rate of one a minute.

All the boats used by the police and other workers were equipped with lanterns. In addition lights were hung on poles that had been stuck in the mud along the shore of the island. The police boat patrol stood by constantly with a big

searchlight playing on the waters. The employees of the hospital rigged up temporary lines of incandescent lights along the lawn to aid those at work in tabulating and searching the bodies.

#### **THE BODIES SEARCHED AND PHOTOGRAPHED**

As soon as the bodies were taken from the water they were laid in groups of four each. They were first tagged and then searched. All jewels, papers, and valuables taken from the bodies were thrown into huge bags. Each batch of valuables taken from a body was tagged with the number corresponding to that on the body.

After the searching and tagging of the bodies had been completed, photographs were taken of the groups of four; this was done by the use of flash lights.

The first photograph was taken at eight o'clock at night. It was a group of four, consisting of a woman and three children. The bodies were stretched out along the lawn with the heads propped against the wall of the scarlet fever hospital.

It was also decided to send all the valuables taken from the dead to the office of Coroner O'Gorman at One Hundred and Seventy-seventh street and Third avenue.

#### **BODIES ALL GOING TO ONE PLACE**

Commissioner McAdoo first proposed the scheme of sending all bodies to the morgue at Twenty-sixth street, where arrangements had been made to turn the big charities department dock into a temporary morgue.

Mr. McAdoo explained that the bodies would then be brought nearer to their homes, and could thus be more easily identified. Coroner O'Gorman readily assented to this plan, although it took the cases out of his jurisdiction in the

Bronx and transferred the bodies to the authorities in Manhattan.

#### **DIVERS COME TO RESCUE**

At seven o'clock Wednesday night a Merritt-Chapman wrecking tug, with full crew and three divers, reached North Brother Island. The wrecking crew and two of the divers had come at the call of Commissioner McAdoo. The other came over in a boat and offered his services. He was John Rice, who went to Boonton, N. J., and brought the body of Bill Hoar to the surface, when others had failed to do so. Rice was gladly welcomed, and, joining the others in the wrecking crew, hurried to the charred and sunken steamer to recover the bodies fastened in and about the wreck.

#### **POOR LIGHT IMPEDES WORK**

Word was sent back by them some time later that the work would be difficult, owing to lack of light. It was also stated that the single wrecking tug was hardly able to cope with the situation, and Commissioner McAdoo decided to summon more help.

He then telephoned to the authorities at the Brooklyn navy yard asking if they would help out, and received word back that a powerful navy tug, fitted up with searchlights, would be dispatched to the scene immediately.

#### **NAVAL RESERVES CALLED ON**

Commissioner McAdoo had already called on the First Battalion, New York Naval Reserves, to come to his assistance. Commander Franklin, who received the message, sent two launches, the Oneida and Seneca, in command of Lieutenant Barnard and full crews made up of picked men from the New

Hampshire, lying at the foot of East Twenty-fourth street. Commander Franklin ordered these men to report to Commissioner McAdoo, and they did so as soon as they reached North Brother Island.

One of the launches was sent to aid the harbor police in the recovery of bodies from along the shore and the other was used as a ferry between the island and the foot of East One Hundred and Thirty-sixth street.

Dr. Darlington, president of the health board, arrived early in the afternoon and was still seen superintending his men and hustling with his coat off at midnight. Coroner O'Gorman was also still there at that hour.

#### DIVERS QUIT WORK ON WRECK

At eleven o'clock Wednesday night Diver John Rice returned from the wrecked steamer with four bodies of children. They had been found in the afterhold of the vessel. Rice said that the divers had decided to make no more descents into the wreck, as it was plain to them that their labor would be useless.

"We searched the forward part of the boat," said Diver Rice, "and could find no bodies. The ship had settled down with a crash in the middle and we couldn't explore that part. I suppose there are a lot of bodies there, but the wreckers will have to get in their work before any one can get in the center of the vessel.

"The wrecking crew are going to work on that part and they say that if necessary to clear it they will split the boat in two parts. We divers will go out in the morning again."

**ALL THE ROPES WERE BURNED**

Edward Van Wart, the pilot of the General Slocum, said: "When I first discovered the presence of fire on the steamer I decided to make for the first dock that I could find, but in a moment I was informed that all the ropes by which we usually tied up had been burned. I then decided to make for the first point of land where there were no rocks and beach the vessel, and this I did. The presence of rocks all along the shore made it impossible for me to beach the vessel any sooner than I did."

Van Wart was taken before Coroner Berry and was paroled in the custody of his counsel.

**THE BEST CITIZENS**

Said Police Commissioner McAdoo: "The saddest and most pitiful thought in regard to this disaster is that it fell upon the very best citizenship in the community—the industrious, frugal, peaceful, well-behaved people of German origin. There are no better people in New York, and it was pathetic to look at the new shoes, the neat, tidy and attractive dresses, the articles of jewelry, the savings bank books. The maternal and paternal affection so strong in these people was shown in the many bodies found together with locked arms.

**NEW YORK YACHT CLUB DEFENDED**

Members of the New York Yacht Club were considerably annoyed at the reports that a yacht flying the flag of the club had passed the General Slocum when the fire was at its height, and had made no effort to assist in rescuing the passengers.

The boat under discussion proved to be the Candida, and the following letter was issued by its captain:



"We arrived from the eastward at the scene of the wreck just as the Slocum was beached, about 10:10 a. m. Our lifeboat was lowered at once, and sent in charge of the mate to save lives. He proceeded at once to pick up those people who were hanging on under the starboard paddlebox.

"When the boat was loaded she transferred the people to the tugs and other large craft which surrounded the wreck. Our boat remained at this work for more than an hour, and when it became apparent that no more effective work could be done by this boat, about 11:30 a. m., as the wreck by this time was surrounded by craft of all descriptions, she returned to this vessel.

"The fact that the yacht was hove to while the lifeboat was doing the work of rescue evidently led certain persons to think that this vessel rendered no assistance. The log of this vessel will prove this statement, and is open for inspection at any time."

#### **GHOULS AT WORK**

Charges were made that after the burning of the Slocum there was wholesale robbery of the dead in the river, by a gang of men who put out from points on the Long Island shore in boats. Robert Brandt, of Brooklyn, while protesting at the morgue about a pair of diamond earrings which were missing from the body of Mrs. Margaret Zerdes, said:

"I know positively that when Mrs. Zerdes went to that picnic she had on a very handsome pair of solitaire earrings. They were of the hanging sort. I took the number given me by the morgue officials to the coroner's office in the Bronx and they turned over a wedding ring to me, nothing else. They said they had no other property belonging to Mrs. Zerdes.

Unless these diamonds were stolen from this woman's ears they would not be missing.

"I have made some inquiries about what happened about the wreck, and I am informed that when the river was full of bodies a number of men put out from College Point in small boats. Some of these men, I am told, were seen taking jewelry from the dead and then passing the bodies along to other boats, which took them ashore."

#### USELESS FIRE HOSE

On the day following the disaster a great deal of evidence touching the origin of the fire, and the conditions which prevailed on board the boat, was collected by Coroner O'Gorman. Several feet of the fire hose of the General Slocum, was recovered from the wreck by one of the divers. The hose was burned at both ends and on a fold in the middle, as though it had never been unreeled.

Former Fire Marshal Freel, who examined the section of hose, said that while it might serve its purpose if an attempt had been made to use it in the case of the Slocum, it would be seriously defective if the hose had to be used at any considerable range. He said:

"The rough weave of the canvas on the inside causes a considerable loss of force at the nozzle on account of the friction with the water. Roughly, in such hose as that the loss due to friction would be about forty pounds to a hundred feet of hose. The hose is porous also and leaks somewhat. That is, it 'sweats,' causing a further loss of power, until the fiber of the hose swells and makes the coating thoroughly impervious to water. That would take about ten minutes."

**STEEL WIRES ON THE BOATS**

From the sunken vessel one of the starboard steel lifeboats was also brought up. The boat was still attached to the davits, to which it was lashed by steel wires instead of ropes. The boat was crumpled up in the middle, as if it had been paper, and great gaps had been sprung in its bow, but boatmen say it would have been serviceable if it had ever been got into the water.

**STORY OF FIRE'S START**

Charles H. Lang, who used to be a lifeguard at Coney Island, said the General Slocum was on fire between Fiftieth and Fifty-fifth streets. As a result of his statement made to the police at the Information Bureau, he was summoned to appear before the coroner.

Lang said he was on the upper deck with his wife, his brother-in-law and sister-in-law and his five-year-old son when two of the crew came on that deck and told another deckhand, in his hearing, that there was a fire on board. Lang said he looked at the Manhattan shore and knew the boat was between Fiftieth and Fifty-fifth streets by the brewery he recognized. He gathered his family together, told them something was wrong and got them to a place on the boat where the crowd was small.

Just above Eighty-eighth street he saw an officer of the boat come on deck and tell two deckhands there was a fire on board. Lang and his family knew how to swim and all escaped save his cousin, Amelia.

**TO REASSURE THE PUBLIC**

Everything indicated that steamboats carrying passengers in New York harbor and neighboring waters would come in

for a rigid reinspection by the federal officials, in spite of the opposition of Robert S. Rodie, supervising inspector of this district. Mr. Rodie's devotion to the rules and regulations of the department was weakened apparently by the disclosures concerning rotten life preservers and inadequate fire-fighting facilities since the Slocum disaster happened. He declared repeatedly that he saw no necessity for another inspection of the excursion vessels and that none would be made unless upon the written application of the owners or masters of the boats.

#### OTHER BOATS TO BE INSPECTED

His attitude aroused the city officials, who felt that the people would never be satisfied until assured in the most positive manner that every excursion steamer, barge and ferry boat was properly equipped for the protection of life in case of an accident.

The following letter was sent to Secretary Cortelyou by Mayor McClellan:

"The awful calamity which has befallen the city in the loss of the lives of so many hundreds of its inhabitants while on board the steamer General Slocum in the Sound on the 15th instant, impels me to invite your attention to the propriety of an immediate inspection by the United States government of all passenger carrying boats in the waters adjacent to New York City."

#### COULD NOT USE THE HOSE

W. E. Ortman, who had charge of the icecream stand on the Slocum, said that he was near the wheel-house at the time the fire became known. He saw several of the crew trying to fasten the hose to the standpipe. After much difficulty they

succeeded in doing so, but the threads on the hose were so worn that when the water was turned on the hose at once fell off.

"I then saw," he said, "that the boat was doomed. I noticed a man standing on the ledge which runs around the wheel-house, and I got out there with him. A woman was standing beside him. Finally he jumped, but made no effort to save the woman. I finally jumped off and managed to keep my head above water until I was picked up by a tug."

#### **MORGUE HELPER INSANE**

Driven insane by the long strain of his work among the bodies of the victims of the General Slocum, Walter Watson, twenty-nine years old, one of the attendants at the morgue, was found wandering aimlessly about the streets, the morning after the disaster, by a policeman. He was stumbling along with vacant eyes, and occasionally broke forth into incoherent mutterings which were like this:

"I can't identify that body. Take it away. Bring me another one. No, I can't identify that, either. Take it away."

Schneider took him into custody, and he was later sent to the psychopathic ward of Bellevue. The physicians there found that he had been at work steadily in the temporary morgue on the Charities Department pier from the time the bodies began to arrive till Saturday night, when he disappeared.

#### **NUMBER OF DEAD UNDERESTIMATED**

Dr. Darlington, health commissioner, who went to the morgue to see how the work there was advancing, reiterated his previous statements that the number of dead would eventu-

ally be found to be much larger than now was apparent. Dr. Darlington said:

“In explanation of what to the uninformed might seem to be so high an estimate, the fact should be remembered that most of the bodies recovered near North Brother Island were at the northerly end of the island. People began jumping or were thrown or pushed off when the steamer was at the sound end, and there was a continuous stream of unfortunates going into the water long before the steamer was beached. Few of these have been found.

“In the last two days it has been learned that aboard the steamer were many young women—most of them domestics—who had not been long in this country. Though they had been attending St. Mark’s Church, there is no certainty that they were sufficiently well known to have been reported as missing.”

#### **IDENTIFIED BY WEARING APPAREL**

Alfonse Ebling went to the morgue looking for the bodies of his wife and his son, George, five years old. The identification of his wife’s body was made from pieces of wearing apparel and jewelry. When directed to the box containing the body Ebling threw himself across the box and wept. He repeated his wife’s name again and again and called to her to return to him. Finally he fainted. Two policemen carried him away. When he revived he returned to the coffin.

#### **RATHER DROWN THAN BURN**

In a family in Seventh street a little girl is now alive because of what one of the victims of the accident—a man—did before he perished himself. Grabbing the little girl, whose dress had already caught fire, he said:

"I would rather see you drown than burn to death."

Fortunately neither of these alternatives proved to be the fate of the little girl, for when she struck the water she was seen by the crew of a tugboat and pulled out.

#### **SUPPLY OF COFFINS RUNS SHORT**

Another sad feature revealed by the visitations was the discovery that because of the great demand made upon East Side undertakers the funerals were delayed, and coffins could not be furnished fast enough. In one of the homes so distressed, a funeral had been arranged. The mourners all collected and were sitting in the rooms adjoining the little parlor, but had to be informed in the end that the funeral could not take place.

#### **A SAD FEATURE**

It was a noticeable fact that the homes of the victims of the accident were generally neat and comfortable, typical in many ways of the care of the German housewives, in some instances lying dead in the rooms they took so much pride in keeping tidy. In one of these little homes on Fourth street a very aged woman sat alone beside the coffin in which lay her only sister.

The dead woman had for years been employed as governess in a family up town. She had taken her charges, three of them, to the excursion and perished with them. Although the family in which she had served so long had begged the privilege of burying the governess, the sister, though living alone, would not consent, and there she sat alone with her body.

**HOPED IN VAIN**

It was Otto Harnes, a twelve-year-old lad, who declared that among those he saw on North Brother Island after he swam ashore were his brother Herman, eighteen years old, and Rosa Wallace, a golden-haired little girl of eleven years, who lived at 214 East Eleventh street.

"Rose was my only child," said Mr. Wallace, "and was one of the prettiest little girls in this neighborhood. I hired a boat, and went to North Brother Island and inquired for her, but could find no trace of a child answering her description. A search of the hospitals was just as fruitless.

"Of course, I fear she is among the dead, but I cannot keep from hoping that maybe after all Otto really did see her, and that eventually she will be returned to me." Later, the bodies of both the children were found.

**AN ENTIRE FAMILY GONE**

On the top floor of a tenement sat Fred Diehl, with several friends who were trying to soothe his grief over the loss of his entire family—his wife and three children. When any one knocked at his door Mr. Diehl sprang up and opened it. A look of expectation was on his face, but it gave way to disappointment when he said, "Oh, I thought it was some one bringing them to me."

He told who his missing ones were and then said, "I have almost walked my feet off looking for them, and I can't find a trace of a single one. If this keeps up much longer I shall go crazy. I walk through the house and at every step a pain goes through my heart.

"There are their schoolbooks, just where they left them, I open a closet door and see their clothes, and I have to turn



away. I cannot believe that they will never return. Oh, they must come back! This is just a bad dream I am having, and soon I shall awake to find my wife and the little ones about me just as they have been in the past."

#### WENT WITHOUT PERMISSION

Willie Keppler had gone on the excursion without his parents' permission. He said he had first learned to swim at the foot of Pike street. So when he saw the fire on board the Slocum he shouted to two other boys who were with him, telling them they had better jump overboard and swim around until a boat picked them up. Keppler, who was on the hurricane deck, dived overboard.

"As soon as I hit the water," he said, "I started to swim out toward the center of the stream, but the tide was so strong. I went back five strokes every time I took one, so I made up my mind that I would not tire myself out, so I jist turned over on me back and floated. That's what we used to do down at the docks. You see, if a fellow wants to stay in the water longer than some one else, he must jist hold back his strength.

"So while I was a-floating they were a-jumping over the side of the steamer. Twenty would jump at once, and right on top of 'em twenty more would jump. Then there would be a skirmish of grabbing at heads and arms, and the fellows what could swim would be pulled down and had to fight their way up. Two women who got near me shouted for me to help them, and I tried to, but they were too big, and I had to break away to save meself. When I was in the water about half an hour they pulled me on a tugboat and chucked me up on the dock. I was so scared that I might git a licking for

going on the excursion without being let go that I stayed up in Harlem and slept in a park. Yesterday when I picked up a newspaper I saw me name among the missing, so I thought I'd come home and git the licking instead of breaking me mudder's heart. So I'm home, and me mudder only kissed me and me fadder give me half a dollar for being a good swimmer."

#### **LOST HIS MOTHER**

One little white-headed chap spent all day sitting on the stoop of his home, in Sixth street, waiting for the return of his mother, whose name was among those of the missing, "But I really don't think she will come back," he said, "because the last time I saw her she was standing beneath the place where the deck fell. I tried to get her to jump overboard before that, but she wouldn't because she had my sister with her. A big woman knocked me away from her, and I was thrown into the water. As a big man put me on the shore I looked around, and could not see mamma because the deck had fallen down."

#### **CITY DECIDED TO RAISE THE WRECK**

The owners of the General Slocum having refused to raise the wreck, claiming that it was the property of the insurance companies, the city decided to undertake the task in order to facilitate the recovery of any bodies that might be buried beneath it, and for the obtaining of any physical evidence that may throw light upon the cause of the disaster. The cost of raising the wreck was approximately \$12,000, and by Mayor McClellan's action Police Commissioner McAdoo was authorized to contract for the work at that price.

## CHAPTER IV

### HEROIC RESCUERS

Bravery of the Nurses—Florence Denning Saves Seven Women—Other Heroines—The Bravery of a Switchboard Girl—A Courageous Irish Girl—Lashed to the Burning Steamship—Flannery the Hero—Heart-Rending Appeals for Aid—Tugboat Men to the Rescue—The Awful Death of Three Little Babies—Two Men Save Sixteen Persons—Saves His Sweetheart—An Eleven-Year-Old Boy Shows Great Presence of Mind—Van Tassel the Intrepid Policeman.

It was through the heroic work of persons employed on North Brother Island, including physicians, nurses and orderlies, that many of the passengers on the General Slocum were saved. Even the patients in the tuberculosis hospital, though weakened by disease, rushed down to the beach as the victims were struggling in the water and aided in the rescue.

#### A DARING DEED

One of the bravest feats accomplished was that of Miss Florence Denning, a nurse in the tuberculosis hospital, who, aided by the other nurses, rescued seven women whose lives would have been lost but for her courage and the fact that she was a strong swimmer.

Miss Denning was standing on the east shore of the island when she saw the General Slocum, with flames shooting from her sides, pass by. Passengers were then jumping overboard in large numbers. Miss Denning, realizing that many persons were losing their lives, plunged into the water and swam with

all her strength toward them. Though hampered by her clothing, the young woman did not cease her work, swimming to the shore and back again until seven women had been saved by her. She then sank exhausted on the beach.

Though the other nurses could not swim, they boldly waded in the water to receive the unconscious victims brought to them by Miss Denning. The nurses who made it possible for Miss Denning to accomplish so much were Miss Martha Rutledge, Miss Eleanor Wrenn, Miss Hattie Walker, Miss Lamb, Miss Anna Lay, Miss Sloan, Miss S. C. Wolfstenholm, Miss Atkins, Miss Florence Rhodes and Miss E. Smith. Mrs. White, the matron, also assisted in the rescue work and later assisted in caring for the injured.

#### GIRL SAVES TWO BABIES

Miss Lou McKibbin, a young woman who operates the telephone switchboard on the island, when she learned that the Slocum was on fire, immediately telephoned to the police headquarters and then, throwing down her receiver, rushed to the shore. Seeing two babies floating near by, she plunged into the water and rescued them. The babies proved to be a little boy six months old and a girl somewhat younger.

One of the first persons on the island to see the burning vessel was Dr. McLaughlin. He immediately leaped into a boat and, rowing out, rescued four or five women. One of these was Miss Alfreda Rebenklau of 28 Eldert street, Brooklyn.

#### PHYSICIANS USE BOATS

Drs. Lord, Weihman, Herowitz, Cannon, Algeson and Watson, who are stationed on the island, also leaped into boats and rescued many women and children, and in the work



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### BOAT BRINGING SURVIVORS AND DEAD BODIES TO LAND

There were twenty-one bodies of adult women and the remains of nine children on the boat shown in the above picture. A dozen men were in readiness and, when the gang-plank was thrown out, one after another the bodies were carried to the piers and placed in coffins to be afterward conveyed to the morgue, where thousands had already assembled.



### FISHING UP BODIES FROM THE RIVER

This scene represents eight disfigured victims of the flames picked up in the river. They were found drifting with the tide some distance from the spot where they had sought to escape death from the fire-swept steamer. Most of these were young girls from twelve to eighteen years of age.

the physicians were assisted by the male nurses and orderlies several of whom swam to the struggling passengers and held them up till the boats arrived. In all about sixty persons were saved in this way.

Miss Mary McCann, a ward helper who came to this country from Ireland less than a month ago, proved herself one of the most courageous of all of the brave persons about her. She swam out to where the helpless passengers were struggling four times, each time bringing back some drowning person.

Dr. McLaughlin, in describing the destruction of the boat, said the upper deck seemed to suddenly collapse and disappear. In his opinion no less than 150 persons fell with the deck and lost their lives in the fire.

#### **SAVES SCORES OF LIVES**

The following description of the scene aboard the burning General Slocum was given by Captain Flannery of the tug Walter Tracey, who lashed his vessel to the burning steamship and took off 200 passengers:

"Until my dying day I will hear the anguished cry that went up as I cut loose from the burning boat," he said. "I stuck until my pilot house was afire. Then I cast loose and followed my men, leaning over the gunwales and grabbing at the children as they floated by in the river."

Captain Flannery and his men worked aboard the Slocum until the heat burned their shoes. His story of the panic and the work of rescue and the manifold horrors of death by fire and drowning is the most complete and graphic of the actual participants in the disaster. After landing his 200 passengers in Port Morris, he said:

"The Slocum was going through Hell Gate when I found that she was in distress and steered for her. I reached her side before any other craft and found that she was on fire. I ordered my men to lash us alongside and then we began the work of taking off the frantic children.

"It was terrible work, and my heart fails me now as I think of it. The little ones seemed to have lost all reason, and their cries and screams will echo in my mind for years to come.

#### **CHILDREN REMOVED TO TUG**

"I stayed alongside just so long as I could. It was getting hotter and hotter every moment, until the deck boards burned through the leather of our shoes. We didn't think of that at the time, however, and it wasn't until the flames burst from our pilot house that I gave the order to sheer off.

#### **CRIES OF TERROR AND DESPAIR**

"The cries that went up from the Slocum as we backed away were expressions of utter despair and terror.

"We extinguished the flames which had attacked the pilot house and continued through the Gate after the Slocum.

"As the children began to leap into the water I ordered all hands to catch them as they floated past.

#### **MANY CHILDREN TAKEN OFF BY BOATS**

"Every man on the boat that could be spared helped in this work of rescue. We could only make one grab for each body, for the reason that there were so many bumping that we could not devote our time to any particular one. To see the faces of those little ones, who drifted by struggling against death, but just out of our reach, was agony to every one of us. It was almost as great suffering for us as it was for them.



"We followed until the Slocum ran into water that was too shallow for our depth. I then ordered away several small boats and they succeeded in taking off loads of children. All those recovered by us were unhurt, so far as I could see.

"The scenes on board the Slocum as I came alongside were too horrifying for description. The little ones were running hither and thither, uttering heart-rending cries and appeals for aid. We could only do our best at helping the unfortunates, although it made a man feel like a criminal to think that he could not save every innocent life on board."

#### **FIFTY WOMEN AND CHILDREN RESCUED**

Rescue work of a courageous nature was done by Henry Rock, captain of the tugboat Franklin Edson, which is used to transfer patients to North Brother Island, and by Charles Johnson, the mate. The tug boat was lying at the foot of East One Hundred and Thirty-sixth street when Captain Rock saw the blazing steamboat pass by.

Quickly throwing off the lines which held the Edson to the pier, the captain rang for full speed and started for the Slocum. Running close alongside the blazing vessel, the crew of the Edson succeeded in rescuing fifty women and children, all more or less burned, and also recovered the bodies of nine women and a child.

So intense was the heat as the tug lay alongside the Slocum that her paint was blistered and her woodwork caught fire several times. Anticipating the danger before them, the crew of the Edson had uncoiled the fire hose of the boat ready for an emergency, and as fast as the woodwork caught fire it

was extinguished by the deckhands, who kept a stream playing continuously from the hose.

#### HEAT WAS UNBEARABLE

The heat was almost unbearable, but Captain Rock and his crew worked with desperate haste until they were forced to draw away or lose their lives and those of the passengers they had rescued. The members of the tug's crew expressed surprise that the captain of the General Slocum had not beached the steamboat before he did. They declared he could have run the vessel ashore on Manhattan Island, but instead proceeded farther up toward the Sound.

Another tug, which steamed up to the burning vessel and succeeded in recovering nine bodies, was the Margaret. All the bodies were those of women.

#### A SAD STORY

Lucy Hencken, fifteen years old, of 169 South Second street, Brooklyn, who lost her mother and brother, told the following thrilling story of her experience:

"When the fire started I was sitting with my mother in the rear of the boat. My brother was on one of the lower decks. As soon as we saw the smoke and heard the cries of 'fire!' my mother asked me to go below and find my brother. When I got down the stairway I found the crushed bodies of three little babies, who had been trampled upon in the terrible scramble. They were all still living, and I carried them up to my mother and put them on her lap. Then I went below again to find my brother. I saw him for a moment, and then he was swept away from me in the surge of men and women who were rushing from the flames.

"I succeeded in getting back to the upper deck, but when

I went to look for my mother and the three babies I had rescued, they were gone. With my mother and brother gone from me I didn't want to live any longer, so I jumped in. As I was going down a man on the tugboat Theo caught me with a boat-hook and dragged me on the deck of the boat."

#### HEROIC WORK OF TUGMEN

A tugman named Olsen and his partner, Andersen, jumped into the water and brought to the side of the tugboat Arnott eight persons, six women and two children. Three of the women were unconscious.

Olsen saw three children, not more than six years of age, floating near the shore. Jumping overboard, he rescued two. Holding their heads out of the water with his left arm, he used the right in swimming to the shore, where they were lifted to the bank by willing hands. Returning to the other child floating in the water, Olsen swam with it to the island. Although greatly exhausted, Olsen returned to the Arnott and was pulled aboard. Three times the tugboat caught fire from the flames from the Slocum.

#### YOUNG MAN SAVES SWEETHEART

"I was sitting on the lower deck with Miss Swartz when the fire started," related Henry Iden. "We had smelled smoke for about four minutes, but thought it came from the kitchen, where clam chowder was being cooked.

"Suddenly I noticed persons on shore waving their arms and I could hear them shouting. Then came the fire. I got two life preservers and put one on Miss Swartz and another on myself.

"We crowded to the rail and stayed there until the boat went aground, when over we went. The fire was so hot that

I kept ducking Miss Swartz under water every minute or so, and did the same myself. After a while we were pulled aboard a tug."

The faces of both Iden and Miss Swartz were blistered.

#### **BOY SURVIVOR SAVES THREE GIRLS**

Some of the survivors of the awful tragedy tell thrilling stories of their escape from the jaws of death.

George Gray, aged thirteen years, of 309 East Fourteenth street, told the following story of his experience:

"I was sitting on the rear of the upper deck with my two friends, Otto Hans and Albert Greenwall. The boat was just passing out of Hell Gate and going toward an island when I smelled fire.

"I said to Otto and Albert, 'Hey, boys, there's a fire,' and we jumped up on a seat and tried to pull down some life preservers.

"A lot of them were rotten and all the cork came out of them. Women and children around us were yelling something awful. While we were pulling at the life preservers a big cloud of smoke and flame came right up out of the center of the boat. Then the boat seemed to stop and the women began jumping overboard, and I saw some of them throw their babies in the water and jump after them.

#### **PASSENGERS JUMP FROM THE STEAMER**

"After the fire came up all around the deck the boat got started again, but the people kept jumping over. There were not any tugboats near us then, but soon I saw a lot coming to us. I was afraid to jump over, and got Otto and Albert to stay with me.

"We all had got life preservers for ourselves and for three little girls, whom we held on to when they tried to jump.

"While we were working getting the life preservers the tugs were coming at us fast, but all back of us in the water I could see men, women and children going down. Most of them couldn't swim at all, and went right down as soon as they jumped over.

"The first tug that came to us was the Director. It was a big boat and came right up near us as we were going toward the island.

"I jumped on to the boat, and then a whole crowd of people jumped on top of me. Half of them that jumped on the boat fell into the water between the side of the tug and the steamer.

#### RESCUES A LITTLE GIRL

"Pretty soon there were so many on her that her rear end was way down in the water and her bow way up in the air, but they kept jumping and slipping into the river and going down. I got a hold of a little girl's leg who was falling over, pulled her up and sat on her so as to keep her from being pushed over.

"As I was on the boat I saw a man on the upper deck take a baby and throw it into the water. The baby's hair was all on fire and she fell into the water near the tug and a man jumped over and got her and brought her on to the Director.

"As the tugs came around the boat everybody that was left tried to jump on them, and they jumped on top of each other, lots of them rolling off the decks of the tugs into the water. I saw a lot of young girls swimming toward the island who were picked up by rowboats.

"I saw two little girls who hadn't life preservers on, but who could swim, sink when a wave made by one of the tugs rolled over them. The women and kids couldn't hear the shouts of the men who had come on the tugs to rescue us.

"I saw about ten men jump overboard long before the tugs came and not one of them could swim. They were shouting for help and they all went down. After the Director had so many on her that I thought she was going to sink or turn over, she steamed for the New York shore, where we got off and a few were taken in wagons to the Elevated Railroad."

#### SAVES HIS GIRL FRIEND

John Tischner, aged eleven years, of 404 Fifth street, another survivor, described his experience and his rescue as follows:

"I was down on the lower deck with Ida Wousky, fourteen years old, who lives in the same house with me. We were eating ice cream when the flames burst out right near us. Everybody seemed to be yelling 'Fire!' and I saw a lot of women with their hair and dresses burning jump into the water long before any boats came near us.

"My friend, Ida Wousky, was going to faint, but I kicked her on the shins and waked her up. Then I got a lot of life preservers, most of them rotten, and after a long time I got one on Ida.

"The tugs were coming near us then, and I told her to jump. She wouldn't jump and I pushed her over. Then I jumped in the water myself and I got hold of her hair and held her up until the tug came and we were pulled out."

**TUG'S MAD RACE**

An exciting incident of the disaster was the attempt of the White Star Towing Company's Goldenrod to overhaul the flaming steamer after a hot pursuit.

"I sighted her coming up back of me about One Hundred and Thirty-second street," said Captain Hillery, of the Goldenrod. "I had the schooner Allison in tow. As she swept past me, I cast my schooner and put on all speed after the Slocum. She went like the wind. I only got to her after she had driven her nose into the sandbar at North Brother Island.

"Head first, sidewise, any way, hitting the rail, the deck, the water, men, women and children hailed down upon my decks from the Slocum's lower and middle decks. The crew and myself began to pass them to the stern. With eighty-five maimed and crippled, either aboard or hanging to the bow, I put for the Bronx shore.

"Back I ran, and with eighty-five more I raced for the New York shore. On the third trip the flames had eaten so far aft that I got but fifteen or twenty. I counted two hundred in all that I landed."

**WORKHOUSE HEROES**

Two of those who performed heroic duty in the deathwake of the General Slocum were John Merther and Dan Casey, prisoners in the workhouse on Riker's Island.

They sighted the burning vessel coming around Light House Point of North Brother Island, and without stopping to get permission of their guards launched a boat beached near at hand. Dr. Broder, of the workhouse staff, joined them. They were among the first to reach the burning

steamer. Going in almost to the blazing hull, they began the work of rescue.

Two trips to the shore and a record of thirteen dead and five living did they achieve before a collision with a fireboat wrecked their boat.

#### WHAT TWO STEVEDORES DID

Two stevedores were unloading lumber when the Slocum swept by ablaze. As the steamer passed within two hundred feet of the lumber-yard these men saw her port-rail forward give way before the awful pressure of the panic-stricken crowd, and hundreds of women and children fell into the water. The paddle-wheel beat down upon them and they were seen no more.

The two stevedores ran to the yawl hanging on the davits of one of the schooners, cut the falls, rowed her over to North Brother Island and got close as possible to the burning General Slocum. It was so hot under the lee of the fire that they had to jump overboard to keep their clothes from burning off. Each of them was scorched and blistered on face, head, neck and hands. But they saved more than thirty lives and they were happy.

"I'll never forget the horrors we saw," said one of these heroes. "We were among the first to get near the General Slocum, for we started before she was beached. There were so many women and children in the water that we could hardly dip the oars without striking a head.

"We picked up women and children by the hair. If they were alive we drew them into the boat; if not, we let the dead drop back in the water to wait until we had rescued the living."



**THROUGH FIRE AND WATER**

Mention has been made before of the splendid heroism of the employees of the hospital on North Brother Island. Not only men, but women unhesitatingly risked their lives to save those of others, and none were braver than the women nurses in charge of the wards set apart for the treatment of contagious diseases. Living almost isolated, as they do, many of the nurses have become expert swimmers, and several of these women struck boldly out from the shore and rescued many lives, while others stood in the river and aided struggling victims to gain the land. So intense was the heat, while they worked to save drowning men and women, that except in such an emergency they would not have thought it safe to remain within a hundred feet of the spot where the vessel was blazing.

But in spite of the heat there stood in the shallow water near the shore until the boat was lifted by the tide and drifted away into the main channel more than a score of men, and here and there a woman, who gave no thought except to the work they were called upon to do.

As a body was carried toward them they grasped it and passed it to the sea wall, where others stood ready to lift it to the bank. Small boats found ready hands to aid in lifting out the rescued and to speed the craft again to the side of the floating furnace.

In the beginning of what was the end for so many, a few had saved themselves by springing across a gangplank which was thrown from the vessel toward the shore, but while some thus saved themselves more were pushed from it before they had more than touched foot to it, so great was the rush made by the panic-stricken excursionists.

**A BRAVE POLICEMAN**

Van Tassel, the gallant policeman who worked so bravely saving women and children, was only stopped from his rescue work by utter exhaustion.

"I was detailed for duty on the General Slocum," said Van Tassel, "and when the fire broke out I thought only of the best way to save the children.

"I stood on the outside of the rail, passing the children into the tugs and trying to keep order. Every time I saw a little face turning its pitiful appeal to me I thought of my own two children at home, and struggled harder than ever to save them."

The heroic policeman worked at his life-saving on the outside of the rail, which was the only thing that saved his life when the deck fell.

After he had been there for what seemed ages to him, he felt a terrible blow on the back of the neck and fell unconscious into the water.

"I thought it was the deck that struck me, but people who saw say that it was the body of a big, fat woman who jumped from the deck.

**MADE HIMSELF A HUMAN RAFT**

"The water, of course, revived me, and I started for the shore. I found that I was too weak to swim, so I turned over on my back to float. I was soon surrounded by women and children, grabbing at me to save themselves. I called to them to keep calm and I would save them. Then I floated into North Brother Island with women and children clinging to me from head to foot."

## CHAPTER V

### THE SUNKEN SEPULCHER

**A Grewsome Task—Diver Finds Eighty Bodies of Women and Children—Pinned Down by Metal and Wood—In the Clutch of the Tide—A Shapeless Heap of Dead—Pitiful Forms Crushed by Beams—Bodies Floating Rapidly Away—The Work of Rice and Other Divers.**

The following authentic story of the aftermath to the terrible disaster is told by Diver Charles P. Everett, who explored the ruined General Slocum. He found pitiful evidences of the [fury of the fire in the charred hulk, many bodies being pinioned near the center of the vessel. Mr. Everett was engaged by the United States Government in 1898 to explore the wreck of the Maine in Havana harbor.

“With assistants and the crew of the steamer William E. Chapman I started for the scene of the disaster. We left East Twenty-third street, and I was inside the 175-pound armor by 6:15 p. m. The Slocum lay listed at about an angle of forty-five degrees to port. Her low side was in twenty-five feet of water, her stern in about sixty.

“Although the parts above water sweltered from the slowly dying heat, there was little smoke to impede my work. I was commissioned, if possible, to loosen the debris and beams which might hold, pent up, any bodies in the hold and to make a general survey of the real fury of the fire.

**INDICATED AN EXPLOSION**

"If I had not known what caused the frightful wreck I would have thought an explosion of some character had ripped the very bowels from the vessel and torn and lacerated her superstructure. The wreck was complete, absolute, and there is no use in trying to restore the hulk to any semblance of a vessel. The appetite of the fire must have been insatiable and probably could never by any human means have been curbed unless by just such submersion as occurred.

"I really dislike to get down to the important part of the story. No man cares to hurry the grewsome. Finally, after surveying the surface, I went slowly down into the tomb.

**SIGHT MADE HIM LOSE NERVE**

"While groping about in an endeavor to remove an intricate mass of wire rail guards from my path, or to plunge my way through it, I noticed a section of the hold, on my right, sag less than a foot. Immediately the ends of dresses and long, slowly moving, disheveled hair floated about from under beams and the general wreckage.

"I was at this time about the middle of the vessel. I crawled gingerly through the gloomy, disemboweled section to amidships. I thought I had my nerves under control. But I had had only a foretaste of the real extent of this calamity, which has wrung so many hearts and disrupted so many homes.

"There were at least eighty charred or pitifully distorted bodies of women and children in the center of the vessel. Like those I had just left, they were nearly all held in the same awful embrace of the flames.

"I finally came to the conclusion, after making many efforts

to extricate the bodies, that nothing but machinery can raise the shapeless mass of metal and wood that lies between the poor victims and human burial.

#### SCORES OF BODIES IN HEAPS

“The shadow of the walking beam—one of the only objects protruding above the surface—fell athwart something which was held, as in a vise, by a stanchion of what used to be a taff-rail. A beam lay on it, and on the beam lay the pitiful little frame of a child whose dress was held in the clutches of the thing beneath—the mother, evidently. I braced myself for what was to come and I peered around.

“Over on the leeward, or port side, where the debris lay in a shapeless heap as the thought of a drunken man, there were more things. Oh, a score of them! All caught in that implacable, fatal grip supplied by the crunching together of beams and stanchions and wooden supports and a thousand and one appurtenances of every excursion steamer.

#### EXTRICATED SEVERAL CORPSES

“One by one, so far as I could avoid the obstacles and prevent my lines becoming tangled in the maze, I tried to extricate the forms of those for whom mothers, or brothers, or sisters were wailing in hospitals or homes. A couple of bodies floated free of the tanglewood, but drifted away slowly—like the movement of a funeral, I thought at the time—into dark, obscure corners of the thing that men used to call a graceful, speedy steamer.

“Some of those waiting mothers and sisters and brothers will probably never again see the faces they loved, for the tide that swirls angrily around the watery grave is a thing not to

be cheated of its dead. I do not like to become a prophet of evil, nor to be mistaken for one. But I will hazard a guess that many bodies from which life was crushed in that awful tragedy will never again be seen. The tide will swirl them away.

#### ANGUISH ON VICTIM'S FACE

"If anybody had told me that the human countenance was capable of expressing such deep, unutterable anguish I would not have believed him—even if he were endowed with the superhuman power to fittingly depict it. I never fully realized the profound depth of this mother love until I summoned strength enough to peer into the faces that glimmered at me fitfully through the waters of the sound.

"Of those who, wooing pleasure, won death, a small group impressed itself indelibly upon my memory. Three children and a woman, who certainly was their mother, were pinioned against what I took to be part of a cabin detached from the whole.

#### CLUNG TO MOTHER'S DRESS

"The children clung to her dress just as if the life was still throbbing in their little hearts. But the mother, with a look of agony on her face, was kept from grasping the little ones by a big piece of iron—probably hurled aft from the machinery when the grounding crash came—which lay diagonally across her breast.

"The mangled remains of the General Slocum formed as complete a wreck as I have ever seen. I have been asked to draw a parallel, if possible, between this disaster and that which befell the battleship Maine. Comparison is impossible. Had that which overtook the Maine happened to the Slocum



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### SOME OF THE SURVIVORS OF THE DISASTER

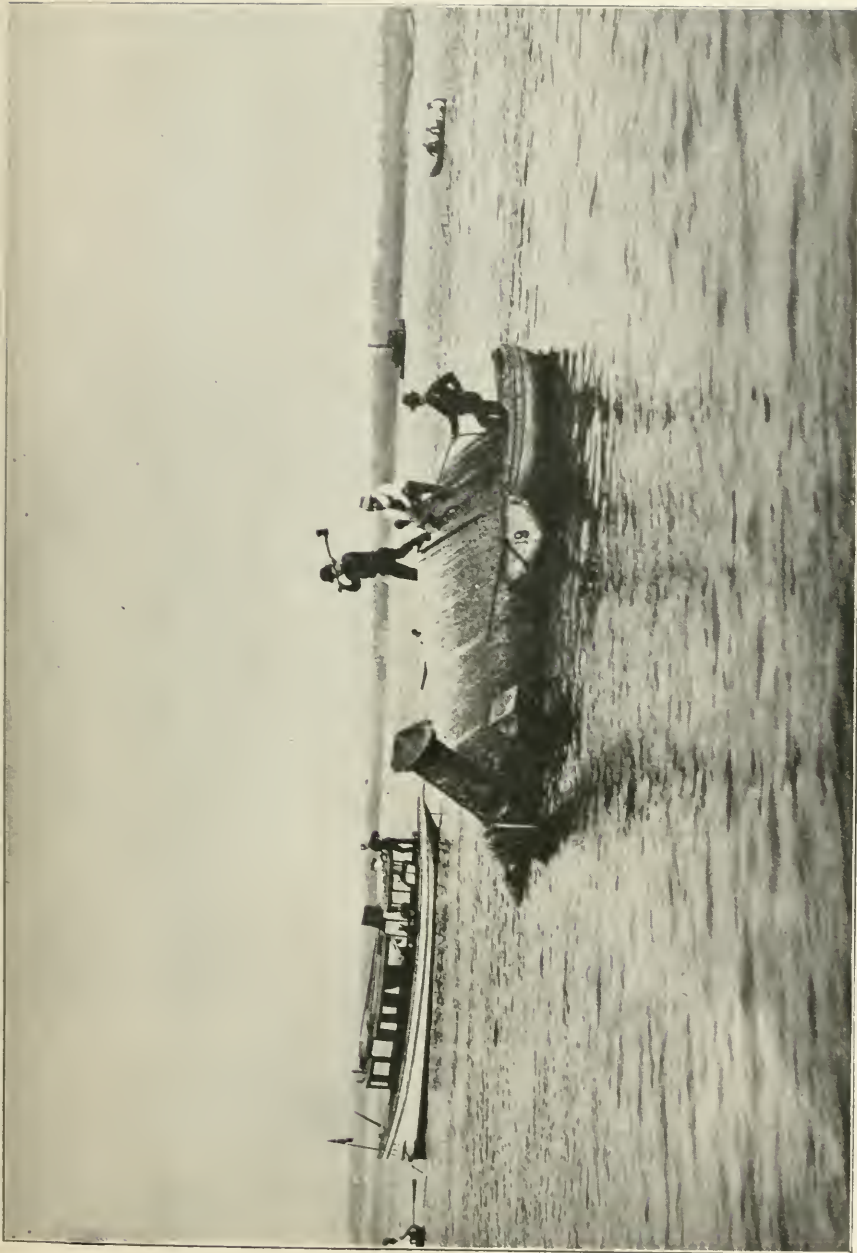
The matron of the hospital at North Brother Island, who directed the work of the nurses among the injured and dead, said that after the rescued had been revived they were given dry clothes and the entire hospital stock available was brought out for their use. All night the kitchens were kept busy preparing hot soup for the survivors. She stated it was fortunate that the boat was beached as it was.



#### A GROUP OF BEREAVED RELATIVES

The row of grief-stricken figures, in this picture, are of those who searched day and night for traces of their loved ones. Exhausted with fatigue and stunned with sorrow, they have sunk down at the steps of the morgue. Such scenes as the above were of common occurrence and in many instances despair was followed by suicide.





### BODIES WEDGED IN THE PADDLE-BOX

As the side supports and paddles of the wrecked steamer were chopped away, bodies could be seen packed tightly in the paddle-box. Twisted pieces of iron and fragments of heavy burning framework pinned down the remains of others. It is said that while these mangled corpses were being removed endurance almost failed the workers.



Courtesy of Leslie's Weekly. Copyright by Judge Co., 1904.

### BOATS REMOVING BODIES FROM THE SUNKEN WRECK

The sunken hulk of the General Slocum was hauled from the place where it was first beached to Hunt's Point because of the better bottom found there. As the wreck slid off the rocks the bodies began to float to the surface. Many of the bodies were seen on the wrecking tugs, sailboats and launches shown in the above picture.

there would have been no wreck to explore to-day and there doubtless would be no list of survivors to print.

"The vessels are so totally different that no line can be drawn to connect the two catastrophes. The Slocum's fate was less swift than the Maine's, but the former is irreparable.

"They tell me I was down in the tomb about an hour and a half. That must be a mistake. I was down there a year. There must be near a hundred bodies in the wreck."

#### WHAT OTHER DIVERS SAW

John Rice and David Tulloch, divers in the employ of the dock department, and Harry Hayer and Albert Blumberg, in the employ of the Merritt-Chapman Wrecking Company, explored the burned hull of the steamboat, which lay on the port side in sixty feet of water. Only part of her starboard paddlebox and the smokepipe of her donkey engine were above the surface, her big smokestacks having gone by the board.

Before the divers could explore the starboard paddlebox it was necessary to tear away part of its covering. It was not possible to get into the port paddlebox. Police Commissioner McAdoo gave authority to use dynamite, if necessary, to break up the wreck, but the divers said the wreck was going to pieces gradually. The divers found twenty-six bodies, which were taken to North Brother Island in launches before noon, and sent with other bodies to the morgue.

#### BURNED BODIES FOUND

After several hours of grewsome toil the divers reported to Police Inspector Albertson, at North Brother Island, that they had explored the entire wreck, and did not believe any more bodies would be found in it. Later, Rice found in

the hull a section of the spine and a part of the trunk of a boy, apparently eight or ten years old. Close to the paddle-box the diver found the badly burned body of a girl, probably ten or twelve years old. On one foot was an Oxford tie with a spring heel.

While the divers were working in the waters near the shore of North Brother Island, men in boats were dragging the bottom with boat-hooks at low tide. In this search twenty-five bodies were recovered, mostly by the men in the boats.

#### **PULVERIZED CORK ROUND ONE BODY**

One of these bodies was that of a woman about forty years old. Around her neck was what looked like a life preserver covering. Coroner O'Gorman found a quantity of pulverized cork inside of the woman's waist. He thinks she tried to save her life by donning a life preserver, and that it failed to work. When Coroner O'Gorman discovered the cork he called Captain Dean, of the Harbor Squad, and several reporters to see it.

"I may use this cork in fixing the blame for the death of this woman when her body is identified," said Coroner O'Gorman. "She had been cool enough to put on the life preserver, and had it been in good condition she might have had a chance for her life."

#### **CORONER O'GORMAN AROUSED**

The ghastly discoveries of the divers stirred Coroner O'Gorman deeply. Diver Rice secured a section of one of the Slocum's standpipes, which were placed in the steamer for no other purpose than to supply water in case of fire. Said Coroner O'Gorman:

"The section Rice gave me shows absolutely that the crew of the Slocum made no attempt to fight the fire. The valve was closed tightly. My opinion is that when we get hold of the other standpipe its valve will be found closed also. I am one of those coroners who have got to be shown. I don't put a bit of stock in the pretty tales of heroic fire fighting told to the reporters by the crew when it was all over.

#### **MORE WATERLOGGED LIFE DESTROYERS**

"I found to-day more life preservers, or life killers rather, with rotten canvas coverings split, and rotten, granulated cork half dribbled out of the place where good, honest, solid cork ought to have been. I found several life preservers that had been removed from bodies dragged from the bottom of the river. These were waterlogged, not burst.

"The evidence that Rice handed me I sealed up and sent to my office in The Bronx. When the people who are responsible for criminal neglect, criminal carelessness and criminal cowardice come to business with the coroner's office they will find an office that won't stand for any bamboozling. I may not sit myself, but you can bet every cent you've got that I'll make a good witness against somebody.

#### **QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED**

"Why wasn't that fire apparatus in order instead of being absolutely useless? Why was there no fire drill, no discipline that would have fought back the flames? Who of the crew tried to turn the standpipe valves? Why is it that the percentage of the crew lost is 4 1-3 (one man), while probably 75 per cent of the helpless passengers died? Why didn't Captain Van Schaick take that boat to shore a mile below North Brother Island? Why didn't he turn in at at least a half-

dozen perfectly safe and easily accessible places? Why were the life preservers rotten? Why were the lifeboats not swung from their davits into the river when the steamer ran a mile and a half from the time fire was first discovered? These questions will have to be answered.

"I've counted 508 dead persons, women and children for the most part, and have seen things that made water rats who worked with me sick, and I have smoked a cigarette and tried to keep a smile going all the time, but when these things come to light I get mad all over. That's all I've got to say, except this—I like my fiction between the covers of a book."

#### CANNON CALLED INTO PLAY

Toward the end of the search cannon were used to hasten the recovery of the Slocum's dead, after the thunderstorm brought up many bodies, and many more had been recovered. Under the direction of Police Inspector Albertson, dynamite was also called into play. Sticks of the explosive were attached to short pieces of timber to serve as buoys, the free ends riding clear of the water, while the dynamite was several feet below the surface. The improvised mines were placed at intervals of about one hundred yards around the wreck and touched off by time fuses.

Two of the Second Battery's field pieces, in charge of a firing squad, were put aboard a railroad float, and in tow of a tug conveyed to the wreck. Firing was begun as soon as the tug and float cleared the shore, and was continued as the journey toward the hull of the Slocum progressed, until thirty rounds had been fired.

Around Riker's Island the floating battery circled, Coroner O'Gorman following in a launch. The guns were discharged

at short intervals. A turn was made and the float was towed past the wreck, until it was abreast of North Brother Island; near the pier on the island six rounds were fired.

#### **BODIES COME UP BY THE DOZEN**

With the discharge of the last gun bodies began to appear upon the surface. Within five minutes no fewer than sixteen rose within a few yards of the coroner's launch, and the crews of the patrol boats were kept busy picking them up. Further search in the wake of the battery revealed fourteen more bodies. Before the firing began a large number of bodies had been recovered, and before the Fidelity left for the morgue with its first load of dead, the temporary morgue at North Brother Island was more heavily stocked with bodies than at any time since the day following the loss of the Slocum.

Rapid progress was made by the Merritt-Chapman Derrick and Wrecking Company in raising the wreck of the Slocum. The hull was lifted fifteen feet from the rocks on which it rested, and the placing of the chains necessary for bringing the hulk to the surface was rendered comparatively easy. Contrary to expectations, there were comparatively few bodies released when the wreck was lifted from the bottom. Only two bodies, both those of women, were found beneath the paddleboxes, terribly disfigured.

#### **IDENTIFICATIONS MADE RAPIDLY**

The identification of bodies began almost immediately and within a short while not fewer than two dozen bodies had been claimed. The rapidity with which the identifications were made was considered remarkable. The bodies were in almost every instance identified by the clothing upon them.

Orders were then sent out by Health Commissioner Dar-

lington that all bodies must first be stripped of their clothing and effects, which should be numbered, and the bodies placed in metallic coffins, bearing a corresponding number, and sealed up. The bodies were then to be sent to the morgue at Bellevue, but were not to be kept there for identification, but forwarded at once to the Lutheran Cemetery and buried in the plot set apart for the unknown dead. The place where each body was buried was to be carefully marked, so that if bodies could be identified from the clothing or effects, they could be disinterred and buried elsewhere if the relatives so desired.



## CHAPTER VI

### SCENES AT THE MORGUE

**Awaiting the Arrival of the Dead—First Boatload of Thirty Bodies—Eighty Corpses on the Massasoit—Rows of Pine Boxes—Wide Open Eyes Staring Upward—A Father Finds His Baby Daughter—Wife and Children Gone—The Tireless Search at the Hospitals—Human Tragedies.**

Many heart-rending scenes have been witnessed in New York's morgue, and many harrowing tales have come from that temporary home of the city's dead, but all were eclipsed by the scenes and doings there when the bodies of many of the General Slocum's victims were laid side by side for the purpose of identification.

It was one of the first places that distracted fathers and mothers, wives, and sisters sought for tidings of those who had left their homes earlier in the day for a bright June day's outing. Relatives hurried there to learn whether those they loved had been saved, or, if burned or drowned, they were in readiness to establish the identity of a body by a piece of clothing or a trinket, or perhaps by marks that perhaps had been left unharmed.

#### COFFINS WAIT FOR DEAD

Scores of rough pine boxes, those grewsome, coffin-shaped receptacles that the city furnishes for temporary use, were carried from storerooms in Bellevue Hospital and deposited in piles in the morgue and in the department of charities' long

shedded pier, waiting the arrival of the steamboats Fidelity and Massasoit with their loads of dead.

It was the Fidelity that was first sighted in midstream heading for the morgue, with its forward deck covered with a burden kept from sight by the spreading of blankets. The Fidelity drew closer and closer and finally made fast at the north side of the morgue and at the door of the building. A dozen men, morgue attachés, were in readiness, and when the gangplank was thrown out two men supporting a pine coffin stepped upon it and to the Fidelity's deck.

#### **DECK COVERED WITH BODIES**

There were twenty-one bodies of adult women on the steamboat and the remains of nine children whose ages ran from a few months to ten years. One after another the bodies were lifted from the deck and placed in coffins to be picked up and carried into the morgue, where they were placed side by side.

Men had worked over the Fidelity's dreadful cargo for almost an hour, when the Massasoit was reported. Its forward deck was covered with bodies that lay side by side, and through the deckhouse windows and doors forward it could be seen that the wain deck was completely covered with bodies, between which there was only room left for the deck hands to move about.

#### **DEAD BABE IN DEAD MOTHER'S ARMS**

There were eighty bodies on the Massasoit. Of these nearly all were women and small children of ages running from three months to fifteen years. On the deck, side by side, lay bodies numbered 21 and 22. The first was a mother, who when picked up from the water had clasped to her bosom

her little babe, to be numbered 23 when gently removed from her mother's arms.

One after another the bodies were placed in the pine boxes and carried into the pier, where they were arranged in two long rows, between which room was left so that relatives or friends could pass between them for the purpose of recognizing features or articles of clothing.

#### A SMILE UPON THEIR FACES

As fast as the bodies were carried in on stretchers, some with faces covered by a bit of skirt or a wet handkerchief, and others quite uncovered, their wide open eyes staring upward, their faces twisted by the agony that was upon them when they died, they were laid upon the bare board floor of the great square room. They lay side by side in regular rows, the women in the center of the room, the little children, some of them with a smile upon their faces, in a corner.

There were no men, nothing but drowned women and children. Few showed traces of the fire; one or two were burned about the hands or arms, or had hair and eyebrows singed, but it was death by water they had all met.

#### FATHER TAKES UP WEARY HUNT

The first into the room was Joseph Volmer of 123 First avenue. He looked fearfully at the rows of dead, gasped, and covered his face. Then he started the terrible task of trying to find his wife and children. Volmer, trembling and weeping, passed up and down the rows. He was about to leave, convinced that none of his loved ones was there, when a gray plaid skirt caught his eye. He cried out like an animal in torture and fell forward on the body of a woman. He did not need to lift the cloth from her face. The dress that he had

seen her put on in the morning when she bade him good-by and started for the boat hand in hand with their three children told him all that he wanted to know.

#### FINDS BABY HE SOUGHT, DEAD

A big German, Franz Boeger, whose child and wife had gone from their home in Brooklyn to the boat, came stumbling into the room. It didn't take him long to find the baby face he sought, that of his little three-year-old daughter, Florence, whose body lay in the corner with other drowned children. Boeger didn't cry. He acted as if he could not; but the awful silence and calm, the whiteness of the man's face, were more terrible than the frenzied screams of others.

#### WIFE AND CHILDREN GONE

Men and women whose faces were tear-stained and their eyes red from weeping tried to control themselves until they might be admitted to the coffin-strewn pier or morgue. Among those waiting was Mangus Harting, who was in search of his wife, Louise, and their children, Minnie, twenty-four years old, who sang in the choir of St. Mark's Lutheran church; Frances, seventeen years old, who was a teacher in the Sunday school of the church; Harry, fifteen; Willie, thirteen; Elias, six; and Clara, eleven years old. The distracted husband and father had been to North Brother Island, but could get no tidings of his loved ones.

#### BOY FIRE HERO DEAD

Mrs. Minnie Leitz was among those who stood waiting. She knew that her sister-in-law, Mrs. Mary Wolmer, was lying dead in the Alexander avenue police station in the Bronx. But Mrs. Leitz was in quest of Magdalena, seven, and Minnie

Leitz, nine years old, and Joseph, seventeen. It was the latter, Mrs. Leitz said, who, at 457 Broome street, where he was employed as an office boy, during a fire, took charge of the elevator after it had been deserted by the regular attendant, and ran it up and down, thereby saving thirty or forty lives of persons employed in that building.

#### PASTOR'S FAMILY GONE

The Rev. John A. W. Haas, pastor of St. Paul's Lutheran church, in West One Hundred and Twenty-third street, and a brother of the Rev. George C. F. Haas of St. Mark's church, was at the morgue in search of his sister-in-law, Mrs. Anna S. Haas, and her and his brother's daughter Gertrude, twelve years old.

The scenes at the hospitals and police station at Alexander avenue, where many bodies were carried, were pitiful in the extreme.

The corpses found floating near the Bronx shore, south of North Brother Island, immediately after the General Slocum was beached, were piled in heaps at the One Hundred and Thirty-eighth street dock until the police were organized to handle the great crowds that assembled, and arrangements were made to lay them out for identification at the police station.

Then they were carried from the dock to the station in patrol wagons as fast as they were brought in by tugs, launches, and rowboats.

#### CRAZED BY SUSPENSE

An hour later there were ten thousand in the streets struggling to beat down the solid wall of policemen that guarded

the doorways and sidewalks. These came most of them from the neighborhood of St. Mark's church. They knew that a large proportion of the General Slocum's passengers had perished and they were determined to fight their way into the station house to find out if a sister or a mother or a sweetheart or a child was in there dead.

Men were cursing and shouting. Women were crying, embracing one another, calling out through the crowd to know if any one had heard of this one or that one, begging the police to let them in to set their fears at rest.

One desperate rush was made. Detective Prundy, guarding the front with fifty plain clothes and uniformed men, slammed the heavy doors and policemen set their backs against them. Prundy called out in a voice that was heard above the tumult of curses and screams:

"Men and women, we must keep you out now. We are sorry for you. We will help you in every way, but you must wait until we have made arrangements to let in a few at a time. If you force us, we'll have to fight back."

#### HOPING AGAINST HOPE

It was a sorrowful procession of anxious men and women who climbed the steps of the Harlem hospital in quest of missing relatives and friends. In their faces could be read the forlorn hope that still lingered, in spite of a tireless search of hospitals in the Bronx, that those whom they sought might possibly be in the Harlem institution.

"It means a wife and five children to me," said a broad-shouldered man, who looked to be a mechanic, to Dr. Krauskopf, "and if there are tears in my eyes they are tears of sorrow, not of weakness. For four hours I have looked for a

trace of them, but to no purpose. God is good, though, and I may yet find my darlings," he added, as he stifled a sob and slowly walked from the hospital.

#### **PITIFUL SIGHTS**

"Oh, tell me, tell me, my boy is not there," one woman kept crying, and to quiet her she was told that he was not, and she seemed satisfied, not thinking that no one in the crowd had any idea who her boy was.

In many cases the little ones were still half clasped in the arms of their mothers, who had died trying to save them, and as these bodies were uncovered, several of the men who were carrying them out had to quit their work.

The sight was too much for even the strongest, and not a few of those who were admitted inside the lines were obliged to assume charge of the situation and the work of identification was systematized so far as possible.

#### **THROW CHILDREN AT BOATS**

"When I reached the island," said Commissioner of Police McAdoo, "I found that every soul was already at work rescuing the living and bringing in the dead.

"My men tell me that the women were frantic. Some of them were seen to throw their children at the boats as they edged close to the burning vessel. Up to four o'clock the greater number of bodies brought in were those of women. After that time, as the tide went down, just off the point where the vessel was beached, bodies of children were taken out at the rate of fifty an hour. We had determined to put up temporary morgues, converting a coal shed and a disinfecting building for that purpose, but the finding of this great number of bodies changed our plans.

**DEAD MAY NEVER BE KNOWN**

"My idea is that the number of the dead will not be known for some time, if it ever is known. When the General Slocum was beached the tide was running strongly and most of the unfortunates jumped from the off side of the vessel, the side toward the New York shore. These must have been carried out by the tide. The proof of this is that bodies were picked up on the New York side and all along the channel down the river. The bodies brought ashore after the tide went down off the point, most of which were children, had sunk at once. While there have been many charred bodies brought in, some of them horribly burned, the majority of those I saw died from drowning."

**FINDS ONE CHILD IN FIVE**

Many pathetic scenes were witnessed at the various hospitals, where the relatives sought their loved ones. Wild-eyed men, tremulous women, and frightened children begged to know if any of their family were in the hospitals. Eagerly they seized upon survivors. Most of the interrogations were in German.

"Have you seen my wife? My children? I have lost all."

"I had five children," said a distracted woman at the Lincoln hospital, "the oldest nineteen and the youngest five years of age. They were all on this excursion. Let me pass."

The men on guard stepped back and she ran, panting, up the stairs. The nurses helped her, and presently she came upon a girl in a bed in one of the wards, so bandaged that none but a mother would have recognized her. The girl was burned about the head and limbs, but she leaped from the bed at the sight of her mother, and the two descended to the lower hall, where they sat side by side in a tearful embrace.



"I had five children this morning, now I have only this one, my dear love," said the woman, holding the girl as if she feared she might yet be taken from her.

#### DYING SEND KEEPSAKES TO RELATIVES

Health Commissioner Darlington, on his return from North Brother Island, carried in his pocket a chatelaine bag and a gold watch which had been handed him by two young girls who died as they were being carried ashore, before they could make known their identity.

"The chatelaine," said Dr. Darlington, "was given me by a girl of about seventeen, who was brought in half drowned and terribly crushed, soon after I reached the island. As I bent over to help her she opened her eyes and held out this little bag.

"'Give this to mother,' she said, 'and say Amelia——'

"Then, without finishing, she fell back and died. The handbag contained only three unmarked handkerchiefs."

Soon after this, Dr. Darlington said, his attention was drawn to a young girl who lay on the grass near the shore. As he approached she took off her watch. Her lips quivered. He knelt beside her and raised her head.

"Speak," he said.

The girl's eyes opened; then closed. She, too, was dead.

#### THE NIGHT OF THE DISASTER

The scenes enacted at the Charities pier on Wednesday night were weird and sad beyond the power of description. The charities department tenders plied back and forth in the darkness between the municipal islands and other points where bodies had accumulated, bringing in loads of burned

and drowned victims of the dreadful catastrophe. Some of the bodies were encased in rough pine boxes, such as are used to inter the dead on Hart's Island—the unclaimed and pauper dead.

Other bodies were rolled in blankets, canvas and sheeting. But all were lifted from the decks of the boats and laid out in long rows upon the floors of the wharf and morgue, where electric lights lit up their pallid features and made death more hideous than is its wont. All night long Commissioner Darlington, of the health department, remained upon the pier, as did also Acting Superintendent Rickard, of the morgue. These officials acted with great humanity, directing, advising and assisting the grief-stricken thousands who came to the place of death in search of loved ones.

#### DRIVEN AWAY BY FORCE

The crowd was large all day, and toward evening the jam became so great that a detachment of eighty patrolmen, under Captain Shire, of the East Thirty-fifth street station, had all it could do to hold the throng in check. While thirty-nine bodies were being taken from the steamer *Massasoit*, hundreds of relatives were barred from the pier at the foot of East Twenty-sixth street. They had to be driven out by force and then the doors were barred.

Crying and fretting on the outside, they soon worked themselves into such a frenzy that they threw their weight upon the doors, shoulder to shoulder. The police were for the moment swept aside. The screams of two women who were trampled on, drew the attention of the other police reserves, and the doors were again barred. Neither of the frightened women was seriously hurt.

**ICE WATER FLOODS THE PIER**

The floor of the whole pier was soaked with ice water that dripped from the bodies of the dead. Women held up their skirts and men turned up their trousers to wade through the slop. Off to one side five or six men were chopping more ice for the coffins. Would-be identifiers searched the coffins for some sign or token by which they might recognize the dead, until their fingers were almost frozen. Sometimes a ring, more often a piece of clothing, would furnish the necessary clew.

**UNDERTAKERS FIGHT FOR BODIES**

The police had great trouble all day with the undertakers who gathered at the pier. Their wagons stood around the entrance to the temporary morgue so thickly that it was with difficulty people could effect an entrance. The undertakers approached every one who walked in the direction of the pier, asking to be allowed to take charge of the bodies of friends if they succeeded in identifying them. Many times several undertakers, or their runners, would grasp some man or woman and force him to listen to them. Two of these men got into a fight and several blows were exchanged before the police separated them. Both were arrested, charged with disorderly conduct.

**A PATHETIC SCENE**

Thursday saw a repetition at the morgue of the human tragedies which were enacted there the day before. In the drizzling rain of the early part of the day there stood hundreds of anxious ones waiting for their chance to see the dead, and with them were scores of others who had made the gloomy trip between the rows of coffins time and again with-

out finding those they sought, yet waited on in the hope that the next consignment of bodies would include them.

There was a pathetic scene at the pier when a stricken father found the body of his little girl in a coffin. He could not be controlled for the moment and, standing over the rude white box, he threw his watch and his ring and his purse in beside the body of the child, exclaiming:

"Take all, take all, now that you have taken her!"

#### GRIEF DRIVES FATHER INSANE

He had a boy still missing, but the little girl was his favorite. Right behind the father, who was led away with difficulty, came two men, one of whom was obviously maddened by the grief he had undergone. He was searching for his daughter, but he could not find her. He was turning over a lot of empty coffins when the police decided to take him away. The man fought desperately.

"You've got her body," he yelled. "You're trying to keep her from me. Give me my little girl."

He was finally removed. His companion refused to give his name.

#### A DESPERATE CROWD

Such scenes as were witnessed all day long about the morgue can scarcely ever be repeated. Thousands gathered in the streets and fought to get through the police lines that held them back from the morgue and Charities pier, where five hundred or more of the bodies of the victims were laid out in rude coffins for identification.

Two blocks up a strong police line had been established and only those who were there to search for the bodies of relatives or friends were supposed to be admitted. But this

rule at times was almost wholly ignored, for thousands of morbidly curious men, women and children gathered, and kept up a constant struggle to slip through the lines and see the spectacle that made many a strong heart throb fiercely.

In this respect the women were the greatest offenders. Many of them appeared to be filled with an insane desire to reach the death-filled pier. All day long and late into the night there was a constant stream of grief-stricken fathers, mothers, brothers and sisters looking for their dead.

#### RUSH BREAKS THE LINE

Late in the afternoon several thousand struggling men, women and children were jammed up close to the police cordon. The pressure became so great that the line wavered, and none of the policemen had the heart to draw his club. Before they could prevent it several hundred of these morbid people had plunged through the line and started for the morgue and pier where the long rows of coffins had been placed. There was no stopping the rush. Within two minutes the crowd was at the wide doors of the pier, where they were met by another detachment of policemen who were there to keep all out except those who had business there.

But even there the crowd was not disposed to be stopped. The leaders elbowed their way through the doors and the others followed as if mad. The police were hurled back and in an instant half a hundred men and women were through the doors. In their stampede two old women there in search of dead loved ones were thrown to the floor and trampled upon. Not until then was a police club raised, but at that point the bluecoats saw the necessity for stern measures. They raised their clubs and the vanguard of the crowd hesi-

tated and stopped. That was the turning point, and within two minutes the idly curious scores were rushed out through the doors into the street.

#### **A CURIOSITY SEEKER**

In this crowd was a richly dressed woman who had come there for no other purpose than to gratify her curiosity. She arrived at Twenty-sixth street and First avenue in a big automobile. With her was another woman, who remained in the automobile and waited while her companion joined in the crowd that was to rush the police line. She first attempted to get through the line by a ruse. She told the sergeant in command that her sister had gone on the fatal excursion and that she was there in search of the body. But the police were not satisfied with her representations and told her that she must see Captain Shire, of the East Thirty-fifth Street Station.

At that the persistent woman burst into tears and pleaded with still more emphasis. It was at this moment that the ever-growing crowd behind her made the rush and swept back the police guards, giving her the opportunity she had tearfully sought.

#### **SEEKING LOVED ONES**

Pitiful scenes were enacted every minute of the time as the long procession of grief-stricken men, women and children moved around the death-freighted pier. Mothers stooped over little coffins in search of little ones who were counted among the missing. Fathers were there seeking whole families. Young men marched down the line peering into one coffin after another seeking mothers, sisters brothers or sweethearts.

Early in the day a woman of about thirty years begged the

police to admit her. She said that her mother and two children had been killed in the disaster and that she was there to get their bodies. She knew they were among the dead, for only a few hours after the burning of the Slocum a tugboatman had told her that he saw them crushed under the deck when it fell.

## CHAPTER VII

### HEART-RENDING INCIDENTS

Rev. George C. F. Haas Relates His Experiences—An Inhuman Brutal Heat of the Flames Prevents the Work of Rescue—Story of a Deck-hand—A Fireman Loses his Family—Rail of the Boat Gives Way—Left with Only His Baby—Watching While Mother Dies—The Children's Side of the Disaster the Most Pathetic—Gave Up Life Preserver—Priests Comfort the Bereaved Ones—Mother and Child Die Together—Pickpockets—Twenty-nine Relatives Gone.

Rev. George C. F. Haas, the pastor of the church which was giving the excursion, was saved, but his wife, Gertrude, and his daughter, Anna, were among the dead.

#### THE MINISTER'S STORY

"The fire started in the kitchen, in the forward part, when we were off One Hundred and Thirty-fourth street," said Mr. Haas. "I understand that some fat that boiled over started the blaze. At that time most of the women and children were jammed in the rear end of the boat, where the band was playing.

"Why the captain did not point the boat for the Meadows I do not understand. He kept on and the fresh wind from the Sound drove the fire back through the decks.

"In three minutes from the time the fire started all the decks were ablaze. Such scenes as followed I do not think were ever witnessed before. I was in the rear of the boat with my wife and daughter. Women were shrieking and clasping



their children in their arms. Some mothers had as many as three or four with them.

"When the fire shot up to the top deck and drove the crowd back the panic was terrible to witness. The women and children clung to the railings and stanchions, but could not keep their hold. With my wife and daughter, I was swept along with the rest.

#### **DRIVEN OVERBOARD BY THE CRUSH**

"I believe that the first that fell into the water were crushed overboard. When they went there seemed to be a general inclination to jump. The women and children went over the railings like flies.

"In the great crush many women fainted and fell to the deck, to be trampled upon. Little children were knocked down.

"I got my wife and daughter out on the rail and then we went overboard. I was in such an excited state that I do not remember whether we were pushed or jumped.

"When I struck the water I sank and when I rose there were scores about me fighting to keep afloat. One by one I saw them sink around me, but I was powerless to do anything.

"With a great effort I managed to keep afloat, but my strength was about gone when a man on one of the tugs picked me up."

#### **DROWNING MAN DROWNS A CHILD**

P. Edward Kessell with his wife, Annie, and their two children, Edward, three years old, and Annie, two years old, were among the excursionists. Both Kessell and his wife are expert swimmers. When it was seen the boat was doomed, Kessell and his wife jumped overboard with the children.

Kessell, holding to the boy, swam for the North Brother Island shore, followed by his wife, who was swimming with the little girl.

A short distance from the boat a man who could not swim grabbed the little girl and held on in an effort to save himself. Mrs. Kessell fought frantically with the man and tried to drag her child from his grasp, but the man's strength proved the greater and Mrs. Kessell saw her little girl disappear beneath the water with the drowning man.

Mrs. Kessell then swam to shore and joined her husband and son.

#### TUGS STOPPED BY BODIES

Herbert S. Nulson, an employee of the Delavergen Refrigerator Company, said he was working in a tower in the company's factory, at the foot of East One Hundred and Thirty-eighth street, when a fellow employee called: "Here comes a big boat up the river, and I believe she is on fire."

"I looked down the river," said Nulson, "and saw the steamboat which I was sure then was the General Slocum. The flames were just beginning to make headway when I first saw her, and by the time she came opposite us I could see that her decks were crowded with women and children, who began to jump into the water.

"Tugs began to put out to the burning boat, but they could not get near enough to do any good on account of the heat of the flames.

"A lot of rowboats had put out by this time, and those, with the tugs, went as near the General Slocum as they could, but the water was so full of bodies that they made their way only with difficulty and the smaller of them were in danger of being

swamped by those in the water trying to climb over the gunwales.

"I saw one tugboat push right up through the smoke and flames. She had a long, flat, empty barge in tow, and I suppose she ran this against the Slocum and took off many people in it."

#### VICTIMS FIGHT IN WATER

Peter J. Tremble, a deck hand of the Slocum, was arrested by the police as he was wandering aimlessly about the beach.

"We left the Third street dock at 10 a. m.," he told them. "I was polishing brasswork soon after, when a deck hand called my attention to smoke coming out of a forward cabin. I ran forward and helped the first assistant engineer to stretch a hose.

"We could not get any water. The fire spread so rapidly that we were driven to the forward promenade deck, which was covered with panic-stricken women and children. I pulled down an armful of life preservers and distributed them. I then put a life preserver around my shoulders and jumped overboard with two children.

"They were torn away from me by the impact of the water. I managed to grasp one of the blades of the paddle wheels and climbed up in the paddle box. The water beneath me was a perfect hell. Men and women were clawing at my legs as I climbed and my trousers were torn away in my efforts to escape from them. I was subsequently rescued by a rowboat and put on shore."

#### COMPLETELY UNNERVED

Fred Hoffman, a fireman, and one of the excursionists, was brought ashore, unnerved and hysterical. At first all that

could be got from him was that he had lost his mother and sister-in-law, his brother's two children and a young woman with him.

"I was on the upper deck with my family," he finally explained, "and little Edna, my brother's three-year-old child, was in my arms. Beside me were my mother, Mrs. Sophia Hoffman; my brother's wife, Celia; her boy Raymond, aged four, and Jane Workman, my friend, aged twenty.

"I don't remember much about the fire. It seemed to come from below. I grabbed the boy and called upon the women to follow me. First the women were separated from me, then the crowd swept me and the little ones toward the stern of the boat.

"In trying to reach the women folks of my family I got lost in the crowd and went overboard with it. I remember nothing but being trampled upon. When I came to the surface a life preserver was within my reach and I clung to that. My strength was gone and it seemed as if I could not hold on a bit longer when some one pulled me out of the water and took me ashore."

#### SEES BROTHER SINK TO DEATH

Fred Liberman of White Plains, N. Y., who was on board, said:

"My poor mother, brother and sister were on that boat, too. I don't know what became of them. I was standing with the other three boys at the right side of the boat leaning against the rail.

"We were almost to North Brother Island when the rail gave way and many people tumbled into the water. My brother and I were two of these.

"I caught hold of Johnny's hand and tried to save him. He lost his hold on my hand and the last I saw of him he was looking at me with an appeal on his face that was terrible. I was picked up by a boat."

#### RESCUED BY A BARGE HAND

Miss Marie Krueger of 451 West End avenue, one of those injured, is at the Harlem hospital.

"I was sitting on the upper deck when there was a cry of fire," she said. "Men came among us and told us to be quiet. The women and children were panic-stricken. I slid down a pole to the water and held on by a rope by the side of the boat.

"The flames began to shoot out of the portholes and I had to let go. A little boy was near me holding a life preserver. A coal barge was near and a deck hand threw us a rope, which we got, and were pulled aboard the coal barge. I saw my cousin and sister, but they disappeared. An ambulance with Dr. Krauskopf of Harlem hospital came along and brought us here. The barge first put in to the landing on Randall's Island and, after putting the people ashore, went out for another trip of rescue."

#### NO TRACE OF HIS FAMILY

August Schneider, a musician, appeared at the Alexander avenue station with his baby Augusta in his arms, looking for his wife and two other children. The only information Schneider could impart was that he was with his family on the main deck near the stern and saw the steamboat "break in two in the middle." The next he knew he found himself with his baby in his arms on the deck of a tug. Whether he

had been in the water or not the man did not know. His clothing was dry. There was no trace of his family.

#### THE BAND WAS PLAYING

John Edell, twenty-two years old, one of the survivors of the Slocum disaster, gave a graphic account of his terrible experience, his mother and little brother having been drowned before his eyes.

"When we left the pier the decks were packed to the limit of their capacity," he said. "The band was playing, the children were frolicking about and we were all having a fine time.

"As we neared Hell Gate the children were called down to the lower deck, where ice cream and soda water were served. The children were falling all over each other in an effort to get to the tables which held the refreshments. With my mother and my little brother Paul, I went to the engine-room to watch the machinery.

"Suddenly and without the least warning there was a burst of flames from the furnace-room that rushed up through the engine-room and flashed out about us. The flames spread quickly, setting fire to the clothing of the women and children who were grouped about the engine-room watching the machinery.

#### HIS MOTHER SWEEP AWAY

"There was the most terrible panic as the burning women and children rushed out among those surrounding the ice cream and soda water tables screaming with pain.

"I endeavored for a few minutes to break through the mad crush and get to my mother and little brother, but I was swept into one corner of the boat and held there unable to move. They were swept overboard by the crush against the rail.

"At one time it seemed to me as if the women and children were pouring over the sides like a waterfall. As we made for the shore the captain blew his whistle in one continuous blast and soon boats of all descriptions were making for us from every direction.

"I was rescued by a launch just as the boat settled close to the shore.

"The men from the tugs who could get near the steamboat shouted for those on board to jump and then the small boats picked them up by scores."

#### A PECULIAR COINCIDENCE

The children's side of the Slocum disaster was perhaps the most pathetic of all.

One, a little girl about seven years old, walked sobbingly along the line of dead on the pier. She said she had lost her mother and grandmother. By a peculiar coincidence the bodies were found side by side and identified by the little girl. The mother was Mrs. Annie E. Bucheidt and the grandmother Mrs. Louisa Schwartz.

#### A HEROIC SACRIFICE

In the same hospital were little boys.

"My mother gave me a life preserver, that's how I got saved," said one whose name was Muller. "I guess she didn't have none herself, because they can't find her."

"I didn't have no life preserver at all," said his bedfellow, Henry Fernweiser. "I went down twice and I swallowed a whole lot of water, but pretty soon I caught hold of a dead woman and then somebody grabbed me with a hook. If it hadn't been for that dead woman I'd been drowned sure."

**TOO YOUNG TO REALIZE**

Up and down the wards and corridors tramped a little lad two years of age. He had yellow hair and was neatly dressed in white. He could talk little, and that little was German, so he and the nurses took each other on faith. He spoke of his mother and it was understood that he had been with her on the excursion. After he had been in the hospital for several hours his father came, sad of face, and kissed the little boy and took him away.

"I cannot find her," he said, when asked about the boy's mother, but the little chap smiled, waved his hands in farewell and went away hugging a toy.

**PRIESTS GIVE EXTREME UNCTION**

Priests went about administering the last rites to the dying. Among them was Father Donlin of St. Jerome's Church, who gave the extreme unction to forty-four persons, of whom forty-two died.

Fathers Boyle and Christian, both of St. Luke's Church, went about administering the last rites for the dying or comforting the bereaved ones gathered about their dead.

Sometimes one would hear the strange sound of hysterical laughter, and looking in the direction whence it came, would see some entire family united. They had not seen one another in many cases since the fire occurred, and they had grieved for the missing ones as lost until they met on the island.

The bright sun and the laughing waters seemed out of place on this lonely island with its weeping, wailing groups, its long row of silent bodies and the boats off shore landing frequently with more bodies to place with the others.



**MOTHER AND CHILD DEAD TOGETHER**

A sight that brought tears to the eyes of all beholders was the body of Mrs. Lillian Granefire. Clapsed to her breast was the body of her nine-months-old baby. Both had been burned to death, the mother vainly endeavoring to protect her child.

**A TERRIBLE EXPERIENCE**

Fred Keeler, a lad of fourteen years, who resides at 115 Avenue A with his aunt, went on the excursion alone. Here is the boy's description of his terrible experience:

"The first thing I knew of the fire was when the lemonade man came and said that there was a small fire in the engine-room, but there was no danger and we need not be afraid. We all sat down and an officer of the boat came in and told us there was no danger, but just then the black smoke began to pour out of the middle of the ship.

"I ran for a life preserver and got one and put it on. There was a terrible rush to get life preservers, and women and children fought for them. Those who got them put them on and many people climbed over the railing and hung to it on the outside, hoping that the flames might be checked.

"The flames spread rapidly, and a big yellow tugboat came alongside of the steamer. I saw a chance and jumped aboard her with a lot of other people. We were landed at North Brother Island. Ambulances were waiting there and many of those who escaped on the tug needed help, for some of them had been badly burned.

"But the most awful thing was the babies. Women either dropped them or were torn away from them during the struggle to get life preservers or to get overboard. I looked

back after we had left the burning boat and I could see lots of them lying in the flames near the edge of the boat. They screamed and tried to get away from the flames, but it was no use for them to try, and pretty soon they would lie still, and I knew they were dead."

#### **WEAK ONES BEAR THE BRUNT**

For as usual it was the women and the little children who bore the brunt of the death agony. The crew, stalwart seamen, all escaped unharmed with one or two exceptions. Most of the men on board the ship were saved. But the women and the children, the mothers with the babies in their arms and the toddlers clinging to their skirts, were crushed, buffeted, maimed and burned beyond recognition. Helpless, screaming and praying for mercy, they were shriveled before the fiery breath of the flames.

#### **WOMEN PROVE HEROINES**

No brain can imagine the fullness of that horror; no pen can write it. There were deeds of heroism done on board that burning ship that equaled any recorded in history.

Feeble mothers covered their babies with their bodies, presenting a living barrier of flesh and blood to the flames that leaped toward their darlings. That many little children were thus spared the agony of death by the flames was mutely attested by the charred bodies of the mothers and the corpses of the little children beneath them untouched by the flames.

#### **FOUGHT LIKE ANIMALS**

Other mothers fought like trapped animals to reach the edge of the crowded decks, in order that they might give their little ones the more merciful death of drowning.

Still others, separated from their children by the onward

rush of the maddened crowd, rushed like maniacs into the very heart of the flames in the vain search for their little ones.

It was the triumph of mother love over terror of death. It placed anew the laurel crown upon the brow of the mother.

#### **TWO BOY HEROES PERISH**

Two boys, Fred and Charles Schaler, brothers, were last seen just before the upper deck gave way. They were working in a bucket brigade and disappeared when the deck crashed down into the flames below. Their father was searching at the hospitals and morgue at night for news of his heroic sons, but had not found them at midnight.

Henry Alt was one of the boys who went on the excursion. His mother, father and brother, it is believed, accompanied him. All were missing from their home at night. The rooms were dark.

#### **TELLS STORY OF HORROR**

August Balzer was the first of the survivors to return to the parish with the tale of horror. He and his wife, with the family and servant of Peter J. Fickbaum, formed a party of merry excursionists. Balzer, dripping wet, his hands and face burned, returned to break the news. He staggered into the saloon of his friend Fickbaum, and fell to the floor unconscious.

"What's the matter, Gus?" cried Fickbaum, after Balzer had been revived.

"They're lost—burned—all gone," gasped Balzer. Then in incoherent sentences he told the story of the disaster. Like wildfire it spread throughout the neighborhood.

"My wife! My Catherine!" Balzer would exclaim time and again. Later, surrounded by a group of anxious and fearful

inquirers, he became more composed. This is the story he told:

"Shortly after leaving the pier I left my wife and the Fickbaums on the middle deck. They were sitting in the bow. I took little Freddy Fickbaum on the top deck to show him the points of interest.

#### **FIRE COMES FROM BELOW**

"We were approaching the island when, looking forward, I saw flames shooting up from the deck below. Unclasping my knife, I slashed at the fastenings of the life rafts near by. But they were secured by wire instead of rope. I told Freddy to stay with me, but when I returned he had disappeared. I then started for my party, but was driven back by the flames.

"The whole front part of the boat by this time was a mass of fire. For the time being so near were we to shore that there was no panic. The passengers, mostly women and children, retreated before the flames.

"All thought the boat would put into shore at once, but it seemed fully five minutes or more before she swung in shore. By this time the scene was terrifying. Women threw their children overboard and then followed. They had no other refuge from the flames, which swept everything before them.

"I rushed aft, calling to my wife, but I could not see her, and in the roar of the fire and the cries of the panic-stricken passengers she could not hear me. I was driven back to the wheelhouse by the fire. I thought I was trapped. There was no chance for me to go farther aft, and below was the fire.

#### **SEARCHED IN VAIN FOR HIS WIFE**

"I threw myself over the railing and dropped into the water on the side farthest from the land. It was then I

received these burns. The water only came to my arm-pits and I could have walked to the shore. When I finally emerged I looked back and to my dying day I'll never forget the scene.

"Around me were a score of bodies, most of them charred and burned. I helped as many as possible of those living to the land. From the stern of the boat, where hundreds of persons were huddled, fighting like mad to leap into the water, I saw dozens of women with babies in their arms throw themselves over the side.

"I searched in vain for my wife. Body after body was laid on the shore, but hers was not among them. Then some one said that a party of women and children had been sent to the city, and a neighbor told me my wife was among them. As he spoke, her hat, the feather burned, was washed ashore.

"I grabbed it and then hurried here. But she's lost! Catherine's gone!"

#### A TWO DAYS' SEARCH

For forty-eight hours, with scarcely any sleep, Adolph Molitor searched for his wife and three children and four other relatives who were on board the General Slocum, but he was able to find the bodies of only four of his missing loved ones. He could not get any trace of his three children, Carl, Eva and Joseph, who were last seen on the steamboat, just before she ran on North Brother Island shore.

"I don't know what has become of my children," said Mr. Molitor. "I searched high and low for them, but can get no trace. I believe they are drowned and are floating somewhere in the Sound. It is very mysterious and I am almost heart-broken over their loss.

"I found the body of my wife and my sisters-in-law. I have searched the morgues, hospitals and police stations, but I cannot get any word of my children." Later the bodies of the missing children were found and identified.

#### ALDERMAN IS UNNERVED

'Alderman Doherty was one of my volunteers when we found a tiny baby girl four years old to whose little foot a blue baby shoe was hanging by a ribbon," said Coroner O'Gorman. "The alderman broke down for the first time. He was able to stand up under the horrible phases of the thing, but the sight of the baby and the little shoe unnerved him. He asked me for the shoe and I gave it to him. That shoe is the only piece of property that I have permitted to be taken off the island.

"No one who stood on the beach on Wednesday night when our men were fishing out bodies as fast as they could row back and forth will ever forget the scene. It is the kind of thing that a man will wake up nights and see again before him in the darkness.

#### HELD BABES IN HER DEATH AGONY

"Only one of a hundred such instances was a mother and her three children fished up locked in each others' arms. The mother had clutched them so fiercely in her death agony that it was hard to release her arms from the babes. Two young girls were found clinging to each other just as they had jumped from the steamer. A little boy with his right arm clasped about a little girl's neck, her arms around his waist—that was another one of the death groups that was enough to make any man weep.

**CARRIAGE WITH DEAD BABY**

“We found one giant. He was six feet five inches tall, a perfect Hercules of a man, and must have weighed three hundred pounds. On a handkerchief, in indelible ink, was printed the name ‘Griffing.’ He must have made a terrible fight for life. His limbs and face showed that only too plainly.

“One of my men, S. H. Berg, raked up a baby carriage, with a six-months-old girl in it. The baby had been strapped in the carriage and the hood of the vehicle was pulled down over it.

‘I could tell of fifty such horrors that would make you gasp. But a man doesn’t want to think of too many of these things, and they don’t look well in print. They are not pleasant to remember either.’”

**PICKPOCKETS AT WORK**

Many heartless pickpockets took advantage of the crowds of afflicted people in front of St. Mark’s Church and at the morgue to ply their mean trade.

Detectives from the East Side Station were detailed to all of the places where the bereaved people were likely to gather to get information about their loved ones.

A detective watched two small boys who were acting suspiciously in front of St. Mark’s Church. He saw one of the boys slip his hand into the skirt pocket of a woman who was weeping bitterly. The other boy was acting as a lookout. Both boys were arrested and sent to the House of Refuge. The judge who sentenced them said:

“I am very sorry I cannot send you to State Prison. Anybody who has so little heart as to rob a sorrowing mother who

is hunting for little children that are in all probability dead, deserves the severest penalty that the law can inflict."

#### **ATTACKED A WOMAN TO SAVE SELF**

A young girl survivor relates the following incident that occurred on the Slocum:

"So far as I could see, not one of the steamer's crew did anything to help the passengers. The life preservers were hanging on wires, and we had to get them as best we could. Mamma and sister Grace and I were standing together. I climbed up on a camp stool and pulled down three life preservers. As I did so I became separated from mamma and sister, and when I tried to find them they were gone.

"Then I tried to fasten on a life preserver myself. The string which I tried to tie around my waist came off, and then the life preserver seemed to come apart. At any rate, a lot of powdered cork fell out on the deck.

"Everybody seemed to be jumping overboard, so I put the life preserver under one arm and the camp stool under the other and jumped. When I fell into the water the camp stool seemed to open and it held me up. I floated around for a while near the steamer, and I saw a woman hanging to the rail. The steamer was then near the beach.

"Had the woman been able to hang on a little longer she could have walked ashore. But a man climbed over the rail from the boat, and, not being able to get a place to catch hold of, I saw him bite the woman's hand until she had to let go. She dropped into the water and I don't know whether she was saved or not."

#### **TWENTY-NINE RELATIVES LOST**

One single family connection counted its loss by the General Slocum disaster at twenty-nine persons. Henry A.



Kohler, who lived at 315 East Thirteenth street, and was engaged in an insurance business, went on the excursion with his wife and his son, Henry, ten years old. With him also in the family party on the boat were cousins, sisters-in-law, and connections of every sort by blood and law. In the fire or in the water afterward perished Kohler, his wife, his son, and twenty-six others of the kinship.

Henry A. Kohler's body was found in the water. The body of the boy also was recovered and identified, but that of the mother was not found.

Of the twenty-six remoter kin many, too, were among the missing, but all day many others lay in one of the undertaking shops, while every now and then hearses came and went and now one and now another body was borne out for burial, some of which made up the grim family party lying so quiet in the long black boxes in the back room of the undertaker's shop.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE CAPTAIN'S STORY

**The First Alarm of Fire—Knew that the Slocum was Doomed—Could Not Swing the Boat Against the Tide—No Chance to Beach the Steamer—Scores Pitched into the River—Tried by Fire—Did the Captain Blunder?—Other Means of Escape—The Crew Blamed.**

The captain of the General Slocum, W. H. Van Schaick; Edward Van Wart, his first pilot; and Edward N. Weaver, second pilot, all of whom jumped overboard and swam for North Brother Island when the flames drove them from the pilot house, were at once arrested.

The three men, burned, dripping wet, and overcome by the horror of the things they had seen, were taken to the police station, where they were questioned by the coroner.

Captain Van Shaick, shaken and nerve shattered, told the following story by fits and starts.

"I was in the pilot house with Van Wart and Weaver, first and second pilots, when I heard the cry of 'Fire!' raised in the fore part of the steamer. I remember that the German band on board was playing, that the children were romping all over the upper decks, and their mothers and elders were singing, keeping time to the band.

"At first nobody in the after part of the steamer seemed to realize what had happened.

#### KNEW THE BOAT WAS DOOMED

"I saw a big spurt of flame shoot up and I had had enough experience with river fires to know that the Slocum was

doomed. The boat was running perhaps twelve miles an hour. Consequently the stiff breeze caught the flame and fanned it backward all through the open decks.

"I looked around trying to make up my mind where would be the best place to make a landing. We were just off the Sunken Meadows. I thought at first of trying to run in there or somewhere along the Bronx shore of the river. But the tide was running so strong that I knew it would be a hard job to swing the boat around at right angles. I was afraid, too, that the steering gear would break down under such a strain and leave us helpless in the middle of the river.

#### WARNED OFF ONE LANDING

"A tugboat captain saw me turn the boat ahead a little towards 184th street on the Bronx side. He yelled at me to keep off, as the fire would ignite the lumber stored there, and the oil tanks on the pier. Then I made up my mind to run for North Brother Island. It seemed the best under the circumstances. I may have been wrong, but there was a chance there to beach the Slocum sidewise and give everybody a chance to get off. At the Meadows along the Bronx shore that, too, would have been impossible. There are many rocks there.

"Then the panic began. I kept my eyes ahead, but it was impossible to keep from seeing the frightened scramble for the boat's side, the side towards the Bronx shore. Men fought each other, yelling like mad. Women clawed each other's faces and screamed for their babies. Children cried and screamed and were trampled under foot.

#### HUNDREDS PITCH INTO RIVER

"The rush to the rail on the port side of the boat caused it to heel over a little. This forced a mass of crazed men,

women, and children against the guard rail of the upper deck. It broke, and scores—God knows how many—were pitched into the river by the weight from behind.

“I saw Mate Ed Flannagan and yelled to him to get the fire apparatus to work. Flannagan got all the men he could find together and rigged up two hose lines.

“He got these playing on the fore part of the boat, but it was like trying to put out hell itself. The flames had too much of a start, and by then were roaring all through the boat, for the most part on the starboard or Brooklyn side. Besides that, hundreds of women snatched at Flannagan and his men, falling over them, pulling them down, making it impossible to work.

#### JUMP WITH BABIES IN ARMS

“The fire made the fiercest and wildest blaze I ever saw. It was impossible to live near it. I saw, I don’t know how many, stand it as long as they could and then jump into the river, some of the women bearing babies in their arms, others holding fast to older children.

“I got the General Slocum beached sidewise. It struck twenty-five feet from shore. Before that the flames had crept to the pilot house, blistering my feet. Van Wart, Weaver, and I got out some way, I can’t tell how, and jumped into the river. We swam to shore, burned and sick, and stood around until we got a chance to get to the mainland in a small boat.’

All that a man is must be brought out in an experience such as Captain Van Schaick of the Slocum went through. He proved his courage, even if his judgment shall be impeached. But if he erred in judgment his critics must not

lose sight of the strain upon the man and the horror of the situation from which he could not run away.

When the seriousness of the fire came to him the Sunken Meadows virtually were passed by his vessel. The strong, irregular tides that have made Hell Gate a menace to shipping made turning back seem impossible. He was in a channel varying from 140 to 300 yards wide, and under the Slocum's keel were 16 to 150 feet of churning water. He had been warned off from lumber yards and oil tanks at One Hundred and Twenty-fourth street, and in the fraction of a second in which his mind had to act he fixed upon North Brother Island for beaching the doomed craft. From his place on the bridge the tragedies of the fire were behind him, veiled in black smoke. It was a question whether, if the vessel were turned nose on to the rocks sheer at the edge of deep water, the current might not swing the boat helpless into the stream again. He had fixed upon North Brother Island, however, and his purpose held according to his first judgment. With his feet blistered and his hat burned from his head, he beached the boat on the north shore of the island, with his engineer dead at his post below. Van Schaick could not tell how he escaped. When he had been arrested with his pilot he was burned so that a hospital ward was his place of detention.

Many a man lacking in judgment has been a hero in his unselfish duty. Van Schaick was tried in literal fire and did not flinch. Even his judgment may be left to him when the technical critic is done.

#### **DID CAPTAIN VAN SCHAICK BLUNDER?**

In respect to the allegation that many lives were sacrificed because the captain of the Slocum delayed too long and went

too far to beach the boat, much was learned by going over the actual course followed by the General Slocum with expert river men who have worked the upper East River and sound for years. There are no less than seven points, all more than one mile nearer the point at which the fire was discovered on the Slocum than the one where it was beached, to which Captain Van Schaick might have taken the Slocum and beached it safely and saved many hundreds of lives.

#### **NEARER POINTS THAN BROTHER ISLAND**

At the time the fire alarm was given on the Slocum the vessel was in the East River, opposite the northeast corner of Ward's Island—not two hundred feet away. It was not in mid-stream, and was much nearer the Ward's Island shore than the Astoria shore. A list of the places at which the Slocum could have been beached which offered either good means for the escape of the passengers or better means than they found at North Brother Island, in the opinion of expert navigators, is as follows:

The northeast corner of Ward's Island, where there is shallow water for 150 feet out, and well within reach of hundreds of boats, small and large, on the shores of Oak Point and Port Morris, from which point many might have swum ashore.

Little Hell Gate, a narrow passage between Ward's and Randall's islands, in which a safe beaching point could have been reached at a distance of no more than 1,000 feet from the point of the Slocum's course, opposite the eastern mouth of Little Hell Gate.

#### **SUNKEN MEADOWS EASY OF ACCESS**

Sunken Meadows, a large area of grass-grown meadow, which at its nearest point was not more than 400 feet from the

course of the Slocum when opposite Sunken Meadows' light. This point is easy of access from Oak Point and Port Morris.

Casino Beach in Astoria, not 600 feet from the easternmost point attained by the Slocum in its course north when the captain was wavering between the east and west. At this point there is a wide shelving beach of sand, and at the time there were 300 men standing on the beach watching the burning boat.

Lawrence Point, 300 yards north of Casino Beach, where there is a shoal for more than the Slocum's length, and easy of access for men from Casino Beach.

A narrow passage east of Lawrence Point, between that land and Berrian's Island, and in reach of men from Casino Beach.

Two points on Oak Point, both a mile or more south of Port Morris, both in reach of the fire department, and within a stone's throw of the yacht club, where 100 small boats could have been manned for rescue work in ten minutes.

#### SHOULD NOT HAVE FACED WIND

All these places are so situated that they could have been reached without the necessity of turning the Slocum's head to the wind, and thus sweeping the fire aft over the vessel.

Defenders of the action of the captain say in reply that he had a strong tide with him in the course he took, and in such a current he would have lost much time in swinging the big boat around.

One authority stated that Captain Van Schaick's course in keeping the boat under motion was the principal cause of the loss of life. Every turn of his wheel murdered a score of women and children. Had the boat been stopped—we mean

simply stopped by shutting off the steam and leaving the boat to drift in the tideway—several things would have happened.

#### WHEN A BOAT IS ON FIRE—STOP

In the first place, there would have been no such draught to force the fire, and the chances of putting it out would have been tenfold better. In the second place, if it could not be extinguished, it would have burned more slowly, and there would have been a great deal more time to save the passengers. In the third place, the direction of the flames would have been the natural direction, perpendicularly into the air, not backward to roast the passengers. In the fourth place, other vessels would have had opportunity to gather around the doomed steamer and take the passengers off, and in the fifth place there would have been opportunity to launch the lifeboats, throw overboard the life rafts, to get down the life preservers and put them on, and, without outside help, many more would have been saved. In short, the running of the boat consumed it in the most rapid possible manner, and in the most dangerous possible manner. To stand still would have given time, the one great essential thing that was needed to save lives.

The thing which happened was the worst possible thing that could have happened. The final beaching of the boat did not save a single life, did not tend to the saving of any lives. If instead of that the General Slocum had even drifted on the rocks and sunk at the start there could not have been any more lives lost than there were lost. It is impossible to imagine any untoward circumstances, any disastrous complication, anything whatever, that could have increased the death roll. To have stopped the boat, therefore, even supposing the



worst, could not have increased the chances of loss one iota, while it would have increased the chances of salvation a hundredfold. The great lesson of the whole disaster is summed up in the orders of the national government—"When a boat is on fire, stop." Nothing can happen to a vessel standing still so bad as what is brought upon it by going ahead.

#### THE CHIEF ENGINEER'S STORY

Chief Engineer Conklin, of the General Slocum, who had a miraculous escape from the burning boat, said:

"Never in my forty years of seagoing have I seen such a disaster or dreamed that such a thing could possibly happen. When I close my eyes at night I can see those children and women with their white faces, upon which an agony of fear and horror are stamped. I can hear the screams of mothers and the cries of anguish from the helpless little ones, and it is impossible for me to sleep.

"We left the Third street pier on Wednesday morning about nine o'clock. The steamer was well filled, but we were not overcrowded. We proceeded up the stream at a good rate of speed, and I was standing near my engine watching it work. I had just turned to my assistant, Everett Brandow, and remarked that I had never seen it work so smoothly, when the mate came running up to me with his face very pale and told me that the boat was on fire forward.

"There were women and children near the engine-room watching the machinery, but I do not think that they heard what the mate said. I at once informed the captain of the fact and, telling my assistant to stand by the engine, I sprang to the pumps and started them going. The captain ordered

the hose laid and in less than two minutes after the fire was discovered water was being thrown upon the flames.

#### THE FIRST CRY OF FIRE

'A moment after the pumps started to work some one on the deck above shouted 'Fire!' and in an instant there was a roar like a cyclone as the people made a rush for the stern of the vessel. They talk about a handful of men, twenty-one in number, controlling a crowd of sixteen hundred panic-stricken people. It was simply impossible. No power on earth could check them or calm their fears. They rushed about as though bereft of their senses.

"I never saw flames spread with such rapidity. In less than two minutes the whole forward part of the vessel was on fire. The captain, from time to time, kept calling to my engineer, asking how the fire was progressing, and ordered a full head of steam on.

'I stood near the pumps all the time, even when it was evident that the water would not extinguish the flames.

"The part of the boat where I stood was filled with a dense black smoke and I was obliged to cover my mouth with my arm in order to breathe. The boat had been freshly painted and that caused the woodwork to burn more fiercely. As far as I could see the crew worked nobly and did all they could.

#### THE CAPTAIN DID THE BEST THING

"When I saw that the steamer was headed for North Brother Island, I knew that Captain Van Schaick was doing the best thing possible. Every one who has been on the river knows that Hell Gate is a treacherous place, and I was fearful if the pilot put about we would ground on a rock, and then



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### VIEW OF THE BURNING STEAMER

As the burning steamboat, shown in the above picture, was borne along the stream on the breast of the tide, fire alarms were rung along the shore and several fireboats put out into the river. They followed the flame-enveloped boat, blowing their whistles for help. After the General Slocum was beached, the captain and firemen on these boats aided in the work of picking the people out of the water.



#### EXTERIOR VIEW OF THE MORGUE

All day long, hearses and undertakers' wagons rumbled through the streets carrying away the identified dead bodies to the morgue. Possibly one wagon, containing the tiny coffin of a baby, would be followed by another piled to the roof with eight or ten caskets. The sight was appalling.



### IDENTIFYING THE DEAD

One after another the bodies of the victims were placed in pine boxes and carried into the morgue, where they were arranged in long rows, between which room was left so that relatives could pass between them for the purpose of recognizing features or articles of clothing. Many heart-rending scenes were witnessed.



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### HEROIC RESCUERS AT WORK

Many of the passengers on the General Slocum were saved through the courageous work of the physicians and nurses employed on North Brother Island. The above picture represents the rescue of a little girl whose unconscious body was being overhauled by the rescuers.

the loss of life would be even greater, for a person, no matter how good a swimmer he might be, would have been carried down like a dead weight and there would have been little or no chance of saving them. The docks at that point were covered with oil and other inflammable material, and to have attempted a landing there would have been extremely unwise.

"In my opinion the captain did the only thing possible, and had he not done so, very few, if any, on the boat would have survived."

#### DIFFERENT OPINIONS

Shipping men expressed diverse opinions concerning the action of Captain Van Schaick in beaching his vessel on North Brother Island. In every steamboat office the chart of the waters about Hell Gate was carefully gone over in considering whether or not the captain of the vessel did all that he could have done to save the lives of his passengers.

Along the Manhattan shore, from the point at which the fire was discovered to where the steamboat was beached, is a line of gas works and lumber piles, and many held that had the vessel put in there she would have started a blaze ashore. Some expressed the belief that Captain Van Schaick refrained from going in there because he did not want to cause any extra damage for which his company would be held liable. Others said that he had probably kept on his course thinking that he could extinguish the flames, and that he did not attempt to beach his vessel until he saw that all hope of saving her was gone.

#### VIOLATED AN UNWRITTEN LAW

An officer attached to the local revenue cutter service, after looking over the chart, said that Van Schaick was guilty of having violated one of the great unwritten laws of the sea

that says to put the tail of your vessel to the wind when fire is discovered forward. His course, when the fire started, was almost east. The wind was coming from across his port and fanned the flames so that in a very short time they enveloped the entire vessel, running, as they did, straight aft.

#### DEFENDS THE ACTION OF VAN SCHAICK

One of the river captains expressed the belief that it was impossible for Van Schaick to have done otherwise, because of the depth of water and the nature of the tides about Hell Gate. "The Slocum could not have run up to the Sunken Meadows," he said, "because to have done so she would have had to turn about, and while trying to accomplish that she would have been carried by the tide as far as North Brother Island.

"On the New York shore are rocks suddenly falling off to a depth of seventy to eighty feet, down which, had she attempted to ground, she would have slid, when she sank, with all those aboard.

"South Brother Island offered only a bad rocky shore, and Riker's Island was too far away, so that the only alternative was to send her where she was beached, out of the tide and on a sandy bottom. To have sent her into a dock on the New York side would probably have fetched her up alongside of one of the naphtha boats that always lie there, and think what would have happened then!"



## CHAPTER IX

### HISTORY OF THE GENERAL SLOCUM

**Built in 1891—Made Entirely of Wood—Overhauled and Inspected Shortly Before Disaster—A Victim of Many Mishaps—Present Laws Which Govern Inspection of Steamboats—Same Accident May Occur to Any Excursion Steamer—Stop the Building of Boats with Flimsy Upper Decks—A Boiler Always a Danger Spot—Age of the Boat Does Not Count.**

The General Slocum was built in 1891 by Divine Burtis, Jr., in Brooklyn. It was built for the Knickerbocker Steamboat Company, and at that time was one of the handsomest and most perfectly equipped excursion steamers in this port.

It was launched April 18, 1891. As soon as it was completed it was used for summer excursions by churches, Sunday schools, and various societies, and when not chartered for those purposes ran as a public excursion boat. It was built chiefly of white oak, locust, and yellow pine. It was 235 feet long on the water line and 250 feet on deck. It was seventy feet beam on the deck and drew about seven feet of water. The Slocum had three decks, also built of wood, which extended the entire length of the vessel. The pilot house was on the hurricane deck, and on this deck were lifeboats, and rafts, the boats being hung on davits outboard and the rafts lying on deck at the outside rail.

#### WAS THOROUGHLY INSPECTED

The boat was thoroughly overhauled this year before going into commission, and was inspected as required by law.

Inspector Henry Lundberg, of the local board of steamboat inspectors, thoroughly examined the vessel five weeks ago. The Slocum had a large steam fire pump, with a hose that extended the entire length of the vessel. It only was necessary for the engineer to open a wheel valve and the full force of water was ready for those who wanted it. It also had two hand pumps and hose, and these two together extended the length of the vessel. It carried six lifeboats and four life rafts. The boats and rafts would carry about 250 persons. There were on board 2,550 life preservers. On the inspection license issued the Slocum could carry 2,500 passengers.

#### A SERIES OF MISHAPS

The General Slocum had had many mishaps since it was launched thirteen years ago, but none serious. On Aug. 14, 1891, four months after it was launched, it ran aground on a mud bank at Rockaway Beach, and two days later it ran into the steamer Monmouth off pier 6, North River, and was slightly damaged.

While returning from Rockaway Beach on July 29, 1894, it ran aground at Rockaway Inlet, and there was a panic among the passengers. On August 15th of that same year it went aground off Manhattan Beach in a storm. The passengers were taken off by the steamboat Angler and brought to the city.

On Sept. 1, 1894, the Slocum backed into the tug Robert Sayre and was disabled. At that time it had 400 passengers on board and it drifted helplessly until picked up by two tugs. It collided on July 8, 1898, with the steam lighter Amelia off pier 12, East River.

On July 14, 1901, the Slocum with 750 passengers aboard

went aground on a bar about five miles off Barren Island. It was on the way back to the city after having made a short excursion out to sea.

On June 15, 1902, when it had 2,000 passengers on board, it stuck hard and fast on a bar in Jamaica Bay, and the passengers were on board a greater part of the night. They finally were taken ashore in small boats. On July 6, 1902, the Slocum and the Thomas Patten collided off the battery

#### **AN OFFICIAL OPINION**

General Dumont of the steamboat inspection department in New York City spoke freely about the present laws which govern inspection of steamboats. He said that the same conditions which ended in the awful disaster on board the General Slocum exist on every steamboat in New York engaged in excursion business. "The laws of the United States," he said, "lay down certain rules as to the inspection of steamboats. We have to see that a boat carries only a safe number of passengers according to her tonnage. In the case of the General Slocum she could only carry, according to law, 2,500 passengers. It is conceded that she did not carry anywhere near her legal quota.

"The law, however, does not touch upon the construction of a boat. She may have a wooden hull or a steel hull. That is all within the province of her designers and owners. We have to determine just whether her hull is seaworthy and constructed in a safe manner.

#### **MADE ATTRACTIVE TO THE EYE**

"In the case of the General Slocum, her hull was of wood. Next, the General Slocum had all of her upper works built of wood. She was painted and varnished and generally made

attractive to the eye, so that passengers on excursions could have pleasing surroundings. In this she was just like her sister ship of the same line, the Grand Republic, or, in fact, like the Coney Island boats, the Starin Glen Island boats, the Staten Island Line vessels or any other line or individual excursion boat that plies New York harbor.

"All of this paint plastered on thin and flimsy joiner work makes highly inflammable material. People off for a holiday, men especially, smoke cigars and cigarettes. Women and men read papers and throw them away. There is a puff of wind while the boat is going fast through the water, thus creating a breeze. A newspaper is blown under a seat, a lighted end of a cigar or cigarette touches the paper and in a second there is a blaze. Unless a fire on any excursion boat in our harbor to-day can be quelled immediately there is little hope for the people aboard. The only way to stop such disasters as happened aboard the General Slocum is to stop the building of boats with flimsy upper decks.

#### **THERE IS NO LAW TO STOP IT**

"There is no law to stop this manner of building boats. We do not make the laws. That is up to Washington. We only try to enforce the law as we find it. In this case we have done so. So far as the General Slocum is concerned we feel that our board has fully attended to its duty. The boat Slocum was certainly equipped in every way with the requirements of the law. I am candid in saying that there is not an excursion boat in New York harbor to-day that is not liable to the same accident. All are in danger of fire, and fire is the most deadly peril to be feared.

"A good many years ago I pointed out that another danger

spot on the excursion boat was about the boiler. A boiler with a fire in it is always a danger spot. The laws ought to be changed so that no flimsy joiner work is used in any boat designed for excursion traffic, and all boilers should be fully sheeted in steel. Then the public can be carried in safety.

#### **PASSENGER ON ISAAC NEWTON**

"I have known all this since 1880. I was then a passenger on the old Isaac Newton, which was burned on her night trip to Albany off Fort Lee, and several persons were killed. I saw then the dangers of the light wooden material.

"The fact that the Slocum was old did not make her any more unsafe. If a boat is thoroughly overhauled yearly, age does not count. The Mary Powell, now plying on the Hudson River, is thirty-five years old, but she is as safe as any of the modern boats. The Sound-going steamers, whenever wooden upper works are used, are dangerous. Any boat built the way that the General Slocum was is dangerous. The wonder to me is not that accidents happen, but that they do not happen more often."

#### **EXPERT OPINIONS**

It was the opinion of several of the foremost shipbuilders and naval architects of New York, that it is possible to construct vessels of the type of the General Slocum in such a way as to make them comparatively safe; but these experts believed that the free use of steel in the construction of the upper works would involve a greater expense than builders of excursion craft are ready to incur.

These builders and architects believed that a safe boat, constructed with bulkheads, corrugated iron partitions and fireproof materials, might be built for about twenty to thirty

per cent more than the cost of a wooden vessel, such as the General Slocum.

#### **BOATS CAN BE MADE SAFE**

The designers of the New Staten Island ferry boats said that they would undertake to build an excursion boat of five thousand capacity, in every way as safe from fire as an ocean liner, but it would cost more money than builders would pay. It could be designed almost entirely of iron and steel, with ample deck room, and of a model that could be handled in any spot where New York excursion boats go. Such a boat would cost from twenty to thirty per cent more than a wooden boat of the same capacity.

But it is not necessary to build iron excursion boats. Take, for example, the Hudson River or Fall River line boats. They are constructed on the same general plan as the ordinary excursion boats, yet they are comparatively safe from fire, because they have larger and well-trained crews, regular and careful inspection, and their passengers are all the time under control.

#### **IRON BOATS NOT NECESSARY**

According to well-known naval authority, the burning of wooden ships in warfare taught us to build fire-proof battle-ships. We have learned to build safe ships for ocean travel, but we are building excursion boats as we built them half a century ago. Under present conditions it would not be feasible to build iron excursion boats, but practically safe boats could be constructed at a cost not much greater than that of wooden boats.

Corrugated iron is not much heavier than wood. Probably it would be necessary to have the decks of wood, but much of

the structure could be of metal. The uprights should be firm, but not necessarily large.

The machinery for putting out fire should be greatly improved. There are many precautions that should and probably now will be taken for the safeguarding of the lives of those who go on excursion boats. But the situation is no worse in New York than elsewhere. All over America excursion craft are of about the same type. It is marvelous that the loss of life is not greater.

## CHAPTER X

### THE SPECTACLE FROM THE SHORE

**An Ominous Cloud of Smoke—Enveloped in Flame—A Huddled Mass of Women and Children—Bodies in the Wake of the Burning Boat—The Dead Tangled in the Debris—A Floating Crematory—Shrieking Mass in the Water—The Beach Strewn with Disfigured Dead.**

Tragic in the extreme were the descriptions given by persons who witnessed the passing of the General Slocum from the moment the big excursion steamer passed through Hell Gate until she grounded off Hunt's Point, a mass of flame, with the passengers who five minutes before had been absorbed in the pleasure of their outing fighting for life between fire and water.

#### THE CHILDREN WERE DANCING

It was at ten o'clock that the steamer entered Hell Gate. The employees of the Astoria ferryboat Haarlaem, which passed under the Slocum's stern, said that at that time there were not the slightest evidences to foreshadow the disaster that was to overtake the General Slocum in a few moments. The band was playing the "Marseillaise," the children of the St. Mark's Lutheran Sunday school were dancing, after the manner of the East Side children, to the stirring music, the steamer was decorated with pennants and strings of flags, while her decks were bright with the gay summer dresses and parasols of women and children.

As the vessel swept past the Haarlaem, one of the deck hands waved to a knot of children who had come to the rail



to see the ferryboat pass. The children returned the greeting, and presently a good-natured excursionist ovation was given to the old Haarlaem.

Then the Slocum slipped past Mill Rock and the ferry employees saw her no more; but several Astoria people said that before the steamer disappeared around the bend in the river at Hackett's Point there was a cloud of white smoke hanging over her. This, however, was thought nothing of at the time, as the strains of band music were still plainly audible.

#### OMINOUS CLOUD OF SMOKE

But the moment the General Slocum disappeared from the sight of the casual watchers at Astoria the steamer attracted the attention of Superintendent Grafing of the new gas works at Casino Beach. Mr. Grafing noticed that there was some smoke coming from the forward part of the vessel. At the same moment one of the gas works laborers spoke to the superintendent about the smoke, which increased in volume every moment. Then it was realized that the vessel was on fire, although it was a hard thing to believe, for the band was still playing.

At this time the Slocum was just off the Sunken Meadows. While the gas works employees were curiously regarding her the band suddenly ceased playing right in the middle of a popular air. Simultaneously there came from the throats of over fifteen hundred people a cry that was heard from the Casino Beach to Riker's Island and the New York shore.

#### THE WAIL OF THE WHISTLE

Superintendent Grafing ran for his field glasses and, when he got them focused, he was just in time to see a great sheet of flame burst from the cloud of smoke that enveloped the

steamer, whose head was now directed straight for the breast of North Brother Island.

The shrieks of the panic-stricken women and children were plainly audible on both sides of the river, while over all arose the prolonged wail of the Slocum's whistle. The gas works people say that not until a few moments before the vessel slid in behind North Brother Island did the real catastrophe occur. But the huddled mass of women and children were discernible on the hurricane and 'tween decks, while above all a long flagstring, the lower part of which had been eaten through by the flames, was flying frantically loose in the breezes of the Sound.

#### **SHRIEKING MASS IN THE WATER**

While Superintendent Grafling of the gas works was watching he suddenly saw the starboard rail of the upper deck collapse, and a huddled, shrieking mass of women fall with the burning debris into the water. It was then, according to the witnesses around Casino Beach, that the real panic occurred. Women and children, nearly all dressed in white or light colors, were to be seen leaping wildly from the doomed steamer, which a few moments later was obscured from the sight of the gas works people by North Brother Island. Superintendent Grafling afterward went to the scene of the disaster in a rowboat, but did not care to discuss what he had seen when he returned.

At the same time William Henry Muff, who runs a hotel and a boathouse at Steinway, L. I., about a quarter of a mile farther up the Sound, was a more active witness of the catastrophe.

Muff was eating his breakfast on the veranda of the boat-

house, when all at once, from behind the hillock known as Berrians Island, came the General Slocum in flames. Muff dispatched a messenger to Steinway to tell the engineer of the steam launch Gloria, which he owns, that the Slocum was on fire, and that he wanted steam at once.

While the engineer was being found the Slocum ran behind North Brother Island, but not before Muff had witnessed the breaking of the guardrail and the terrible panic that followed.

#### **COURSE OF FIRE AND SMOKE**

The flame and smoke ascending from the vessel arose from behind the island, plainly marking the course of the General Slocum, although nothing could be seen of the vessel itself except now and then the top of a smokestack.

Just as the Gloria was about to start to the possible rescue of some of the Slocum's passengers a number of reserves from the Seventy-fourth Precinct, Long Island City, ran onto the wharf and boarded the launch.

The boat followed directly in the larger vessel's wake, picking up bodies as she went along. By the time she arrived at the point where the General Slocum was grounded and burning to the water's edge, the Gloria had picked up so many bodies that before she could be of further service the dead had to be turned over to the Fidelity, and the police reserves landed on North Brother Island.

#### **A MASS OF DEBRIS AND BODIES**

"After that," said Muff, "we made a second trip over the wake of the Slocum. The water was simply a mass of debris and bodies.

"We came upon a larger mass of floating debris and mixed up with it we found several women and children, all tangled

together, as if they had fallen in a panic-stricken heap into the water with the rail, and gripped one another tighter in their death struggle. We had to disengage them one by one before we could get them into the Gloria. They were all dead.

"Altogether my engineer and I, assisted by the police, who came with us, picked up twenty-two bodies, which we turned over to the Fidelity.

"The saddest thing I saw was the body of a baby which we tried to extricate from the wreck, only to find that the seeming debris was the arms of the infant's mother, who was underneath."

#### **A FEARFUL SIGHT**

Racing up stream with sheets of flame shooting from every part of her, the doomed boat, with its load of burning, maddened, dying humanity, dropping by twos, threes and groups into the water to meet death by drowning, furnished a spectacle for thousands that drove them frantic.

Many proved themselves heroes, and fought with the energy of giants to save loved ones. Some saved one or two, but lost others. Some weeping, almost insane men, parted from those they loved by the mad rush of the panic-stricken throng, were able to save only their own lives, valueless to them when they realized that wives and children had perished.

#### **A WAKE OF STRUGGLING HUMANITY**

These fought to get to the railings to jump into the water, and they pushed those before them over the rail. Men and women went mad. Men pushed wives or children into the water and then sought to follow and save them by holding them up in the water. Others tried to hold to the railing and

sides of the vessel, but the fighting crowd behind pushed them over and they fell into the river.

Behind the flaming vessel as she bore on up the stream was a wake of struggling humanity. The heads of men, women and children bobbed up and down on the foam-crested waves for a few minutes and then went out of sight.

Clusters clung to the sides of the vessel. Flames were shooting from all parts of the boat, and as the heat became too great the men and women clinging to the sides like flies dropped off two and three at a time, then in bunches of half a dozen or more.

The life preservers had saved only a few. Those who had been able to get them found that for the most part they were old and rotten and would not support a person in the water. Mothers who had managed to get some sobbed in despair, threw them away and leaped to death in the river with their children.

#### A MAD RUSH

Almost with the first cry of fire the throng of excursionists became panic-stricken. A few excited inquiries were made, men and women glanced about with frightened looks, and then came a cloud of smoke and a glimpse of flame. The next instant a shriek went up from the women and there was a mad rush.

Mothers rushed to and fro for a moment to find children that had been playing about, and men tried to find wives and little ones, then all were caught in the mad rush for the sides and stern of the boat. Men shouted, women and children screamed and shrieked, and the mad fight for life was on.

In the terrible rush old men, women, girls and little ones

were knocked down and trampled into insensibility on the decks of the vessel. The band had made a feeble effort for an instant to restore calm by trying to play an air, but in a moment the musicians were swept from their feet and they, too, were fighting for their lives.

#### A HELL OF FLAME

The flames carried back through the boat by the current of air caused by the boat's swift rush up stream swept through the entire vessel. It spread so quickly that those in the forward part of the boat were cut off and doomed to a terrible death almost in an instant.

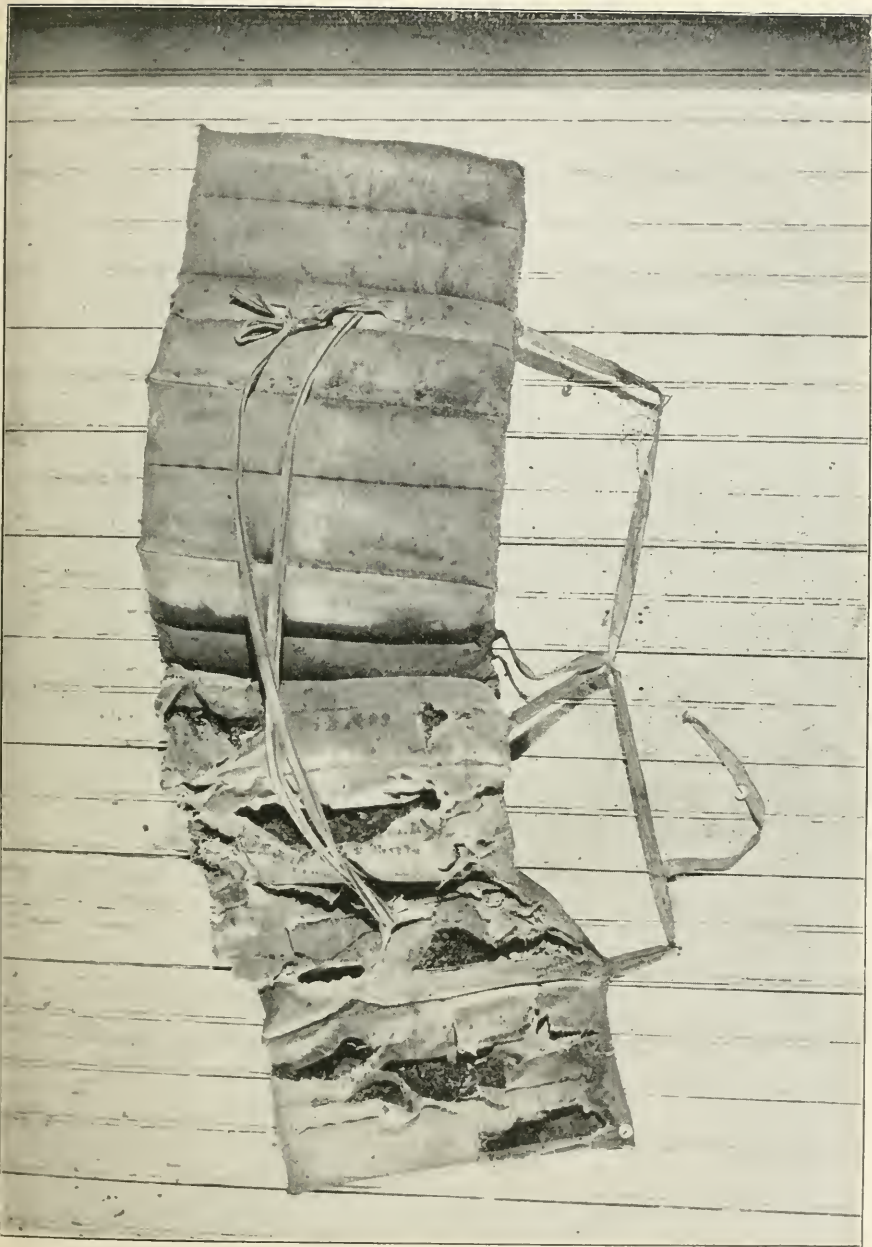
The others on the boat were driven to the after part of the decks. Men tried to get life preservers, but only a few could reach the racks, the others being carried to the railings by the mad rush.

Then the flames began their deadly work. Catching the clothing of those on the edge of the throng, the fire drove them mad with pain.

Their bodies licked by flames until they fell and were roasted to death, leaping into the river to go down with the water bubbling into their lungs, trampled and crushed in a mad panic, these thousand merry excursionists, most of them women and children, died within a few minutes.

The horror of the scene was almost beyond conception. Men who passed through it and lived were dazed and seemed to remember little of what happened. There were terrible incidents seared on their brains, but for hours they seemed unable to realize the whole horror of the holocaust.

An eye-witness who saw much of what happened to the boat said:



### ONE OF THE LIFE PRESERVERS

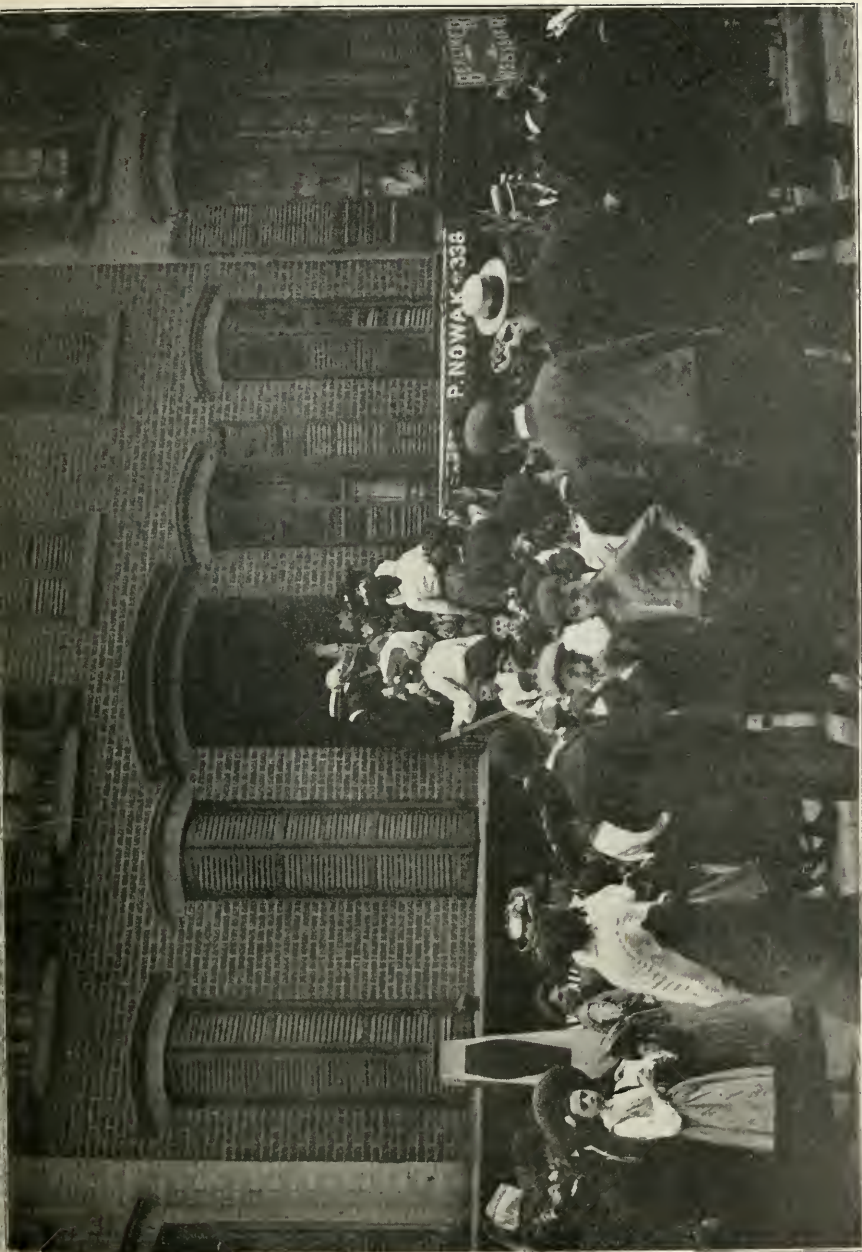
The life preserver shown in the above illustration was taken from the body of a drowned woman found on North Brother Island. One of the most horrible facts that came to light was that proper safety appliances were not provided on the boat. The life preservers were rotten and filled with corkdust, which quickly becomes water soaked



### A SIMPLE FUNERAL

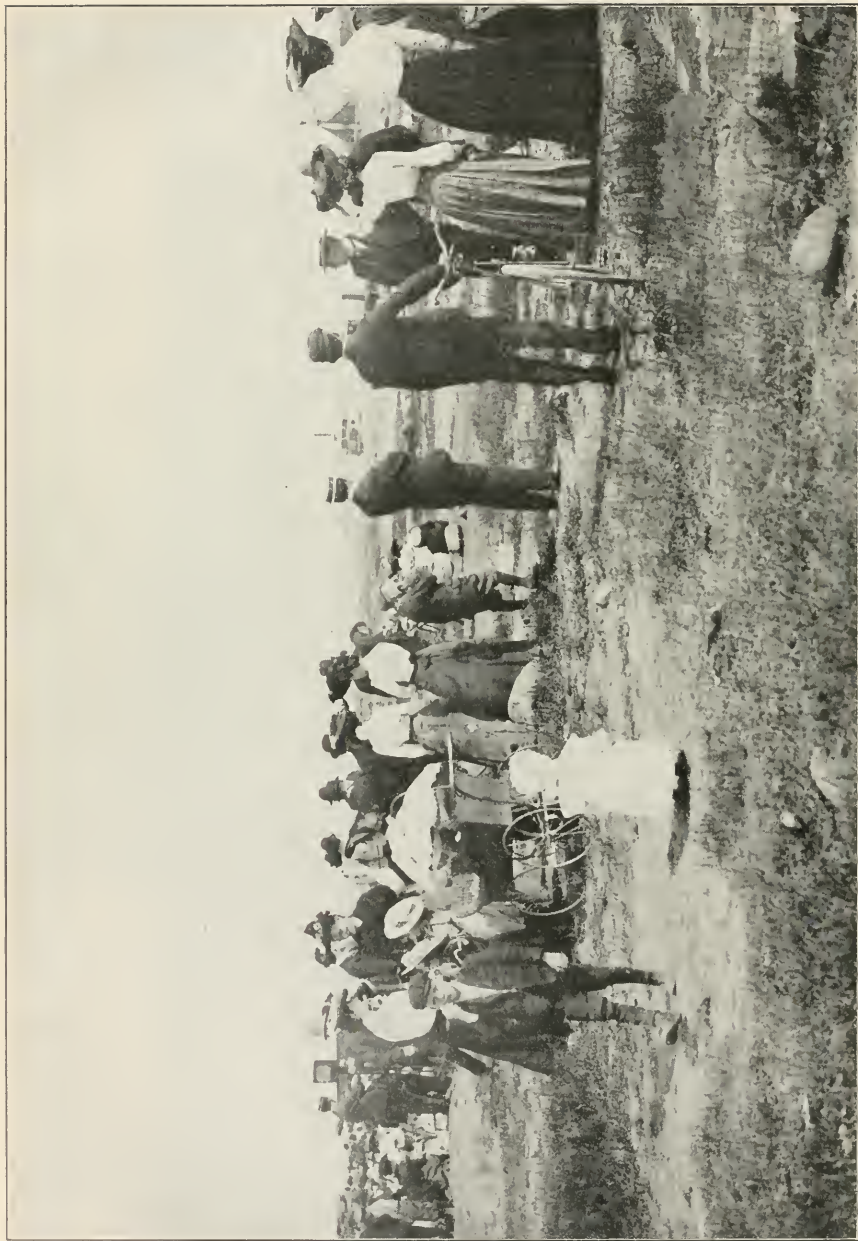
There were a number of instances on record where undertakers did not scruple to profit by the limited supply to extort from stricken widows twice the regular cost of coach or hearse. The above picture represents the funeral of one of the baby victims of the horror. The parents were unable to secure a hearse, and the father was compelled to carry the





### A HOUSE OF MOURNING

Within the limits of a few blocks on the East Side, nearly every house had crape tied to the front door. The above picture represents a house on East Ninth street, in which lay eight of the dead, and which was visited all day Friday by hundreds of friends and relatives of the deceased, as well as a great number of curious spectators.



Courtesy of Leslie's Weekly. Copyright by Judge Co., 1904.

### ANXIOUS CROWD ON THE NEW YORK SHORE.

The news of the burning of the General Slocum flashed like wildfire over the city of New York. The above picture shows a throng of people watching the burning steamer and awaiting news of imperiled friends. Tens of thousands of people gathered on the Island of Manhattan forgot their business, their pleasures and their troubles in the shadow of the awful catastrophe.

“The steamer’s whistle was blowing for assistance as she came up the river. I saw several persons jump into the water before she was headed for the northwest shore of North Brother Island. Her position in the water made it impossible for those aboard to reach land except by swimming. I saw perhaps fifty or a hundred persons, mostly women and children, jump overboard. Most of the throng was on the hurricane deck when I plainly saw a part of it collapse. Many must have been killed instantly. The greatest loss of life was caused by the collapsing of the upper deck. It fell with a crash soon after the fire started, crushing hundreds of persons who had gathered on the lower deck. It was then that the greatest panic ensued amid the living stream of persons going over the rail into the water.”

## CHAPTER XI

### HAIRBREADTH ESCAPES

Clara Hartmann's Story—Alive, but Tagged with a Deathmark of Identification—Thrilling Story—Boyish Pluck—Clung to a Paddlewheel—A Pile of Heads, Legs and Arms—Hair and Clothing on Fire—Dragged under Water—Plucked from the Waves.

The story of twelve-year-old Clara Hartmann was probably the most remarkable one among the many tales told by survivors of the General Slocum disaster. The seemingly dead body of the little girl had been picked up by the crew of a launch already laden beyond its capacity with victims of the disaster. There was neither time to lift Clara's body from the water nor space upon the deck of the launch for another body, so a rope was fastened to the waist and the launch towed Clara to the pier at the foot of East One Hundred and Thirty-eighth street.

#### A SUPPOSED CORPSE

Clara was the last to be raised to the wharf, where a man from a neighboring coal yard wrapped what he supposed to be the corpse of the little girl in a tarpaulin. Then Clara was loaded on a truck with a dozen dead bodies of women and children and was transported to the Alexander avenue police station. The bodies were taken from the truck and laid in a row, according to their number, on the floor of the station house.

**ASKED FOR HER DEATH TAG**

Clara's number was twenty-four, twice her age. She said she never would forget that number, and she asked the sergeant of the station house to give her the death tag which the kind surgeon removed from her dress when it was discovered that she was alive. She will save the tag as a memento of her dual escapes from death and being sent to the morgue.

**"THIS GIRL IS ALIVE"**

It was a woman volunteer who had entered the station house to aid the police and the doctors to establish identifying marks of the dead women and children, who made the discovery that "No. 24" was yet alive. She was examining the child's clothing, when a sudden convulsive movement indicated the presence of life. A moment later the woman's cries of "This little girl is alive! Come, quick!" at once brought the doctors and nurses to Clara's side. Their prompt attendance and efforts saved the girl's life.

**HELD HANDS AND THEN JUMPED**

"I shall never forget when mamma and sister Margery said 'God help us!' when they saw the fire come up out of the front end of the boat, and the people, many of whom we knew, began to rush around the big boat," said Clara. "Mamma called me to her and she took hold of Margery's hand and mine and she said, 'Stay with me.'

"Margery only recently graduated from the public school and was confirmed, and I was proud of her. She was a good sister, but she and mamma are lost now. I don't see how they could have reached the shore. Mamma and Margery and I remained on the boat, still holding hands, until the flames got awfully close and hot. Everybody was then jumping into the

water, and, as we didn't want to get burned up, we decided to jump, too.

#### TRIED TO SAVE MOTHER AND SISTER

"There were so many in the water near where we wanted to jump that we had to wait a while before the space was clear, and then all jumped together, still holding hands. But the moment we got into the water we had to let go of each other to do what we could for ourselves.

"I felt I wasn't going down and, seeing Margery and mamma near by, I tried to save them, for they were struggling awfully. Then a lot of swimmers got around us and we were separated. I heard Margery say again, 'God save us!' then she gave a gasp and sank out of sight. I guess Margery's heart gave way. Mamma I didn't see after that.

"While I was keeping afloat a man came near me, and I grabbed him around the neck. He was awfully mean, for he tried to push me away, but I just hung onto him as hard as I could. He tried again to push me away, but I told him that I could hold on and we would soon be ashore, but he pushed harder than ever, and my head went under the water often. Then I felt him sinking, and I let go, and I must have fainted. That was the first time that I ever fainted in my life.

#### SHE LOST CONSCIOUSNESS

"I don't know what happened to me after that until I came to life, they tell me, in the Alexander avenue station house, but I must have floated and been picked up by a boat. They told me afterward that I was towed behind a launch, but I didn't feel it.

"When I got out of my faint it was in the afternoon, when I thought it was yet morning. I heard men tramping on the

floor and felt I was lying on something very hard and that my head was covered. Then there was talk about taking the dead people away and then I remembered the fire and the people drowning all around me.

"I thought that I was still in the water, too. My stomach got sick—I had swallowed a whole lot of salty water and I did want awfully to get rid of that water. Then it began to gush out of my mouth and a woman said, 'This little girl ain't dead,' and she called, 'Doctor, doctor!' quick, like that.

#### TAKEN TO THE HÔSPITAL

"They pulled the cover off my head and I began to feel very much better and the air came to me. It felt good, too. They took me up from the floor and put me on a soft couch, and then I was taken to the hospital, where they treated me nicely. I cried when I remembered mamma and Margery, but the hospital nurses told me they were safe, but they haven't come home yet.

"Willie Reitz, my cousin, found me in the hospital and I was glad to see him. He is only thirteen, but he went around to all the hospitals looking for me, Margery and mamma, he told me when the nurses let him come to my couch. He hurried home and they brought me clothes and took me here.

"Pauline Jordan, of No. 37 Third avenue, who plays with me, was in the next cot to me in the hospital, and we talked over the excursion and the fire while we were getting better. I think Pauline lost her mamma, too, and her sister Catherine was dreadfully burned.

"I am going to have my hair cut off to-day, for it is all matted and can't be combed out. I hate to lose my curls, but the hair will grow out again."

**SAVED A LITTLE GIRL**

"I seized a life preserver," said a boy survivor, "and pulled down the wire netting, and half a dozen life preservers fell to the floor. The first one I picked up came to pieces in my hands. It was full of straw. The next one also came to pieces. It was full of powdered cork. I tried all the six life preservers, and they were all rotten. The stuff they were made of tore all apart.

"So I had to jump overboard just as I was. A little girl grabbed me by the back of my collar and held on tight. I did not try to get rid of her. I swam to the shore, where one of the nurses took the child from my back, and then I turned and swam back to where I saw a little girl held up by a life preserver.

"She grabbed me first by the heel, then by the hand, but I brought her near shore and one of the nurses threw us a rope."

**CLUNG TO A PADDLE BLADE**

Said Mrs. Lena De Luccia: "My life was saved by clinging to a paddle blade while the fire burned furiously around me, blistering my hands and face. The torture was terrible. I had lost my baby and was separated from my three other children, whom I have since heard from. When the fire started I picked up my baby and told my other children to cling to me. I was close to the rail when a wave of frenzied women and children forced us overboard. I was just about to abandon hope and let go, for the blaze was right over me, when a rowboat came along and I was picked up."

**PICKED UP BY A BOAT**

"I was on the railing when the fire started," said George Heinz, "and I was pushed over by the rush. Before I fell I



saw a little boy with pretty light curls looking up. Then a big sheet of flame came and his face was burned beyond recognition. I can still see that little fellow. I was in the water only a minute when I was picked up by a boat. My brother, Henry Heinz, who was struck dumb with fright, was able to speak to-day for the first time since the disaster. I stood right alongside of the lifeboats and not once was an attempt made by any of the crew to launch them. Instead, the men acted as if they were crazy. They were worse than the women. The captain was yelling at them to do something, but they gave no heed to him."

#### TOO AWFUL TO REMEMBER

"It was too awful to remember about," said Susan Schulz, "and I wish I could forget it all. Such tearing, pushing and hauling I never saw before. In the water it was worse. Women fought for small pieces of board, grabbed each other for support, some of them begging others to save their children. I could not tell you all the things that passed through my mind. The blaze sprang up all of a sudden. Then the wild rush began. I don't know how I got into the water, but after I had been in a short time I felt a sort of suffocation. I could not breathe. My ears tingled and I seemed to hear sounds like music afar off. I don't remember any more until I found myself on the island with the doctor working over me. Later I was taken to Lincoln Hospital."

#### GAVE UP HOPE

Mrs. Mary Waurer said: "When the fire started and the crowd began to rush, I got excited as I felt myself carried along to the side of the boat. I don't remember whether I

jumped, for I was pretty badly burned, or was pushed overboard. In the water I grabbed at a man but missed him. Then I tried to catch hold of a life preserver, but just as I was about to seize it it sank. I gave up hope, thinking I was going to be drowned. I felt a ringing sensation in my head and seemed as if I were going to fall asleep, when somebody grabbed me and pulled me aboard a boat. I was taken to North Brother Island and from there sent to Lincoln Hospital."

**SOMEBODY SHOUTED, "FIRE!"**

"I was on the top deck," said William Vassner, "when some one shouted 'Fire!' Everybody tried to jump and I tried to jump, too, but there were so many ahead of me that I couldn't. I kept getting pushed back from the railing, so I grabbed a post. Just then the deck caved in and the people went crashing down with it. It was an awful sight—a big pile of heads, legs and arms, like a football game, only a thousand times worse. I clung to the pole about two minutes and then jumped into the water. I was not afraid, for I knew that I could swim as well as any one on the East Side. I swam around to five different tugs, but they were filled with women and children who couldn't swim. I helped three little fellows to board, and then, getting tired, I swam toward a launch that had only a few on it. I had to push bodies out of my way to reach it. A very large and stout woman grabbed me and pulled me under water. When I came up I was pulled aboard the launch. So was the big woman. I didn't find out her name, but when we got to Riker's Island she was alive. The life preservers were no good. As fast as any one tried to use them they would burst open or the straps would come off."

**MUST HAVE FAINTED**

The following statement is from Mrs. Albertina Lembach: "My attention was first attracted to the fire by the screams of the women. I saw a big sheet of flame shoot up the stairway, and, gathering my five children about me, I told them to cling tight to me. Pastor Haas ran forward to try to calm the screaming women, and Mrs. Haas got her children and told me to stay on the boat as long as we could. Then there was a fearful rush. People ran shrieking to the rail and it gave way, letting most of them fall into the water. In the rush three of my children were swept away. Taking the two remaining under my arms, I prepared to jump. The flames had ignited my clothing, and my face and neck were burned. A man rushed past me and jumped. I think it was one of the crew. As he jumped his arm struck me and I fell into the water with my children. I tried to cling to them, but must have fainted, for I don't remember anything more until I found myself in the Lincoln Hospital. All my children perished except Herman, my oldest boy."

**LIFE PRESERVER OF NO USE**

Said Walter Mueller: "After papa tied the life preserver around me I jumped into the water. The life preserver was of no use, for it broke right off me and I thought I was going to drown. I grabbed a man's neck and went under the water. When I came up again I seized a woman by the hair and she scratched my face. I let go of her and was sinking again when a man in a boat picked me up."

**SAVED BY A DEAD MAN**

Katherine Jordan, the last of the General Slocum victims in the hospital of the Department of Correction on Riker's

Island, stated that, had it not been for the dead body of an unknown man, she would surely have drowned, despite the fact that she wore a life preserver. She said:

"Instead of being supported by the life preserver I wore, I found that it was of no use to me at all. I could not keep my head above the waves. In my desperation I grasped for anything that might be within reach and my hand fell across the corpse of a man that was floating past.

"Getting a secure hold on it, and kicking my feet as fast as I could, I managed to keep alive until picked up by a tug."

Miss Jordan was terribly burned about the face and arms.

#### A LUCKY BOY

John Roseman, eleven years old, walked into the information bureau established in St. Mark's Church and said he wanted to contradict a report that he had been drowned. His name appeared on the missing list in the newspapers. He said he had intended to go on the excursion, but, just as the boat was about to leave, a member of the church committee discovered him and put him back on the pier. Roseman was told that he was lucky, and he said he guessed he was. One of his companions, who knew he had gone on board the *Slocum* before she started up the river, had reported Roseman as missing.

## CHAPTER XII

### A HOUSE OF LAMENTATION

**Thriving Neighborhood Plunged in Woe—Once Happy Church Turned into a Place of Mourning—Sorrow for the Lost—Woeful Trips of the Undertakers' Wagons—The Missing—St. Mark's Church an Old One—The Streets Thronged With Mourners—Crowds Round the Church—People Clamoring for Information—Crape-Hung Doorways.**

The burning of the General Slocum changed the entire aspect of New York's swarming East Side and filled the streets with lamentations and made the tens of thousands almost forget their business, their pleasures, and even their individual troubles. Not a block but mourned from East Fourteenth to Houston street, and a few that did not feel the shock directly or indirectly through the lower part of the city.

#### GRIEF-STRICKEN GROUPS

From the time when the first news of the disaster reached the neighborhood of the Evangelical Lutheran German Church until the early hours of the next morning, every street and alley resounded with the weeping of the grief-stricken fathers and mothers and brothers and sisters of the victims. On every tenement stoop groups of excited men and women talked of nothing but the great disaster. In front of the church thousands gathered to read the hastily prepared bulletins posted there. Hundreds of carriages and wagons passed to and fro throughout the afternoon and evening, each bringing home some injured survivor of the steamboat or restoring

to their waiting relatives those who had been fortunate enough to escape unscathed.

A little before noon a woman alighted from a Second avenue car at Sixth street, the tears streaming down her face, and her hand clinching an afternoon newspaper in which was the first news of the disaster. She rushed to the church, half a block away, and, upon finding the doors closed, fell weeping and hysterical to the sidewalk.

#### THE FIRST TIDINGS

It was the first tidings Sixth street had received of the accident. The woman was the first of the hundreds who had lost kin or friends on the excursion boat. Ten minutes after her arrival the whole vicinity was aroused. Newsboys with extra editions thronged the sidewalks. In front of the church a crowd had collected. Another excited crowd had gathered into Seventh street, and was vainly seeking information at the home of the Rev. G. C. F. Haas, pastor of the church.

#### PASTOR'S SON'S SUFFERING

Inside the minister's house his nineteen-year-old son, the only member of the family who had not gone on the excursion, was hearing over the telephone that his parents, two aunts, and a sister were supposed to have perished in the flames. Hours passed before he heard of his father's safety.

While the streets round about grew more excited and scattered survivors began to find their way down town from hospitals or police stations or piers, the minister's house became a general bureau of information, and a score of the family's friends went in to give their aid.

**AN ESTABLISHED CUSTOM**

From these church members and from the church records in the house, it was learned that the annual excursion of the Sunday school had been a custom of the last seventeen years.

The picnic was organized by the Social Committee of the Sunday school teachers, most of whom are young unmarried women. Miss Mary Abendschein of 325 East Eighteenth street was chairman of the committee. The tickets—costing fifty cents for adults and twenty-five cents for children—were distributed among the scholars to be sold. While most of them undoubtedly went to German Lutherans, not a few were held by others. Among the excursionists was a scattering of Jews, Italians, and others.

Although lunch-counter privileges were sold for the steamboat, most of the provisions, such as sandwiches, ice cream and the like, were contributed by church members, and, according to the annual custom, many who bought tickets never intended to go on the trip, but merely paid to help along the outing. Locust Grove, on the Sound, had been the picnic grounds of the Sunday school ever since the church members could remember, and the start always had been made from the same pier—at the foot of East Third street.

**STUDENTS CAME FROM ALL OVER**

The students, like the teachers, came from varied districts, though most of them were of the East Side. There were some from as far away as Hoboken and Flatbush. The church for fifty-seven years has been growing steadily, and its membership spread more than ever in the twenty-seven years of Mr. Haas's pastorate. It was estimated that practically all of the five hundred students were on the excursion. Added

to these were the scores of infants in arms, mothers, invited friends, and a few fathers and other male relations.

"The proportion of men was very small," said the Rev. John A. W. Haas, brother of the minister of the church and formerly pastor of St. Paul's Lutheran Church in New York. "Among the children were many so small that their mothers took them aboard the boat in baby carriages."

#### **A BUREAU OF INFORMATION**

The crush of anxious relatives became so great around the pastor's house that it was decided shortly after noon to establish a temporary bureau of information in the church in Sixth street. Long tables were placed just inside the entrance, and conspicuous bulletins were posted outside, announcing that survivors should report their safety inside, and that relatives should come in to inquire about those who were missing.

Within a few minutes the street was packed from Second avenue to First avenue. A score of policemen, detailed to keep order, were busy all day and night maintaining the line of those who wanted to enter. As news came from the scene of the wreck it was posted outside. Before nightfall the church members sitting at the inquiry tables had catalogued hundreds of names, sent out as many alarms to the police, and listened to the weeping stories of scores of those who had lost their relatives or in some cases their whole families.

#### **EXHAUSTED WITH GRIEF AND FATIGUE**

Wednesday night a quiet, grief-stricken crowd stood in front of St. Mark's Church, in Sixth street, until a cheerless dawn found them, exhausted with grief and fatigue, lying and sitting on the sidewalks, still patiently waiting for news. All night the police and newspaper men had taken lists of the



dead, the saved and missing to the church, but no sooner had some one in the crowd been made happy by the announcement that some loved one had been saved than a fresh list of dead was posted.

At first only lists of the dead were put up by the information bureau on the outside of the church, but a teacher in one of the public schools urged on behalf of the people gathered in front that a list of the saved be also given out. Those in charge of the bureau did this at once, and many waiting an opportunity to enter the church learned that their children had been saved

#### UNDERTAKERS' WAGONS BUSY

All day hearses and undertakers' wagons rumbled through the streets. Sometimes when they stopped only a tiny coffin would be taken off, to be carried into a tenement house under the arm of the driver. Across the street would be another wagon, piled to the roof with seven or eight coffins containing the bodies of women and children. There was scarcely a house in the district bounded by East First and Twelfth streets and Avenue A and Third avenue, but had at least one knot of crape on its door. Directly in front of St. Mark's is the home of August Dippert, whose entire family, mother, wife and three children, perished.

The undertakers in the neighborhood did not know how they could handle the situation. Every establishment had already reached its full capacity and orders were piling in. All their rooms were small, and many of the undertakers had to refuse to care for any more bodies. They were also hampered by the relatives of the dead. When one or two in the family were missing, the relatives would ask the undertakers

to delay the funerals in the hope that the others might be found.

#### FOURTEEN DEAD IN ONE HOUSE

As each hearse drove through the streets it was followed by men and women until it stopped in front of some house. Once there and the identity of the victim established, the crowd did not press around the wagon, but silently retraced its steps, waiting for the next wagon.

In one house in Seventh street five pieces of crape, all white, were tied to the door, but fourteen children lay dead there. In other houses the one or two pieces of fluttering crape failed to indicate the sorrow behind the doors, for often a streamer represented the death of four or five children in a single family.

All day Thursday, as when the news of the disaster first reached the district, groups of sad-eyed men and women stood on corners and on the stoops of houses, drearily waiting for news. At the foot of the steps leading to the Eighth street and Ninth street stations of the elevated road were other groups waiting for those who had been discharged from the hospitals. As the burned, dazed survivors came down they were almost mobbed by those crazy for information about their lost. Too often the survivors could tell only that they had seen the friends of the inquirers burn and drown before their eyes, and it was seldom that the joyful tidings were given, "She is in the hospital, and will be out soon."

#### SCENES IN ST. MARK'S

The affecting scenes that followed the first news of the accident were duplicated all day Thursday in front of St. Mark's Church. Soon after five o'clock a man reeled into the

church to a seat and broke into sobs, crying aloud the loss of his wife and two young daughters. Women, heartbroken with their own loss, tried to console him, but he would not be comforted, and after a long and bitter prayer he staggered into the street again, reeling like a drunken man. Scarcely had he gone when a middle-aged woman cried out hysterically from the steps of the church that her daughter and grandson were dead. It was long before she could be quieted. Later in the day a young woman, scarcely more than a girl, learned at the church that her six-months-old boy, her firstborn, whom her sister had taken to the excursion, was dead, with his aunt. She burst out laughing, and it was not until a physician had given her an opiate that she could be moved to her home.

Coupled with scenes like these was the quiet, subdued weeping of men and women. Now and then a woman would reel and faint as she heard the names of her dead called out. Those fortunate enough to have their people return to them rushed at once to the bureau of information to have the names stricken from the list of dead and missing and to give such news as the saved ones had been able to tell.

#### **SIX WENT AWAY, ONE RETURNED**

Andrew Ottinger stood before his home and kept watch for his wife and two little ones, who, he had been assured by his friends, had certainly lost their lives with the burning and sinking of the steamer. But Ottinger kept hoping against hope. Two others of his children, Charley and Emma, twins, fifteen years old, were lying at the morgue dead, and of the mother and five children who set out in the morning to enjoy the excursion only Willie, the thirteen-year-old son, came limping in late at night from the hospital, badly burned.

Willie Ottinger said that when the steamer caught fire he was with his mother and his two younger brothers, Andrew, seven years old, and Arthur, five years old, on the lower deck.

**SAID SOMETHING LIKE A PRAYER**

"We saw the boat was going to burn up," said the small survivor, "when mamma grabs a life preserver and wants to tie it around me, but I told her I could swim and to hurry and put it on one of my brothers. With that she said something like a prayer and then pushed me into the water.

"I kept swimmin' around awhile, and saw mother fixin' the life preserver about the little boys, and after a long time I was picked up by some men on a tugboat. The first thing I did I looked over to the Slocum and saw one of my little brothers bein' led along by the hand by the captain of the boat. Then I don't remember nothin' else until I finds myself in the hospital."

The bodies of Emma and Charley Ottinger were found in the water. The girl was clasped in the arms of a schoolmate.

**TOO YOUNG TO COMPREHEND**

At No. 119 Seventh street, a few doors away from the Ottinger home, a little golden-haired girl was playing about a bunch of white crape tied with pretty flowers. This was the Schmindling home, and the little girl looked up at the visitors and volunteered:

"Annie is dead, and Georgie is dead, and——" The bodies of Annie and George, fifteen and eighteen years old, had been brought home, and were lying upstairs.

**THEY MISS MOTHER GALEWISKI**

Two doors farther down the street, at No. 123, there were two other pieces of crape, one of black and one of white.

Still farther on, a little distance, is Tompkins Square, and among those who sat under the shade of the trees were a number of men and women with handkerchiefs to their faces, as if they had come to this, the quietest spot, to grieve alone. The shaded square recalled the death on the ill-fated excursion of Anna Galewiski—"Mother Galewiski," as she was known all over the neighborhood—a fine little gray-haired Samaritan who for many years was in the habit of taking large herds of children out into the square on fine days and minding them all day long while their mothers were at work.

Down Avenue A, one block, past a busy undertaker's shop, where the sobs of women were heard at intervals in the crowd that gathered about the incoming dead wagons, to Sixth street, and here on door after door were the emblems of death, crape and flowers. At No. 430 a knot of sad-faced women and awe-stricken children were gathered. Two families in this house had been almost entirely wiped out in the catastrophe.

#### **SUBSCRIPTION BUREAU STARTED**

Under the leadership of Rev. F. Holter of the Lutheran Church in Summit avenue, Jersey City, a subscription bureau for the needy was established in the churchyard. Mr. Holter sat at a table taking small and large contributions. As soon as the crowd discovered what was afoot there was a rush to reach the minister, and hundreds of hands were thrust toward him with dimes, quarters and bills.

An old man, apparently a day laborer, his hands grimy from his toil, shyly laid a penny on the table and then ran away as fast as he could, brushing the tears from his eyes as he went. A woman, her face covered by a veil, sobbing so

that she could be heard across the street, pushed her way into the line of policemen to contribute a half dollar. So it went on all day, until the minister had nearly \$1,000 in the afternoon, most of it composed of very small gifts. A majority of the givers refused to tell their names.

#### HUNDREDS STUNNED BY GRIEF

The overwhelming numbers of dead recovered and identified replaced the desperate uncertainty that pervaded hundreds of homes by the stunning realization of grief, and the calm that fell upon the parish was strangely pitiful, striking a keener inward agony than even did the first horror of the disaster.

Friends and relatives met and passed in the streets, exchanging silent glances of mutual sympathy that established a kinship of grief which will unite these people for life. In the faces of scores there was a dull wonder that showed their affliction was multiplying upon them as they struggled to thread together the whole terrible picture.

Only a few hours before they were looking forward to a fête day, a day that was to mark one festive and joyous occasion throughout the year. For days their children had prattled gleefully about the long-looked-for excursion; mothers and fathers had related to the youngsters the freedom and abandon they would have in their play, the unstinted supply of ice cream, soda water, cakes and other delectables that made their mouths water and their hearts leap as they dreamed.

Then came the early morning of preparation, when the entire district rang with the cries and laughter of children, the happy greetings of the elders and the delightful bustle and

hurry preparing for a gala day. Finally the hurrying of the little feet, barely touching the ground in their prancing delight, to the pier, and last that half hour on the big steamer vibrating from stem to stern with the mirth of old and young.

#### PICTURES OF GRIEF AND MISERY

After the minds of those stricken ones revolved this picture before them, it was no wonder their reason began to waver when there descended upon them the unspeakable thought of what followed; when the mothers and fathers looked upon the little bodies, bruised and burned; when parents heard their own little ones cry for "mamma," "sister" and "brother."

Feebler and feebler did these cries become, followed by that paralyzing hush of misery that made itself felt in every corner of the little district. Ere night fell, friends and relatives ceased questioning one another. One glance from face to face, and the tongue knew it could not utter any appropriate word of sympathy for the grief it saw and felt.

No sound of the mourning within the big tenements came to those who passed in the street, but if one went into the little alleys and courts and had the heart or courage to peer through the darkened windows of the scores and scores of stricken homes, he would see such pictures of grief and misery as would live forever in the memory.

Long before the hour set for the funerals held in the parish, crowds of sympathizing friends and neighbors began to collect about the homes where the hearses and carriages stood.

#### POLICEMEN GUARD EACH FUNERAL

There were none of the idly curious in these throngs, and the ten policemen stationed to guard each funeral cortège

had not to lift a finger of warning to child or elder. In every window that looked out upon these hearses, to one of which three little white caskets were borne, the shades were drawn, even though no dead were within the homes.

In fact, in every street where mourning emblems were suspended from the doorways no curious faces could be seen in the windows and no groups of young or old were gathered in the doorways. Perhaps the most impressive feature of the great calm of grief that hung about the neighborhood was the entire absence of children on the streets. Usually thoroughfares and even alleys and courtyards in this district swarm with children at play, so that the absolute ceasing of the hum of their cries and laughter is more impressive than would be the intrusion of singular clamor.

#### **FLAGS NEAR CHURCH AT HALF-MAST**

The policemen stationed in the parish showed the same universal deference, often doffing their helmets as some pathetic figure of bereaved old or young passed them and went silently into their homes to continue their vigil by the dead.

On all the business houses and schools in the vicinity of St. Mark's Church flags hung at half-mast and many of the little shop windows contained insignia of mourning as melancholy tokens of sympathy for their patrons. Though the majority of the recovered bodies were taken to the homes that claimed them, there still continued at brief intervals throughout the day the slow rumble of undertakers' wagons bearing more corpses of those who perished in the horrible disaster.



## CHAPTER XIII

### STORIES OF EYE-WITNESSES

Tales of Horror—A Brave "Trusty"—An Unknown Hero—Clinging to the Paddle-wheel—The Work of Herbert Farrell—What Captain McGovern Saw—Remarkable Child-Bravery—Survivors Commit Suicide—Robbing the Dead—Crazed Mothers Hurl Babies into the River—Paddle-wheel Choked with the Bodies of Victims—Saw the Hurricane Deck Collapse—Fifty Children Perished in the Whirlpool of Hell Gate.

Probably the first persons who saw the outbreak of fire from a point close at hand were Thomas Miley, of No. 629 East One Hundred and Thirty-seventh street, and John Kain, of No. 617 East One Hundred and Thirty-eighth street. The young men were in a rowboat within one hundred feet of the big excursion steamer. Their impressions are well set forth in young Miley's statement, after he and Kain had assisted in the work of rescue.

#### THERE WAS AN EXPLOSION

"Both Kain and I were rowing, with our backs toward the Slocum," he said, "when we heard a loud report as if an explosion had occurred. When I looked around a cloud of smoke was hovering above the forward part of the steamboat. It seemed only a few moments until flames leaped up, but it may have been longer, because my companion and I were awe-stricken by the scenes that followed the explosion.

"Cries of horror went up from every deck and, in an instant, it seemed, the rails were swept away as though they

were made of paper. Men, women and children fought, struggled and shrieked, and those who had been nearest the rails were swept from the decks.

#### **TRAIL OF DYING IN WATER**

"We could see women and children struggling with those in the rear, and in their terror they clung to those closest to them and dragged them into the water.

"While this was happening, the Slocum was being run in toward North Brother Island. She had been only one hundred feet or so distant from the island shore when we heard the report, but in making the short trip a long trail of struggling persons was left in the water. Many of them, I think, had been crushed to death in the panic before they touched the water, and they sank at once from view.

"Before the steamboat reached the island the clothing of those in the forward part was in flames. To escape the fire, which was burning more fiercely every moment, many rushed toward the stern, which was already filled with persons.

#### **FLAMES SWEEP OVER DECKS**

"In a short time flames burst from other parts of the vessel, and the passengers' panic became more terrific. Over the sides they were swept from the decks in masses. By this time the shore had been reached and the Slocum had been run in between two small piers.

"It seemed to us that the members of the crew remained at their posts, for no sooner had the ship been run in than a gangplank was run out. Passengers fought and struggled with the sailors so that they could scarcely work, and they had to make several desperate efforts before they succeeded.

"Almost before the end of the footbridge reached the shore the shrieking passengers rushed out on the plank and we saw several persons drop into the water as though pushed from the sides. In a short time those who were uninjured were ashore, but there were some who had been hurt by the struggle for life aboard the burning boat who could not reach the gangplank.

#### HEMMED IN BY FIRE

"Some of the less frightened men rushed back and carried these to safety, but there were many, a tugboat captain told us, who had been hemmed in by the flames on the lower deck. This captain had run his boat alongside and picked up ten bodies and saved two little boys.

"Some of those who had been crowded from the decks swam to the shore, but the tide was running strong and everything was against them. On the shore women rushed up and down, crying and shouting for their children. We saw all along the shore women in faints. They had succeeded in getting from the ship safely, but had been overcome by the excitement.

"The tug Wade was the first to go to the rescue. My companion and I followed and succeeded in recovering two bodies. One was that of an aged woman. The other body was that of a boy, about ten years old. The boy's head was burned and his face was bruised, as though he had been injured before he was forced into the water. About a hundred feet from the Bronx shore was a private yacht with several persons aboard, but they made no move.

"Many must have been hurt in those first rushes toward the rail. It seemed that children were trampled under foot.

We saw one woman, with a small child in her arms, pushed from the deck after the rail had given away."

#### THE PORTER'S STORY

"I was up on deck, by the forward stairway," said Payne, the porter, "when a deckhand came running up to the mate and said that something was wrong in the hold—smoke was coming out. The mate looked down and came back on the jump to give the alarm and get out the hose. I ran down and opened the door into the hold. A big puff of fire came out at me, and I had to duck under it to get back on deck. I ran back and helped get out the hose. It was new. There were four lengths of it—two hundred feet long—bought sometime about the middle of May, I think.

"We got a line attached to the big pump, but it was too long, and got kind of kinked up and rolled around on the deck. Then the great big pump got to working, and just forced the water through so fast it tore the hose apart at the joint where it was fastened on the pump. I jumped up there to see if I could fasten it back, but it was torn. Then I tried to shut off the water, but the mate came and did that.

"I didn't see the chief engineer. The assistant was down at the engine. We stayed fighting the fire till the deck fell in. The life preservers were all right. I pulled down a lot of them. The boats were all right, too, I guess. They launched one. I don't know what happened to it. They're saying lots of things about a coward crew and want to know why it was nobody in the crew got drowned," the porter said indignantly, "but every man there worked as hard as he could. That boat went up in five minutes. Poof! Just like a powder keg. I don't believe there was any explosion at first. There

was one when the oil got afire, all right. I can't say how it started; I don't believe any one else can.

"When the deck fell in I went overboard. I couldn't swim, but I learned right then, paddling like a dog. I got around to the paddlebox, and I hung there until a boat came, and I caught on behind that and they towed me to shore. After I'd been there a while I went out on a towboat and helped pull in the people."

#### A TERRIBLE EXPERIENCE

Among the survivors of the General Slocum disaster was Mrs. Henry Kassebaum. She said that she regarded her escape from death as almost miraculous. Mrs. Kassebaum and her daughter Annette were the only two out of a family party of eleven that went on the excursion that survived. The other nine were either burned to death or drowned.

"I hardly know how I lived through the terrors of it all," said Mrs. Kassebaum. "We had a jolly party of eleven on the boat and were anticipating a fine day's outing. We wanted to hear the music on the way up the river and so all of us were gathered on the after deck, not more than twenty feet away from the band and close to the rail of the deck.

#### A PIERCING SCREAM

"The first intimation we had that there was something wrong was when a piercing scream came from the forward part of the boat. We concluded that some one must have fallen overboard and began scanning the water in the wake of the boat. But we did not have to wait long to find out what the real trouble was. A few seconds after the first scream there was a general panic on the forward decks.

"We could hear the women and children screaming, and an

instant later there was a puff of smoke and flame near the bow of the boat that told the story. I realized then that we were all in the gravest peril and that if we expected to escape with our lives some of us at least must keep cool heads. In our party were my daughter Annette, my son-in-law and daughter, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Schnude, and their two little children, and my daughter Mrs. Frieda Toniport, and her two little children. In addition to these nine there were the aged father and mother of Mr. Schnude.

#### MEMBERS OF PARTY SWEEPED AWAY

"The moment I saw the flames I called all of our party together and told them quietly that if we were to escape alive we must stick close together so as to be able to help one another. I thought the strong among us might be able to save the weak. But my words of warning were not more than out of my mouth when there came such a rush of panic-stricken and frenzied people to the stern of the boat that no human being could have stood up against it.

"I clung to the rail with all of my strength and managed to hold my place, but when I looked around not one of my family was to be seen anywhere. They had been whisked away from me in the mad rush and I did not know what had been their fate. By that time there were scores of women and children in the water, who had jumped overboard to escape the worse fate of being roasted on the boat.

#### WATCHED THE MADDENED CROWD

"At last I managed to get a foot up on the rail by clinging with my hands to a post. From that point of vantage I watched the maddened crowd in search of my loved ones, but they were nowhere to be seen. Just then I saw our pastor,

the Rev. Mr. Haas, with his wife and daughter at the other side of the boat. He was trying to protect them from the trampling crowd. Then a minute later I saw them climb over the rail and all jump into the river together.

"That seemed to give me an idea of my own peril, and I knew that if I expected to escape alive I must decide on some course quickly. I took another careful look around to see if any of my family were on the boat, but still they were nowhere to be seen. Then I decided to take my chances in the water. Even then the fire was so near me that my hands and face were scorched and blistered and there were holes in my clothing that had been burned by the flying sparks.

#### SEEMED AN ETERNITY

"I climbed over the rail and jumped feet first into the water. It seemed to me that I sank hundreds of feet, and that I should never come to the surface again. But at last I saw a flash of light, and that told me I was up where I could get a breath of air. I tried to keep myself from sinking again by striking out blindly with my hands and feet, and did manage to keep up for a few seconds.

"In that brief time I saw scores of women and little children all about me in the water. They all seemed to be drowning. I remember I wondered in a dreamy sort of way if any of my children were near me, and if they would be rescued. Then my strength failed me, and I sank once more. That time I thought I should never see the light again. It seemed like an eternity to me. I stopped struggling and didn't seem to care any longer whether I ever rose to the top or not.

**CLUNG TO THE PADDLEBOX**

"Just then my head struck against something hard. That aroused my flagging senses and I grabbed intuitively at whatever had bumped my head. I caught it with my hands and held on. Once I got a breath of air my strength came back a little and then I discovered that I was clinging to the paddlebox. I held on desperately and a minute or two later a man in a small rowboat pulled up close to me.

"The boatman held out an oar to me and yelled to me to grasp it and hold fast. I did so, and he soon hauled me aboard his boat. I begged him to look for the other members of my family, but he had as many in his boat as it would hold and had to go ashore."

**SAW THE FIRE BREAK OUT**

William Halloway, engineer on a dredge working off Lawrence Point, Astoria, saw the fire on the Slocum just after it broke out. He at once seized his whistle and gave four blasts. He says that up to that time there had been no alarm sounded from the Slocum. Whether the Slocum sounded an alarm after that he does not know, for his four blasts attracted the attention of boats in every direction, and four tugs sounded their whistles as they raced toward the burning Slocum.

Halloway says it was 10:05 when he first saw the fire. This was according to his clock in the engine-room of the dredge. The Slocum was then off the upper end of Randall's Island. The fire was on the port side forward. The tugs which started toward the burning steamboat were the Wade, the Wheeler, the Tracey and the Sumner.

**MIGHT HAVE BACKED THE BOAT**

Halloway declared that had the pilot of the Slocum backed his boat when he sounded his whistle, he would have beached



the big steamboat on Casino Beach. Then all could have been saved, as it was only a few yards' run and the backward motion of the boat would have carried the flames away from the boat, whereas by running forward and toward North Brother Island the flames were driven directly aft to all parts of the boat. This may be explained, perhaps, by a statement made by some of the men who were on the tug Wheeler. They said that they could distinctly see the men in the pilothouse trying to signal the engine-room, but there was no response.

As the Slocum headed toward North Brother Island the wind swept the flames along to the upper deck, and Halloway said that within five minutes after he sounded his whistle the upper deck caved in on top of the people who were below. Pieces of this were floating about in the river later. It was of flimsy build, as all such decks are. The thin, light planks were laid over light scantlings and all covered with canvas. The boat was midway between North Brother and Riker's islands when the collapse came, and a minute or so later hit the rocks.

#### **ANOTHER ACCOUNT FROM AN EYE-WITNESS**

Captain McGovern, who was employed on the same work as Halloway, jumped into the steam launch Mosquito when the alarm was given, and followed the burning steamboat until he had picked up five women and six children. That was all he could take, as the little boat was then so loaded that he feared she might be swamped. He took the rescued to North Brother Island, as he knew there were doctors there, and every one of the eleven was suffering. He says that his load was the first of the rescued to reach the island, and that after he had got them ashore he started back, but found no more

living. As he followed the burning steamer Captain McGovern saw the scenes on her decks.

"The fire was burning the upper decks, forward," he said, "and the women and children had crowded aft. Those in the rear part of the boat were swept into the water by the onrush of those from the fore part. The pressure against them carried away the bulwarks, which were of joiner work and rope. Their giving way allowed great numbers to fall into the water. The early collapse of the upper decks was in part due to this. The pressure against them carried away the stanchions, and the weight on the after part of the decks, added to the weakness resulting from the breaking of the stanchions, caused the decks to give way even before the fire reached them. I saw women fall into the water with children in their arms and more clinging to their skirts. Others went overboard all afire, and some with their hair or hats, it was hard to see which, burning. I did not see the worst at that, for when the affair was at its worst I was dragging the women and children aboard and had not time to look."

## CHAPTER XIV

### IDENTIFYING THE DEAD

**Clothing of Victims Searched for Effects — The Bodies Carefully Tagged — Many Charred Beyond Recognition — Identified by Some Article of Clothing or Trinket—Searching for Loved Ones—Remains Sent to the Morgue—System for Preventing Mistaken Identification.**

The bodies found on the Bronx shore south of North Brother Island after the steamer was beached were piled in heaps at the One Hundred and Thirty-eighth street dock until the police were organized to handle the great crowds that assembled and arrangements made to lay them out for identification at the police station in Alexander avenue.

Then they were carried from the dock to the station in patrol wagons as fast as they were brought in by tugs, launches and rowboats. Meanwhile police reserves lined the shore.

#### **WILL REMEMBER TO HIS DYING DAY**

Inside the station house Coroner Thomas I. Berry of the Bronx and his assistants, Dr. Thomas H. Creighton and Dr. John H. Riegelman, had made arrangements for identifying the dead. The coroner sat at a table in a corner of the room. In front of him was piled a heap of identification slips, ready to be filled in. The process of filling those in will be remembered by Coroner Berry to the day of his death. When his task was finished he was sick physically and mentally.

Most of the bodies were carried to the Department of Charities pier, and the morgue at the foot of East Twenty-

sixth street, where the work of identification was carried on. The monotonous shuffling of the feet, as the endless line moved on, was broken now and then by a scream of a woman or the cry of a child, which told that another body had been identified. As each identification was made a policeman stepped up to the mourner, took the name of the body claimed and led the one who made the identification to the coroner's office, where the records were kept and permits of removal given.

#### **BODIES PLACED IN DOUBLE ROWS**

The facilities of the morgue were insufficient to accommodate the number of bodies brought in from North Brother Island and other places in the vicinity of the disaster. It was for this reason that the bodies were laid along the Department of Charities pier; only corpses which were badly burned, or charred beyond recognition, were taken to the morgue proper.

All of the bodies brought to the morgue and to the pier were wrapped in blankets secured from some of the various hospitals which sent aid, or else covered with tarpaulins or other coverings which were to be found on the steamers.

Before the boats reached the docks hundreds of rude pine coffins had been secured, the sizes ranging from those for babies in arms to adults, and each body was placed in one of these coffins before being removed to the morgue or to the pier. On the pier the bodies were placed in long double rows, so that the line of persons seeking to identify those missing might pass up one side and down the other and thus see each body laid out. At one time more than two hundred bodies were lying side by side on this pier. Each body had been tagged with a number, to aid in the work of identification.

In a steady line, two abreast, the waiting crowd then was admitted to the pier, passing out toward the river on one side of a row of bodies and coming back toward the land on the other side of another row. The boxes in which the bodies were placed were emergency affairs, the bodies themselves being huddled in as best the men could arrange them in the space of time they had to make the arrangements, and it was hard work in many cases for the relatives and friends to pick out the missing ones.

#### **POLICE PRECAUTIONS**

Police were stationed every few feet, and theirs was the trying task of restraining husbands and fathers from throwing themselves in a frenzy on the bodies of wives and children as they finally found them in the mute and grewsome line before them. Every few minutes a man or a woman would either shriek in agony and try to throw himself or herself on a prostrate form, or else would collapse entirely and have to be carried in a fainting condition to the outer air, to be revived by the hospital physicians before they could appear before the coroner to give the number of the body identified and secure a permit for its removal.

#### **MANY CHILDREN AMONG THE IDENTIFIERS**

All night there was a line of undertakers' wagons in East Twenty-sixth street extending all the way from the pier to First avenue, and at times turning well into the avenue. Among the persons seeking to identify dead were many children, some not more than four or five years old, who had been brought by friends, in whose care they had been left, to identify mothers and brothers and sisters. In many cases mistakes in identification were made at first, but every precau-

tion was taken to prevent this and also the false identification of any body for the purpose of dishonestly taking possession of property belonging to any of the dead. Where missing friends and relatives were not found in the line of dead on the pier, most of the bodies there being those of victims who died by drowning, the persons seeking friends went through the morgue proper to look at the burned bodies and the clothing that remained.

#### **A FATHER'S LOVE**

The body of Lena Ackerman, sixteen months old, was identified by her father. Mr. Ackerman was walking out on the pier when he saw some photographers slant a coffin against the side of the pier and attempt to take a picture of two bodies therein. He recognized the features of his baby, and, rushing forward, tore the body from the coffin. It was some time before the police could persuade him to give it up.

Jacob Michael identified the body of his daughter on the island. He was slowly walking along the line of coffins when he suddenly halted, and, with a moan, fell to his knees in several inches of water, raised the head of a child and began to kiss the cold lips fervently. Earlier in the day the man had been to the morgue and had identified the charred body of his married daughter, and that of his year-old grandson. The bodies of his daughter and grandson had been burned almost beyond recognition, but the stricken parent did not seem as much affected by that awful sight as he was when he saw the little body in the coffin. He had to be dragged from the coffin by police and was forced to leave the pier.

#### **TIDE TOOK HER BODY HOME**

The body picked up in the river farthest from the scene of the disaster was that of six-year-old Marguerita Heins, of 300

Front street, found floating in the river off the foot of Clinton street. The body had drifted eight miles, and was picked up by the crew of a New York and New Haven Railroad tug within a stone's throw of the child's home.

The child's father, Henry Heins, had been haunting the morgue for twenty-four hours in an effort to get some trace of the girl. On Wednesday night, while he was at the morgue, he had found the body of his wife, Annie, together with that of his twelve-year-old daughter, Henrietta, and while he inquired for news of his missing daughter, Elsie, aged nine, he begged those at the morgue to make a special effort to find his favorite child, Marguerita.

He remained at the morgue until his friends took him away, and a few minutes later the body of Marguerita arrived in a patrol wagon. The tug that had found the body had put in to the dock at the foot of Clinton street and left the corpse there on the pier. It was soon surrounded by a crowd of children from the neighborhood of the Heins home, many of whom immediately identified their playmate's body.

"It's Margie Heins," remarked a woman in the crowd, "and her home is just up one block and around the corner."

#### FAMILIES ALMOST WIPED OUT

Frederick and Gustave Rheinfrank searched for their two families, saying that in the two families fourteen persons were missing. They were particularly concerned about their aged father and mother, but were unable to find them, and finally Frederick obtained permission to go on the Fidelity to North Brother Island. Gustave waited on the dock to examine any other bodies that might be brought in. Just as the Fidelity pulled out, Gustave saw an old man, shabbily dressed, weeping

over the body of his wife, which had just been identified. He heard the man say he had no money with which to pay for a funeral, and, going up to the man, handed him six dollars. Then the big German went away to continue his own search.

The beautiful woman whose face wore such a peaceful smile as she lay in her coffin with her baby in her arms, and whose body attracted such attention and interest, was identified as Mrs. Mary Bretz of 304 West Twenty-eighth street. The identification was made by her sister-in-law.

#### **THE SCENES VARIED LITTLE**

For five hours the tragedy of grief-crazed men and women bending over those drowned women and babies went on. The scenes varied little when identifications were made. Women and men, it was all the same—a frightened, fearful glance, a sudden change in the face, a scream that tore its way from the heart, and a storm of grief that shook the tortured mothers and fathers and brothers and sisters until they were led out by the police and taken to their homes.

#### **ONE OF THE SAVED**

Through it all, her big blue eyes looking straight ahead, her little face quite serene and untroubled, sat a baby girl of four in a big chair at the side of the room. She had come out of the burned boat somehow, nobody knew how, and her yellow hair and bright red dress were as neat as a pin, with not even a drop of water to spoil its prettiness. Her eyes traveled all about the room, taking in the dreadful figures on the floor, some of them stretched at her feet. She watched the screaming women and the moaning men curiously, obviously puzzled as to what it was all about. She wasn't frightened at the dead, or shaken by the experiences she herself must have



passed through. Hour by hour she sat in her big chair until a white-faced man burst into the room. Then she scrambled down.

#### FOUND BY HER FATHER

"Oh, papa!" cried the baby. "Where have you been, and where is mamma and brother and sister and baby?"

The father, who was Charles Kregler of 257 Avenue B, caught up the child in an agony of love and held her close for minutes before he spoke. His wife and Lizzie, the yellow-haired little maiden, together with three other children, had been on the boat. Lizzie he had found, the only child alive in that place of dead children; but his wife and the other children were not there, living or dead. That alone convinced him they had perished. Otherwise they, too, would have been there. He went away sobbing, holding the child close to him, and the last thing seen of them was a wealth of yellow hair, a red dress and a happy baby smile.

#### SEEKERS WHO DID NOT FIND

Hundreds passed through the room who searched for their dead but failed to find the face they feared to recognize. One man, Charles Schoeffling of 189 Third avenue, was on the verge of insanity. He bent over the body of a large woman and screamed:

'It is my wife! My God, it is my Mary!'

The police tried to calm him, and he started along the row of corpses. Another dress that looked familiar caught his eye, and again he cried that it was his wife. Two policemen went with him arm in arm, appealing to him to be calm, to look close and to make no mistake. A third time he thought he recognized his wife and screamed, until, at last, the police

took him away, convinced that the man was mad temporarily from the frightful shock of the news. Before he went he told Coroner Berry that Mary Schoeffling, his wife, and Eddie and Elsie, his children ten and three years old, had been on board the burned steamer.

### THREE SISTERS LOST

The Fidelity reached the morgue Wednesday night shortly before midnight, bringing five bodies. There was the body of a man, that of a boy child, and those of two women and a girl. The coffin containing the body of the girl had hardly touched the floor before a girl barely more than fourteen years of age made for it.

"That's Annie," she said. "I've been waiting for her, and Clara is still to be found."

The girl said that her name was Louise Hagenback. She lives at 102 First avenue. The body identified was that of Annie Scheele, fifteen years old, of 14 St. Mark's place.

Annie Scheele, with her sisters Clara and Vina, went on the excursion with friends. Their father was at home sick, and their mother stayed behind to take care of him.

### IDENTIFIED BY AN ALUMINUM PLATE

Another body, that of a ten-year-old schoolboy, was identified by an aluminum tag sewed on the lining of his coat. The bit of metal bore the words: "Frank Delucce goes to P. S." The boy lived at No. 54 East Seventh street.

Eight bodies were recovered from a hollow in the river bed. The first was that of a well-dressed young woman wrapped in the stars and stripes. She wore a black silk dress, and around it, like a winding sheet, were the folds of a large

silk American flag. It is supposed she became entangled in the flag when she fell overboard.

#### MUCH JEWELRY FOUND

Jewelry was found on nearly all the bodies of the women. On one was a wedding ring, bearing the initials "F. H. to A. T., January 28, 1891." On the body of a woman numbered 524 a wedding ring was marked "A. J. to L. K. 51402." Another woman's wedding ring bore the letters "C. D. to M. R., 1902." On another body, that of a fourteen-year-old girl, was found a ruby ring in a cluster of pearls, an opal ring, two gold pins and a blue turquoise necklace. On the body of a woman about twenty-four years old were a solitaire diamond ring and two diamond earrings.

## CHAPTER XV

### TESTIMONY OF THE SURVIVORS

**The Story of Clara Stuer—Awful Scenes Witnessed by Little Sallie Klein—His Dead Wife Smiled—Twenty Boys Form a Bucket Brigade—Annie Weber's Dreadful Narrative—The Pathetic Tale of Henry Cordes—Freda Gardner, Eight Years Old, Relates Her Experiences—Saw Her Mother Fall Into the Burning Hold—The Statement of John Halphausen.**

Stories told by the survivors of the burning of the General Slocum gave a vivid picture of the terrible swiftness with which death swept the vessel, of the panic which raged over her decks, and of the sudden tragedy which took hundreds of the helpless. Many of those who were rescued had no very clear idea of how they escaped. A man dragged them into a boat or a swimmer brought them ashore. Further details very few of them could give. Two things they all agree upon: the tragedy fell with awful swiftness, and the panic aboard the steamer instantaneously swept away every semblance of calmness.

#### STATEMENT FROM A CLERGYMAN

The Rev. Julius G. Schulz of Erie was a passenger on the General Slocum, and witnessed the frightful scenes that followed the burning of that craft. Mr. Schulz was of the opinion that Captain Van Schaick used bad judgment in running the Slocum up stream instead of beaching her on the Sunken Meadows.

**TRIED TO PRAY**

Freda Gardner, eight years old, was rescued after being in the water fifteen minutes. She was picked up by a man in a rowboat. She says that the first thing she knew of any trouble was when everybody started shouting and running to the stern of the boat. She was knocked down, but managed to get to her feet again.

A big man stopped and put a life preserver about her. He was praying all the time, and hurried on to help another child. She fell again, and, as she was getting up, somebody, she thinks it was a woman, tore off the life preserver. The smoke was stifling and it was terribly hot. She managed at last to get to the outer rail, but was afraid to jump.

"A man picked me up and threw me into the water," she said. "I saw him a second later swimming toward me, and it gave me courage. Then he disappeared. A plank came floating by, and I grasped it. It easily supported me. Somebody caught hold of my foot, but let go. All the time I was trying to pray, but could not, because I had gone on the excursion without the knowledge of my mother.

"A man grabbed the plank and was pulling himself up on it, when a woman threw her arms about his neck, and the two slipped back into the water. I managed to say a prayer then and felt better, and I then resolved never again to disobey my mother. I started to pray again, when a man in a rowboat reached out and pulled me in."

There was the greatest surprise on the part of the mother when her little daughter, wrapped in a great blanket, was carried into the house with her clothing, still wet, in her arms. There was no scolding for the truant girl.

**A THRILLING STORY**

The story of Clara Stuer, one of the survivors, who succeeded in reaching the home of friends on Seventh street, abounds in thrilling interest.

"I was sitting on the upper deck with some friends," she said. "They were Miss Millie Mannheimer, Miss Lillie Mannheimer, her niece, and Walter, the latter's brother, aged eleven. We had just passed the entrance to the Harlem River, and were going slowly, when Lillie, who was looking forward, called to her aunt, saying, 'I think the boat is on fire, auntie. See all the smoke.' 'Hush,' replied her aunt, 'you must not talk so; you may create a panic.'

"Lillie would not be silenced, however, and it seemed but a few moments later that there was a roar as though a cannon had been shot off, and the entire bow of the boat was one sheet of flames. The people rushed pell-mell over one another, and in the rush I lost track of my friends. Hundreds of people jumped overboard, being so caught by the flames that escape was impossible.

"I jumped over the rail, and dropped down to the next lower deck, when I began to dispense with my clothing, so that I would have a better chance in the water. Then I started to climb down the side of the boat, when I heard a voice calling to me to hold on a minute.

"I turned and saw a man standing on the bow of a tug which was approaching. I held on, and was soon taken off with a number of other persons who had been rescued from the boat and from the water.

**SAW THE PASTOR REVIVED**

"As I left the dock I saw, it looked to me, two hundred bodies, mostly of women and children, along the shore, lying

on the ground. Physicians were working over many of them. In the center of one group I saw the pastor, the Rev. Mr. Haas. Several doctors were doing their best to revive him, and as I stood there he opened his eyes and looked about. His first words were, 'Where are they? Where is my family? Are they saved? Are they dead or alive?'

#### **DRAGGED UNDER WATER**

Bernard Miller called at police headquarters and went to the bureau of information, looking for his wife and four children. He and his family were all passengers on the General Slocum and all jumped overboard.

"Myself, my wife, and four sons, whose ages are three, six, nine, and twelve respectively, were sitting on the first deck," he said, "when I saw smoke coming up through the deck in great clouds. The people in the boat acted as though they had lost their minds. I grabbed life preservers, and, after putting them on my wife and children, assisted them over the side of the boat into the water.

"Then I put one on and went after them, telling them to make for the shore. The youngest child was in my wife's arms and she and the three elder started for Randall's Island. I started after them, but had not taken more than half a dozen strokes when I was surrounded by half a dozen women, who clung to me and dragged me under. I had all I could do to save myself from being drowned by their frantic efforts to hold on to me, when a rowboat came up and took us all on board. When we got there I searched for my family in vain. They were not to be found."

#### **LIFEBOATS TIED WITH WIRE**

Nicholas Belzer, an employee of the dock department, went down to the pier at the foot of Third street, looking for his

wife and child, who had become separated from him in the mad rush at the time of the disaster.

"I lost track of my wife some time before the fire," he said, "and was sitting on the upper deck when I discovered that the ship was on fire. I drew my penknife and tried to cut away one of the lifeboats, and succeeded in severing the ropes, but when I got this far I discovered that they were also held with wire and were immovable. Seeing that I could do nothing, I climbed over the edge and down to the lower deck, and from there down to the lowest. I then jumped into the river and swam ashore."

#### A SCENE OF HORROR

Henry Cordes, who called at the morgue looking for his mother and brothers and sisters, said that all was orderly on the steamer until some one cried fire, and with one accord every one made for the upper decks. Those who were on the main deck also rushed up the steps to the hurricane deck, until it was crowded to suffocation. The people still kept crowding until there was a crash, the railing gave way, and many were pushed over the edge into the water. He added:

"As the fire increased and ate away the supports of the deck, the weight became too great, and there was an awful crash as it caved in, carrying many into the flames. The crew did all they could stretching hose and lowering boats, but the boats on the starboard side could not be used owing to the flames, while the rest would not nearly suffice for the hundreds who were to be saved.

"The scene when the deck fell in was one of indescribable horror. The flames, roared and licked at the people, who, in their desperation, leaped overboard to escape a worse death, while those who were too late went down into the hell below."



**CALLS CREW UNDISCIPLINED**

John Halphusen, sexton of the church, said:

"The crew appeared to me to be undisciplined and unfamiliar with the working of the liferafts and lifeboats. I was standing beside the pastor nearly all the time. He did everything in his power to save the people. I placed my two daughters, Mina, aged twelve, and Clara, aged ten, on the top of the paddlebox and kept them there until a tugboat by the name of Sumner picked all of us up."

**LOOKED FOR HER FAMILY**

The great sense of childish grief over the failure to find her brother, John Klein, and other relatives, saddened little Sallie Klein to such an extent that, child as she was, she seemed to be weighted with the gloom of her bereavement.

"I was eating lunch when the fire started," she said. "On the deck where I was sitting with my basket some children came running and I heard shouts.

"Then somebody said 'Fire!'

"I dropped my basket and looked around for the family. There were fifteen of us. I was left by myself. The flames came up, and a big black smoke, too. I don't think I was afraid. I don't know. I just know that I ran away from the fire, and when I got to the edge of the boat I heard everybody screaming and crying, and I jumped into the water.

"A man and woman were in the water where I jumped. I caught hold of the man's hair. He went under the water, and then I caught the woman by the foot. She went down, too. When I saw nobody near me to help me I started to paddle out myself.

## BOAT WITH DARK HILL

"I don't know what a man there was a boat but I could not catch it, and the boat went on after the storm. They were taken to land in the water. I guess there were no many people around the boat as there are others in this area.

"I could not see a big boat. I was not a woman was on the boat. The woman had the boat a good way to land on the left side and I was sitting on the boat and there we could not see any boat in a distance. I was to leave about. Some of the boats had been pulled off in the water and the rest of them were pulled off with a hook and got around me. They then gave me the boat and took me to the beach.

"It was like a boat about what things get after you and I got home the evening after the boat came.

"I could not remember anything except an awful boat. There was a woman on the boat and there were some people in the water. There were boats pulled in the water too. Some of them had lost their engines and some of them were with their engines. It was the graves of people that got pulled through. They were in small boats and began to get out of the water."

## WHAT TO GET THE FISH OFF

"Doctor Schmidt, my own boat and of the boat. That boat was used for a party of many boys who were on the boat of the doctor when the boat was destroyed.

"The boat is not small" and young Schmidt. "I don't know how many and how many a boat brought but we could not take it out of the boat. That we pulled up on the boat and got on the ground. Then the boat broke and all of us

were thrown into the water. The powdered cork from the life preservers was so thick on the surface that some of us were nearly choked by the smell."

#### HIS DEAD WIFE SMILES

Walter Peters of 30 Avenue A was searching all day for his baby daughter Lillian, seventeen months old. His wife's body lay at home.

"I know Lillian didn't die with my wife," he said. "My wife was drowned but she looks peaceful and there's a smile on her face. She'd never have looked that way if she hadn't known that the baby was safe. Maybe Lillian was lost afterward but when my wife died the baby was safe. Her face tells me that."

#### SCALDING SEA OF HUMAN BODIES

Mrs. Annie Weber burned so that bandages hid half her face and covered most of her body, and suffering with a mother's yearning for her two little children, told a story of the fiery trap in which she and her family were caught on the General Slocum. Her husband, Frank Weber, who fought against the flames trying to find his little ones, until they burned his clothes from his body, told of his futile efforts to wrench from their fastenings and use the devices intended for the safety of those aboard, and the final plunge into a scalding sea of struggling human bodies.

#### THE HAPPIEST SIGHT

"There never was a happier party than we were when we boarded the boat Wednesday morning," she said. "We are members of St. Mark's Church and had looked forward to this outing. The children danced around when I was preparing the lunch the night before, and we started early. My

husband and myself, and my children, Emma, ten years old, and Frank, seven, and my sister Martha Liebenow met my brother Paul Liebenow and his wife, with their six-months-old baby in her arms, and Helen, six years old, and a baby girl three years old at the dock. We had invited them to go with us to the excursion, and we went on board laughing and talking, the children romping ahead with my sister.

"We went to the middle deck, near the forward part of the boat. The sun was shining and the boat glided through the water so smoothly that the children could play around without any danger, and were told to remain within call. The four little ones, my two and my sister-in-law's older children, romped back toward the stern of the boat with my sister.

"We were sitting in a circle talking when a puff of black smoke came up the stairway leading to the deck below. It was a big puff of smoke and startled every one.

#### FLAMES' QUICK SPREAD

"'Don't mind that, it is the chowder cooking,' some one said, and then we laughed at our fears, but the laughter changed to a cry of horror when a sheet of flame followed the smoke.

"I cried for my children, and my sister-in-law, with her baby, ran back to search for her two little ones. The flames kept sweeping up in puffs, each one growing higher and spreading. My husband and my brother had gone to look for the children.

"Then we were all separated. I rushed here and there, looking for my children and saying to myself that my husband had found them. The flames were sweeping back as the boat raced on, and it was like the breath of a red-hot furnace.

"Get life preservers!" said a man, and we stood up on camp stools and on the benches and reached for the life preservers. Some of them we could not budge, and the others pulled to pieces and spilled the crumbs of corks over our heads. The heat was blistering and the flames swept along the roof of the deck and scorched our fingers as we tried to snatch down the life preservers. The flames drove those who were standing around me back and over to the side of the boat.

"Nobody could live in such heat as that. My face was scorching and my hair caught fire. I went to the side of the boat and swung myself over the side by a rope. Every time my hands, face or body would come in contact with the sides of the vessel it would blister my flesh.

**"DROP OR BURN TO DEATH"**

"Drop or burn to death!" some one cried to me. I don't know whether I dropped or whether I was pushed off. I found myself struggling against the water, and it was hot. There were others struggling in the water all around me, and they were pulling each other down. I cried for help and heard a man, who was in the water, tell me to come nearer, that the water was too hot where I was for him to swim in to me. I think I must have caught a rope. I was pulled in shore on North Brother Island and then went back into the water to look for my children.

"Before I let go of the rope the vessel was one mass of flames. I knew that the children couldn't live there and thought I might keep them from drowning. I found my husband, with his clothes burned off, looking for the children, and then they took us both to the hospital.

"At the hospital I found my brother and his wife. Some

one restored to them their six-months-old baby, which had been pulled from the water. My two little children and her two little girls are missing. I pray God that they have all been saved."

"When I ran back to look for my children," said Mr. Weber, "the flames seemed to follow me. I could not find them. It was useless in a moment to look, for the flames were all over the boat, and no one could live.

#### BOATS FASTENED WITH WIRE

"With other men I tried to lower away a lifeboat. We could manage the ropes, but found that the boat was fastened on by wire and could not be lowered. The life preservers were as useless as a handful of sawdust, into which they seemed to crumble at the touch.

"I jumped to the deck below. There was a man there with a hose, which seemed to be split and broken, and I heard him shout:

"'Where's the water? Where's the water?' Then he dropped the hose and jumped for his life.

"The deck-hands and crew of the boat were absolutely of no aid in saving lives. No one was even warned of the fire.

"I remained on the boat until my clothing was aflame and then jumped into the water. It was boiling hot near the boat. I swam around looking for my children and then made for the shore."

## CHAPTER XVI

### EXPRESSIONS OF SYMPATHY

President Roosevelt's Message—England Horrified—Offers of Aid from American Cities—President Loubet Cables His Sympathy—Mayor Harrison Sends a Telegram of Condolence to the New York Executive—Generous Contributions from Wealthy Sympathizers—Letters from Clergymen—Cablegrams from European Monarchs.

From foreign countries and American cities came hundreds of official and private messages of sympathy to Mayor McClellan. President Roosevelt was prompt in tendering condolence and aid; but one of the earliest and most appropriate expressions of sorrow and sympathy was the following message from Sir Thomas Lipton:

#### FROM SIR THOMAS LIPTON

Am greatly shocked at terrible disaster which has overtaken your city. The suffering and bereaved have my heartfelt sympathy, and if any pecuniary help is needed would like to contribute \$1,000.

#### MAYOR M'CLELLAN'S RESPONSE

I thank you in the name of New York for your message of sympathy. While the generous contributions of our citizens will amply provide for the afflicted, we are most grateful for your kind tender of aid.

#### FROM THE CHIEF MAGISTRATE OF GLASGOW

The corporation of Glasgow, in council assembled to-day, unanimously passed a resolution expressive of their sincere

sympathy with those bereaved or injured by the lamentable disaster at New York yesterday.

BAILIE SORLEY, Acting Chief Magistrate.

**PHILADELPHIA MAYOR'S OFFER**

Philadelphia is horrified by the news of the fearful accident to the Sunday school children on the General Slocum. Our most sincere sympathy is extended to the parents and friends and we are most anxious to do something to help you in this great affliction. Will you let me know if there is anything we can do to help?

JOHN WEAVER, Mayor of Philadelphia.

**FROM MAYOR HARRISON OF CHICAGO**

Chicago sends to New York her heartfelt and keenest sympathy on account of the terrible calamity which has just happened. Our own recent catastrophe makes us mournfully appreciative of the sorrow in which your city has just been plunged. Please command us if we may be of any assistance whatever.

CARTER H. HARRISON, Mayor.

**SYMPATHETIC WORDS FROM INDIANAPOLIS**

The people of Indianapolis sympathize most keenly with you and your people who suffered on account of the appalling disaster on East River.

JOHN W. HOLTZMAN, Mayor of Indianapolis.

**FROM THE POLISH ALLIANCE**

Please express our deepest sympathy to all who lost their dear ones in the awful disaster.

POLISH NATIONAL ALLIANCE.



**AFRICAN METHODIST BISHOPS UNITE**

In behalf of the Bishops' Council of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, in session, we unite in the universal mourning which the nation is calling forth on account of the lamentable disaster which has suddenly befallen the city of New York, of which you are the honored head, in the loss of hundreds of human lives in the General Slocum disaster.

W. B. DERRICK.

B. W. ARNETT.

**FROM A SISTER REPUBLIC**

The students of the School of Engineers of Mexico send sympathy for the misfortune befallen the school children on board the General Slocum.

Cablegrams were exchanged between President Loubet of France and President Roosevelt.

**PRESIDENT LOUBET'S DISPATCH**

Profoundly moved by the awful catastrophe of the General Slocum, I have it at heart to address to your Excellency my sincere condolences and to send to the families of the victims the expression of my sorrowful sympathy.

**PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT'S REPLY**

I profoundly appreciate the friendship and sympathy which prompted your Excellency's telegram of condolence, and I beg you to accept in behalf of the afflicted families and the people of the United States my sincere thanks.

**FROM ARCHBISHOP FARLEY**

Archbishop John M. Farley, of the Diocese of New York, sent the following letter to Dr. Haas:

Rev. and Dear Sir: I beg to tender you and your afflicted

people my most sincere sympathy in the presence of the appalling calamity that has fallen upon them and you through the burning of the General Slocum; and I know my feelings are fully shared by the whole body of the Catholic clergy and laity of New York.

May the Giver of all strength comfort you and yours in this their dreadful hour of sorrow. Believe me, my dear sir,

Very respectfully yours,

JOHN M. FARLEY, Archbishop of New York.

**FROM THE GERMAN EMPEROR**

Rev. George C. F. Haas received the following telegram from Baron Speck von Sternburg, the German Ambassador at Washington, enclosing the following cable message from the German Emperor:

Rev. George Haas, Sixth street, New York: The following cablegram has just been communicated to me by His Majesty, the Kaiser:

Being most profoundly affected by the news of the indescribably horrible catastrophe which has overtaken the Lutheran congregation, I command you to express to it my innermost feelings of sorrow.

In carrying out the command of my most gracious sovereign, allow me at the same time to offer you my own personal sympathy.

STERNBURG.

**FROM THE GERMAN EMPRESS**

Supplementing the Emperor's condolences, came a telegram from the Empress of Germany, which was transmitted to the Rev. Mr. Haas by the Ambassador, and of which a translation follows:

Her Majesty the Empress and Queen has authorized me to

express her heartiest sympathy for the unspeakable disaster that has brought such great grief into hundreds of German families. I beg Your Reverence to bring this to the notice of those afflicted.

**MAYOR M'CLELLAN'S ANNOUNCEMENT**

Mayor McClellan issued the following on Thursday, the day after the catastrophe:

**PROCLAMATION**

To the Citizens of New York: The appalling disaster yesterday, by which more than five hundred men, women and children lost their lives by fire and drowning, has shocked and horrified our city. Knowing the keen sympathy of the people of the City of New York with their stricken fellows, I have appointed a committee of citizens to receive contributions to a fund to provide for the fit and proper burial of the dead, and for such other relief as may be necessary.

The following gentlemen have been asked to serve on the committee: Morris K. Jesup, Jacob H. Schiff, Herman Ridder, Charles A. Dickey, Robert A. Van Courtlandt, Erskine Hewitt, Joseph C. Hendrix, Thomas Mulry, George Ehret, John Fox, John Weinacht, and H. B. Scharman.

Until the committee has had an opportunity to organize I shall be glad to receive contributions at the Mayor's office.

As a sign of mourning I have ordered the flags on the City Hall to be put at half-mast.

GEORGE B. McCLELLAN, Mayor.

**FLAGS AT HALF-MAST**

The flags of the City Hall and all buildings where city departments are situated were placed at half-mast as soon as the Mayor's order became known.

The Mayor said:

"I hope all the gentlemen named in the proclamation will accept. When I hear from them I will call a meeting for purposes of organization, after which the committee will undertake relief work and the collection of funds.

'I cannot estimate the amount of money needed to be raised, but it will certainly be a large sum, because there are so many families who are perhaps not well able to meet the cost of the funerals.

"A large number of orphans also will have to be cared for. In many cases the head of the family has been lost. Provision ought to be made for these families.

"For the immediate necessities I have given to the heads of all departments *carte blanche* in expenditures, stating that any bills they contract in carrying out their work will be met by the Board of Estimate.

"I have directed Health Commissioner Darlington to bury in Lutheran Cemetery in Long Island City all bodies which cannot be identified.

"I have nothing but praise for the work of the city employes, who have been busy practically twenty-four hours. I have directed departmental heads to employ laborers to take the place of regular city employes who become exhausted."

#### MAYOR'S MESSAGE TO PASTOR

Mayor McClellan sent the following message to the Rev. George C. F. Haas, pastor of the stricken congregation:

On behalf of the people of our city, and myself, I express to you and your stricken flock the sentiments of sorrow which pervade this community at the awful calamity which has come upon you.

In the hope that we may lessen in some degree the anguish which you and your people suffer, I have appealed to the generosity of our fellow citizens to render financial aid to those who may need it to care for their sick and to decently bury their dead.

We all hope that courage may be given you to bear up under your great affliction.

#### **PRODUCE EXCHANGE RESOLUTIONS**

At a meeting of the board of managers of the Produce Exchange the following resolutions were unanimously adopted:

Whereas, in the burning of the excursion steamer General Slocum, and the fearful and sad loss of life occasioned thereby, our city has been visited with a calamity unprecedented in its awful character, and,

Whereas, in the terrific death suffered by so many, especially by helpless children, bereavement with its consequent sorrow has entered so many homes, bowing everywhere hearts with grief, and awakening the deepest sympathy, be it

Resolved, that the New York Produce Exchange, through its board of managers, tenders to the Rev. G. C. F. Haas, and through him to his church and to all bereaved families, this expression of its deep sorrow, and its tender and heartfelt sympathy with one and all the suffering ones in this hour of grief.

#### **CATHOLIC CLUB WILL AID**

At the meeting of the Catholic Club of New York, Thomas C. O'Sullivan introduced the following resolutions, which were adopted unanimously:

The Catholic Club, mindful that the issues of life and death

rest in the power of an All Wise Providence, but yielding to natural grief caused by the appalling disaster which has wrapped the city in profound gloom, records this minute of its sympathy for the afflicted congregation of St. Mark's German Lutheran Church in the deplorable loss of life happening on their excursion yesterday. The Catholic Club desires that its president, Justice Giegerich, express to the Rev. George C. F. Haas, pastor of the St. Mark's German Lutheran Church, its deep and prayerful sympathy for his people, in this, their hour of trial, and its willingness to coöperate with him in any plan of financial aid.

**FROM THE LONDON SUNDAY SCHOOL UNION**

The following cablegram was received from London:

Sunday School Union, representing two and a half million workers, scholars, Great Britain and colonies, assures church and relatives of profound sympathy at the time of this appalling disaster. Heartfelt prayers. Father may vouchsafe comfort and sustaining grace.

BELSEY, Chairman.

**FROM THE SALVATION ARMY**

Col. Charles Miles, of the Salvation Army of New York City, sent the following message:

Salvation Army sends to you and your people profound sympathy. We are praying. If we can serve you command us. We are holding memorial services in all corps Sunday.

## CHAPTER XVII

### SLAUGHTER OF THE INNOCENTS

**A Happy Party of Children—A Freight of Youthful Happiness—The Little Tots Flock Together—No Hint of Danger—Eating Ice Cream When the Fire Started—Looking Forward to a Day on Long Island—Tiny Toddlers Lost from Their Mothers—Baby Heroes and Heroines—Mothers Crazy With Panic—Empty Benches in Schools.**

An eye-witness who saw the army of joyful children marching to the boat said it was one of the gayest that ever started from New York. The day was as perfect as is ever known in this section, and this of itself had caused the boat to be crowded, not only with members of the church, but with outsiders who took this opportunity of spending a delightful day in the country, and far from the noisy turmoil of New York.

#### CROWDED WITH CHILDREN

As the Slocum swung into the stream and headed northward, it was saluted by all passing craft. Forward the band was playing lively, summery airs, and from every part of the boat floated flags and streamers.

The great excursion steamer carried a freight of human happiness. Everywhere the little ones crowded, gazing over the side at the rushing water that swept past the swift steamer or at the fleet of river craft that passed the Slocum in only one direction, for the great paddle wheels sent her at a rate that made it impossible for any to pass her.

Later, this very fact added hundreds to the death list of

the Slocum, for the boats that followed the burning steamer in the hope of rescuing those in danger found it impossible to overtake her. Within half an hour the crowd on the boat had coagulated into little groups.

Neighbors, friends, relatives formed little parties and gathered together in corners or in sections of the boat, the children flocking about by themselves and straying far from their parents or guardians of the day. There was no hint of danger, and they were permitted to go where they pleased without restraint.

Around the band were gathered hundreds of the little ones, and even on the upper decks they were huddled together in little flocks.

#### HAPPINESS EVERYWHERE

In a short time long tables were set out on the cool, shady afterdeck, and a rush carried hundreds of the children in laughing groups to where the dainty, tasteful mounds of ice cream and long glasses of ice-cold sodawater and lemonade were being handed out to the little ones. Around these tables the children were gathered in a laughing, scrambling, good-natured swarm, when the first note of warning came from the deck below.

On the main deck had gathered the few men in the party. They had been smoking and talking as they watched the shore lines glide by on either side, and it was feared that a lighted cigar tossed carelessly aside may have been responsible for the fearful disaster.

#### EMPTY BENCHES IN SCHOOLS

No more startling evidence of the slaughter of the innocents which accompanied the General Slocum disaster could



be found than in the rows of empty benches in the schools, which the children who went down on the calamitous excursion attended, and which are located in the neighborhood of Pastor Haas's church.

Of these the most seriously affected was Public School 25, on Fifth street near First avenue, over which a pall of mourning hung for many days. The majority of the two thousand pupils are related to the dead or missing parishioners, and many of the scholars were lost on the vessel. In the classrooms Thursday morning there were whole rows of empty desks and little of the work of the curriculum was carried out.

The children who attended came into the class-rooms, their eyes red from weeping, and little knots of scholars stood about discussing the probable fate of their companions. The little girls were most affected when they heard that one of their friends had met death, and the boys, trying to be brave, often burst into uncontrollable fits of weeping.

No. 25 is, however, not the only school that has felt the hand of swift death. Superintendent Maxwell received the following reports from six of the thirteen schools in the vicinity of the stricken church, showing the list of missing.

#### **DEAD, INJURED AND MISSING SCHOOL CHILDREN**

No. 25, 326 Fifth street:—Boys' department, 17 dead, 33 missing, 10 injured. Girls' department, 34 dead, 35 missing, 6 injured.

No. 79, 38 First street:—1 dead, 2 missing, 5 injured.

No. 131, 273 Second street:—1 dead, 1 missing.

No. 15, 728 Fifth street:—1 dead, 1 missing.

No. 105, 269 East Fourth street:—2 dead, 2 injured.

No. 126, 536 East Twelfth street:—2 missing.

No. 36, 710 East Ninth street:—5 missing.

No. 71, 188 Seventh street:—14 missing.

No. 104, 413 East Sixteenth street:—5 missing or dead.

No. 50, 211 East Twentieth street:—13 missing or dead.

No. 73, 209 East Forty-sixth street:—1 dead or missing.

No. 19, 344 East Fourteenth street:—Grammar department, 18 missing; primary department, 5 missing.

No. 122, Ninth street and First avenue:—21 dead

No. 129, 433 East Nineteenth street:—19 missing or dead.

Superintendent Maxwell and President Rogers of the Board of Education sent out the following circular to the principals of schools on Thursday:

“By an appalling calamity some hundreds of public school children and their friends and relatives were overtaken by sudden death yesterday in the East River, and many others were grievously wounded. The households stricken by this disaster will have the heartfelt sympathy of all public school children and teachers. As an expression of our sympathy, flags will be displayed at half-mast on all public school buildings throughout the city from 8 o'clock a. m. to 3:30 o'clock p. m. Friday, June 17.

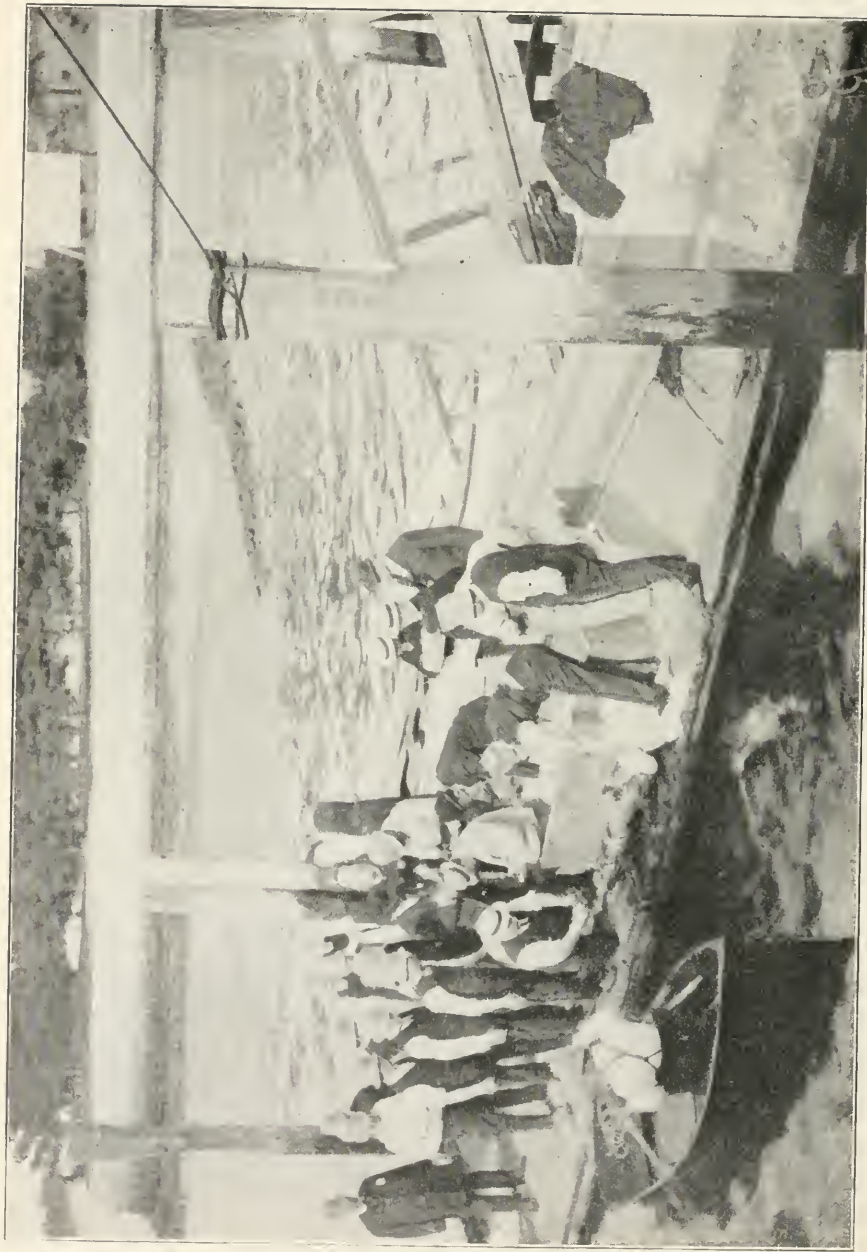
“Principals and teachers will take the opportunity to admonish their pupils to remain cool and collected in the presence of sudden danger, which is always imminent in a great city; not to risk their lives unnecessarily; to learn to swim; and always to be ready to lend a helping hand to those weaker than themselves.

“The records of this disaster furnish abundant illustration of heroism, the effect of which should not be lost upon our children.”



### FIVE DEAD IN ONE HOME

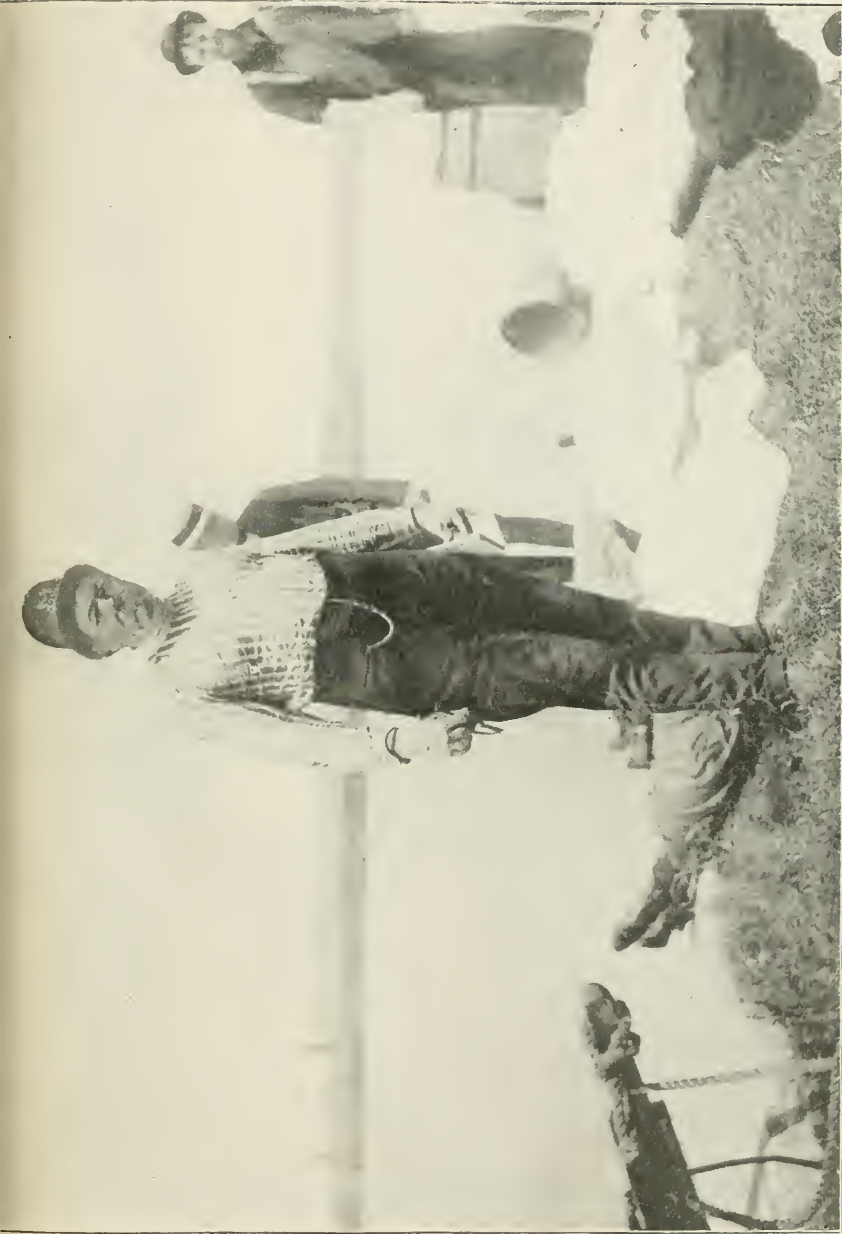
This picture represents the crape-hung door of a home, made desolate by the burning of the General Slocum. With the exception of the father, August Dippert, who bade his wife good-bye on the morning of the disaster, the entire family was wiped out—mother, wife and three children losing their lives.



Courtesy of Leslie's Weekly. Copyright by Judge Co., 1904.

### A BURNED AND MUTILATED BODY

One of the bodies taken from the wreck of the burned steamer was only a fragment. It consisted of the charred and mutilated remains of a girl between sixteen and seventeen years of age. The remains were so badly disfigured



Courtesy of Leslie's Weekly. Copyright by Judge Co., 1904.

### PREPARING THE BODIES FOR IDENTIFICATION.

The bodies found on the shore south of North Brother Island, after the steamer was beached, were piled in heaps on the shore until the police were organized to haul the great crowds that assembled, and arrangements made to lay them out for identification. After being carefully searched, the bodies were tagged and removed to the morgue to await the arrival of friends.



**REV. GEORGE C. F. HAAS**  
PASTOR OF ST. MARK'S GERMAN LUTHERAN CHURCH

**"NUMBER 144"**

A baby boy was washed ashore by the tide. His clothes were drenched, but they were not torn. And around his neck he still wore the sky-blue ribbon marked in black letters "St. Marcus's Sonntag Schule," which proclaimed him one of the few survivors of the last Slaughter of Innocents.

In Superintendent Daub's arms he was hurried to Lebanon Hospital, where Nurse McCallum, in charge of the childrens' ward, undressed him and put him in a little white-enameled bed and marked him 144.

One hundred and forty-four he remained until a bent, gray-haired old lady tottered into the ward in charge of Nurse McCallum, took one look at him as he lay asleep and gathered him in her arms.

She was Mrs. Augusta Debit of No. 328 Sixth street and the baby was her grandson Charles Debit, ten months old.

She was the last of more than two hundred distracted men and women who since Wednesday afternoon visited the children's ward in their hunt for "little blond babies."

**LOOKING FOR A BLOND BABY**

"They all seemed to be looking for blond babies," said the nurse, Miss McCallum. "When they were told in the office that we had one baby here answering to that description their faces would brighten and they could hardly wait for me to bring them upstairs. But when they had looked at No. 144 they would shake their heads, and the mothers, and sometimes the fathers, too, would break down and sob.

"I am not a sensitive woman. I have watched the most cruel surgical operations without flinching—even the sight of the maimed and charred adult victims of the wreck did not

destroy my nerve. But when I saw that little baby look up into the faces of the strange women who bent over his crib, and lift up his little arms and coo at them, and then saw the mothers shake their heads and turn away sobbing, I cried—I couldn't help it.

#### **SORRY TO PART WITH BABY**

“He was such a sweet little baby that I was really very sorry to part with him. I almost wished he would never be claimed. He did not cry at all when he was picked up, but after he was brought here he clamored for food. He was very hungry. I tried to give him milk out of a cup, but he was too young for that, and wouldn't take it. But when I fixed some in a bottle for him he was happy. I couldn't get the bottle away from him. Why, he drank sixteen ounces of milk before he would give it up.

“After that he never cried once all the time he was here. He would lie in his cot smiling, or else coo at the nurses to make them take him up and walk with him.

#### **KEEPS RIBBON AS SOUVENIR**

“We were all sorry to part with him, but I have a souvenir of him that I am going to keep always—the little blue Sunday school ribbon he wore around his neck when he was washed ashore.”

#### **DEATH DUE TO A LIFE PRESERVER**

John Kircher visited the morgue and identified the body of his seven-year-old daughter Elsie. Mr. Kircher directly charged that her death was due to a life preserver, which served as a death-trap instead of a safeguard. He made the following statement:

“My wife and our three children, Elsie the youngest, and two others, went on the excursion. My wife is a fine swim-



mer, and is perfectly at home in the water. When the fire broke out and the panic started, she gathered the children together and thought out the best thing to do. She decided to put a life preserver on Elsie, as she could not swim, although the other two could a little.

"Thinking that the little girl would be perfectly safe with the preserver on, she lifted her to the rail and dropped her over the side. She waited for Elsie to come up. But the child never appeared. She had sunk as though a stone were tied to her. Then my wife and the other two children jumped in, and mostly by her efforts all three got safely ashore. The only one lost was the one who wore a life preserver."

#### FATE OF LITTLE JENNIE

Coming down the steps of the Little Missionary Day Nursery, in St. Mark's Place, one German woman met another who was just going in.

"They've found little Jennie's body," said the first woman. "They've brought her home; Miss Curry's been laying her out. I'm going over to see her. Will you come?"

The two women passed up Avenue A to a tenement house just below Thirteenth street, and through a dark hallway leading to an inner court, and there, in a small room filled with women sitting silently around the bier, was Jennie—happily not disfigured; her face was as dimpled and round and her brown curls as neatly arranged as when she led in the doll drill at the last festival given by the nursery. Her mother, a working woman, a widow with no other child but Jennie, sat beside her absolutely stonelike in her grief.

"They say she cannot cry," one of the women whispered to the other as they went out, "but I guess maybe when Jennie's

taken away and she begins to pick up her little things, then she cries."

#### A BORN MOTHER

Everybody who knew anything of the Little Missionary Day Nursery knew Jennie Eisler. "She was a baby when her mother first brought her to us," said Miss Curry, the manager, and when she was little more than a baby she took care of the other babies. She was a born 'little mother.' When she was a tiny thing of four or five, just promoted to the kindergarten, if she chanced to hear a baby crying in the nursery behind the kindergarten room—left alone in its cradle, perhaps, for a minute—first thing the teacher knew Jennie had slipped out from the circle, and she would find her standing on tiptoe by the baby's side, hushing it in her motherly little way."

On Wednesday morning Jennie's mother, who had to work and so could not go upon the excursion, put her in charge of a young girl, a neighbor, who promised to take care of her. It is said the girl lost her life trying to save the child. All Wednesday night and Thursday Miss Curry and Jennie's mother searched for the two who had not come home, and on Thursday, at midnight, they found them in the morgue

#### PARENTS AND CHILDREN DIED TOGETHER

"Were any of your babies left motherless by the tragedy?" Miss Curry was asked.

"None of our babies. Indeed, in most cases the mothers who went took their young babies with them, and they died together. But many older children are orphaned. The saddest case I know was that of the Burkharts. They are not our nursery children; I happened on them while looking for some one else. The father of this family has been bedridden with rheumatism, and his wife supported him and the six chil-

dren. Some one gave her tickets for the excursion, and the husband told her to go and take the baby and the oldest little boy, and the other children could stay with him. The boy was saved; mother and baby were lost. When I went into their room on Friday morning—a wretched little room—the man had dragged himself out of bed and sat there, head down; I could hardly get him to speak. The five children were huddled around him, looking scared and hungry. While I was talking I happened to mention a remedy I thought would help the man's rheumatism.

“‘You'll only need five cents' worth,’ I said.

“‘I haf not five cents,’ he answered, and it was true; he had not a penny in the world. Thank God, I could leave some food, and I gave their names to the relief committee.”

“But these relief committees,” said a woman who stood near, shaking her head, “they have so much red tape.”

#### LEFT ALONE IN THE WORLD

On Friday morning, as Miss Curry was preparing the bodies of a mother and her baby for burial in a tenement on Sixth street, she heard a boy come running into the rooms on the floor below. “Mamma,” he cried, “mamma, are you home?” This boy had boarded the General Slocum on Wednesday with his mother and sisters—the entire family. When the panic came he was somehow separated from them all. He saw a little child that was separated from its mother, and fastening it on his back he swam ashore. He was in the hospital on North Brother Island for a day with some small injury, and then he was sent home. But his mother and sisters had not come home; they were with the unidentified dead, and the boy stays on alone there, looked after by neighbors.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### MEMORIAL SERVICES

Comforting Words from Clergymen—A Sad Sabbath—Pathetic Scenes at Church—Quotations from Addresses of Noted Divines—A Whole City Mourns—Churches of Every Denomination Send Messages—Prayers are Read—Bells are Tolled during the Funerals.

There were more than a hundred ministers, representing nearly every denomination, at the memorial meeting in St. Mark's Church in Sixth street, held under the auspices of the Lutheran Ministers' Association. The Rev. Dr. William R. Huntington, rector of the Grace Episcopal Church, was there, and Rabbi Joseph Silverman, of the Temple Emanu-El. The purpose was to take such steps as were necessary to relieve those who had lost relatives.

#### FIRST MEMORIAL MEETING

The meeting was called to order by the Rev. John J. Hirschman, of St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Brooklyn, and President of the New York Ministerium of the New York Synod of the Lutheran Church. Resolutions expressing the sorrow of the community for those in bereavement were adopted, followed by the singing of the hymn, "Wer Weis Wie Nahe Mir Mein Ende?" which, translated, is "Who Knows How Near My End May Be?" It was decided to have the unidentified buried in the Lutheran Cemetery, in a plot that the cemetery authorities have offered for the purpose. It was also agreed that memorial services be held in all Lutheran churches. The

Rev. Dr. Berkemeir, of the Wartburg Orphan Home, at Mount Vernon, announced that that institution would accept the charge of little ones bereft of parents.

#### **RELIGIOUS DIFFERENCES FORGOTTEN**

The Rev. J. W. Loch, of Brooklyn, was made chairman of the relief committee, the other members being the Rev. Dr. John J. Hirschman, and the Rev. E. C. J. Kraeling, also of Brooklyn. This committee was to coöperate with the committee appointed by Mayor McClellan. Arrangements were then made for the attendance of the Lutheran pastors at the various funerals. Clergymen of all denominations offered their services for the ceremonies at the homes of the dead.

#### **ALL LUTHERAN TO-DAY**

The Rev. Dr. Huntington, of the Grace Episcopal Church, was among the first at the meeting to express sympathy and sorrow for the bereaved parish. Dr. Huntington said: "I am here to convey to you the Episcopal Church's and my personal expression of sorrow and to extend to you whatever aid is in my power and in that of the staff of the Grace Church. Fourteen of my own people were lost in the sad catastrophe and your sorrow is my sorrow. We are all Lutheran to-day."

#### **"WE SHARE YOUR LOSS"**

Rabbi Silverman, of Temple Emanu-El, said: "I come to you as a minister of God to express the sympathy of my people. We feel and share your loss. It is our misfortune, not yours alone. Where we can help, we must help and will help."

With considerable emotion the Rev. Dr. Hirschman said: "The brightest thought in this our dark hour is the fraternal sympathy not only of Protestant churches, but of the Church of Rome."

**EXPRESSIONS OF SYMPATHY FROM ALL DENOMINATIONS**

Expressions of sympathy were uttered by representatives of the Baptist, Presbyterian, Methodist and other denominations. The Lutheran clergymen adjourned to the rectory directly in the rear of St. Mark's Church after the meeting, where they began the work of assigning their members to the conduct of funeral services.

Memorial services were held on the Sunday following the disaster in churches all over the city for those who perished in the Slocum disaster, and special prayers were said by the congregations. In the stricken district every church, without respect to creed, was draped in deepest mourning. In many of these and other churches the collections taken were for the swelling of the fund now being collected for the benefit of the sufferers.

**GOD'S WAYS ARE HIGHER THAN OURS**

The Rev. Dr. John B. Remensnyder, President of the Lutheran Synod of New York, took the loss of the Slocum as the theme of his discourse.

"The whole city," he said, "the entire country, aye, the world, is startled by the blow. The tragedy stands unexampled of its kind. A church is almost destroyed. A Sunday school is nearly depopulated. And what brings it very closely home to us is that those people were of our own faith and name."

Still, he counseled his hearers, they should not lose faith. "Enough," he said, "that God's ways are higher than our ways, and His thoughts higher than our thoughts. Because His ways are in the great deep, let us not question them. Let us, while set to thinking by this fearful visitation, apply to our conscience its pointed lesson."

**SPECIAL SERVICES**

Signally impressive were the services held in the Middle Dutch Church on Second avenue, near Sixth street. In the Slocum disaster the lives of seventy-three members of this church or their relatives were lost. Before beginning his sermon the Rev. Dr. John C. Fagg announced the hymn<sup>4</sup> "Come, Ye Disconsolate." It was softly sung by the congregation, and at its conclusion the pastor read a list containing the names of those of the church who had perished. From the Sunday school there are six dead and five missing. From the Industrial School ten are dead and three are missing. Forty-one children identified with the congregation were on the Slocum, and of these twenty-four were lost.

There were special services at the Immanuel Lutheran Church, Lexington avenue and Eighty-eighth street, of which the Rev. William Schoenfeldt is pastor.

At the Evangelical Lutheran Church, in East Houston street, the Rev. Julius Geyer, in speaking of the disaster, said: "The disaster was a visitation of God. Although we do not know His purpose at this time, it will be cleared up to us." He then paid tribute to the memory of John Hendencamp, a deacon of the church, who was among those who perished.

Mgr. Lavelle, in his sermon at St. Patrick's Cathedral, referred to the Slocum disaster as an evidence of the uncertainty of life and the necessity for better living. At all masses said during the day a special prayer for the victims of the disaster was offered. The prayer was repeated at the Catholic churches.

**THE ACT OF MAN**

The Rev. John L. Belford, the pastor of Sts. Peter and Paul, in Wythe avenue, Williamsburg, said:

"If a cowardly crew seeks its own safety instead of fighting fire or saving the helpless, the disgrace is not due to Providence, but to selfish and base humanity. To drive a boat at full speed with a burning furnace in her bow seems madness. To expect God to change the laws of nature would be presumption. The disaster was not the act of God. It is the act of man. It comes from greed, neglect of duty, from defiance of law and conscience."

#### PRAYERS ARE READ

At Bishop Potter's recommendation, the prayer for those in great distress and illness was read in the Episcopal churches of the city. The Rev. Dr. George C. Houghton, pastor of the "Little Church Around the Corner," made reference at the morning services to the calamity. He asked for the prayers of his congregation in behalf of the stricken congregation. Other preachers throughout the city made reference to the Slocum disaster. The Rev. Henry Ruggles Remsen of Calvary Episcopal Church, Fourth avenue and Twenty-first street, said:

"Our first idea is, of course, one of sympathy for the stricken congregation of St. Mark's, which has suffered such appalling losses. After its lesson our committee was unwilling to accept the great responsibility involved in taking children out in steamboats evidently not safe, and I now announce that the excursion arranged by Calvary Church for July 20th has been abandoned."

#### SIN AND GREED THE CAUSES

The Rev. Dr. James Oliver Wilson, at the Nostrand Avenue Church, Brooklyn, said: "But for sin in the Knickerbocker Company, the sin of greed and carelessness, the boat would



not have burned. Four firemen properly stationed, with hose that was not rotten, could have checked any fire that might have broken out. But these four firemen would have cost the company ten dollars a day, and that would affect the profits and dividends, and was not to be thought of. What if nine hundred souls do perish? We must not imperil the dividends. Thus the sin of greed in the company overreached itself and destroyed nine hundred lives. And hundreds of rotten life preservers are chargeable to the same sin of greed. I charge this appalling disaster, those rotten life preservers, and rotten hose and lack of firemen, not to God's account, but to the Knickerbocker Steamboat Company. And also the cowardly conduct of most of the crew, who saved themselves by letting the women and children perish. And if this be not enough, then bring in the Steamboat Inspector for his shameful share of this slaughter of the innocents. Sin in the corporation, sin in the inspector, and in the cowardly crew, occasioned this awful tragedy."

#### **PRACTICAL AND SPIRITUAL LESSONS**

The Rev. Dr. John Lloyd Lee, at the Westminster Presbyterian Church, said: "With the growth of corporations, there is a tendency to eliminate the individual, so that no one person will be held responsible when something goes wrong. A special effort should be made to meet the circumstances growing out of this situation, and those who should see to it that steamboats are in proper condition should be held to a strict accountability."

The Rev. Dr. Huntington, at Grace Church, said: "These poor sufferers have not died in vain if, following upon their dreadful pains, there comes better shipbuilding regulations,

more rigid inspections of steam vessels, and stricter discipline aboard of vessels carrying human life."

"Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people, saith your God," was the text of the Rev. Dr. Robert S. MacArthur at the Calvary Baptist Church. The entire service—music, sermon and prayers—was a memorial for the dead of the St. Mark's Lutheran Church Sunday school excursion.

"There has been no calamity so great in the history of this city," said Dr. MacArthur, "and the sorrow is not peculiar to any race, church or section of New York.

"The disaster abounds in practical and spiritual lessons. In the first place it belongs to the great mystery in human existence.

"This was not, however, what is known in a legal sense as an 'act of God.' We err if we blame God for the neglect of man. God is not responsible for our violation of nature's laws. The problem in the steamboat is the same as that in the creation of Adam. Men who built the boat were under obligation to obey the law and under temptation to disobey. They yielded to temptation."

Speaking of acts of heroism on the General Slocum, Dr. MacArthur said:

"The discipline of the police force was shown at its best. The men on the tugs fighting in the midst of flames, the nurse learning to swim in saving others, the policeman saving twelve and willing to lose his life to save the thirteenth, ought to have crowns radiant with stars.

"The sense of brotherhood has been strong in every soul since this disaster. We have learned the lesson of sympathy. We must learn that of precaution. Theaters and ocean

steamers have been made virtually fireproof. Why not the excursion boats? There should be steel sheathing around boilers and fireproof construction in deck work. There has been deliberate violation of many of the laws of safety. One takes his life in his hand when he goes on an excursion boat. It is a reproach on the science of the times and the civilization of America and a reflection upon the intelligence and benevolence of the people."

#### **SOCIETY WAS RESPONSIBLE**

At the Lenox Avenue Unitarian Church the pastor, the Rev. Merle St. Croix Wright, preached on the subject, "Interpretations of Providence in the Face of Disaster." He said in part: "This has not been misfortune only; the fault lies elsewhere. It is fault, abominable fault, of a third party. Did the simple, innocent people who went to their destruction have any hand in it? Did God have a hand in it? Yes, as He has in everything. But the culpability lies with those who failed of their antecedent duty, who slacked and skimmed what they should have done. This thing was long gathering. It was not the work of an instant. We can find in this horror an indictment in which we all are concerned to some extent, though not equally.

"Society is responsible, at least through its agents and inspectors, in view of the fact that it was necessary for it to be waked out of its miserable, sleepy negligence by an appalling horror."

#### **THE RESULT OF OUR SYSTEM OF POLITICS**

The Rev. Joseph Silverman, pastor of Temple Emanu-El, Fifth avenue and Forty-third street, in a sermon fixed the responsibility for the General Slocum disaster upon our polit-

ical system; the greed and selfishness of corporations; the violation of laws and the dereliction of duty of officers. He said in part:

“Words fail us to express our sympathy on the one hand and our abhorrence on the other. This seeming accident must be sifted to the bottom to fix the responsibility at the door of those to whom it belongs. It is only by the merest chance that we who are now living are not victims of a similar accident. Yesterday I went to that section of the city where the affliction fell. Groups of men, women and children gathered together, and with flowing tears commiserated with one another. We protest at the violation of law responsible for all this bereavement. In the midst of this great gloom there is one ray of cheer, that is, that all hearts are touched alike by this calamity.

“While we feel for the victims and for the sufferers, the question before us now is, What must be done for the future protection of our people? The dead of this calamity must be buried with all honor, whether known or unknown, identified or unidentified; for these are the dead not of the individual family, but of the city and nation.

“This calamity is the result of our system of politics, and that reprehensible trait of human nature, greed and selfishness. The crime has been committed by the corporation, by officers who have been derelict in duty—that will be the verdict of just judges. Greed and selfishness in the race after wealth overlooked the safety of human beings.

“The result of this will be greater care for the future, due regard for the safety of the people. The citizens of the city, state and nation will be aroused to see that officers do their

duty and that the majesty of the law is upheld, which is the only safety of a republic. We must see to it that we create better means of carrying humanity about on railways and in steamboats, and that the enactments of our legislature are preserved.

“Our city will survive the dire disaster, and as a result we will live better, hope for better things and secure peace not only in heaven but on earth.”

#### TOLLING THE CHURCH BELLS

As a mark of respect to the dead of the General Slocum disaster, as well as an expression of sympathy by the people of the whole city for the grief-stricken relatives, the suggestion was made that all the churches of the city toll their bells on Monday afternoon between two and three o'clock. Bishop Potter, to whom the idea was broached, very warmly favored the suggestion, and prominent clergymen who were seen agreed that the idea, if carried out, would be an appropriate expression of the city's sympathy with the bereaved congregation of St. Mark's Church.

Speaking for the Rev. Mr. Haas, pastor of St. Mark's Church, who was too ill to be seen, the Rev. A. Steimle, pastor of Holy Trinity Church, Brooklyn, said: “It would be a beautiful expression of sympathy by the people of New York for the sorrowing members of St. Mark's, and I am sure that it would be received with most heartfelt appreciation by the congregation. Everybody has been so kind; people of all denominations have showered us with offers of help and expressions of sympathy and we are overwhelmed by these manifestations of kindness. To have all the church bells toll

on Monday would be a most appropriate tribute of the city's sorrow."

#### **MANY PASTORS APPROVE**

The Rev. William R. Huntington, rector of Grace Church, said that he cordially approved the idea; that if Mayor McClellan requested it the chimes of Grace Church would be tolled for the victims of the General Slocum in unison with the bells of other churches.

The Rev. John G. Fagg, pastor of the Collegiate Reformed Church, in whose congregation there are nearly seventy dead, said: "While we have agreed to have as little publicity as possible in connection with the funerals, it seems to me that the tolling of the church bells would not be out of place and I would not be opposed to it."

The Rev. W. Ludwig, pastor of St. Luke's Lutheran Church, of Brooklyn; the Rev. Jacob W. Loch, pastor of the Schermerhorn Street Lutheran Church, Brooklyn, and the Rev. E. Kraeling, pastor of Zion Lutheran Church, Brooklyn, were in accord in favoring the suggestion.

#### **A FITTING MARK OF RESPECT**

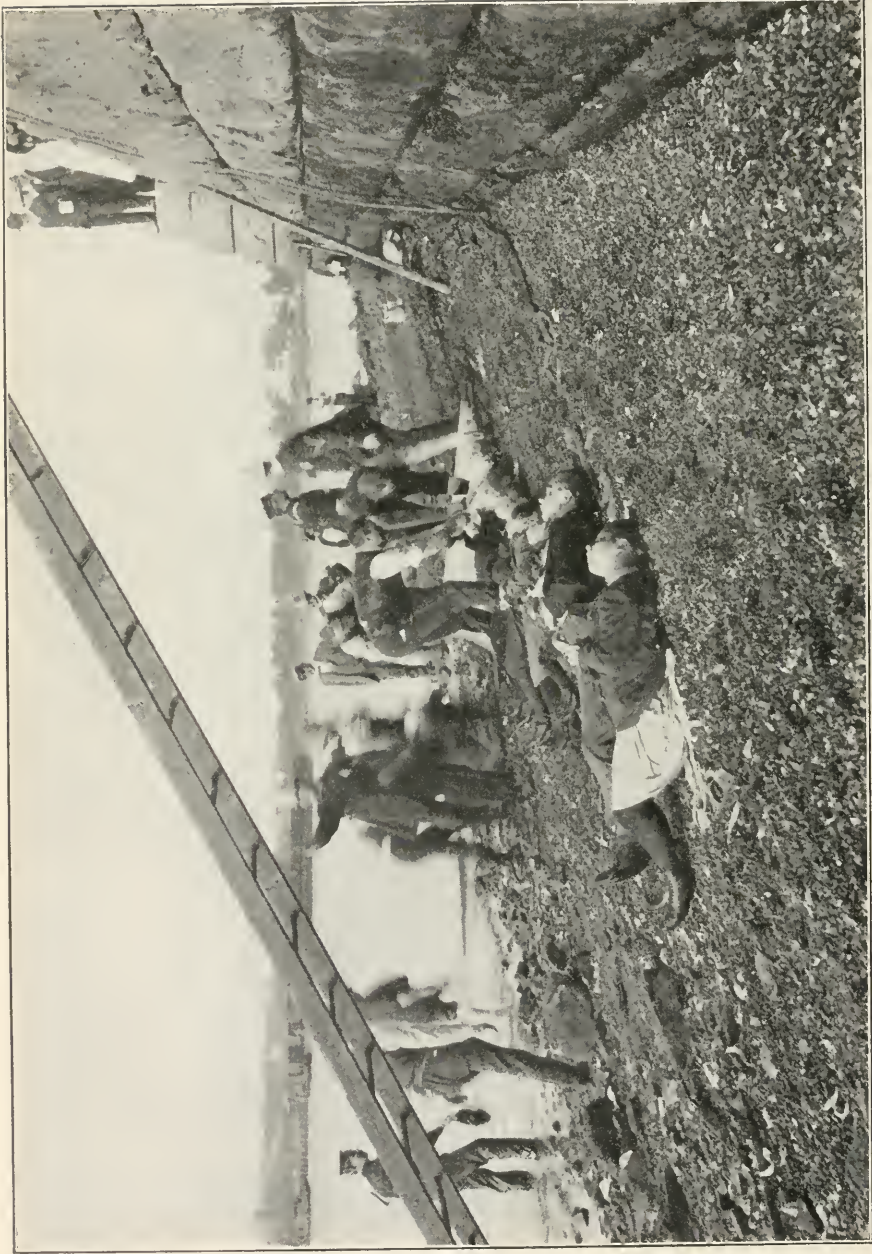
The Rev. Dr. Houghton, rector of the Little Church Around the Corner, said that he thoroughly approved of the plan. "Prayers were offered in our church for the dead," he said. "It is right that a mark of respect be shown the victims of the awful disaster. I cannot express my sorrow and grief too deeply."

The Rev. J. Ross Stevenson, minister of the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church, said: "Though our church has no bells, I am in sympathy with the idea. Some way of showing sympathy for the families of the lost by tolling bells or displaying flags would be appropriate. Perhaps some of the churches that do not possess bells could raise flags as a mark of respect."



### FUNERAL OF THE PASTOR'S WIFE

When the body of Mrs. Anna S. Haas, wife of the Rev. George C. F. Haas, pastor of the church, was being borne to the hearse, the voices of the people, who filled the street and thronged the windows and doorways of the adjacent houses, were hushed in pity, as the minister himself, moving as in a dream, slowly descended the steps and entered one of the carriages.

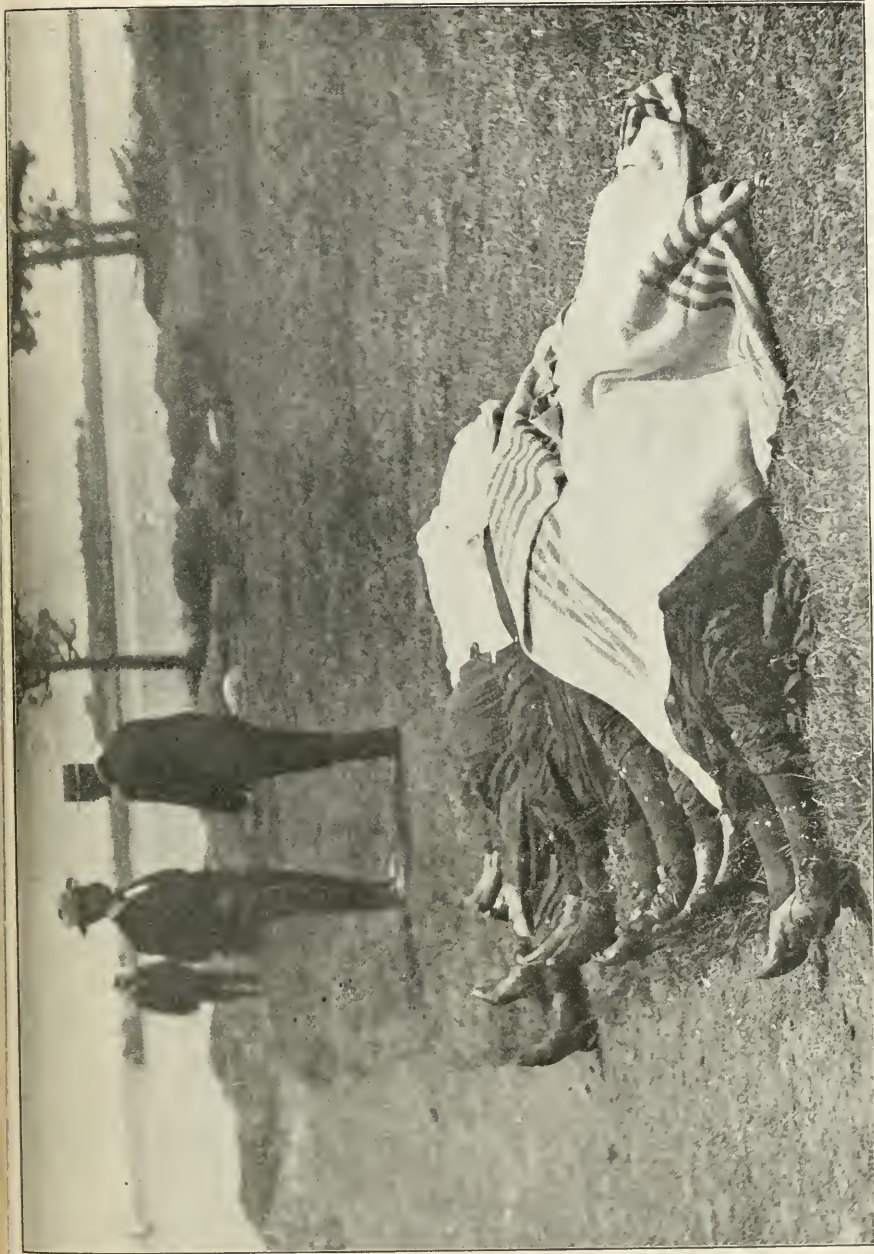


Courtesy of Leslie's Weekly. Copyright by Judge Co. 1904.

#### A ROW OF CORPSES AWAITING REMOVAL.

The most pitiful part of the disaster was the fact that most of the victims were children. The bodies in the above picture were of boys and girls ranging from three to ten years of age. At sight of these innocent victims of the horror, the workers were almost overcome. With pale faces, however, they persisted in the work





### BODIES LYING ON THE SHORE OF NORTH BROTHER ISLAND

After the bodies were taken from the river they were laid along the shore of North Brother Island until boats arrived to carry them to the morgue. Few of these showed traces of the fire; one or two were burned about the hands and arms: some had hardly an eyebrow singed; for it was death by water that they had all met.



#### CORONER'S JURY IN SESSION

Technically the coroner's inquest was upon the death of only one of the victims of the Slocum horror, which one was not announced. The jury itself was a remarkably intelligent body of men. The above photograph was taken during the testimony of Pilot Weaver.

The Rev. Arthur W. Byrt, pastor of the Warren Street Methodist Church of Brooklyn, said that anything tending to show the city's sympathy with the bereaved of St. Mark's Church would be very appropriate and he heartily favored having the church bells of the city toll on Monday afternoon.

"It is a beautiful idea," said the Rev. W. J. Hutchins, of the Bradford Presbyterian Church, Brooklyn.

"I favor the idea very heartily," said the Rev. Macy McGee Waters of the Tompkins Avenue Congregational Church of Brooklyn. "It would be a fine expression of sympathy for the bereaved people."

#### **PASTOR HAAS'S FIRST SERMON**

"Believe in Him Always" is a text in German scrolled upon a beautiful stained-glass memorial window in St. Mark's Lutheran Church in Sixth street. It was upon these words that the gaze of Rev. Dr. George C. F. Haas rested nearly all the time as he delivered his first sermon since the blotting out of two-thirds of his congregation by the General Slocum disaster.

It was a sad morning for the handful of men, women and children left of the congregation. The exterior of the little brick church was draped in long streamers of black cloth. Nearly every woman present wore a long black crape veil. Men of the congregation also were in black, and during the entire morning there were tears and sobs and fainting women, while stalwart men sobbed under the stress of the memory of their dead. Bandaged heads and scarred faces here and there marked the survivors of the disaster.

#### **FEW CHILDREN LEFT**

Pastor Haas, white-faced, trembling, tried to open the usual Sunday school session of the church. The Sunday

school room in the basement has always been too small for the children. It was designed not long ago to enlarge it. There is no need now. Three benches held all the children left of the Sunday school that used to fill to overflowing a row of twenty-five benches.

#### THE PASTOR OVERCOME

The memory of this seemed to sweep over Pastor Haas when he arose to open the service and thought of his pretty daughter and bright-faced wife, who used to sit over at one side of the school-room.

"My dear children," said the pastor in German, "we are gathered here at this sad time——"

Then the speaker faltered, and then, as he sobbed in bitter grief, the Rev. Dr. J. P. Holstein, who was assisting him, led the stricken pastor away from the awe-stricken children.

Later, in the church itself, Pastor Haas preached his sermon. Before he began, a broken choir, two members of which had perished on the General Slocum, sang a quaint old Lutheran choral. Pastor Haas's son played the organ.

"Fast goes the time," sang the choir in a low chant, that sounded the keynote of sorrow upon which the services were set. "Then comes the death. Unannounced, death's hand may strike us. Oh, God, I pray have mercy on me when my end comes."

In his sermon Pastor Haas scored in temperate but vigorous words those responsible for the accident.

#### IT WAS NOT THE ACT OF GOD

"It was not God," he said, "who was responsible for this long list of our dead. It was the negligence and carelessness

of man and the greed of a corporation. Yet in my bitter sorrow I can still thank God for it all, because He has opened the eyes of men and women in our great city and in the whole country to what is required and necessary to save others from a like fate. No one on that fatal boat died in vain."

The pastor took his text from St. Paul's second epistle to the Corinthians, xiii, 13: "All the saints salute you."

"I have been through many a sorrow in life before this last one," he said. "I have been through many a hard struggle, but for the last two weeks it has been difficult for me to bear up under my burden. It equally has been difficult for you of my congregation to bear up, and to us all it seems that so much sorrow should not be brought upon us all by a just and loving God. To the officers and teachers of our church who have gone we can lend no helping hand. To those left we can say we must just continue our work. We must not give up. 'All the saints salute you.'

"This accident shows that God's laws cannot be violated by men. Common, everyday precautions would have been enough to have saved us all. Yet, in this darkest hour, and with all the burden of affliction that has come upon us, I still look up to God. He strikes a silence at our murmurs."

#### **LOVE LIVES FOREVER**

Pastor Haas called on the congregation to bear up, for, as he expressed it, "Even though the beloved ones have gone, the loved ones still live."

"Love cannot be killed," the speaker added. "We can hold our love as a memory of our dead. What is a calamity may be in fact a blessing, and though the cross be heavy it will not be made too heavy for us to carry."

## CHAPTER XIX

### NOBLE WORK AT THE HOSPITALS

Physicians and Nurses Act as Life-Savers—Burned Children Tenderly Cared for—Setting a Baby's Broken Jaw—Caring for the Injured at North Brother Island—Heroic Nurses Brave Death to Aid the Helpless Ones—No Work Too Hard for Them—Energy Born of Desperation—Clamoring, Frantic Men and Women—An All-Night Task—The City Hospitals.

There were many heroic acts performed by the women of North Brother Island in rescuing the living and caring for the dead in the terrible catastrophe. Officials and maids, women of education and position, humble scrubwomen and servants, they gave themselves royally. Those who could swim risked their lives not more generously than those who could not swim. Delicate girls swam out to the wreck or stood up to their armpits in the water as long as there was a soul they could save, and their devotion was equaled by those who on the shore worked to bring back the spark of life as long as there was a ray of hope.

#### PULLED FROM THE PADDLEWHEEL

One of the most brilliant acts of heroism was that of Pauline Pultz, a slender girl of seventeen years, who swam out to the stern, pulled a child from the revolving paddlewheel, brought it safely to shore, and then, finding that its jaw was fractured, set the jaw. Pauline is a waitress. Sitting on the back stoop of the doctor's house, in her plain black gown and

waitress's apron, she told briefly the story of what she had done.

"My father taught me to swim when I was seven or eight. I used to teach swimming at Twenty-fourth street. As soon as I saw there was a vessel on fire, I pulled off my oxford ties and ripped off my apron.

" 'Don't go,' cried one of the girls, 'you'll die!'

" 'I must go,' I replied. 'I can't see those people drown without giving a hand.'

"They tried to hold me back by my skirt, but I let them pull my skirt off me and rushed into the water in my petticoat.

" 'In God's name, jump!' I called to the people. 'Throw your babies overboard; we'll catch them.'

#### SAVED MANY LIVES

"There was a woman who stood on the upper deck in the bow, with her baby in her arms, crying for help. I swam out to her. She ran back near to the paddlewheel and threw the baby by mistake right into the wheel. The wheel was going. I swam up, and supporting myself with one hand, with the other pulled the baby out from the churning waters, and ran up with it to one of the boatmen's rooms. Then I saw the little thing's jaw was broken. So I laid it on the bed and set the bone in place. I'm not a nurse. I never set a bone before in my life. I couldn't do it again.

"Then I went back into the water and with a rope brought out a group of three girls. One was a girl of sixteen, another was a young married woman who had lost two children, and the other was a young woman. One of them was named Annie. That's all I know about any of them. The next time, as I was swimming out, a large woman who was lying on

top of the water and looked to be dead caught me by the neck in a death grip. I had to fight for my life. When they dragged us out I fainted. The woman was badly wounded. Afterward I helped to bandage her arm. I saved five from the boat and had pulled in ever so many by the time I fainted."

Pauline Pultz's tremendous exertions may cost her dear. By jumping down from the paddlewheel she bruised her foot and is hobbling around in consequence. Yesterday afternoon, after waiting on table as if nothing had happened, she fainted dead away, and when she came to was carried off to bed hysterical.

#### FED THE CHILDREN

And then there was Mary Clarke, tall, dark, with a thin, worn face and eloquent eyes, a chambermaid.

"I was drinking a cup of coffee in the kitchen when I heard the whistle, and, thinking it might be the Edison on fire, I rushed down to the pier," she said. "When I saw the steamer all on fire, and the people crowded in the stern, I ran along the banks calling to them to jump. When they did jump, they fell right one on top of the other. Then I saw the rail give way. As I pulled the children out, Alice Meinhart, a kitchen maid, took them out of my arms, and fed them with hot milk and put them in dry clothes.

"I was changing the clothes of a little boy of nine or ten I'd pulled out. 'Leave me,' he says, 'and go to some one who is hurt worse.' He lived in Second avenue. 'I'm so glad mother didn't come,' he says, 'or else she and baby would have been lost.'

"He was the manliest little fellow I ever saw. But they



were all brave. Everybody wanted some one else to be helped first. I also saved an older boy, who had had the skin burned off both his hands, and two women."

#### **A HEROIC COOK**

The story of the heroism of the workingwomen of North Brother Island—the scrubwomen, laundresses and waitresses—just the plain, simple people who day after day go about their humble tasks without acknowledgment of any kind, will never be known. Take Catherine Hanley, the cook. All that terrible Wednesday afternoon and Wednesday night she stood over the range in the big kitchen preparing soup and sending it down by the bucketful to the workers at the water's edge. She would take no rest, except to go to the beach and help the others. Kate Duffy, a cook, was another heroine. All day and night she slaved, heating milk and soup.

#### **THEY DID THEIR DUTY**

Mary Maher, a helper in the measles ward, was making toast for a patient when the alarm came. A few minutes later she was standing in the water nearly up to her waist. She saved three boys and one woman, besides one woman who proved to be dead. "I only did my duty," said Mary.

Margaret Lawrence, another helper, rushed out without her stockings, and with the water above her waist rescued three boys, three babies, one man and three women.

"I worked until 8:30 in the evening in and out of the water, and then I began covering the faces of the dead."

#### **SUCCORED THE VICTIMS**

Magnificent as was the heroism of all the women on the island, none behaved more gallantly than Miss White, the

superintendent of nurses, and Mrs. Smith, the matron. And none, it is safe to say, carried such a weight of responsibility. For not only were they straining every nerve to succor the victims of the wreck—they were responsible at the same time for the lives and comfort of the patients in the wards. Miss Smith had the nurses working under her resuscitating the more dead than alive bodies as they were dragged ashore. Mrs. Smith was responsible for all the supplies of blankets, stimulants, clothing and food. For two whole days they did not have six hours' sleep, but in their white uniforms they were as neat, as calm, as thoughtful for others, as if nothing unusual had happened.

"We couldn't all go into the water," said Mrs. Smith. "It wouldn't have been any use for us to have got the people out of the water and then left them on the bank. As soon as a body was brought in, a nurse set to work to resuscitate it. Some of the nurses were asleep when the accident happened. They threw their mackintoshes over their nightdresses and rushed down with bandages and medicaments in their hands, and worked till they were wet to the skin up to their waists over the dripping bodies."

#### **DROPPED FROM EXHAUSTION**

Miss White herself worked till she dropped from exhaustion, trying to induce artificial respiration in the half-drowned children and women. She showed how it is done—the arms raised over the head, then brought down to the sides, the chest forcibly depressed, then the body rolled over a barrel, face down, to force the water from the lungs.

"At first we had no barrels," she went on, "so we rolled them over our knees.

"The nurses worked heroically, but I will not say that they deserve more credit than the others. Nurses expect to sacrifice themselves, and without acknowledgment or recompense—it is our business," she added, smiling wanly. (When a woman has gone fifty-seven hours on five hours' sleep she is apt to look wan.) "But the conduct of the ward helpers and other women employees was superb.

"No, I won't say anything about myself—I haven't done anything, and I won't let you say I have." Then, "This little building is the chapel. We laid the corpses in a row along that wall," and she pointed to the shabby side of the low building. "Do you see how these trees are scorched right up to the top? That is with the flames from the burning steamer." She showed a splendid maple, by the water's edge, seared to its crown. "On this lawn we laid four hundred bodies in rows—first the living, then the dead."

#### REVIVING THE INJURED

Miss White was equally matter of fact with regard to herself.

"As soon as the General Slocum came around the point I sent back for cheesecloth and bandaging muslin," she said. "While Mrs. Smith and the nurses were busy bringing the victims to, I went back and got whisky and more bandages and cheesecloth. Then I started out to see what I could do myself. I tried several times to get up to the wreck, but the heat was so intense I could not, until I put the skirt of my dress over my face. In that way I was able to wade out up to my knees. The call came for ladders. There was no one to go for them, so I went. They were thirty-five feet long and dreadfully heavy, but I dragged them down to the water. I

never could have done it if I had been in my senses. I didn't know anything or feel anything.

"I saw a boy and his mother drifting in. He was a fine looking lad of about twelve. I lay down on the sea-wall on my stomach and called to him to hold on to his mother, and I would get her out. He had his hand under her chin and was paddling along as well as he could. She was unconscious, and weighed, I should think, 250 pounds. Somehow I got her up over the sea-wall and kneaded the water out of her. She lived, I think. In reading over the list of injured I fancied the boy might be No. 47 in Lincoln Hospital.

"As soon as the injured revived we wrapped them in blankets and brought them up to the hospital. We stripped the place of blankets. We used up four hundred sheets and as many pillow cases. The nurses had their shoes and uniforms destroyed by the mud and water and torn to pieces on the rocks. Some of them lost three uniforms."

#### AT THE HOSPITALS

The hospitals to which the injured of the Slocum were taken—Lebanon, Lincoln and Harlem—were the scenes of what seemed to be an endless search for many of the excursionists from whom nothing has been heard and whose names are among those of the missing. Hoping that in the wards of one of these institutions they might find some trace of the missing ones, members of the bereaved families flocked there in scores, only to pass along the rows of white beds without finding those for whom they looked; all of the hospital patients had already been identified.

At all of the hospitals, although the attendants knew that the search for missing ones would be unavailing there, the

greatest consideration was shown to all callers, so that the doubt and anxiety could at once be removed from their minds.

The story of the noble work done by physicians and nurses at the various city hospitals will never be told. It was a labor of love, cheerfully performed, and every one was loud in praise of their noble efforts to relieve the suffering, minister to the dying and care for the dead victims of the Slocum disaster. The following public recognition, in the shape of a telegram from the president of the Lebanon Hospital, of the splendid work done by Superintendent William Daub, his daughter Hannah, and the doctors and nurses of the hospital, in caring for the injured is only one of many such communications received by the heads of this and other hospitals.

“William Daub, Superintendent: Directors of hospital appreciate highly the indefatigable efforts of your heroic staff, assisted by doctors, nurses and your daughter, in the unfortunate Slocum disaster.”

## CHAPTER XX

### FUNERALS OF THE VICTIMS

**Funerals from Dawn to Dark—Morbid Crowds—Burial of Mrs. Haas—The Unknown Dead—Children Take Part in the Ceremonies—Curiosity Seekers—The Child with the Rose.**

Nearly a hundred funerals of victims of the Slocum disaster were held daily until all the bodies had been buried, and on account of the demand for hearses and carriages the ceremonies began early in the morning and lasted until late at night. In many instances two coffins were carried in the same hearse, and in some cases two and even three hearses carried away the dead of a single family. In every side street and along the avenues from First to Eighteenth and Avenue A to Third avenue there was at least one funeral.

#### **CARRIAGES AND HEARSE GOING TO AND FRO**

In the streets immediately surrounding St. Mark's Church carriages and hearses were going to and fro all day long. In Fifth, Sixth and Seventh streets, between First and Second avenues, the curbs were lined continuously with hearses and carriages. Wagons and messengers hurried here and there with flowers, and crowds of friends of the victims lined the sidewalks.

In nearly every instance friends of the victims accompanied the funeral for at least three or four blocks, marching in columns of twos, the head of which would be on a line with the hearse.

In some cases the morbid throngs so crowded the rooms that the bereaved families had difficulty in reaching the coffins, while throngs of the morbidly curious even tried to force their way into the carriages, in some instances being restrained only by the threats of arrest made by the police.

#### AT THE LUTHERAN CEMETERY

One hundred and fifty-nine bodies were buried in the Lutheran Cemetery at Middle Village. Five others were buried at Mount Olivet, close by, and six in Linden Hill Cemetery, which is not far from the Lutheran.

The funerals began arriving not long after the noon hour. It was dark and lanterns were used to light the graves when the last coffins were lowered. At times there were long waits for the mourners, as the carriages could only enter the cemetery a few at a time, and at periods the congestion caused funerals to become blocked a mile from the gates. Not less than twenty-five thousand sight-seers, in addition to the mourners, visited the cemetery, and thousands lined the various avenues of approach to see the long line of funerals pass.

A little before the middle of the afternoon Borough President Cassidy of Queens drove to the cemetery. The clouds of dust caused him to marshal immediately a force of sprinkling carts.

#### HANDLING THE CROWD

Police Inspector Kane, with a force of one hundred and seventy men, aided by Central Office men from Manhattan and Brooklyn, handled the great crowd in and around the cemetery successfully, and only one case called for ambulance treatment. There was constant danger in the cemetery that

some of the over-curious would be forced into the many open graves which gaped in all parts of the grounds. This was prevented by hard work by the police. Many women fainted in the course of the afternoon, but all were revived at a hotel near the entrance.

One woman fainted at the funeral of a friend. She fell, and her left arm, turning under her, was broken. She was removed to the German Hospital in Brooklyn.

#### **DEMAND FOR BURIAL PLOTS**

The approaches to the cemetery were policed by a squad of mounted patrolmen. So great was the demand for new plots that the cemetery officials had to sell plots in a section which they had not expected to use this year. Men worked all night clearing away the underbrush which had been allowed to grow on this tract, and graves were opened for use.

#### **CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

There were services Sunday morning in the chapel in the cemetery, and in the afternoon the children of the Lutheran Sunday school in Middle Village took part in a service. Eighty-seven, ranging in years from five to ten, each carried a single potted plant, and, under the leadership of the Rev. Dr. Peterson, marched from the main entrance to the plot where eleven unidentified children were buried. After a prayer by Dr. Peterson, the children grouped about the plot sang "Nearer, My God, to Thee." Then the plants carried by the children were planted on the plot.

#### **THE FUNERAL OF MRS. HAAS**

Pathetic incidents marked the funeral of Mrs. Anna Haas, wife of the pastor of St. Mark's Church. No one but family



friends and clergymen of the Lutheran Church were admitted to the darkened parlors of the parsonage at No. 74 Seventh street, where the services were held.

Although the husband, suffering from injuries received in the disaster and crushed under the grief of his loss, was barely able to leave his bed, he insisted upon sitting beside the body of his wife. Miss Emma Haas, his sister and organist of the church, was carried into the parlor on a stretcher with her head swathed in bandages. She was rescued from the wreck of the Slocum in what was at first supposed to be a dying condition. It was against the advice of her physicians that she attended her sister-in-law's funeral.

#### PHYSICAL AND MENTAL TORTURE

Throughout the services a doctor sat beside the stretcher administering restoratives from time to time to the woman, tortured alike by her wounds and her grief. Peculiarly simple were the services. The Rev. J. W. Loch, of the Schermerhorn German Lutheran Church of Brooklyn, offered the prayer, then followed the reading of the Ninetieth Psalm by the Rev. Hugo Hofemann of St. Paul's German Lutheran Church, and a brief sermon by the Rev. Alexander Lichter of Hoboken. The sermon was a brief eulogy of the dead. It concluded with the words:

"We must all be good Christians, recognizing in this tragedy, most appalling, the inscrutable hand of the Divine Providence. In times like these, we must show the world that our faith in God is unshaken."

The Lord's Prayer and the benediction concluded the services.

In the street fronting the parsonage an immense crowd had

congregated, held in check by a strong police guard under the personal command of Inspector Schmittberger. A single hearse stood in front of the door, but an hour passed before the dead body of the pastor's wife was carried out.

The body of Mrs. Titamore of Brooklyn, a sister of Mrs. Haas, had been identified at the morgue and arrangements were hastily made to have the two bodies buried together. So while the silent crowd waited and wondered at the unaccountable delay, family friends were hurriedly preparing the sister's body for burial. Its arrival in a second hearse was the signal for the funeral cortége to start.

Pastor Haas followed the bodies to the grave. He was urged by physicians and friends to abandon the attempt and return to his bed, but he waved them off with a trembling hand and said:

"No, gentlemen, she was a devoted wife, and though it kills me I shall pay her this last tribute."

Twenty-eight Lutheran ministers attended the funeral services of the pastor's wife and followed the bodies to the Lutheran Cemetery in Queens County.

#### FUNERAL OF HENRY SEIFERT

The funeral of Henry Seifert was held at the Twenty-third street branch of the Young Men's Christian Association. Mr. Seifert had been for two months the social secretary of the branch, his duties being especially to meet strangers and to encourage friendliness and sociability among the members. He was a member of St. Mark's Church, and was practically a member of the family of the pastor, Mr. Haas, being accustomed to stay in his house when in the city. He was just about to graduate from the training school of the Young

Men's Christian Association at Springfield, Mass. Burial was in the Young Men's Christian Association plot at Woodlawn.

#### **TRY TO FORCE THEIR WAY INTO CARRIAGES**

Five thousand persons crowded into East Ninth street, the majority to see the hearses and carriages depart from the home of Edward and Charles Schmid, where Catharine Schmid, wife of Edward and mother of Charles Schmid, lay dead. In coffins in the same room were the bodies of Kate Schmid and Arthur Schmid, wife and son of Charles Schmid. The little parlor and other rooms in the Schmid apartments were crowded to suffocation by a curious throng, for the most part attracted by morbid curiosity. It was with great difficulty that the relatives and friends of the bereaved family gained access to the apartment.

#### **THE UNKNOWN DEAD**

The Slocum's nameless dead, buried Saturday, tier on tier, in a grim trench in the Lutheran Cemetery, Middle Village, Long Island, were remembered Sunday by the little children of the Trinity Evangelical Church there, who marched to the cemetery with arms full of flowers and smothered the unmarked graves beneath fragrant blossoms.

The gracious deed of the little ones, prompted by the sympathy they felt for those who had none to mourn them, was witnessed by thousands of men and women, the great majority of whom had come to the cemetery to visit the graves of loved ones, or to bury their dead, victims of the same disaster which had filled the trench.

#### **FEW DRY EYES IN THE MULTITUDE**

There were few dry eyes in the multitude which looked on, as the children, one by one, filed past the trench, which had

been filled Saturday night, and tenderly placed their flowers above the dead. When the last child had passed, the clodded earth was no longer to be seen. The children had left behind them a great mound of flowers.

The placing of flowers was preceded by a service conducted by the Rev. Dr. Peterson, the pastor of Trinity Church. The children sang as requiems hymns especially selected for the occasion, and joined in the recital of the creed and the Lord's Prayer. One of the hymns, the German song "Where Doth the Soul Find Its Home?" seemed especially in keeping with the occasion, having in its strains all the woe of a miserere.

There were over two hundred children in line when the march past the great unmarked grave began, and there was not one who came empty-handed.

#### **ENORMOUS CROWD AT THE CEMETERY**

Not less than fifty thousand visited the Lutheran Cemetery Sunday. From the time the gates were opened in the morning until long after night had fallen the chapel bell at its entrance tolled continually. There was no break in the line of funeral processions which filed by. When the last hearse had passed there were 159 newly-made graves in the burial ground.

In the lanes between the tombs in both the old and the new divisions of the cemetery there was constant confusion resulting from the influx of funerals. At one time there were seventeen hearses waiting in the main avenue of the new cemetery to reach the public burying ground, while as many more were almost hopelessly tangled on the side avenues.

In anticipation of the funerals fixed for Sunday, a large detail of police was early on hand. Their work was almost

invaluable in the turmoil which came with the advent of thousands of mourners.

#### **MANY CURIOSITY SEEKERS**

When the first funeral party reached the cemetery it found the street before it lined with flower vendors who had discounted the demand for their wares. There were vendors, too, of all manner of eatables and drinkables. By noon the stream of funeral processions was well under way, and every car which arrived was filled to its capacity.

With the afternoon came many curiosity seekers, whose presence complicated matters still further. Every hearse was followed by them, and they elbowed the mourners for advantageous places by graves beside which funeral parties had gathered.

#### **A MILITARY FUNERAL**

A funeral which resulted in a great crush was that of John Schaefer, whose body was identified at the morgue on Thursday. Mr. Schaefer, who was but twenty-six years of age, was a veteran of the Spanish war and a member of the William H. Hubbell Camp of Veterans, Brooklyn. He got a military burial. Draped in the United States flag, his body was followed to the grave by his comrades. The hearse was preceded by a brass band, which as it entered the cemetery gates played the "Dead March" from "Saul." The solemn strains attracted every sight-seer within hearing, and the police had to open a way for the procession to pass. The services at the grave were conducted by the Rev. William H. Green, the chaplain of the command.

#### **WANTED FOUR GRAVES**

When the line at the office of the cemetery's superintendent was longest a wild-eyed man approached an officer

who was on duty there and said that he wished to secure four graves.

"I want one for my wife," he told the roundsman, "and two for my children. When I bury them I will use the fourth one for myself. I will have nothing left to live for."

The officer tried to comfort the disconsolate man, who finally walked away, weeping softly. "I would have arrested him at any other time than this," said he. "But I hadn't the heart to do so under the circumstances."

#### **"CHILD WITH THE ROSE"**

"The child with the rose," as it was referred to at the morgue, received a separate funeral. The baby girl, a year old, was in the first lot of bodies from the wreck sent to the morgue. Yet no one called for it. No one identified it. No one asked about a baby that could possibly fit the description of this one.

Every day the great crowds that called to try to identify bodies passed by this one. It excited comments, and one little girl placed a rose upon it, but though its rich dress indicated well-to-do parents, no one claimed it. It became the "child with the rose," and it was sent to the grave that way.

The Stephen Merritt Burial Company took charge of the burial. They held a service for the child in their chapel, and a funeral and interment in keeping with the great sympathy the child's fate had aroused. The pink rose, too, was buried with her.

## CHAPTER XXI

### THE CORONER'S INQUEST

**Testimony of Owners and Crew of the Slocum—No Fire Precautions—Refuse to Testify—Bursting of the Hose—Only One Member of the Crew Drowned—Hero Day at the Inquiry—Scum of Powdered Cork on the Water—Rotten Hose and Useless Life Preservers—The Survivors Testify—Held to the Grand Jury.**

The inquest was held in the large drill room of the Second Battery Armory at One Hundred and Seventy-seventh street and Bathgate avenue. Monday morning, June 20th, all the arrangements were as nearly perfect as it was possible to make them. Technically the inquest was upon the death of only one of the victims, which one was not announced.

#### SPECTATORS IN MOURNING

In the body of the room were many women in mourning, survivors of the disaster, who had lost husbands and children. Some of these still had their arms and heads bound in bandages, and wept quietly as the details of the tragedy were brought out. A great number of exhibits were in court, including one of the standpipes of the vessel, sections of hose, life preservers and various other odds and ends.

The examination of witnesses was conducted by Assistant District Attorney Garvan. Ex-Judge Dittenhoefer appeared as personal counsel for President Barnaby; Terence McManus for the Knickerbocker Steamboat Company, and Assistant United States District Attorney Wise for the Government.

S. J. Gilbert appeared for Steamboat Inspector Lundberg, who was one of those who inspected the Slocum, and John D. Lindsay, president of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, was also in attendance. Among the others who attended were Inspector Lundberg, General Uhler, inspector general of the department in Washington; Robert S. Rodie, the chief inspector for the district; Deputy Fire Commissioner Churchill, and Fire Marshal Seery.

#### WIDE SCOPE OF INQUEST

After the consultation between Coroner Berry and Mr. Garvan it was announced that the inquest would be made to include the whole of the Slocum's death roll. During the examination of witnesses all other witnesses except the injured passengers were excluded from the courtroom.

Frank A. Barnaby, president of the Knickerbocker Steamboat Company, who lives at 150 West Fifty-seventh street, was the first witness called. Mr. Barnaby, at the request of Mr. Garvan, produced a number of bills which he said were for life preservers, fire apparatus, and engines for the past three years.

"You know of your own knowledge that these bills are for Slocum apparatus?" asked Mr. Garvan as he offered them in evidence. "I do," replied the witness.

"I have here five bills," said Mr. Garvan, "they are for life preservers—about 350 of them—and they are dated May 14, 1902; April 30, 1903; May, 1903; April, 1904, and May, 1904. You are sure all these were for the General Slocum?" "Yes."

"If that is the case," said Mr. Garvan suddenly, "how is it that I find in some of these bills the name 'Grand Republic' scratched out or taken out with acid and the name 'Slocum' "



inserted? One of the bills still stands in the name of the Grand Republic." "I did not know about that," answered Mr. Barnaby. "I suppose some bookkeeper must have done that."

"What is the name of that bookkeeper?" "I don't know. Separate accounts are kept for each boat. The books will show to which one the life preservers went."

#### ABOUT LIFE PRESERVERS

"Any erasures in them?" asked Mr. Garvan. Judge Dittenhoefer muttered an objection, and the question went unanswered.

In answer to further questions, Mr. Barnaby submitted the certificate of inspection, which stated that on May 7, 1904, the General Slocum was in proper condition to carry 2,500 passengers, and that she had 2,550 life preservers. St. Mark's Church had chartered the boat for the day, paying \$350 therefor, and the Company served no refreshments on board, merely turned the ship over to the church officials. Mr. Barnaby also said that "other businesses took up most of his time, and that he knew nothing of ships or shipbuilding, relying for the details upon his subordinates."

Mr. Barnaby also testified that he had told Captain Pease, who planned the Slocum, to put the boat in first-class condition, and \$12,000 had been spent on repairs suggested. The estimated value of the Slocum was \$165,000 and the steamer carried \$70,000 insurance.

#### NO FIRE DRILLS

John J. Coakley, a deckhand, was called to the stand and testified that he was never present at a fire drill on board the Slocum, and that he had never been instructed what to do in case of fire. He said after he had finished counting the pas-

sengers, a duty which had been assigned him, a child ran up to him and said "smoke was coming up one of the stairways." He then noticed there was smoke issuing from the forward cabin, which was below the main deck. In answer to questions as to what the cabin contained, he said there were two barrels of oil used for masthead lamps, ropes, brooms and a barrel of salt hay in which glasses had been packed.

#### TRIED TO SMOTHER THE FLAMES

Coakley then detailed what he did after his attention had been called to the fire. He said not much smoke was coming up the stairway, but when he ran down he could not distinguish anything clearly. The smoke, however, he said, smelt like that from burning hay. He tried to pick up some old canvas that was there and throw it on the fire, but it was fastened down.

He saw two bags of charcoal, and thought to smother the fire by emptying one of them over it. It had no effect. He said he stayed down there two minutes, and then he ran upstairs and told Mate Flanagan, who was standing at the 'midship gangway, that there was a fire in the forward cabin. He then ran down again, but was not sure if the other men followed him. When he got below again the place was in a blaze. He then ran up to the main deck again, and drawing his clasp knife, cut the fastenings holding the fire hose in place.

Coakley said he pulled down the hose, and a lot of other men near-by took hold so as to run it out. He then turned on the valve and the water came through at a pressure of thirty-five pounds. As soon as it did so the hose, which had kinked in several places, burst. Finally, Coakley said, when he saw it

was futile to try to fight the flames he ran up to the hurricane deck, begging the women to keep quiet as he went. He pulled the wires holding the life preservers in place, and a lot of them fell on the deck.

When questioned as to the condition of the life preservers, he said that he had never noticed any of them before and had not seen them tear apart when the people grabbed them. He also stated that efforts were made to lower a lifeboat, but that so many of the passengers crowded into it that the craft was swamped.

#### **WHAT TWO DECKHANDS HAD TO SAY**

Thomas Collins, a deckhand, said he never saw anything of a fire drill, nor had he been instructed what to do in case of fire and saw no lifeboat lowered. When he first saw the fire he helped to get the hose out. He flatly contradicted Coakley by the statement that it was he, and not Coakley, who broke down the hose. He said he also pulled down some of the life preservers. He didn't know how many.

James Corcoran, who said he was a sort of head deckhand, said he had never seen any fire drills on the boat, although he had been with her for three seasons. He said he tried to go down to where the fire was, but the place was all ablaze. Then he pulled down the nozzle of the hose, which he explained was coiled up and hung from the ceiling. The hose kinked, and after a little water had dribbled through the nozzle the hose burst in several places. He ran down and closed the door of the forward cabin where the fire was raging, but the flames soon ate their way through and the whole forward part of the boat was ablaze. He stated, also, that no lifeboats were lowered.

**HIS MEMORY FAILED HIM**

First Mate Flanagan said there was one barrel of mineral sperm oil in the forward cabin and a lot of empty oil barrels. He couldn't remember if there was any kerosene there. To a lot of other questions Flanagan said he couldn't remember, and then Mr. Garvan asked him what was the matter with his memory.

"Well, if you went through what I did," said Flanagan, "your memory might be bad, too. I can't sleep nights. I imagine I see the whole thing before me. The doctor says I was out of my head on Wednesday night."

Flanagan said he told the chief engineer to turn on the water, but the hose burst, and the coupling blew off besides. Then he told the men to help the passengers and man the lifeboats if they could.

Assistant United States District Attorney Wise here got an admission from Flanagan that he had no license, although he had been first mate for two years.

"Did you see any women with life preservers on?" asked Mr. McManus. "Yes, I pulled one out of the water."

"Hadn't she sunk with that life preserver on?" put in Mr. Garvan. "Yes," said Flanagan.

"What happened to her afterward?"

"She died after she got ashore."

"Died from drowning, did she not?"

"That's what they said."

**REFUSED TO TESTIFY**

A sensation came when Henry Lundberg, an assistant United States steamboat inspector, the one who inspected the hull of the Slocum and the life-saving appliances and fire

apparatus on board the boat on May 6th, was put on the stand. Lundberg absolutely refused to answer any questions put to him by the coroner or by Assistant District Attorney Garvan, giving as his reasons that his answers might tend to incriminate him.

At the opening of the inquest Mr. Garvan announced that he intended to prove that no new life preservers had been put on board the Slocum since 1895. But for the fact that fire had destroyed the books of the concern that made the appliances, Mr. Garvan said, he could prove that no new preservers had been on the boat for even a longer period.

#### THE HOSE BURST

Daniel O'Neill had been a deckhand on the Slocum only since April, before she was put in commission. It was his first work of that kind. He said he was on board when an inspector went over the boat, but he did not know what the inspector did. He did not see any life preservers taken down for inspection. When he heard of the fire he ran to the hose. It kinked and burst as soon as the water was turned on. He then tried to fasten the rubber hose used for washing the deck to the standpipe, but it wouldn't fit.

Asked how he got away from the boat, O'Neill said that he saw a small rowboat alongside. A number of people were in it, and he jumped in also. This capsized the boat, and O'Neill then said he swam ashore. He admitted that the man in the rowboat had told him not to jump, as the boat was then already filled to its capacity, but he paid no attention to the warning. He said he thought he could help the man manage the boat if he jumped in with him. He said he did not take any one with him, and helped to rescue none of the people in the water.

**THE ASSISTANT ENGINEER TESTIFIES**

Everett Brandow, the assistant engineer on board the Slocum, was called. He said he had been on the boat six seasons. He described the donkey engine's place, and said there was a valve to fill the fire-room with steam in case of a fire there, but that was the only place on the boat so supplied. No steam could be turned into the forward cabin or any other part of the hold, although the United States regulations provided that there should be such appliances.

**PRESERVER KEPT GIRL DOWN**

Brandow was asked if he saw anything of any life preservers. He said he saw one on a little girl who was near the shore in shallow water. The child was under the life preserver, Brandow said, and it seemed to be keeping her down. He pulled her ashore and took the life preserver off her. She was unconscious, and he believed that she afterward died.

**THE BOOKKEEPER EXPLAINS ERASURES**

Miss S. C. Hall, the bookkeeper for the Knickerbocker Steamboat Company, who had erased the name of the Grand Republic from bills for life preservers and substituted the name Slocum, was brought to the stand. She had some of the books of the company with her, dating back three years. The books prior to that time, she said, had been destroyed. Miss Hall, who has been with the company since 1890, admitted that she had made the erasure with acid, but denied that this had been done since the disaster. She said that she had done it simply as a matter of convenience, to aid her in her bookkeeping, and that she was in the habit of doing so on the books as well as on the bills. She was asked if she had

ever changed any other bills, and said she had, but could not remember when.

#### **PILOT WEAVER UPHOLDS VAN SCHAICK**

On the testimony of Second Pilot Weaver it was developed that the fire hose used on the boat cost sixteen cents a foot, but when asked what he thought of hose at that price, Fire Chief Croker said, "I would hate to have to put out fire with it. I don't believe that water could be run through it without having it all leak out."

Pilot Weaver upheld Captain Van Schaick in his action of running the boat aground on North Brother Island, and said he would have done exactly the same thing.

Weaver said he never saw a fire drill on board the boat, and that no lifeboats were lowered. When asked how long it was between the time of the alarm of fire until the boat went on the beach, he said that it was between two and one-half and three minutes.

#### **COULD NOT HAVE TURNED THE BOAT**

"If that boat had been put in at Locust avenue and One Hundred and Twenty-ninth street," said the coroner, "wouldn't the wind have held her there the same as if she was anchored?"

"Certainly," said Weaver, "but you couldn't put her there. It would have taken three minutes to swing her around in that tide and with that wind, and there wouldn't have been a soul alive to tell the tale by the time we got there. The wind, which was blowing across her quarter, would have been swept all over the boat, and every one would have been roasted to death before a landing was made."

"Did you not tell me in the pilot-house on Sunday that you

would have beached her at Locust avenue?" asked the coroner sharply.

"I did not," said Weaver decisively.

"Why was she put ashore at the furthest point of the island?"

"So that the wind would blow the flames away from the passengers and give them a clear space to starboard to get off."

"Did you see any of the crew at any time trying to save passengers?"

"Not until after the boat was beached."

#### ONE MEMBER OF THE CREW DROWNED

It also developed during the inquest that the only member of the crew drowned was the steward, McGrath, and he had jumped overboard after a life preserver had been fastened on him by his assistant. Cross-examination brought out the fact that the steward had jumped overboard with a bag of money in his hand, and that this was quite heavy.

It was positively stated by the porter, who had charge of the forward cabin, in which the fire started, that two or three barrels of glasses, packed in salt hay, were in the cabin when the fire broke out. Mr. Garvan stated that this was an infraction of the law, which states that loose hay cannot be brought aboard of a passenger steamer.

#### A CLERGYMAN'S TESTIMONY

The Rev. George Schulz, pastor of St. Luke's Lutheran Church, was the first one of the survivors to tell the story of the disaster.

"The first I saw of any fire," said Mr. Schulz, "was when smoke came out of the cabin below the main deck. The chil-



dren were playing with bean bags and one thing or another, and were so taken up with their games that they did not know of any danger until the flames came up the stairway. Pastor Haas's wife, who was near me, was very much excited. I went to the side of the ship, and saw smoke rolling up in great volume. Then every one became excited and the panic started.

"My first real apprehension of danger came when I saw one of the crew and some passengers jumping into the water. I tried to stop the children near me from climbing over the guardrail, as I saw some tugs near us and thought they would get close enough to take us off. As soon as a tug ran alongside I threw some of the children into it and then jumped myself."

"Did you try to use a life preserver?" asked Mr. Garvan.

"Yes, I pulled one down and held it by the strap. The weight of the preserver broke the strap, and I knew the thing was no good and threw it away."

"Did you see any of the other passengers getting life preservers?"

"There were only women on the lower deck, and they could not reach the racks."

"How long was it from the time you saw the flames until the boat ran on the beach?"

"A very short time."

#### ENGINEER KNEW OF NO FIRE DRILLS

Benjamin F. Conkling of Catskill, the chief engineer of the boat, said he had been with the Slocum since she was launched, in 1891. He had never heard of any regulations that steam pipes should lead from the boiler to the various

hold compartments. He told of the location of the various pumps and standpipes.

Conkling said he went about the boat with the inspector when the latter came on board on May 5th. He said that no test was made of the fire hose on any of the standpipes while the inspector was there.

Conkling denied the testimony already given, that he had gotten off the boat without getting his feet wet. He said that he did not leave his post as soon as he set the donkey engine working, but remained until a rush of passengers carried him on to a tug that had come alongside. He said it was about ten minutes from the time fire was discovered until the boat was beached. Conkling said he had examined the equipment on other vessels.

"How did the equipment on the Slocum compare with them?" asked Mr. McManus. "They were as good, if not better, than any I ever saw," said the witness.

"That isn't very reassuring to the passengers on other river boats," put in Mr. Garvan.

#### LIFE PRESERVERS FULL OF HOLES

William W. Trembley, a deckhand, testified that he had tried to help others of the crew with the fire hose, but that it had been blown from the standpipe as soon as the water was turned on. He said it was less than ten minutes from the time he saw the fire until the boat went aground.

From questions put to him by jurors it was learned from Trembley that he had seen life preservers with holes in them on the day of the disaster. He noticed this, he said, when he went to pull them down. Several days before, he said, he had told the mate that some of the life preservers were torn and

that the cork was leaking out of them. These were taken down and were not replaced with others. He said it was his opinion that the rust from the wires holding the preservers in place had rotted the coverings.

#### FINE START FOR THE FIRE

Through Walter Payne, the negro porter on the Slocum, it was established that two barrels of salt hay were in the forward cabin where the fire started, and that there also were one barrel of machine oil, one barrel of cylinder oil, one barrel of mineral sperm oil, several bags of charcoal, lumber, mops, brooms, and a lot of old canvas. Payne said he tried to help the crew unwind the hose after the fire was discovered, but that it broke away from the standpipe.

Thomas Ryan, who was a waiter on board the Slocum, said he pulled down a lot of life preservers and threw them to the crowd. Then he grabbed one and ran down with it to the steward. He strapped it on him, he said, and the steward jumped overboard.

"And was drowned, wasn't he?" asked Mr. Garvan.

"Yes, he was," replied Ryan. "But he carried a heavy bag of money in his hand when he jumped off."

#### ONE GOOD LIFE PRESERVER

Mary Behrends, whose hands were swathed in bandages as the result of burns she had received, testified that the boat had just passed Blackwell's Island when she heard the cry of fire. Two of her daughters were lost, Mrs. Behrends said, as she burst into tears. When she had been quieted she said that her third daughter had been brought ashore on North Brother Island with a life preserver on that had kept her

afloat. This was the first instance of the kind that had come out at the inquest.

#### **WATER COVERED WITH POWDERED CORK**

Several witnesses were called and testified that the water about North Brother Island, where the General Slocum went ashore, was covered with powdered cork from the vessel's life preservers, while the hair of survivors and victims was full of the same substance. Some exciting stories of rescue and self-sacrifice were related by other witnesses. The heroic work of Miss McGibbon, the hospital clerk and telephone operator at North Brother Island; of sixteen-year-old Mary McCann, and of John L. Wade, the owner of the tug J. W. Wade, will stand out as bright spots in the history of the horror.

These persons gave their testimony modestly. Wade's statements were as vigorous as was his work on the fateful day of the disaster. The two girls could only be persuaded to tell what they did by the insistent questioning of the district attorney.

#### **COULD NOT GET LIFE BELTS**

By the testimony of these and other witnesses it was learned that shortly after the Slocum was beached on North Brother Island the waters thereabout were covered with a coating of finely granulated cork that had leaked from the torn life preservers of the ship, and a number of persons were dragged ashore dead with life preservers strapped to their bodies.

One survivor showed his badly lacerated hands to prove that it had been impossible to tear down the wires which held the life preservers in the racks, and he said that when he finally managed to get several of the belts out of the racks

they tore to pieces in his hands. A woman who survived the disaster said she was nearly blinded by the shower of cork that fell in her face when she tried to pull some of the life preservers out of the racks above her head.

#### **THE CAPTAIN IS BROUGHT INTO COURT**

A dramatic incident of one of the early sessions occurred when aged Captain Van Schaick was brought into the coroner's court on a stretcher. The hearing was suspended while the coroner and Mr. Garvan went to the rear room and talked with the captain and the doctors, who came with him. A moment later the procession formed again and the captain was borne to the ambulance, which took him to the Lebanon Hospital, where he has lain since the disaster.

#### **THE CAPTAIN'S JUDGMENT QUESTIONED**

An effort was made to question the judgment of the captain in beaching the vessel on North Brother Island, but met with only partial success. Of the three witnesses questioned on this subject, two were policemen, who saw the vessel afire from the shore, and thought the captain could have put in at One Hundred and Twenty-ninth street. They admitted, on cross-examination, that neither knew anything of navigation nor of the conditions of wind or tide, nor of the difficulty that might be experienced in turning around a boat like the Slocum. The other witness was Captain Van Gelder of the New York, New Haven and Hartford tug service, and while he held a similar opinion, he said he did not believe that Captain Van Schaick had done wrong, but that in the excitement of the moment he had lost his head.

**HELP FROM THE ISLAND**

The testimony also established, incidentally, the excellent fire service on North Brother Island. When the Slocum was still a mile away the alarm had been rung on the island, every man was at his post, and the fire-fighting force followed the course of the boat around the point of the island, dragging its hose reels, ready to get into action as soon as the boat came close enough to shore. While it was too late to turn water on the blazing ship, it was doubtless due to the work done by the employees that many lives were saved.

**ONE OF THE HEROINES TELLS HER STORY**

Lulu McGibbon, one of the heroines of the disaster, saw the blazing vessel coming up the river between Sunken Meadow and Ward's Island. After informing the chief engineer, she rang up every hospital in Manhattan and notified police and fire headquarters that the Slocum, afire and loaded with excursionists, was making for the beach on North Brother Island.

Then she ran out to the point and saw the boat go aground on the bar. In a minute, she said, the water was full of struggling women and children, and Miss McGibbon, without a moment's hesitation, ran down the beach until the water reached her waist and began pulling some of the children ashore.

Miss McGibbon said she saw one dead man come ashore with a life preserver on, and not long after the vessel grounded the water was full of particles of cork. All the persons brought ashore for some time afterward had their hair and clothes filled with this powdered stuff.

**BRAVE MARY M'CANN**

Mary McCann said she was in the convalescent ward when the disaster occurred. She heard the fire alarm sounded, and looking out of the window, saw the boat coming up the river with flames bursting from the decks. She said:

"I saw that she was crowded with people and that some of them, women and little children, were jumping into the water as she came on toward the island. A minute later she had gone on the beach and people were jumping into the water from all sides. The water was filled with them.

"Then the top deck fell in and a lot more were thrown into the water. I ran down to the beach and waded out into the water. I didn't go far at first, because I got hold of a little baby and when I saw it was alive I put it up on the beach, where some one took care of it and bundled it up in blankets. Then I went out a little further, and got hold of a little boy. I pulled him up to where he could wade ashore and he begged me to go out and get his brother. I went out again, that time nearly up to my neck, and grabbed hold of another boy—I don't know if it was the little fellow's brother or not—and I got him into shallow water.

**SAW CORK ON THE WATER**

"Then I went out several times more, and the last time some one grabbed me by the legs and I had to call for help to get back. One of the men on the island got me in then, and I was nearly exhausted.

"I wasn't afraid," she said with a flash of pride as she finished her narrative, "because I can swim."

"Did you see any cork in the water?" asked Mr. Garvan.

"Yes, lots of it. It seemed to leak out of the torn life pre-

servers. First I thought it was sawdust, and when I got ashore and got it out of my hair I found out it was cork."

John L. Wade told his story in forcible Anglo-Saxon, so clear and concise that the picture was before the eyes of his hearers. He said:

#### **THE WADE'S RESCUE WORK**

"I was lying at the dock at North Brother Island getting water when I saw the Slocum coming up the river. She was just above the Meadows, and fire was coming from her port side forward. I cut loose and cast the hose off, and made for the Slocum as quick as the Lord would let me.

"When I got near her I told my men to put over our life-boat and throw out life belts to the people struggling in the water. Just as the Slocum went on the beach I went on with her. You see my boat only draws four feet of water, and I could get in close. I went right up under her stern and tried to run under her starboard wheelhouse.

"I had seven men aboard and they didn't lose any time pulling the people in. I told them never to mind the dead—we'd attend to them afterward. I wanted to get the ones that were alive first.

#### **THE LAST TO LEAVE THE BOAT**

"I want to say this, that two men who were in the wheelhouse (I suppose it was the captain or the pilot and the man at the engines) must have been the last to leave. They stuck till it was no use to stick any longer. I saw one of the pilots cross himself and jump overboard. The other one jumped, too. I said to my men, 'Boys, the engineer's a goner!' I saw him fill and back that boat clear up on the beach, so I knew some one must be in the engine-room, and I never thought he could get out then.



"Yes, some of the Slocum's men helped me after they got aboard, but I put that fellow Flanagan ashore. He nearly got me into serious trouble. He cast a line off—afraid, I guess, that my boat would catch fire and that he was risking his skin again. When he cast off a line I went for him, and—well, I just put him off the boat, that's all."

#### DID THE BEST THING

"What do you think of the captain's action in beaching the boat where he did?" asked Mr. Garvan.

"He couldn't have done any better," was the immediate response. "He beached her in the shallowest part. He was all right, that fellow was."

Edward Van Wart, the first pilot of the Slocum, whose spine was so badly hurt that he had difficulty in sitting up in the witness chair, testified that every year, except this one, since 1891, he had charge of getting out the life preservers on the vessel. He said that several years after she was launched 250 new preservers were put aboard. There were no new ones put on board since, he said.

#### PILOT STUCK TO HIS POST

Van Wart, who has been a pilot for thirty years, said the captain left the pilot-house and came back an instant later, telling the pilots to beach the boat on North Brother Island. He said he held the course of the boat all the way and jumped from the hurricane deck into shallow water after the boat had been beached.

He rang a jingle bell for full speed when he made for the island, and when near the beach rang a bell to slow up and another to stop. The boat grounded easily, without any jar. All the signals were answered from the engine-room.

**THE HULK INSPECTED**

The last day of the inquest was devoted to an inspection of the hulk of the burned steamer in Erie Basin, where the wreck had been towed. Coroner Berry assembled the jury about an opening on the deck, down which there had formerly been stairs. On one side were piled musty life preservers with long rents, through which granulated cork had escaped, barrels, boxes of bottles, casks and rubbish of all kinds, including some soft meadow hay, such as is used for packing glasses.

**WHERE THE FIRE ORIGINATED**

Thomas F. Freel, former fire marshal, said he had made an examination of the hull after it had been raised and had found forward the debris that now littered that portion of the deck.

"Where did the fire originate?" inquired the coroner.

"Inside of this barrel," replied Mr. Freel, indicating one by his side.

It had contained hay, he said, and the evidence was clear that the flames had started inside and burned upward. The boards were charred from within. Some of the staves had been burned right through and had evidently fallen blazing upon hay scattered on the floor. From that point the fire had leaped to the stairs and had done more damage to the upper portion of the cabin than it had to the material piled around the barrel.

Under cross-examination Mr. Freel said the boat had been under water for eight days before he made his examination, and he could not tell what had drifted into the cabin.

**PILOT UPHOLDS CAPTAIN**

On the return of the jury up the river Captain Edward Van Wart, first pilot on the Slocum, took the wheel of the

Patrol, going over as nearly as possible the same course that he had taken on the day of the disaster. He thought the Slocum was then going at approximately the same speed that the Patrol had reached at that point. He insisted that, to his mind, Captain Van Schaick had adopted the best possible course in running the Slocum as close as possible to the North Brother Island dock and then beaching her just beyond, on the northwest side of the island.

Many of the jurors present did not hesitate to express the opinion that a grave mistake in judgment had been made by Captain Van Schaick in not beaching the boat on the New York shore at some point between the entrance to the Great Kill and the south shore of North Brother Island.

#### THE GUILTY ONES

After nearly four hours' deliberation, the jury declared that the following men were guilty of negligence or cowardice, and demanded that they be held on the charge of manslaughter in the second degree: Frank A. Barnaby, president Knickerbocker Steamship Co.; James K. Atkinson, secretary; Charles E. Hill, director; C. De Lacy Evans, director; Robert K. Story, director; Floyd S. Corbin, director; Frank O. Dexter, director; William H. Van Schaick, captain of the Slocum; John A. Pease, commodore of the Knickerbocker fleet; Edward Flanagan, mate of the Slocum; Henry Lundberg, U. S. inspector of hulls.

#### HELD TO THE GRAND JURY

These men were accordingly held to the federal grand jury and a special session was called to consider the case under Section 5344 of the Revised Statutes of the United States, which reads:

“Every captain, engineer, pilot or other person employed on any steamboat or vessel by whose misconduct, negligence or inattention to his duties on such vessel the life of any person is destroyed, and every owner, inspector or other public officer through whose fault, connivance, misconduct or violation of law the life of any person is destroyed, shall be deemed guilty of manslaughter and, upon conviction thereof before any Circuit Court of the United States, shall be sentenced to confinement at hard labor for a period of not more than ten years.”

## CHAPTER XXII

### LIST OF THE DEAD AND MISSING

#### DEAD

#### A

ABENDSCHEIN, MARY, 26 years old, No. 325 East Eighteenth street, identified by brother, George, at the Morgue.

ALBRECHT, SELMA, No. 212 East Tenth street, identified by husband at the Morgue.

ANSELL, MRS. LOUISA, 28, No. 103 East Fourth street; identified by her husband, Eugene.

ANSELL, MRS. CATHERINE, No. 105 East Fourth street; died in Harlem Hospital.

Their two children are still missing.

ANSELL, ALFRED (3), No. 103 East Fourth street.

ALFELD, ANNA, 45 years, No. 339 Sixth street, identified by husband, Carl Alfeld.

ALLMAN, LENA, 39 years old, No. 409 Fifth street; identified by Patrolman Hines, a brother-in-law.

ARNBRUST, MRS. BARBARA, 46 years old, No. 166 East Fourth street; identified by husband.

AUGUR, ROSE (19), No. 1365 Third avenue, identified by her father, George.

ANGER, CHARLES A. (52), No. 357 East Sixty-second street.

ANGER, MINNIE (24), No. 357 East Sixty-second street.

ACKERMAN, ———, 16 months, No. 406 East Fifth street.

ALFOLD, TILLIE, 16 years old, 339 Sixth street.

#### B

BELUNKEN, ANNE (13), No. 344 East Forty-eighth street, identified by Herman, the father.

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- BALLMER, MARY, 35 years old, No. 123 First avenue; identified by her husband, Joseph.
- BALLMER, ———, girl, six years old, identified by her father, Joseph.
- BRUNNING, J. L.; address, Produce Exchange.
- BAURILE, MARGUERETTA (35), No. 433 Sixth street; identified by her husband, Frederick.
- BRENNING, ANNIE(43), No. 215 East Twelfth street; identified by brother John.
- BURNS, FRED (10), No. 22 St. Mark's place.
- BURNS, HENRY (6), No. 22 St. Mark's place.
- BOLLAN, REBECCA, 53 years old, No. 334 Sixth street.
- BRUNING, GRACE, 14 years old, No. 215 East Twelfth street.
- BRUNING, MAGDALEN, 11 years old, No. 215 East Twelfth street.
- BOEMLER, MRS. MARTHA, No. 423 East Eighty-sixth street.
- BUFFO, MRS. LOUISA, No. 82 West Ninetieth street.
- BLOHM, MRS. ANNA, 50 years old, No. 18 Jackson street.
- BLOHM, MARGARET, 19 years old, No. 18 Jackson street.
- BLOHM, DORA (15), No. 18 Jackson street, identified by brother.
- BALSER, CATHERINE A. (32), No 137 Avenue B; identified at the Morgue by Gus Balsler, same address.
- BECK, CHRISTINA (50), No. 319 Avenue A; identified at Morgue by son.
- BERRENS, AUGUSTA (5), No. 127 Goerck street; identified by sister Annie.
- BERG, MRS. LENA (46), No. 158 Goerck street; identified by husband at Morgue.
- BIRMINGHAM, KATHERINE (72), No. 79 Mangin street; identified by brother, Michael Dillon, at Morgue.
- BOZEUBARR, EMILY (38), No. 110 First avenue, identified by brother, Bernard, at Morgue.
- BROWN, ALFONSO, No. 203 Fifth street, identified by James Roth, of same address, at Morgue.
- BUCHEIDT, MRS. ANN ELIZA (69), No. 141 East Third street; identified by son-in-law, Jacob Schwartz, at the Morgue.

- BURFIEND, JOHN J., ten months old, No. 101 West One Hundred and Sixth street, identified by father, J. H. K. Burfiend, at the Alexander Avenue Station.
- BANDELOW, LOUISA, 29 years old, 84 East Ninth street.
- BENEKE, MARY, 30 years old, 420 East Seventeenth street.
- BERTRAND, LIZZIE, 45 years old, 730 Sixth street.
- BREUM, EMMA, 29 years old, 411 East Twenty-seventh street.
- BETZER, AMELIA, 46 years old, 422 Sixth street.
- BLUMENKRANZ, ANNIE, 20 years old, 9 East One Hundred and Sixth street.
- BLUSCH, KATHERINE, 25 years old, 41 Avenue A.
- BOEGER, FLORENCE, 3 years old, No. 910 Putnam avenue, Brooklyn; identified by father, William, at Alexander Avenue Station.
- BOEGER, SUSAN L., 32 years old, 910 Putnam avenue, Brooklyn.
- BOEGER, WILBUR, 5 years old, 910 Putnam avenue, Brooklyn.
- BOEGER, PHILLIP, 9 years old, 910 Putnam avenue, Brooklyn.
- BOLLMER, ADELIN, 7 years old, 123 First avenue.
- BOSE, AMELIA, 19 years old, 138 Avenue A.
- BROWNING, MAGDALENE, 11 years old, 215 East Twelfth street.
- BURKHARDT, MARY, 4 years old, 43 Tompkins street.
- BURKHARDT, ALBERTINA, 39 years old, 43 Tompkins street.
- BURFEIND, DORA, 6 months old, 245 West Twenty-seventh street.
- BURFEIND, MARGARET, 2 years old, 245 West Twenty-seventh street.
- BUSH, HILDA, 11 years old, 82 West Ninetieth street.
- BECKER, THEODORE FRANK, 34 years old, No. 1010 East One Hundred and Seventy-eighth street; identified by father, Frank Becker. His wife, May, missing.
- BECKMANN, ANNA MARGARETHA, 7 months old, No. 1894 Third avenue; identified by Arthur Beckmann, her father.
- BERNHORDI, ANNIE, 5 years old, No. 614 East Ninth street; identified by her aunt, Mrs. Frances Bernardi, of No. 403 East Ninetieth street.
- BREHER, KATE (11), No. 310 East Twenty-eighth street; identified by her father, John Breher.

BRIEDE, MAMIE, No. 90 Avenue A.  
 BAUMAN, MAGADINE (30), No. 526 Sixth street.  
 BRAUN, MOLLIE, 32 years old, No. 233 Fifth street.  
 BRETZ, MARY (28), and child, No. 304 East Twenty-eighth street.  
 BRETZ, ELZIE, seven months old, 304 East Twenty-eighth street.  
 BANDELOW, LOUISA (5), No. 84 East Seventh street.

## C

CLOW, MARY, 35 years old, No. 54 East Seventh street, identified by husband, Alfred, at Alexander Avenue Station.  
 CORDES, MRS. METTA (51), No. 417 East Sixteenth street; identified by son John at Alexander Avenue Station.  
 CORDES, FRED (14), No. 417 East Sixteenth street; identified by brother John.  
 CROFINE, MRS. LILLIE, No. 995 Avenue A.  
 CHARLOTTE, MAY, 51 years old, No. 599 East Sixteenth street.  
 COHRS, MRS. KATIE (27), No. 70 First avenue.  
 COHRS, FRIEDA (26), No. 106 Avenue A; identified by brother Henry.  
 COHRS, FRED (6), No. 70 First avenue.

## D

DENGLER, ADOLPH, JR., 3 years old, No. 123 Seventh street; identified by father, Adolph, at Alexander Avenue Station.  
 DEPERT, AGNES (62), No. 328 Sixth street; identified by neighbor at Alexander Avenue Station.  
 DEPERT, MARY, 28 years old, 328 East Sixth street.  
 DERKER, THEODORE, 3 years old, No. 1010 East One Hundred and Seventy-eighth street; identified by father, Frank, at the Morgue.  
 DONHEIM, MRS., No. 41 Third street; identified at the Morgue.  
 DIEHL, CATHERINE, 58 years old, No. 886 Cortlandt avenue; body at Alexander Avenue Station.  
 DIEHL, ELSIE, 7 years old, No. 209 Fifth street.  
 DIEHL, LIZZIE, 30 years old, No. 905 Fifth street.



- DREWS, MRS. CATHERINE (68), No 154 East Fourth street; identified by son Herbert at Morgue.
- DREWS, HARRY, 7 years old, No. 154 East Fourth street.
- DREWS, LILLIE, 2 years old, No. 154 East Fourth street.
- DE LUCCIA, NICHOLAS, 2 years old, No. 54 East Seventh street.
- DONHEIM, MRS., No. 41 Third street; body at Bellevue.
- DORRHOFFER, two children, No. 121 Avenue A.
- DORRHOFFER, FREDERICK (11), No. 121 Avenue A.
- DETSCH, HELEN (41), No. 76 First avenue.
- DEISSMAN, LENA (16), No. 114 East Fourth street.
- DUICK, MARY (16), No. 121 Fourth avenue, Brooklyn.
- DIECKHOFF, JOHN, 20 years old, No. 124 Fourth avenue, Brooklyn.
- DIECKHOFF, WILLIAM, 4 years old, No. 124 Fourth avenue, identified by father, Fred Dieckhoff.
- DIECKHOFF, ANNIE, 17 years old, No. 124 Fourth avenue, Brooklyn; identified by Frederick Dieckhoff, her father.
- DREHER, KATIE, 11 years old, No. 310 East Twenty-fifth street; identified by her father, John Dreher.
- DREHER, CONRAD, 4 years old, No. 310 East Twenty-fifth street.
- DRECIVES, CATHARINE (68), No. 54 Fourth street; identified by son Herman.
- DETSCH, ELSIE, 15 years old, No. 71 First avenue.
- DOERING, IDA, 11 years old, No. 12 State street.
- DIAMOND, FRANCIS, 4 years old, No. 79 Mangin street.

## E

- EHRHARD, MINNIE, 13 years old, No. 69 First avenue; identified by her mother, Mrs. Minnie Ehrhard.
- EHRHARDT, ELIZABETH, 2 years old, No. 151 North Fourth street, Brooklyn.
- EICHOFF, WILLIAM, 30 years old, No. 196 Second avenue; identified by George Bates, of the same address, at the Morgue.
- EIDMAN, GRACE, 6 years, No. 100 East Fourth street; identified by brother, Henry Eidman.

- EIMER, CHARLES, 13 years old, 84 Stockholm street, Brooklyn.  
 ELK, ADALINE (23), No. 306 East Sixth street.  
 ELK, FRANCIS, 2 years old, 215 Sixth street.  
 ELK, FRANCES (3), No. 306 Sixth street.  
 ELLER, MRS. JOSEPH, No. 219 East Thirteenth street.  
 ELLER, ELSIE, No. 219 East Thirteenth street.  
 ENGELMAN, MRS. LOUISE, 28 years old, of No. 425 East Twelfth street; identified by husband at Morgue.  
 ENGELMAN, WILLIAM, 6 years old, No. 425 East Twelfth street.  
 ERTMANN, ALMA, 11 years old, No. 346 East Ninth street.  
 EYSEL, JENNIE, 9 years old, No. 203 Avenue A; identified by Nicholas Stocker, No. 203 Avenue A.

## F

- FRESE, ANNA (20), No. 426 East Fifteenth street.  
 FALMETER, LIZZIE, 40 years old, No. 80 East First street.  
 FRITZ, MRS. ALMA, 47 years old, No. 1235 Park avenue; wife of George Fritz, collector for Lippmann's brewery; identified at the Morgue.  
 FRECH, CHARLES E., 4 years old, No. 409 East Fifty-fourth street; identified by his father, Henry Frech.  
 FROLICH, MRS. CHARLES, address unknown.  
 FOLLMER, MRS. MARY, No. 123 First avenue.  
 FLEISCHER, HENRY, 14 years old, No. 332 East Thirteenth street.  
 FICKBOHM, MRS. MARIE, 40 years old, No. 91 Avenue D; identified by her husband, Peter J. Fickbohm.  
 FICKBOHM, MAMIE, 40 years old, No. 41 Avenue D; identified by husband, John.  
 FELDHAUSER, MRS. MARGARET, 52 years old, No. 50 West Eighth street; identified by Courtland T. Myburg, No. 35 West Eighth street.  
 FICKBOHM, MARIE, 14 months old, No. 41 Avenue D; identified by her uncle, Henry Paulsen, No. 66 Cumberland street, Brooklyn.



### FUNERAL OF THE UNKNOWN DEAD

On Saturday afternoon, June 18th, nearly two hundred victims of the Slocum disaster were buried. This did not include the twenty-nine unknown dead buried by the city, whose funeral is shown in the above picture. The authorities preserved a clear record of where each of the unrecognized bodies was laid, and every coffin plate bore the number of the body in order that relatives might recover them should they be identified later.



#### THROUGH IN FRONT OF ST. MARK'S CHURCH

On the day following the disaster, crowds of people, old and young, hovered about St. Mark's Lutheran Church on Sixth street. All night long they pressed about the church, the silence broken by some exclamation of woe, some child's cry, or the heart-broken sob of a man or woman whose family had been swept away.



#### A PITIFUL STORY

The above picture was taken during one of the sessions of the coroner's inquest. It shows Mrs. Ida Geister relating her awful experience during the burning of the steamer. Mrs. Geister was terribly injured herself and lost her four children in the disaster.



### INSPECTOR LUNDBERG ON THE WITNESS-STAND

Henry Lundberg, inspector of hulls in the Steamboat Inspection Service, instead of giving the assistance expected of him at the inquest, refused to answer all questions of importance on the ground that they might incriminate him.

- FELDHUSEN, MARGARET, 52 years old, No. 50 West Eighth street; identified by husband.
- FOLKE, ANNA (50), No. 257 Avenue B.
- FOLKE, DORA (79), No. 257 Avenue B.
- FOELSING, FERDINAND (8), No. 1914 Third avenue; identified by father. Brother and sister missing.
- FROELICH, CHARLES, No. 301 West Ninety-sixth street.
- FETTIG, PETER, 45 years old, 120 Second avenue, Brooklyn.
- FISHER EMMA, 35 years old, No. 108 First avenue.
- FISHLER, ANNA, 6 years old, No. 314 East Ninth street.

## G

- GAMBERG, HENRY (6), No. 427 East Ninth street; identified by father, Henry.
- GUSTENBERGER, JAMES (25), No. 147 West Thirty-seventh street; identified by C. H. Knapp.
- GADE, GRACE, 61 years old, No. 405 Fifth street; identified by husband.
- GADE, GRACE, 16 years old, No. 405 Fifth street; identified by brother Henry, at the Morgue.
- GRAFF, MRS. ELSIA, 40 years old, No. 134 East Seventh street; identified by her brother, Frank Frederick.
- GALLAGHER, AGNES, 10 months old, No. 45 East Fifteenth street; identified by uncle, Jacob Ottinger, No. 280 Avenue B, at the Alexander Avenue Station.
- GIESER, KATE, 25 years old, no address given; identified by husband, Henry, collector for Lippmann's Brewery, at Alexander Avenue Station.
- GATES, MARGARET, 2½ years old No. 80 First avenue; identified by father, Edward.
- GATES, CATHERINE, 28 years old, No. 80 First avenue; identified by husband, Edward.
- GIRRCLER, EDITH, 18 years old, No. 20 Avenue A.
- GRIMM, MRS. SELMA, 34 years old, No 314 East Ninth street; identified by her husband, Frederick.

- GREUBEN, EMMA, 39 years old, No. 420 East Seventeenth street, identified by John L. Distler, nephew.
- GOETZ, ALBERT, 25 years old, No 80 First avenue; identified by Edward Goetz, at Morgue.
- GOETZ, CATHERINE, 28 years old, No. 81 First avenue; identified by husband, Edward, at the Morgue.
- GRAFING, LILLIE, 28 years old, No. 998 Avenue A; identified by father at the Morgue.
- GRUBER, CARRIE, 14 years old, No. 420 East Seventeenth street.
- GRENER, KATIE, 11 years old, No. 310 East Twenty-fifth street.
- GRANNER, MISS LOUISE, 22 years, No. 100 University place.
- GRANEFIRE, LILLIAN, No. 998 Avenue A.
- GEISELER, EDITH, 18 years old, No. 201 Avenue A; identified by her brother, William Geiseler.
- GEISELER, PETER, 18 years old, No. 201 Avenue D.
- GERMULLER, WILLIAM (5), No. 895 Jefferson place.
- GERMULLER, GRACE (3), No. 895 Jefferson place.
- GROSS, EMMA, 44, No. 90 First avenue.
- GASSMAN, MICHAEL J., 5 years old, No. 128 Fourth street.
- GASSMAN, FRED (11), 128 East Fourth street.
- GASSMAN, MINNIE, 5 years old, No. 128 East Fourth street.
- GREWES, LILLIAN, 2 years old, 54 East Fourth street.
- GALEWSKI, HELEN, 5 years old, No. 54 Seventh street.
- GREFF, OTTO, 43 years old, No. 143 Seventh street.
- GOSS, GERTRUDE, 27 years old, No 97 East Seventh street.
- GEISEL, EMMA, 15 years old, 107 East Second street.
- GERSTEN, RICHARD, 38 years old, 147 West Thirty-fourth street.
- GRESS, CLARA, 12 years old, No. 144 Seventh street.
- GREBER, FRED (14), No. 54 Seventh street.
- GRUNING, MRS. LENA (29), No. 45 Seventh street.
- GRUNING, HENRY (5), No. 45 Seventh street.
- GRUNING, CHARLES (3), No. 45 Seventh street.
- GRUNING, LENA, 10 months old, No. 45 Seventh street.
- GELUECIN, —— (7), No. 54 East Seventh street.



- GALLAGHER, VERONICA (32), No. 324 East Fifteenth street.  
 GALLAGHER, WALTER (9), No. 324 East Fifteenth street.  
 GIVENS, MARGARET, No. 225 East Fifth street.  
 GETTLER, CAROLINE (65), No. 231 Fifth street.  
 GROSS, EMMA, 44 years old, No. 90 First avenue.  
 GROSS, OTTO, 43 years old, No. 134 Seventh street.  
 GILLIS, GEORGE (12), No. 512 East Fifth street.

## H

- HANZLER, AUGUSTA (11), No. 154 First avenue.  
 HARDTMAN, MARGARET, No. 309 East Tenth street.  
 HEWKEN, CHARLES (18), No. 169 South Second street,  
 Brooklyn.  
 HOAG, SUSIE (48), No. 158 First avenue.  
 HEIN, FRANK (12), No. 397 East Fourth street.  
 HAWKINS, Charles (18), No. 169 South Second street, Brooklyn.  
 HERNBERG, GEORGE (7), No. 79 Colyer street, Brooklyn.  
 HERNBERG, ARTHUR (9), No. 79 Colyer street, Brooklyn.  
 HAUSLER, AUGUSTA (11), No. 154 First avenue.  
 HECKER, JULIA, 8 months old, No. 88 Avenue A.  
 HARDEKOPF, ——— (40), No. 343 Rivington street.  
 HEERZ, MRS. M. (32), No. 412 Sixth street; identified by husband, George.  
 HEDENKAMP, JOHN D., 55 years old, No 805 Sixth street; identified by his son, Henry Hedenkamp.  
 HEDENKAMP, MARGARET S., 11 years old, No. 805 East Sixth street; identified by her brother, Henry Hedenkamp.  
 HEIDENKAMP, JAMES; identified by letter on body.  
 HESSEL, WILHELMINA (53), No 801 East One Hundred and Forty-seventh street.  
 HECKERT, ANNIE K. (11), No. 88 Avenue A.  
 HERMAN, GEORGE, 13 months old, No. 410 Fifth street; identified by his father, Henry Herman.  
 HENDERSEN, BARBARA (30), No. 386 West One Hundred

- and Twenty-fifth street; identified by Miss Pauline Steiger (questionable).
- HOELDER, MARY (79), No. 169 Avenue A; identified by daughter-in-law.
- HEHL, GUS (14), No. 55 First avenue; identified by father at the Morgue.
- HOLLER, MRS. BARBARA, No. 334 Sixth street.
- HERGENBERGER, MRS. (45), No. 22 St. Mark's place.
- HERTZ, MRS. MARY (63), No. 611 Columbus avenue; identified by daughter, Mrs. Louise Buffe, No. 82 West Ninetieth street, at the Alexander Avenue Station.
- HOFFMAN, MRS. ELIZABETH; identified by letter on body at Morgue. Address not given.
- HOFFMAN, MRS. SYLVA (53), No. 72 Second street; identified by son Frank at the Morgue.
- HELLER, CHRISTINA, 68 years old, No. 404 Sixth street; identified by her son, William Heller. No 29 Louis place, Brooklyn. Was sexton of St. Mark's.
- HEIM, FRANK, 13 years old, No. 397 East Fourth street; identified by Frederick Heim, his brother.
- HERRMAN, MRS. KATE (50), No. 168 First avenue; identified by her son, Henry Herrman, No. 410 East Fifth street.
- HEIMS, HENRIETTA, 10 years old, No 300 Front street; identified by her father, Henry Heims.
- HARTUNG, ESSIE, 6 years old, No. 342 East Twenty-first street; identified by brother Frank.
- HARDINCAMP, MARGARET, 11 years old, No. 12 East Eleventh street; identified by her brother Henry at the Morgue.
- HORWAY, CARL (17), No. 313 East Ninth street.
- HORWAY, CORTLANDT (27), No. 313 East Ninth street; identified by mother.
- HORWAY, JOHANNA (38).No. 313 East Ninth street; identified by brother, William Beck, at the Morgue.
- HORWAY, DELLA, 5 years old, No. 313 East Ninth street; identified by father, Charles Horway.

- HEHL, GUS (41), No. 55 First avenue; identified by father, Thomas.
- HAAS, ANNIE (45), No. 64 Seventh street, wife of the pastor; identified by the Rev. J. G. Schultz.
- HAAS, MARGARET (5), No. 64 Seventh street, daughter of the pastor; identified by her uncle.
- HARTMANN, MARY (46), No. 309 East Tenth street.
- HEINS, MRS. ANNIE, No. 49 Ninth avenue.
- HEINS, FRANK (13), No. 397 East Fourth street.
- HEINS, MARGUERITA, 14 years old, No. 300 Front street.
- HAAG, WILLIAM (14), No. 310 East Fourteenth street.
- HARNES, HERMAN, 17 years old, No. 312 East Fourteenth street.
- HARTUNG, LOUISA (47), No. 342 East Twenty-first street.
- HEDENKAMP, FRANK, 9 years old, No. 805 Sixth street.
- HEILSHORN, GEORGE, 3 years old No. 181 Waverly place.
- HENRICH, AMELIA, 18 years old, 316 Brook avenue, The Bronx.
- HENRICK, TESSIE, 16 years old, No. 416 Brook avenue, The Bronx.
- HEUER, MARY, 17 years old, No. 127 Division street.
- HOFFMAN, ELLA, 14 years old, 40 Lafayette place.
- HETTERRICK, MRS. FREDERICK, 30 years old, No. 420 East Fifteenth street.
- HILLER, GOTTFRIED, 66 years old, sexton of St. Mark's church.
- HOTZ, MRS. ANNA, 37 years old, No. 319 East Fifth street.
- HOFFMAN, EDNA, 2 years old, No. 116 Lake street, Jersey City.

## I

- IDEN, GRACE (6), No. 100 Fourth street; identified by brother, Henry.
- IDEN, HENRIETTA H., 9 years old, No. 100 East Fourth street.
- IDEN, MINNIE (8), No. 100 East Fourth street.
- IRWIN, FANNIE (25), No. 2112 Third avenue; Salvation Army lassie.

## K

- KRAFFT, LOUISE, No. 140 East Fourth street.
- KELCH, KATIE (6), No. 800 East Fourteenth street.
- KING, KATHERINE, No. 314 East Forty-sixth street.
- KING, CATHERINE (26), No. 314 East Forty-sixth street.
- KLATHAAR, GEORGE (14), No. 506 East Fifth street.
- KOPF, MRS. LIZZIE (32), No. 337 East Ninth street.
- KOPF, ELLIS, year and a half, No. 337 East Ninth street; identified by father, Marin.
- KLEIN, DENNA, 40 years old, No. 31 Avenue A; died at Lincoln Hospital.
- KRAMER, MRS. —, janitress, No. 70 First avenue.
- KEPPLER, IRENE, 12 years old, First avenue, between Twelfth and Thirteenth streets.
- KESSLER, BABBETTE, 45 years old, No. 205 East Seventh street.
- KLATBAUER, KATHARINE, 56 years old, No. 506 Fifth street.
- KLATTER, KATHERINE, 56 years old, No. 506 Fifth street.
- KOEHLER, HENRY, 40 years old, No. 315 East Thirteenth street.
- KOLB, GUSSIE, 22 years old, No. 517 East Fifth street; identified by Mrs. Ida Kister, her sister.
- KLATBAUER, GEORGE, 14 years old, No. 506 Fifth street; identified by John H. Klatbauer, the father.
- KOLINGER, MRS. EVA; identified by papers and bank books in her bustle.
- KOLB, MAGDALINE, 72 years old, No. 743 Summit street; identified by son Albert at the Morgue.
- KLENCK, MINNIE, 19 years old, No. 438 East Sixth street; identified by her father, Charles Klenck.
- KLEIN, EMMA, 25 years old, No. 314 Sixth street; identified by her husband, Gottlieb Klein.
- KOLIDER, HENRY, 12 years old, No. 315 East Thirteenth street; identified by uncle.
- KRAUTWURST, ANNA (13), No. 114 East Fourth street.

- KORMAN, MINNIE (23), No. 402 Third avenue.  
KARL, BARBARA, 60 years old, No. 314 Sixteenth street.  
KLIEN, JOHN, 17 years old, No. 191 East Third street.  
KEELER, Katherine, 12 years old, 122 East Fourth street.  
KOHLEK, MARY, 38 years old, No. 315 E. Twentieth street.  
KOPF, THEODORE, 5 years old, 337 East Ninth street.  
KEISTER, MARGARET, 45 years old, No. 343 Division street.  
KLENCK, WILLIAM F., 21 years old, No. 112 St. Mark's place.  
KREGLER, MARGARET, 37 years old, No. 257 Avenue B.  
KEETENSCH, LIZZIE, 30 years old, No. 420 East Fifteenth street.  
KLENCH, WILLIAM F., 2 years old, No. 113 St. Mark's place.  
KOSTER, MARGARET, 46 years old, No. 343 Rivington street.

## L

- LAHN, DORA, 25 years old, No. 1000 Union avenue, Bronx; identified by her father, Philip Lahn.  
LURIN, LENA, 17 years old, No. 111 East Fourth street.  
LAUSCHE, MORRIS, 60 years old, No. 1518 Webster avenue.  
LOEFFLER, LOUISE, 9 years old, No. 9 East Third street.  
LOEFFLER, LOUIS, 10 years old, No. 96 East Thirteenth street.  
LINK, LOTTIE (15), No. 76 Avenue A.  
LINK, EDDIE (11), No. 76 Avenue A; identified by father.  
LANN, AMELIA (40), widow; identified by Kate Muller, No. 203 Avenue C, at the Alexander Avenue Station.  
LUDWIG, GEORGE, 15 years, No. 413 East Seventeenth street.  
LUTJENS, MRS. KATE, No. 101 Clymer street, Brooklyn; identified by husband, John, at the Morgue.  
LULLMAN, CARRIE, 24 years old, No. 100 University place.  
LOUDEMAM, MRS. JOHN, 45 years old, White Plains, N. Y.; identified by James J. Sullivan, of No. 7 Elm street, White Plains.  
LOEBINGER, HENRY, identified by papers.  
LUBBERT, AUGUST, 12 years old, No. 412 Sixth street; identified by August Lubbert, his father.  
LEBUHRL, LIZZIE, 9 years old, No. 23 Avenue B.

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LANE, GUSTAV, 17 years old, No. 227 East Eleventh street, Manhattan.

LAMM, LILLIAN, 7 years old, No. 645 East Seventeenth street.

LANG, AMELIA, 15 years old, 154 East Broadway.

LUTTGENS, MARGARET, 18 years old, No. 101 Clymer street, Brooklyn.

LAHN, CLARA, 20 years old, No. 1000 Union avenue, Bronx.

M

MESCKE, MRS. CARL, No. 508 Robbins avenue.

MELBOURNE, WILLIAM, No. 441 West Forty-sixth street.

MEYER, KATE or ELIZABETH (40), No. 88 Avenue A.

MAY, CHARLOTTE (51), No. 599 East Sixteenth street; identified by son Charles at the Morgue.

MEHLEIN, MRS. MINNIE (38), No. 416 Fifth street; identified by husband, Otto, at the Morgue.

MOELLER, MARTHA, 35 years old, No. 20 St. Mark's place; identified by her husband, Emil Moeller.

MANHEIMER, MAMIE, 36 years old, No. 86 Seventh street; identified by Louis Lander, her brother, of No. 148 East Seventh street.

M'GRANE, MICHAEL, 48 years old, steward on the Slocum; No. 2161 Eighth avenue; identified by C. G. Peker, a friend, of No. 301 West One Hundred and Sixteenth street.

MOTZER, MRS. ANNA, 38 years old, No. 405 Sixth street; identified by her sister, Mrs. Elizabeth Schneider, of No. 167 Avenue A.

MULLER, EDWARD (10), 368 Bowery.

MUELLER, HELEN, 37 years old, No. 368 Bowery; identified by her husband, Herman Mueller.

MAYER, MRS. LOUISE, No. 130 East Seventeenth street.

MAYER, LOUISA, 39 years old, No. 430 East One Hundred and Seventh street; identified by her husband, Nicholas Mayer.

MICHEL, WILLIAM, 12 years old, No. 34 East Twelfth street; identified by father.

- MULLER, HENRY, 13 years old, No. 20 St. Mark's place; identified by father.
- MULLER, ROSE 14 years old, No. 368 Bowery; identified by her father.
- MULLER, FLORA, 27 years old, married, No. 28 West Ninety-seventh street; identified by brother.
- MULLER, MRS. ANNA (31), No. 123 Seventh street. identified by husband, Jacob.
- MORRIS, KATE, 15 years old.
- MUELLER, MRS. B., 25 years old, No. 95 Second avenue; identified by Otto Rosenberger, same address.
- MICHAEL, CARRIE, 12 years old, No. 171 Avenue A.
- MESSEKE, MRS. BETTIE, No. 508 Robbins avenue.
- MESSEKE, ANNIE (16), No. 508 Robbins avenue.
- MEYER, ALBERT, JR. (10), No. 454 East Fifteenth street.
- MUSEKE, ANNA, 16 years old, No. 508 Robbins avenue, Bronx; identified by brother.
- MEROELLER, MATILDA, fifteen years old, No. 394 Sixth avenue, Brooklyn; identified by John E. Lutz, of Demarest, N. J.
- MEIKE, DAISY, 11 years old, No. 504 East Sixteenth street; identified by father Otto.
- MOLLITOR, MRS. MARY, Mount Vernon.
- MERSELES, MATILDA (16), No. 394 Sixth avenue, Brooklyn.
- M'LOUGHLIN, MICHAEL (12), No. 69 First avenue.
- MEYER, ALBERT (19), No. 434 East Fifteenth street.
- MENINGER, LENA (30), No. 631 Bergen avenue, Brooklyn.
- MILLER, ELIZABETH, six months old, No. 406 Sixth street; identified by father.
- MILLER, FLORA (27), No. 28 West Ninety-seventh street.
- MILLER, MRS. VALESSA, 29 years old, No. 95 Second avenue; identified by Otto Rosenberg, No. 95 Second avenue.
- MILLER, HENRY, 3 years old, No. 41 First avenue.
- MAURER, KATE, 13 years and 11 months old, No 1551 Avenue A.
- METTLER, ALBERT, 12 years old, No. 338 East Fifth street.
- MENINGER, HARRY, 1 year old, No. 31 Bergen avenue.

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MUELLER, HELENA, 7 years old, No. 368 Bowery; identified by father, Edward Mueller.

MOLITOR, CARL, 5 years old, Midland avenue.

MOLITOR, AVE, 8 years old, No. 21 Midland avenue, East New York.

MOLKE, ELIZABETH, 30 years old, No. 125 First avenue.

MANNHEIMER, WALTER, 11 years old, No. 86 Seventh street.

MEYER, META, 59 years old, No. 381 Madison street.

MUTH, ELIZA (62), No. 1264 Lexington avenue.

MUTH, LIZZIE, 11 years old, No. 785 East One Hundred and Forty-sixth street.

MUTH, TINA, 8 years old, No. 785 East One Hundred and Forty-sixth street.

M'CARTHY, JEREMIAH, 9 years old, No. 134 Hobart avenue, Bayonne, N. J.

N

NEHLEIN, MINNIE, 41 years old, No. 416 Fifth street; identified by her husband, Otto Nehlein.

NORWAY, CARL, No. 313 East Ninth street; identified by father.

NOVOTRY, LOUIS (18), No. 190 East Third street; identified by mother.

NUNCLE, ARTHUR, no age given, No. 11 Seventh street.

NEIBHUR, LIZZIE (13), No. 1223 Avenue B.

NOLL, KATE (20), No. 400 East Fifth street.

NOLL, KATIE, 40 years old, No. 400 Fifth street.

O

OCHS, ——, died at Lebanon Hospital.

OEHLER, FRED (14), No. 510 Sixth street.

OELLRICH, ANNIE, 33 years old, No. 519 Willoughby avenue, Brooklyn.

OSMERS, MILDRED D., 5 years old, No. 49 East Eighty-eighth street.



- OEHLER, MARY, 55 years old, No. 510 Sixth street; identified by Daniel Oehler, her son.
- OLFETH, ANNIE, 45 years old, No. 339 Sixth street; identified by husband, Carl, at the Morgue.
- OTTENGER (boy), No. 91 Seventh street.
- OTTENGER (girl), 14, No. 91 Seventh street.
- OTTINGER, KATIE (40), No. 97 East Seventh street.
- OTTINGER, CHARLES (16), No. 97 East Seventh street.
- OTTINGER, EMMA (16), No. 97 East Seventh street.
- OTTINGER, ANDREW (7), No. 97 East Seventh street.
- OTTINGER, ARTHUR (7), No. 97 East Seventh street.
- OHL, CARL (9), No. 340 East Ninth street.

## P

- PAULI, ELSIE (13), No. 26 Avenue A.
- PAULI, KATIE (16), No. 26 Avenue A.
- PATTEBAUM, HERMAN, 5 years old, No. 61 St. Mark's place.
- PRAWDYSKI, HENRIETTA, 14 years old, No. 85 Third street; identified by an uncle, of same address.
- PINING, MRS. DORA, No. 45 Seventh street.
- PRAUDZICKIE, ANNA (15), No. 85 East Third street.
- PRAUDZICKIE, HENRIETTA (14), No. 85 East Third street.
- PRAUDZICKIE, GERTRUDE (13), No. 85 East Third street.
- PULLMAN, WILLIAM H., No. 337 East Eighteenth street, treasurer of Sunday school.
- PART, PAUL C., 10 years old, 10 East Fourth street, Manhattan.
- PLUNKETT, GERALD, 12 years old, 74 Seventh street.

## R

- RICHTER, ANNIE (8), No. 404 Sixth street.
- ROTH, LENA (17), No. 203 Fifth street; identified by her father, James, at the Morgue.
- RYAN, MAMIE, 5 years old, No. 345 East Fifteenth street.

- ROTH, MRS. JOSEPHINE, of No. 203 Fifth street; identified by her husband, James, at the Morgue.
- RUTTINGER, META, 39 years old, No. 47 St. Mark's place; identified by her husband, Ernest Ruttinger. His son, Ernest Ruttinger, 16 years old, reported missing.
- ROTH, HELEN, 20 years, No. 310 East Broadway; identified by Michael Cohen, a friend.
- ROTHMAN, EMILY, 34 years old, No. 48½ Seventh street; identified by her husband, William C. Rothman.
- REKANSKI, WANDA, 10 years old, No. 337 Fifth street; identified by mother.
- RUTHMAYER, MRS. VETTA, 38 years old, No. 47 St. Mark's place; identified by husband, Edward.
- REULING, EMMA, 24 years old, No 424 East Sixth street; identified by father, August.
- ROSENAGLE, ANNIE (38), No. 129 Fourth street; identified by husband, Charles.
- ROTHENBURG, ANNIE (18), No. 368 Bowery.
- RICHTER, LENA (35), No. 104 First avenue.
- RICHTER, TESSIE (13), No. 90 First avenue.
- RUTHINGER, ERNEST (16), No. 47 St. Mark's place.
- REICHENBACK, HERMAN, 2½ years old, No. 79 East Houston street.
- RUELING, EMMA (24), No. 424 East Sixth street.
- RICHTER, MRS. AMELIA (47), No. 404 Sixth street.
- RICHTER, AUGUST (15).
- RICHTER, AMELIA (20).
- RICHTER, LIZZIE (18).
- RITZ, TESSIE (13), No 90 First avenue.
- ROTTENBERGER, ANNIE (19), No. 368 Bowery.
- RICHTER, CHRISTINA, 9 years old, No. 104 First street.
- RICHTER, LYDIA, 12 years old, No. 104 First street.
- RINGER, CLARA, 37 years old, No. 170 Avenue A.
- ROTHMAN, WILLIAM C., Jr., No. 48½ Seventh street.
- ROSENSTEIN, SOPHIA, 20 years old, No. 127 First avenue.

## S

- STOSS, EDNA (10), No. 316 Second avenue.
- SCHWARTZ, LAVINIA (43), No 141 East Third street.
- SCHWARTZ, LOUISA A., No. 290 East Thirty-eighth street.
- SCHNEIDER, A. T., address unknown.
- STROPEL CATHARINE, No 338 East Sixth street.
- SCHMID, KATHERINE (67), No. 418 East Ninth street; identified by son Charles at the morgue.
- SCHNITZLER, TINA, MRS. identified by her husband, Patrolman Edward Schnitzler, of the East One Hundred and Fourth Street Station, at the morgue.
- SCHWARTZ, LOUISA, MRS. (43), No. 141 Fifth street; identified by her husband, Jacob, at the Morgue.
- SIERICHS, LOTTA (38), No. 425 East Twelfth street; identified by her husband, William, at the morgue.
- SMITH, MARY, MRS. (35), No 138 Seventh street; identified by her cousin, Charles Stock, of No. 142 Seventh street, at the morgue.
- STOEHR, SUSIE, No 340 Sixth street; identified by husband, William, at the morgue.
- STRINZ, AUGUST, MRS. (52), No. 90 First avenue; identified by son, Paul, at the morgue.
- SMITH, MARTHA, MISS (18), No. 334 East Fifteenth street.
- SCHMIDT, EVA, 17 years old, No. 149 East Fourth street; identified by George Schmidt, her brother.
- SCHNEIDLING, ANNIE (15), No. 119 East Seventh street; identified by Charles Schneidling, a brother.
- SCHNEIDLING, ANNIE (15), No. 119 East Seventh street; identified by Charles Schneidling, a brother.
- SCHAEFER, KATE, 6 years old, No 332 East Thirteenth street.
- SCHUMPF, LIZZIE, MRS., 40 years old, No. 208 Avenue B; identified by her husband, Jacob Schumpf.
- SPIUZ, MRS. AUGUSTA, 52 years old, No 90 First avenue; identified by her son, Paul.
- SCHULTZ, EMMA, 10 years old, No. 136 East Fourth street, identified by her brother, Eugene Schultz.

- SIEWART, PHOEBE (7), No 225 East Fifth street.
- SERBER, CATHARINE (72), No. 107 East Eighty-fourth street.
- SCHRUPF, JOHN (16), No. 268 Avenue B.
- SCHMIDT, SOPHIA, No. 108 Avenue B.
- SCHMIDT, ANNA, No. 108 Avenue B.
- SEIDENWARD, HENRY (18), No. 184 Third street; identified by brother, Charles.
- STENGER, ROSA (10), No. 88 East Third street; identified by uncle, William Gendert.
- SCHOEFFLING, MRS., No. 189 Third avenue, and three-year-old daughter, ELSIE; identified by husband.
- SCHULTZ, MARTHA, 45 years old; identified by brother, Henry Miller, of No. 202 St. Mark's place.
- SCHULER, ———; identified at morgue by cards; no address given.
- SMITH, HILDRETH, 3 years old, No. 18 Jacobson street; identified by father, George.
- SEEMAN, NETA (26), single, No 227 East Twenty-first street; identified by Henry C. Ahrens, No. 37 West One Hundred and Thirty-second street.
- SCHMIDTLING, ANNA (15), No. 119 Seventh street; identified by brother.
- SCHMIDTLING, GEORGE (18), No. 119 Seventh street; identified by brother.
- SPOEHE, MRS. SUSAN (29), No. 304 East Sixth street; identified by husband, George.
- SCHINDE, HENRY C. (35), No. 1958 Washington avenue, Bronx, identified by W. F. McShane, of same address, a friend.
- SCHNEIDER, TESSIE (14), No. 90 First avenue.
- SEILER, KATE (72), No. 107 East Eighty-fourth street.
- SCHNEIDER, EVA (14), No. 326 East Sixth street.
- SILVER, KATE (60), No. 207 East Eighty-fourth street.
- SCHMITZLER, KATIE (6), No. 10 Gouverneur place.
- SCHNEIDER, . . . . . (14), No. 90 First avenue.
- SCHOEFFLING, MARIA (35), No. 189 Third avenue.
- SCHOENINGER, MRS. GOTTLIEDEN (60), No. 118 East Third street.

- SCHIMMER, WILLIAM (9), No. 140 First avenue.  
STEIN, CARRIE (9), No. 45 First avenue.  
SCHÜLER, FREDERICK (14), No. 15 Stuyvesant street.  
SCHRUMPF, WILLIAM (13), No. 208 Avenue B.  
SCHMIDT, SOPHIA, 36 years old, 290 East Second street, Manhattan.  
SCHEELE, ANNA, 15 years old, 14 St. Mark's place.  
SCHEELE, CLARA, 7 years old, 14 St. Mark's place.  
SACKMAN, HERMAN, 7 years old, 341 Rivington street.  
SCHMITT, MRS. EMMA, 25 years old, 264 First avenue.  
SCHOEMANN, ELSIE, 15 years old, 546 Home street.  
SIEGEL, SOPHIA, 30 years old, 54 Seventh street.  
SVOBODA, MAMIE, 8 years old, 170 East Fourth street.  
SCHEIR, JULIA, 6 months old, 124 Seventh street.  
SUGMAN, HENRIETTA, 23 years old, 101 First avenue.  
SCHNUDE, MILDRED, 18 years old, 196 Guernsey street, Brooklyn.  
STOCKERMAN, AUGUSTA, 15 years old, 225 Fifth street.  
STENGER, MRS. FRANCIS. 35 years old, 88 East Third street.  
SCHMIDT, AUGUST, 1163 Greene avenue, Brooklyn.  
STOCKERMAN, HULDA, 17 years old, 225 First street.  
STOCKERMAN, LOUISA, 10 years old, 225 First street.  
SCHAIER, FREDERICK, 6 months old, 174 East Third street.

## T

- TOTTEBAUM, HERMAN, No. 16 St. Mark's place: identified by brother, Charles, at the Morgue.  
TRAPPING. LILLIAN (26), No. 998 Avenue A; identified by father.  
TREBER, MRS. ANNA (35), No. 310 East Twenty-fifth street; identified by brother, Henry.  
TROELL, ALBERT (13), No. 405 East Fifth street; identified by mother and father.  
TODT, MARY, No. 103 East Seventy-fifth street; body identified at Morgue by Detective-Sergeant McCafferty.  
TODT, MRS., janitress at No. 173 East Seventy-fifth street, and her

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grandchild, son of Mrs. Henry Hermans, of No. 410 East Fifth street.

TETAMORE, MRS. SOPHIA, 30 years old, 1714 Bushwick avenue, Brooklyn.

THORNMAHLER, AUGUSTA, 42 years old, 100 Second street.

TISCHLER, ERMA, 8 years old, 314 East Ninth street.

TREPING, MINNIE, 7 years old, 223 Fifth street.

U

UNGER, KATE, 48 years old, No. 99 Avenue A.

UIHLEIN, MRS. MINNIE, 41 years old, No 416 Fifth street.

ULLMAN, EDWARD, JR., 14 years old, No. 409 Sixth street.

ULLMAN, LENA, 37 years old, No. 409 East Fifth street; identified by her brother, Policeman John Hindes, of the Eleventh Precinct.

UHLENDORFF, MRS. SELMA, 45 years old, No. 93 Third avenue; identified by husband, Louis.

UHLENDORFF, SELMA (45), No. 93 Third avenue.

ULLRICH, ELIZABETH, 32 years old, 433 West Forty-first street.

V

VOLMER, MARY (35), No 123 First avenue; identified by husband, Joseph.

VOLKENBERG, MISS LUCY (25), East Seventeenth street, between First and Second avenues; identified by Albert Hentze, No. 201 First avenue.

VAETH, WILLIAM, 9 years old, 159 East Ninth street, College Point.

VASSMER, HANNAH, 11 years old, 333 Fifth street.

VIET, LENA, 26 years old, 159 East Ninth street, College Point.

VOLMER, MAGDALINE, 7 years old, 123 First avenue.

W

WEIDLER, LAURA (55), No. 411 East Ninth street.

WIESSO, EMILY (12), No. 216 East Eleventh street.

WIESER, MRS. CAROLINE, No. 216 East Ninth street.



### DECKHAND COAKLEY TESTIFYING

John J. Coakley was called to the stand and testified that he was never present at a fire drill on board the Slocum and that he had never been instructed what to do in case of fire. He gave a vivid description of the outbreak of the fire.



**CHIEF ENGINEER CONKLING GIVING HIS TESTIMONY**

Benjamin T. Conkling, chief engineer of the General Slocum, testified that he went about the boat with the Inspector the last time the latter came on board. He said that no test was made of the fire hose upon any of the standpipes.





**MINNIE CHRIST**

Minnie Christ was with the Muth family and perished in the wreck of the burning steamer.



**MARY DUCKHOFF**

The body of fifteen-year-old Mary Duckhoff was one of the first to be identified.



**MRS. ANNIE BACKMAN AND HER BABY**

The bodies of Mrs. Backman and her child were found among the drowned victims on the beach.



**THE MUTH CHILDREN**

Lizzie, Christina, Katie and John Muth were with a party of eleven children, only two of whom escaped.

- WALTER, ELIZABETH (67), No. 336 Sixth street; identified by her son, Philip, at the Morgue.
- WIEDEMAN, CAROLINE (50), No. 79 East Houston street; identified by her husband, Henry, at the Morgue.
- WEAVER, ESTHER, No 304 East Ninth street.
- WEIS, EMILY, 10 years old, No. 532 Fifth street; identified by her brother, John Weis, of No. 167 Avenue A.
- WEIS, TILLY, 47 years old, widow, No. 532 Fifth street; identified by her son, John Weis.
- WEIS, LOUIS, 21 years old, single, No. 532 Fifth street; identified by his cousin, John Weis.
- WURNER, LILLIAN (18), No 524 East Sixth street; identified by Frank Lander, an uncle, of No. 130 East Third street.
- WEISL, MRS. CAROLINE (50), No. 337 East Sixth street; identified by sister.
- WEHLEIN, MRS. MINNIE (41), No. 416 Fifth street; identified by husband, Otto.
- WOLF, MRS. MAGDALEN (65), No. 1181 Fortieth street, Brooklyn, N. Y.
- WUNNER, MRS. CARRILANDIS, No 524 Sixth street.
- WALLACE, ROSE, 11 years old, 1214 East Eleventh street.
- WEBER, MRS. FREDERICK, 36 years old, 30 East Ninth street.
- WEIS, FREDERICK, 19 years old, 532 Fifth street.
- WOLF, FREDA, 2 years old, 283 Himrod street, Brooklyn.
- WOLMER, KATHERINE E., 58 years old, 246 Woodbine street, Brooklyn.
- WOODS, MRS. WALTER E., 26 years old, 127 First avenue.
- WOULREIN, HULDA, 28 years old, 1702 Dean street, Brooklyn.
- WURTENBERGER, LILLIAN, 19 months old, 55 First avenue.
- WERNZ, ANNIE, 22 years old, 426 Sixth street.
- WEIDMAN, CATHERINE, 29 years old, 79 East Houston street.
- WEIDMAN, HARRIET, 79 East Houston street.
- WEISS, John, Jr., 5 months old, 532 Fifth street.
- WEISS, SALOME, 14 years old, 532 Fifth street.
- WURMSTITCH, BARBARA, 37 years old, 413 Fifth street.

## Z

- ZIEGLER, EMILY, 19 years old, No. 370 East Tenth street; identified by John Schrenck, a friend.
- ZIMMERMAN, HUGO (12), No. 196 Second avenue.
- ZIPSE, LOUISE (10), No. 335 East Twenty-first street.
- ZIMMERMAN, AUGUSTA (16), No. 106 Second avenue.
- ZITSI, MARY (14), No 335 East Twenty-first street.
- ZAHN, MRS. BERTHA, 22 years old, 693 First avenue.
- ZIMMERMAN, WILLIAM (30), 229 Bleeker street, Brooklyn.

## MISSING

## A

- ADDICKS, AMELIA, 75 years old, No. 49 Avenue A.
- ADDICKS, JOHN, 16 years old.
- ADDICKS, MARY, 9 years old.
- ADDICKS, ANNIE, 7 years old.
- ADDICKS, ERNEST, 5 years old.
- ADDICKS, MARTHA, 10 years old.
- ANGER, CARL, Assistant Superintendent of the St. Mark's Lutheran Church Sunday School.
- ANGER, MRS. CARL, No. 357 East Sixty-second street.
- ANGER, EDWIN, No. 243 East Fourteenth street.
- ANGER, MRS. CHARLES, No. 523 East Eighty-third street.
- ARMBURST, BARBARA, No. 166 East Fourth street.
- ARMBURST, EDA, No 166 East Fourth street.
- ABESSER, MRS., 128 East Fourth street.
- ABESSER, HENRY, 128 East Fourth street.
- ARMOND, ———, grandmother, 334 East Sixth street.
- ARMOND, ———, grandchild, 334 East Sixth street.
- ABESSER, KATE (8), No. 129 East Fourth street.
- ABESSER, EMILY (11), No. 128 East Fourth street.
- ABRAHAMS, ISAAC (24), No. 166 Avenue C.
- ACKERMAN, MRS. BARBARA, No 406 East Fifth street.

- ACKERMAN, LENA, 16 months old, No. 406 East Fifth street.  
 ALFELD, MRS. CARL (44), No. 339 Sixth street.  
 ARMBRUST, MAMIE (13), No. 166 East Fourth street.  
 ANGER, ROSE, No. 1365 Third avenue.  
 ANGER, GERTRUDE, No. 1365 Third avenue.  
 ABRAM, ISAAC (24), No. 156 Avenue C.

## B

- BAGLEY, MRS. MARY, 41 years old. No. 489 West One Hundred and Thirtieth street.  
 BAGLEY, LIZZIE, 11 years old, daughter of Mary.  
 BALLNER, JOSEPH (16), No. 123 First avenue.  
 BALLNER, MINNIE (8), No. 123 First avenue.  
 BENECKE, MRS. WILLIAM C., No. 420 East Seventeenth street.  
 BECK, MRS. CHRISTIAN (56), wife of John Beck, No. 315 East Ninth street.  
 BUCK, ——, child of George Buck.  
 BUCK, ——, child of George Buck.  
 BEHRENS, ALICE, 15 years old, No. 127 Garden street, Hoboken.  
 BEHRENDT, MRS. MARY, No. 88 Third street; seriously burned; wandered from police custody after reporting loss of her children.  
 BEHRENDT, LIZZIE, 10 years old, No. 88 Third street.  
 BEHRENDT, FANNIE, 8 years old, No. 88 Third street.  
 BERTRAND, ——, 730 Sixth street.  
 BERTRAND, MRS. ——, wife of above.  
 BROOKS, MARY (12), No. 5 Avenue A.  
 BRUCHARD, MRS. ——, wife of a physician of Hoboken.  
 BRUNING, JOHN (46), No. 215 East Twelfth street.  
 BECKER, CLARA, 1157 Lexington avenue.  
 BENDELOW, LULU, 84 East Seventh street.  
 BENDELOW, GEORGE, 84 East Seventh street.  
 BRUNICK, WILLIAM, 71 East Fifth street.  
 BROOK, MARGARET (13), No. 51 First avenue.  
 BEHRENS, FRED, 134 East Twenty-eighth street.

- BAUMLER, MRS. LENA, and three children, No. 526 East Sixth street.
- BONEHARDT, OTTO, No. 304 East Fourteenth street.
- BONEHARDT, ELLA, No. 304 East Fourteenth street.
- BETTER, HENRY, 46 years old, No. 730 East Sixth street.
- BETTER, JACOB, 31 years old, No. 730 East Sixth street.
- BETTER, RICHARD, 16 years old, No. 730 East Sixth street.
- BETTER, MAMIE, 14 years old, No. 730 East Sixth street.
- BETTER, CHARLES, 12 years old, No. 730 East Sixth street.
- BETTER, MRS. HENRY, 40 years old, No. 730 East Sixth street
- BAHR, LILLY, 7 years old, No. 424 East Ninth street.
- BAHR, IDA, 13 years old, No. 424 East Ninth street.
- BAHR, MRS., 33 years old, No. 424 East Ninth street.
- BRANDT, IDA, 25 years old, No. 410 East Ninth street.
- BROWN, MINNIE, 13 years old, No. 69 First avenue.
- BOENHARDT, OTTO, 13 years old, No. 322 East Thirteenth street.
- BOENHARDT, ELLA, 12 years old, No. 322 East Thirteenth street.
- BOESSE, MRS., 34 years old, No. 125 Avenue A.
- BARKER, K., No. 137 Avenue B.
- BEISS, ROSA, 5 years old, No. 70 First avenue.
- BRECKERSTUCHS, ANNIE, No. 276 First avenue.
- BAUMLER, MRS., No. 433 East Sixth street.
- BAUMLER, ANNIE, No. 433 East Sixth street.
- BAUMLER, EMLIA, No. 433 East Sixth street.
- BAUMLER, CHARLIE, No. 433 East Sixth street.
- BARCEI, MRS. LIZZIE, No. 284 East Seventh street.
- BEDESKY, ETTIE, No. 85 East Third street.
- BAIST, LILLIAN (12), No. 23 Avenue B.
- BUCHMILLER, MRS. ANNIE (27), No. 79 Colyer street, Greenpoint.
- BUCHMILLER, GEORGE (8), No. 79 Colyer street, Greenpoint.
- BUCHMILLER, ARTHUR (10), No. 79 Colyer street, Greenpoint.
- BEHRENS, HENRY, (5), No. 134 East Twenty-eighth street.
- BOZENHARDT, LUCILLE (11), No. 110 First avenue.

- BRUNING, GRACE (14), No. 215 East Twelfth street.  
BECKMANN, ANNIE, Third avenue, near One Hundred and Fourth street.  
BECKMANN, ———, 4 months old, Third avenue, near One Hundred and Fourth street.  
BERDOLDT, MRS. F. (30), No. 41 Third avenue.  
BENTZ, OTTO (14), No. 333 Fifth street.  
BEHNKEN, ANNIE (13), East Forty-eighth street.

## C

- CATLIN, ROSE, 19 years old, No. 27 Sheriff street.  
CORDES, ETTA, 23 years old, No. 411 East Sixteenth street.  
CORDES, FRANK, 14 years old, No. 411 East Sixteenth street.  
CORDES, CHARLES, 18 years old, No. 411 East Sixteenth street.  
COHRS, HENRY, 1 year old, No 70 First avenue.  
COHRS, MRS., No. 70 First avenue.  
COHRS, HENRY, No. 70 First avenue.  
COHRS, FREDA, 6 years old, No. 70 First avenue.  
COHRS, FREDA, 25 years old, No. 70 First avenue.  
CRAGER, WINIFRED, No. 222 East Twelfth street.  
COHN, MICHAEL, No. 106 Avenue A.  
COHN, MRS. MICHAEL, No. 106 Avenue A.  
COLLINS, CHARLES (36), No 401 West Twenty-third street.  
CAHILL, MRS. ANNA (22), No. 316 Sixth street.

## D

- DEMEINER, MRS. ———, No. 895 Jefferson place.  
DORAN, MRS. THOMAS, 28 years old, No. 447 East Twenty-fifth street.  
DORAN, ———, 14 months old, child of Mrs. Doran.  
DIPPERT, CHARLES, 10½ months old, son of Charles and Mary Dippert.  
DOEHRING, IDA, 33 years old, wife of the Rev. E. Doerhing, Lutheran Missionary on Ellis Island.

- DOEHRING, GUSTAV, 9 years old, her son.  
 DOEHRING, MARTHA, 5 years old, her daughter.  
 DORFFHAGER, MRS. ———, 40 years old, No. 128 Avenue A.  
 DORFFHAGER, FRED, 10 years old, No. 128 Avenue A.  
 DORFFHAGER, FRED, 13 years old, No. 128 Avenue A.  
 DORFFHAGER, MAMIE, 8 years old, No. 128 Avenue A.  
 DIETZ, ROSIE, 438 East Sixth street.  
 DITTRICH, MRS. HENRY, 30 years old, No. 96 Greenwich street.  
 DITTRICH, EMMA, 2 years old, No. 96 Greenwich street.  
 DITTRICH, HERMAN, 4 years old, No. 96 Greenwich street.  
 DITTRICH, ALBERT, 9 years old, No. 96 Greenwich street.  
 DITTRICH, GEORGE, 10 years old, No. 96 Greenwich street.  
 DISTLER, HENRY, No. 116 East Fourteenth street, and three children.  
 DELUCCE MRS., No. 54 East Seventh street.  
 DELUCCE, ROSIE, 54 East Seventh street.  
 DELUCCE, HENRY, No. 54 East Seventh street.  
 DELUCCE, FRANKIE, No. 54 East Seventh street.  
 DULS, JULIA, No. 103 Avenue A.  
 DULS, PAULINA, No. 103 Avenue A.  
 DULS, MINNIE, No. 103 Avenue A.  
 DRUSE, FRIEDA (28), No. 54 East Fourth street.  
 DRUSE, HENRY (6), No. 54 East Fourth street.  
 DRUSE, TILLIE (2), No. 54 East Fourth street.  
 DAUERHEIM, MRS. MINNIE, No. 1065 Jackson avenue, the Bronx.  
 DERSCH, MRS. HELEN (40), No. 76 First avenue.  
 DEBRICHT, MARTHA (8), No. 414 East Ninth, Salvation Army Home.  
 DIEHL, LULU (34), No. 209 East Fifth street.  
 DIEHL, JOSEPHINE (7), No. 209 East Fifth street.  
 DIEHL, KATIE (3), No. 209 East Fifth street.  
 DIEHL, MRS. KATE (59), No. 209 East Fifth street.  
 DORKMAN, JENNIE, Jersey City.  
 DEINER, MRS., No. 895 Jefferson place.



DUNN, MRS. JULIA, Sherwood Park, N. Y.

DUNN, ARTHUR, her son.

## E

ERDMAN, MARGARET (36), wife of Anthony, No. 346 East Ninth street.

ERKLIN, MRS. OTTO E., No. 1028 Hudson street, Hoboken.

ERKLIN, ———, three children of above, aged 5 years, 2 years and 2 months.

ENGER, ROSIE, daughter of George Enger, No. 1365 Third avenue.

ENGER, GERTRUDE, daughter of George.

EICKHOFF, AUGUSTA, 15 years old, 196 Second avenue.

EICKHOFF, HUGO, 12 years old, 196 Second avenue.

ENGLEMAN, ANNA, No. 41 East Twelfth street.

ESHER, ROSIE (16), No. 87 Avenue A.

EHLIG, CONEY (7), No. 425 Fifth street, and two sisters.

ENS, MRS. CHRISTIANA, No. 184 West Broadway.

ELK, MRS. ADDIE, No. 306 Sixth street.

EBLING, MRS. A. (32), No. 77 First avenue.

EBLING, GEORGE (5), No. 77 First avenue.

ELICK, ELSIE (4), No. 433 East Fifth street.

ELICK, LIZZIE, No. 433 East Fifth street.

## F

FASSNER, MRS. JOHANNA, No. 332 East Fifth street.

FASSNER, MUSIE, 12 years old, No. 333 East Fifth street.

FASSNER, WILLIE, 9 years old, No. 333 East Fifth street.

FRICKBOHM, ERNEST, 11 years old, No. 91 Avenue B.

FRICKBOHM, FRED, 9 years old, No. 91 Avenue B.

FULLER, MRS. ANNIE, No. 95 Second avenue.

FULLER, ———, her three sons, 8, 10 and 12 years old.

FELTZKE, MRS., No. 211 East Fifth street.

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- FELTZKE, LIZZIE, 15 years old, No. 211 East Fifth street.  
FELTZKE, HERMAN, 8 months old, No. 211 East Fifth street.  
FUNK, MICHAEL, 12 years old, No. 31 Avenue A.  
FREY, EDNA, No. 84 Seventh street.  
FREY, LOUIS, No. 84 Seventh street.  
FREY, GUSSIE, No. 84 Seventh street.  
FISCHER, MRS., 52 years old, No. 108 First avenue.  
FRICKBOLM, MRS., No. 284 East Seventh street.  
FRICKBOHN, EARNEST, No. 91 Avenue D.  
FRICKBOHN (servant, name unknown), No. 91 Avenue D.  
FITTIG, MRS. PETER, No. 120 Second avenue.  
FITTIG, ELSIE, No. 120 Second avenue.  
FICKLBAUM, MARIE, 27 years old No. 284 East Seventh street.  
FICKLBAUM, MARY, 12 years old, 284 East Seventh street.  
FICKLBAUM, ERNEST, 10 years old, 284 East Seventh street.  
FICKLBAUM, FRED., 8 years, 284 East Seventh street.  
FULMER, JOSEPH, No. 123 First avenue.  
FELTHUSEN, boy, No. 50 West Eighth street.  
FISCHLER, HATTIE, 8 years old, No. 314 East Ninetieth street.  
FINKELHAZEL, MRS. CATHERINE (35), No. 439 East Sixth street.  
FELLIG, PETER, No. 58 Willett street.

G

- GREVEL, EMMA (15), No. 117 Second avenue.  
GASSMAN, MRS., No. 128 East Fourth street.  
GRETZ, MRS. BARBARA (37), No. 526 East Sixth street.  
GRETZ, GEORGE (8), No. 526 East Sixth street.  
GRETZ, LILLIAN, 10 months old, No. 526 East Sixth street.  
GREVE, FRED (14), No. 54 Seventh street.  
GREVE, MRS., No. 54 Seventh street.  
GOSS, MARY (59), No. 97 Seventh street.  
GREWALD, ELSIE (9), No. 56 Seventh street.  
GREWALD, FRITZ (12), No. 56 Seventh street.

- GILLIS, CHARLES (16), no address.  
 GRANNING, MRS. LENA (27), No. 45 Seventh street.  
 GRANNING, HENRY (6), No. 45 Seventh street.  
 GALEWSKY, FLORA (36), No. 54 Seventh street.  
 GALEWSKY, MORRIS (3), No. 54 Seventh street.  
 GALLAGHER, VERONICA, 35 years old, No. 45 East Fifteenth street.  
 GALLAGHER, WALTER (7), No. 45 East Fifteenth street.  
 GALLAGHER, KATIE (5), No. 45 East Fifteenth street.  
 GEISLER, MRS. CATHERINE (20), No. 201 Avenue A.  
 GEISLER EDWARD (19), No. 201 Avenue A.  
 GEISLER, WILLIAM (17), No. 201 Avenue A.  
 GIBBONS, MARGARET (13), No. 225 East Fifth street.  
 GIBBONS, ELLA (11), No. 225 East Fifth street.  
 GRUENNING, MRS. HELEN (29), No. 45 Seventh street.  
 GRUENNING, HARRY (5).  
 GRUENNING, CHARLES (3).  
 GRUENNING, HELEN, 9 months old.

## H

- HENKEL, LILLIE (8), No. 227 Seventh street.  
 HAÄG, MRS. Susana (49), No. 158 First avenue.  
 HAAG, ELLA (13), No. 158 First avenue.  
 HEYL, DORA (18), No. 9 West Nineteenth street.  
 HENTZENBERGER, two boys, No. 22 St. Mark's place.  
 HETTINGER, MRS. A. J., No. 127 First avenue.  
 HARRIS, SYLVIA (10), No. 242 East Fifth street.  
 HARRIS, AGNES (19), No. 242 East Fifth street.  
 HECKERT, ANIOME (12), Avenue A and Fifth street.  
 HAAD, WILLIAM (14), No. 210 East Fourteenth street.  
 HAAD, WILMA (13), No. 210 East Fourteenth street.  
 HAAD, EMMA (11), No. 210 East Fourteenth street.  
 HARTMANN, MARJORIE (15), No. 309 East Tenth street.  
 HARTMANN, CLARA (11), No. 309 East Tenth street.

HARTMANN, MRS. MARY (45), No 309 East Tenth street.

HARTING, HARRY (15).

HARTING, WILLIE (15).

HARTING, CLARA (11).

HEINZ, ANNIE (40), No. 300 Hunt street.

HEINZ, ETTA (10), No. 300 Hunt street.

HEINZ, ANNA, No. 240 Ninth avenue.

HORWAY, CARL (1), No. 313 East Ninth street.

HOTZ, LILLIE (9), No. 319 Fifth street.

HOTZ, BERTHA (13), No. 319 Fifth street.

HETTERICH, ROBERT (6), No. 420 East Fifteenth street.

HETTERICH, EMIL (3), No. 420 East Fifteenth street.

HETTERICH, ADOLPHE (1), 420 East Fifteenth street.

HENRY, SADIE (12), No. 225 Fifth street.

HENZLER, JACOB (9), No. 154 First avenue.

HENZLER, GUSSIE (11), No. 154 First avenue.

HENZLER, MILLIE (18), No. 154 First avenue.

HEUER, MRS. LENA, No. 129 Division street.

HEUER, DORA (5), No. 129 Division street.

HEUER, HERMAN (7), No. 129 Division street.

HEUER, MAY (15), No. 129 Division street.

HOFFMAN, RAYMOND, son of Fred Hoffman, No. 73 Second street.

HOFFMAN, EDNA, daughter of Fred Hoffman, No. 73 Second street.

HAVEMEYER, EMMA (27), No. 1499 First avenue.

HAVEMEYER, WILLIAM (7), No. 1499 First avenue.

HARTUNG, MRS. LOUISA, no address.

HARTUNG, MINNIE, no address.

HARTUNG, FRANCES (17), no address.

HAGENBUSER, MAMIE, Sherwood Park, N. Y.

HOFFMAN, MARIE, No. 1394 Washington avenue, Bronx.

HAVEMEYER, ANNA (35), No. 1499 First avenue.

HAGENBARCER, MRS. KATE, and eight children, No. 211 Third avenue.

## J

IDEN, EMMA (13), No. 67 East Fourth street.  
IDEN, MINNIE (7), No. 100 East Fourth street.

## K

KIEFERG, LOUIS J. (21), No. 1592 Second avenue.  
KEPPLER, LILLIE (16), No. 192 First avenue.  
KLEUCK, MINNIE (19), No. 438 Sixth street.  
KLEIN, EMILY (7), No. 314 East Sixth street.  
KRUNING, MRS., and three children, Seventh street and Second avenue.  
KORNMAN, MINNIE, No. 402 Third street.  
KOCH, GUSSIE (21), No. 84 Seventh street.  
KUENSTER, WILLIAM (13), No. 65 St. Mark's place.  
KRAFFT, MRS. LOUISE (30), No. 140 East Fourth street.  
KOPF, EMILE (10), No. 337 East Ninth street.  
KOPF, FRANCES (8), No. 337 East Ninth street.  
KOPF, ELLA (1), No. 337 East Ninth street.  
KUNZE, GUSSIE, No. 89 Broadway, Brooklyn.  
KRUSTSCH, MARTHA (14), No. 513 Sixth street.  
KLATTHAAR, GEORGE (56), No. 506 Fifth street.  
KLEMM, MRS. (60), No. — East Ninth street.  
KALB, GUSSIE (22), No. 84 East Seventh street.  
KLEINHENZ, BARBARA (44), No. 196 Avenue A.  
KLEINHENZ, LENA (11), No. 196 Avenue A.  
KIEGLER, LIZZIE (4), No. 257 Avenue A  
KIEGLER, FRED (9), No. 257 Avenue A.  
KIEGLER, DORA (11), No. 257 Avenue A.  
KREUDER, MRS ANNIE, No. 52 West Ninety-seventh street.  
KREUDER, MRS. LENA, No. 52 West Ninety-seventh street.  
KLEINBERT, TESSIE (17), No. 431 East Fifteenth street.  
KLEINBERT, ANNA, No. 431 East Fifteenth street.  
KNUESSEL, MRS. (35), No. 439 Sixth street.

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KNUESSEL, WILLIAM (11).

KNUESSEL, ANNIE (9).

KNUSSEL, NETTIE (8).

KLEIN, MRS. KATE (22), No. 436 East Fifteenth street.

L

LYMAN, SAMUEL (8), No. 72 Avenue B.

LAMBECK, ALBERTINA (33), No. 427 Ninth street.

LAMBECK, DORA (11), No. 427 Ninth street.

LAMBECK, MINNIE (9), No. 427 Ninth street.

LAMBECK HERMAN (14), No. 427 Ninth street.

LAMBECK ALBERT (4), No. 427 Ninth street.

LOEFFLER, MRS. KATRINA (40), No. 9 East Third street.

LAURIE, LONA (15), No. 111 East Fourth street.

LUTZ, GUSTAV (16), No. 148 Second avenue.

LINK, ARTHUR (14), No. 76 Avenue A.

LINK, EDWARD (14), No. 76 Avenue A.

LINK, LOTTIE (8), No. 76 Avenue A.

LUPENZ, MRS. GERTRUDE (46), No. 102 Clymer street, Brooklyn.

LUPENZ MILDRED (18), No. 102 Clymer street, Brooklyn.

M

MACK, FRIEDA (8), Training School, No. 414 East Ninth street.

MACK, ANNIE (22), No. 401 East Fifth street.

MULLER, MRS. FLORENTINA (60), No. 321 East Ninth street.

MULLER, GROVER (12), No. 95 Second avenue.

MULLER ARTHUR (5), No. 95 Second avenue.

MULLER WALTER (9), No. 95 Second avenue.

MULLER, IRENE (4), Bowery and Cooper square.

MEDOLEN, KATIE (35), No. 338 Fifth street.

MEDOLEN, FRED, No. 338 Fifth street.

MEDOLEN, ALBERT, No. 338 Fifth street.

- MEDOLEN, ROBERT, No. 338 Fifth street.  
MATTES, LIZZIE (21), No. 67 Avenue A.  
MUTH, MRS. KATE, No. 785 One Hundred and Forty-Sixth street.  
MUTH, KATE (8), No. 785 East One Hundred and Forty-sixth street.  
MUTH JOHN (3), No. 785 East One Hundred and Forty-sixth street.  
MUTH MRS. ANNA, No. 1254 Lexington avenue.  
MUTH, CONRAD (12), No. 1254 Lexington avenue.  
MELPEN, MRS. FREDERICK, No. 80 First avenue.  
MEYER, MRS. LIZZIE, No. 387 Madison street.  
MAMME, MRS. FREDERICK, No. 730 Sixth avenue.  
MAMME, CHARLES, No. 730 Sixth avenue.  
MENNINGER, MRS. LIZZIE (30), No. 631 Bergen avenue.  
McCARTIN, PATROLMAN GEORGE, West One Hundred and Fifty-second street station, with his wife and family.  
MOELLER, MRS., No. 20 St. Mark's place.  
MOELLER, EDWIN (5), No. 20 St. Mark's place.  
MOLITER, MRS. MARGARET (45), Sherwood Park, N. Y.  
MOLITER, CARL (her son), (4).  
MOLITER, FANNIE (daughter).  
MOLITER, JOSEPH (son), (6 mos.).  
MARSHALL, DANIEL (12), No. 127 First avenue.  
MARSHALL, HENRY (9), same address.  
MOELLER, HENRY (13), No. 20 St. Mark's place.  
MARIO, MAMIE (14), No. 121 Pitt street.

## N

- NOLL, KATIE (11), No. 400 Fifth street.  
NOLL, THEODORE (6), No. 400 Fifth street.  
NIEBAHR, MRS. M. (38), No. 23 Avenue B.  
NIEBAHR, MARIE (9), No. 23 Avenue B.

NIEBAHR, MAMIE (7), No. 23 Avenue B.

NECKER, TESSIE (7), Sixteenth street and Ninth avenue.

## O

OTTENGER, MRS. KATE (33), No. 91 Seventh street.

OTTENGER, CHARLES (15), No. 91 Seventh street.

OTTENGER, ANDREW (7), No. 91 Seventh street.

OTTENGER, ARTHUR (5), No. 91 Seventh street.

OCHSE, CARRIE (15), No. 50 St. Mark's place.

OCHSE, EDWARD (11), No. 50 St. Mark's place.

OSMUS, MRS. MARY (52), No. 49 East Eighty-ninth street.

OSMUS, ADOLPH (17), No. 49 East Eighty-ninth street.

OELBRICK, FRED (6), No. 519 Willoughby street, Brooklyn.

OELBRICK, HENRY (12), No. 519 Willoughby street, Brooklyn.

OELBRICK, MINNIE (4), No. 519 Willoughby street, Brooklyn.

OELBRICK, LIZZIE (3), No. 519 Willoughby street, Brooklyn.

OELBRICK, HELEN (2), No. 519 Willoughby street, Brooklyn.

OHL, EMILY (11), No. 340 East street.

OHL, CHARLES (9), No. 340 East Ninth street.

## P

PORT, HENRY (15), No. 58 East Fourth street.

PORT, PAULINE (12), No. 58 East Fourth street.

PEINING, MRS. (54), No. 45 Seventh street.

PULLMAN, WILLIAM (16), No. 337 East Eighteenth street.

PULLMAN, MRS. ELIZABETH, No. 337 East Eighteenth street.

PULLMAN, ELSIE (18), No. 337 East Eighteenth street.

PETERS, MARGARET (22), No. 50 Avenue A.

PROBST, KATE (24), No. 516 East Twelfth street.

PAULY, KATE (20), No. 26 Avenue A.

PAULY, ELSIE (13), No. 26 Avenue A.



## Q

QUINN, GEORGE, No. 211 Fifth street.  
QUINN, HATTIE, No. 211 Fifth street.  
QUINN, HENRIETTA, No. 211 Fifth street.

## R

RICHTER, AMELIA (47), No. 404 Sixth street.  
RICHTER, AMELIA (20), No. 404 Sixth street.  
RICHTER, ERNST (12), No. 404 Sixth street.  
RICHTER, ANNA (8), No. 404 Sixth street.  
RICHTER, LIZZIE (19), No. 404 Sixth street.  
ROSENSTEIN, KATIE (27), No. 127 First avenue.  
ROTHMAN, MRS. ELIZA (40), No. 100 First avenue.  
ROTHMAN, — (8), No. 100 First avenue.  
ROTHMAN, — (11), No. 100 First avenue.  
REICHBACH — (2), son of Mrs. Helen Reichbach, No. 240  
Stockton street, Brooklyn.  
RHEINFRANK, J., Goerck and East Third streets.  
ROSENBERGER, MRS. MARY, No. 417 East Eighteenth street.  
ROSENBERGER — (8), No. 417 East Eighteenth street.  
REULING, GERTRUDE, No. 424 Sixth street.  
RICE, KATE, No. 70 First avenue.  
RICE, ROSE (16), No. 70 First avenue.  
RICE, LIZZIE (6), No. 70 First avenue.  
RICE, LORENZO (4), No. 70 First avenue.  
RICE, ANNIE (3), No. 70 First avenue.  
RUTHINGER, ERNEST (16), No. 47 St. Mark's place.  
RUTHINGER, MRS. NITA (39), No. 47 St. Mark's place.  
RUTHINGER, ELSIE (14), No. 47 St. Mark's place.  
RUTHINGER, FRED (10), No. 47 St. Mark's place.  
RICHTER, FRED (11), No. 104 First avenue.  
ROSENAGEL, LUCY (14), No. 129 East Fourth street.  
ROSENAGEL, CHARLES R., No. 129 East Fourth street.  
RIETZ, TESSIE (12), No. 90 First avenue.

RAMUS, IRVING (11), No. 420 East Seventeenth street.

RAMUS, FREDERICK (60), same address.

## S

SCHNEIDER, MRS. DORA (32), No. 322 Stanhope street, Brooklyn.

SCHNEIDER, KATE (8), No. 322 Stanhope street, Brooklyn.

SCHNEIDER, AMELIA (6), No. 322 Stanhope street, Brooklyn.

SCHMILING, MRS. ELIZA (36), No. 123 Avenue A.

SCHMILING, FRED, No. 123 Avenue A.

STOCKDALE, MRS. KATE (52), No. 266 West One Hundred and Thirty-first street.

STOCKDALE, EDWARD J. (32), No. 266 West One Hundred and Thirty-first street.

SCHUMACHER, KATE (14), No. 436 Sixth street.

SCHUMACHER, EDWARD (10), No. 436 Sixth street.

SCHUEBBE, CARRIE (15), No. 54 Avenue A.

SCHUMANN, MRS. MARY (30), No. 54 Avenue A.

SCHUMANN, ANNIE (5), No. 54 Avenue A.

SCHUMANN, ALFRED (7), No. 54 Avenue A.

SCHUMANN, EMMA (22 mos.), No. 54 Avenue A.

STEIN, CARRIE (9), No. 45 First avenue.

STEGEL, ANNIE (13), First avenue and Fourth street.

SANDERS, NELLIE (13), No. 416 East Sixteenth street.

STERN, LOUISA (15), No. 508 Fifth street.

SCHOENONGET, MRS., No. 118 East Third street.

SILVERBERG, LILLIE (18), No. 215 West Thirteenth street.

SIEGWERT, HARRY (10), No. 225 Fifth street.

SIEGWERT, PHILIP (8), No. 225 Fifth street.

SCHOTTSBERG, MRS., and two children, No. 22 St. Mark's place.

SCHEIER, FRED (20), — East Eighth street.

SHARF, MARY (62), No. 419 East Ninth street.

SMITH, WILLIAM (5), No. 142 Seventh avenue.

SCHNITZLER, KATE (6), No. 801 East One Hundred and Forty-seventh street.

- SCHNEIDER, MRS. T. (40), No. 326 Sixth street.  
 SCHNEIDER, EVA (14), No. 326 Sixth street.  
 SCHOEFLING, EDWARD (10), No. 189 Third avenue.  
 SCHUMPF, LIZZIE, No. 208 Avenue B.  
 STEGMAN, MRS., East Fourth street.  
 SCHMIDT, HENRY (38)  
 SCHAIER, MRS. (20), No. 237 East Tenth street.  
 SCHAIER, MARGARET (7 mos.), No. 237 East Tenth street.  
 SACKMAN, MRS. MARGARET, No. 343 Rivington street.  
 SACKMAN, MARGARET (10), No. 343 Rivington street.  
 STECKERMAN, MRS., No. 225 Fifth street.  
 STECKERMAN, HERMAN (8), No. 225 Fifth street.  
 STENGER, ROSIE (7), No. 88 East Third street.  
 SIEGEL, MRS. T. (24), No. 54 Seventh street.  
 SCHMIDT, MRS. WILLIAM, No. 138 East Seventh street.  
 STUBENRAUCH, ANNA (21), No. 303 Sixth street.  
 SCHMIDT, ERNA (5 mos.), No. 264 First avenue.  
 SCHNEIDER, TESSIE (14), No. 90 First avenue.  
 SCHLUVER, W., Mr. and Mrs., No. 462 East Seventy-sixth street.  
 SCHLUVER, HARRY, Mr. and Mrs. and two children, No. 196  
 Irwin street, Brooklyn.  
 SCHRENEMANN, ELSIE (17), No. 986 Holmes street, Bronx.  
 SCHRENEMANN, JOHN (15), same address.  
 STRICKORD, MRS., and four children, No. 144 Essex street.

## T

- TROLL, ALBERT (12), No. 405 Fifth street.  
 TOTTEBAUM, MRS. LIZZIE (48), No. 61 St. Mark's place.  
 TOTTEBAUM, HENRY (5), No. 61 St. Mark's place.  
 TOTTEBAUM, WILLIAM (9), No. 61 St. Mark's place.  
 TODE, MRS. (65), No. 103 East Seventy-fifth street.

## U

- ULRICH, JULIA (15), No. 58 Willet street.  
 UHLANDCREFF, LOUISE (8), No. 93 Third avenue.

## V

VETTER, MRS. HENRY, and two children, No. 720 Sixth street.

VETTER, MAMIE (17), No. 17 Sixth street.

VOETH, WILLIAM, SR. (54), No. 107 East Fourth street.

## W

WOOLMAN, MRS. CATHERINE, No. 2225 Jerome avenue.

WOODMAN, LOUISA, No. 2225 Jerome avenue.

WOLFF, MRS. M. No. 420 East Sixteenth street.

WEBER, FRANK (7), No. 404 Fifth street.

WEBER, EMMA (10½), No. 404 Fifth street.

WEISS, MRS. IDA M (40), No. 1335 Third avenue.

WEISS, GEORGE (15), No. 1339 Third avenue.

WALTER, MRS. ELIZABETH (66), No. 336 Sixth street.

Five children of the above.

WOLLMER, MRS. ELIZA, No. 246 Woodbine street, Brooklyn.

WOLLMER, LOUISE (22), No. 246 Woodbine street, Brooklyn.

WORMSTITCH, MR., No. 413 Fifth street.

WOOD, MRS. KATIE (30), Kurtzville, N. J.

WEIDLER, MRS. HENRY (55), No. 411 East Ninth street.

WEIDLER, HERBERT (12), No. 411 East Ninth street.

WENTZ, LEO (11), No. 421 Fifth street.

WENTZ — (9), No. 421 Fifth street.

WENGERT, ETHEL (7), No 409 Fifth street.

WEISS, LOUIS (—), No. 532 Fifth street.

WOLFERT, MRS. ROBERT (—), No. 106 Seventh street.

WOLFERT, ROBERT (11), No. 106 Seventh street.

WOLFERT — (8), No. 106 Seventh street.

WURTEMBERGER, MRS MAMIE (22), No. 55 First avenue.

WILLIAM, FRANK (19), No. 119 East Twenty-fifth street.

WEBER, EMMA (10), No 404 Fifth street.

WEBER, FRANK (7), same address.

WORTHMANN, JULIA (18), No. 178 Avenue A.

## Z

ZUNDEL, CHARLES (6), No. 104 First avenue.

ZUDERMAN, HENRIETTA, No. 104 First avenue.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### RECORD OF STEAMBOAT DISASTERS

Worse accidents, with greater loss of life, than the burning of the General Slocum have occurred, and yet instances of greater fatality in accidents due to human agency are difficult to find. Probably the worst catastrophe of this character was the fire which, on December 8, 1863, suddenly swept through the crowded Church of the Campana, in Santiago, Chili, where hundreds of women and children were celebrating the last day of "The Month of Mary," and destroyed more than two thousand of them. Caught in the crowded church, without proper exits, the worshipers were cremated, and the public indignation which attended the catastrophe was so violent that the church was razed to the ground.

Of natural convulsions New York has little to fear, but of the accidents which belong particularly to a great city its record is long and melancholy. On water there have been at least two fatal accidents rivaling in a measure that of the Slocum, while on shore there have been countless fatalities, stretching all the way from accidents like that rear end collision in the New York Central's Park avenue tunnel to the great fire on the Hoboken piers, when the North River was filled with burning liners.

Of the accidents in the waters of New York, the first of great importance occurred on July 30, 1871. This day, a pleasant Sunday, brought out the usual number of excursion-

ists to the beaches, and the Staten Island Ferry line was obliged to put on the Westfield for an extra trip. Laden with passengers, this boat had moved well into the stream when she was suddenly shaken by a terrific explosion. Her pilot-house was hurled into the air, great beams were twisted and bent, and many of her passengers who were amidships were blown into the air by the explosion. Many fell into the water; others fell back on the wrecked portion of the boat, from which clouds of steam poured forth. Of the passengers some were drowned, more were burned and scalded to death by the escaping steam. Divers recovered thirty bodies from the harbor, and the total death list was above eighty, while more than one hundred and twenty were injured. Investigation revealed the cause of the accident to have been a defective boiler. Following the catastrophe, the press of the day was filled with clamors for the more careful inspection of steamers, the proper regulation of passenger craft, and other comments strangely like those to be heard at the present moment. The national government undertook an investigation, while the local authorities were busy for days placing the responsibility and recovering the bodies.

But it is the Seawanhaka holocaust, which happened on June 28, 1880, that most strikingly recalls the Slocum tragedy, not merely because it occurred at almost identically the same place in the East River, but also because in incident it is strangely similar. The Seawanhaka was a pleasure steamer plying between Glen Cove and the city, and on the day of the accident she was on her way to the former place, carrying a considerable number of well-known merchants of the city.

Just as the Seawanhaka passed through Hell Gate several

of her crew noticed flames coming from her engine-room. One man ran on deck crying "Fire!" Others endeavored to prevent a panic. The captain, C. P. Smith, from the pilot-house, repeatedly encouraged the excited crowd. As soon as he saw the extent of the fire he turned the boat for Ward's Island, then changed his mind, fearing to attempt grounding, and made for the Sunken Meadows, so frequently mentioned in the accounts of the recent accident.

Meantime the flames swept rapidly over the steamer; passengers one after another felt their clothes catch fire and leaped overboard. But Captain Smith, burned but undaunted, held his place at the wheel until the steamer grounded, and then leaped overboard. Meanwhile women and children were burned to death, exactly as they were on the General Slocum. Fortunately, in this instance the life preservers proved sound and there was time to serve them out. From all sides passing craft hastened to the assistance of the passengers. One yacht that ran alongside was capsized by the rush of people.

After the accident Randall's Island presented the same appearance as North Brother Island after the Slocum disaster—bodies were washed ashore there, divers brought up the bodies of children, in one instance a mother and child, the mother's arms still about her baby. At the morgues precisely the same scene took place. As a result of the good condition of the life preservers, the speedy beaching of the steamer and the absence of a panic, the loss of life was far less than on the General Slocum. Thirty-two bodies were recovered and thirty were subsequently reported missing, making a total of sixty-two, less than a tenth of that caused by the recent disaster.

Prior to the recent horror, the accident which was attended with the greatest loss of life in this vicinity was the burning of the Brooklyn Theater, which for many years was regarded as the worst catastrophe in the annals of the city. This happened on the night of December 5, 1876, when the theater was crowded. Suddenly the cry of "Fire!" was raised, a panic resulted, women and children were buried in the ruins, and a fearful loss of life ensued. Curiously enough, the papers of the following morning gave no suggestion of the extent of the disaster, and even expressed the hope that no lives had been lost. But the next day, when the firemen began to clear away the debris, the extent of the holocaust became apparent. The whole body of the theater was filled with the dead, and 295 bodies were taken out. Of these only 217 could be identified; the remainder were buried under a circular mound in Greenwood Cemetery, and the city of Brooklyn raised a monument to their memory.

But, fearful as was the Brooklyn disaster, it pales before the recent holocaust which happened at the Iroquois Theater, in Chicago, last December. On the afternoon of December 30th this theater, newly opened, and believed to be one of the finest and most modern in the country, was crowded with an audience numbering more than two thousand, and largely consisting of children—a circumstance which closely resembles the situation on the General Slocum. The details of the tragedy are familiar—a sudden burst of flame, an effort on the part of the actors to check the panic, the failure of the asbestos curtain to work, and then, as the flames were driven out by explosions, one wild, frantic rush for the narrow doors—all these incidents were but recently recorded. When the panic



was over and the relief came, Chicago was dazed by the extent of the catastrophe.

At the entrance bodies were piled in tiers, while many who sat in their seats were suffocated. Over six hundred bodies were taken from the theater, in the larger part those of children, in many cases fearfully crushed in the struggle for life. The effects of the Chicago disaster were felt over the world, and in every civilized country there was instant action by public authorities to prevent a repetition.

A list of remarkable disasters to steamers on oceans, rivers and lakes in the last century is appended.

President, foundered in midocean .....	March, 1841; 136 lives lost
St. George, burned in midocean .....	December, 1852; 51 lives lost
Arctic, collision .....	September, 1854; 322 lives lost
Pacific, never heard of .....	September, 1856; 240 persons on board
Le Lyonnais, collision .....	November, 1856; 120 lives lost
Tempest, never heard of .....	November, 1857; 150 lives lost
Austria, burned .....	September, 1858; 470 lives lost
Hungarian, wrecked .....	February, 1860; 237 lives lost
Lady Elgin .....	September, 1860; 297 lives lost
Anglo-Saxon, wrecked .....	April, 1863; 250 lives lost
United Kingdom, disappeared .....	1868; 80 lives lost
City of Boston, never heard of .....	January, 1870; 178 lives lost
Cambria, wrecked .....	October, 1870; 180 lives lost
Atlantic, wrecked .....	April, 1873; 585 lives lost
Ville de Havre, collision .....	November, 1873; 220 lives lost
Schiller, wrecked .....	May, 1875; 312 lives lost
Borussia, foundered .....	December, 1879; 165 lives lost
Cimbria, collision .....	January, 1883; 389 lives lost
Vicksburg, struck by an iceberg .....	June, 1875; 147 lives lost
Dan Steinman, wrecked .....	April, 1874; 116 lives lost
State of Florida, collision .....	April, 1884; 103 lives lost
W. A. Scholton, collision .....	November, 1887; 182 lives lost
Geiser, collision .....	August, 1888; 119 lives lost
Erin, disappeared .....	December, 1889; 72 lives lost
Utopia, collision .....	March, 1891; 563 lives lost
Bokhari, wrecked .....	October, 1892; 160 lives lost
Roumanian, wrecked .....	October, 1892; 113 lives lost
Naronic, never heard of .....	February, 1893; 74 lives lost

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Warship Victoria, collision.....	June, 1893;	360 lives lost
Horn Head, sunk by iceberg.....	August, 1893;	62 lives lost
Alvo, disappeared.....	October, 1893;	68 lives lost
Elbe, collision.....	January, 1895;	361 lives lost
City of Haverhill, wrecked.....	April, 1895;	90 lives lost
Colima, wrecked.....	May, 1895;	171 lives lost
Osaka Maru, foundered.....	January, 1896;	68 lives lost
Copernicus, wrecked.....	January, 1896;	163 lives lost
Memphis.....	November, 1896;	62 lives lost
Utopia, wrecked.....	February, 1897;	72 lives lost
Ville de St. Nazaire, foundered.....	March, 1897;	63 lives lost
La Bourgogne, collision.....	June, 1898;	594 lives lost
British warship Captain, foundered in the Bay of Biscay.....	1870;	482 lives lost
German battleship Grosser Kurfurst, rammed by another ship..	1878;	281 lives lost
British warship Eurydice, capsized.....	1879;	all hands (250) lost
Princess Alice, collision.....	September, 1878;	700 lives lost
Nanchow, foundered.....	May, 1892;	509 lives lost
Utorsia, collision.....	April, 1891;	564 lives lost
Shanghai, burned.....	1890;	300 Chinese perished
Quetta, lost in Terres Straits.....	1890;	133 drowned
Chicora, never heard of.....	January, 1895;	26 lives lost
Teuton, foundered after striking a rock.....	1881;	175 lives lost
Spanish cruiser Reina Regina, collision.....	March, 1895;	400 lives lost
Gijon and Laxham, collision, both sunk.....	July, 1884;	150 lives lost
Uncle Joseph, collision.....	November, 1880;	250 lives lost
British training ship Atlanta, disappeared....	January, 1880;	70 men and boys lost
Byzantine, collision in the Dardanelles.....	December, 1878;	225 lives lost
Queen Charlotte, burned, flagship of Lord Keith, off Leghorn Harbor, March, 1880;		700 lives lost
Ajax, burned off island of Tenedos.....	February, 1807;	250 lives lost
Steamer Lexington, Long Island sound, burned off Norwalk, Conn., January, 1840;		122 lives lost
Steamer Erie, burned, Lake Erie.....	August, 1841;	250 lives lost
Steamer J.P. Griffith, burned, Lake Erie.....	June, 1850;	200 lives lost
Steamer Webster, burned, Mississippi River.....	May, 1851;	40 lives lost
Steamer Henry Clay, burned, Hudson River.....	July, 1852;	50 lives lost
Independence, burned off Lower California.....	February, 1853;	471 lives lost
Steamer Ocean Wave, burned, Lake Erie.....	May, 1853;	85 lives lost
H. M. S. Bombay, burned off Flores Island.....	December, 1864;	91 lives lost
Steamer W. A. Waset, burned, Potomac River.....	August, 1873;	50 lives lost
Costpatrick, emigrant vessel on way to Auckland, burned November, 1874;		470 lives lost
Steamer Seawanhaka, burned, East River.....	June, 1880;	62 lives lost
London, foundered.....	January, 1866;	220 killed
Evening Star, foundered.....	October, 1866;	250 killed

Rhone and Wye, wrecked.....	October, 1867; 1,000 killed
Westfield, explosion.....	July, 1871; 82 killed
Northfleet, collision.....	January, 1873; 300 killed
Huron, wrecked.....	November, 1877; 104 killed
Metropolis, wrecked.....	January, 1878; 104 killed
Daphne, turned turtle.....	July, 1883; 124 killed
City of Columbus, wrecked.....	January, 1884; 99 killed
Kapunda, collision.....	January, 1887; 300 killed
Wah Young, burned.....	1877; 100 killed
Sud America and La France, collision.....	September, 1888; 89 killed
Trenton, Vandalia, Nipsic, Adler and Eber, wrecked on Samoan Islands, March, 1889; 147 killed	
Persia, wrecked.....	January, 1890; 130 killed
Dubourg, wrecked.....	February, 1890; 400 killed
Serpent, wrecked.....	November, 1890; 167 killed
Ertogaul, foundered.....	September, 1890; 101 killed
St. Catharis, wrecked.....	April, 1891; 90 killed
Trinabria, wrecked.....	February, 1893; 115 killed
Wairaro, wrecked.....	November, 1894; 134 killed
Reina Regenta, foundered.....	March 11, 1891; 400 killed
Drummond Castle, went ashore.....	June, 1896; 250 killed
Mohegan, wrecked.....	October 14, 1898; 100 killed
Portland, foundered.....	October, 1898; 129 killed
Northfield, collision.....	June 14, 1901; 1 killed, 5 missing

## CHAPTER XXIV

### THE NORGE DISASTER

A lone pile of granite rising sheer out of the Atlantic, 290 miles from the Scottish mainland, now is a monument to almost seven hundred dead who lie in the ocean bed at its base. Near by, completely hidden in the water, is the Scandinavian-American liner Norge, which was carrying nearly eight hundred Danes, Norwegians, Swedes and Finns to join relatives or friends in America. Of these only about one hundred and fifty were saved.

#### SENT FAST TO DOOM

No tragedy of the sea has had more appalling consequences, and none has occurred in a shorter time. The passengers were aroused suddenly from their sleep, terrified by the contact of the bows of the ship with the solid granite, followed by a grinding, rasping sound, as if the hull were being shoved over huge rocks.

Then silence, except the clanging bells, that brought the engines to a stop. Those of the passengers who were standing when the steamer struck were thrown against the bulkheads or on the decks, and had not recovered their feet when a stentorian voice gave the terrifying order: "All hands on deck! Hurry, or you may sink!"

#### PINNED AGAINST THE ROCK

Immediately there was a rush for the narrow companionways, and men, women and children pushed and struggled and

made every other effort to reach the deck, where the boats swung from the davits. Many persons, retaining their presence of mind, seized life preservers, only to find in some instances that the strings were rotten and they could not be put quickly around their bodies. Those who reached the deck saw the nose of the Norge pinned directly against the rock.

It remained there only a few minutes, for Captain Gundel, commanding, who had gone immediately to the bridge, gave the order to the engine-room to reverse the engines. Some men of the engine force had relatives among the passengers, and after seeing them safely to the boats they heroically returned to their stations below.

#### SUPREME FRIGHT AND AGONY

Slowly the ship backed off, and as she gained way it was found that water was pouring into her hold. This announcement, called out in Scandinavian and presaging death, added to the supreme fright and agony. The passengers who were piled in the boats were the fortunate ones who were to escape, while the unfortunates, who saw death near, clustered in the vicinity in seething, struggling masses, some on their knees, praying, surrounded by children, others supplicating aid from any one and shrieking for permission to enter the boats, elbowing, fighting their way to the places from which the boats were being lowered.

The sound of grinding ceased and the bow of the Norge yawed as the steamer returned to deep water. The sea rushed hungrily into the huge rents made by the rocks in the iron hull. Swiftly the vessel began to sink by the bows.

**TACKLE FAILS TO WORK**

Without waiting for orders, without paying attention to their proper manning, the occupants began to lower the boats. The starboard lifeboat began slowly to fall, when, to the horror of those on board, the stern tackle failed, while the bow tackle ran free.

Soon the boat was almost perpendicular. Those in it clung desperately to the sides and seats until a great wave came towering along and struck the boat, smashing it against the side of the ship. The occupants of the boat who were not killed by the impact were thrown into the water. The crew and passengers on deck had no time to spare to assist the few who had a chance to escape but lost it. Undeterred by the experience of the first boat, a second, loaded principally with women and children, was lowered. This time the tackle ran smoothly, but the hopes of escape of the passengers on board were blasted.

**WAVES SMASH BOAT**

The moment it touched the water the waves picked up the small craft as if it had been a feather and dashed it against the side of the ship in spite of the frantic efforts of the passengers to fend it off. The crash was heard on deck. Then the sea swallowed more victims, and pieces of wreckage slowly drifted toward the rock.

The upper deck of the Norge at the time of the disaster to the second boat was only a few feet from the water, and it was apparent to every one that only a few minutes more and she would plunge beneath the waves. In the final crisis those who were able to remember clearly what happened say that the shrieks and sobs died away, and that the quiet was broken

only by the curses of some men whose fear found vent in blasphemy.

#### TAKE TO THE SEA

Suddenly one man threw himself overboard and another followed his example. Still another jumped into the water, and soon around the ship hundreds of persons were struggling in the sea, preferring death in the open to being submerged with the ship. Others determined to stand by the ship, hoping against hope that she would remain afloat.

Three boats, it is known, successfully reached the sea. The passengers frantically pulled away from the doomed ship, passing by poor wretches who still were afloat and who vainly begged to be taken on board, while from the ship came long, despairing cries.

#### DIE WHILE PRAYING

The women in the boat which reached Grimsby hid their eyes, but the men who were sitting facing the Norge say they saw the captain still on the bridge and the passengers on deck in attitudes of prayer. While they looked, the Norge plunged forward, her stern shot up in the air and she disappeared. The swimmers in the vicinity of the ship were drawn into the vortex, around which they swirled like chips in the maelstrom.

But twelve minutes elapsed from the time the ship struck until she sank. A fine Scotch mist which was falling at the time shut out the other survivors from the view of those who were brought to Grimsby. The latter, so soon as their boat was clear of the scene of the wreck, devoted themselves to thoughts of their own safety.

A jacket was tied to an oar, which was in turn fastened in the bow of the boat, and a sailor, a Dane, took charge of the

boat. Men and women were put to work keeping the boat afloat, as a hole had been stove in her bow when it was lowered from the ship. An examination of the water cask showed that it contained not a drop of water. There were some biscuits, however, and these were eaten by the shipwrecked people during the twenty-four hours from the time the ship struck, at 7 o'clock a. m., June 28th, 1904, until they were picked up by the Grimsby trawler *Sylvia*.

#### NO FIRE DRILL

Karl Mathieson, the Danish sailor who assumed command of the boat brought to Grimsby, joined the *Norge* at Copenhagen just before she sailed for New York. He said he knew nothing about the ship's arrangements in case of collision or fire. He never had been instructed in fire drill and did not understand what it meant. He was on deck when the vessel struck, but he did not know, until he heard the captain shouting the order to man the boats, that the damage was great. Mathieson said further:

"I worked with the third mate and followed him to the different boats. The first we attempted to lower fouled her tackle, keeping her stern fixed, while her bows fell and shot the occupants into the water. A heavy sea washed the boat against the ship's side.

#### CREW DISORDERLY

"We went to another, a crowd of shrieking women and children following. The launching operations were not conducted simultaneously, the officers and crew going from one to another. Had men been set at work at each boat more would have been saved. Some of the crew were worse than the passengers, and but for the officers would have put off in the



boats themselves. These were driven back and threatened with death unless they obeyed orders. The captain never left the bridge, but he shouted so many orders that the crew did not know what to do. Therefore I stuck to the third mate. Together we jumped into a small boat just before the vessel went down, but we did not think so many were left behind as appeared on the water when the Norge sank. Those remaining on board were chiefly women and children. I saw only two other boats afloat, one a big lifeboat, easily carrying sixty persons, and the other a smaller boat, carrying possibly forty. No other boats got away, though there were eight on board."

Katrina Tellander, whose husband lives at 331 North Franklin street, Chicago, said:

#### MOTHERS CALL CHILDREN

Everything was quiet and most of the passengers were sleeping. I had left my berth and was dressing my baby. When the ship struck the first time I did not know what it meant, but when it struck again I realized the meaning. I seized my child by the hair and ran up the companionway. I threw the baby into the bottom of a boat and then jumped in myself.

"Some of the women on board had seven or eight children each, from whom they became separated, and the cries of these mothers calling for their missing children were heart-rending.

"The life belts were almost useless, for the strings would not hold. When the boat left the ship there were many passengers standing on the decks, begging, with hands outstretched. Many, too, threw themselves into the water."

**INSTANT BRINGS HEROES**

Many deeds of heroism shine brightly through the pall of catastrophe. That of Jans Peters Jansen, who has relatives in Brooklyn, N. Y., is told with admiration by the survivors. He was one of the engineers of the Norge. When the ship struck he learned the extent of the disaster and went below to where his relatives were, and told them and those near by to go at once to the upper deck. He accompanied them to the boats and saw them safely on board. He was urged to join them, but said he must return to the engine-room, and shouting a farewell, ran to his post of duty, where he died.

Some of the male passengers, without a thought of self, placed women and children in the boats, preferring to remain behind rather than take advantage of their strength.

The mate of the Norge, who left the ship in the boat which arrived at Grimsby, England, seeing that it was overcrowded, leaped into the water for the purpose of swimming to a second boat not far away. He had only gone a short distance when, weighted by his clothes, his strength gave out and he sank.

**ORDERS MISUNDERSTOOD**

The crew of the Norge appear to have behaved well after the first panic, when, it is said, the officers were compelled to drive them back from the boats. But there apparently was no discipline, the orders which the captain shouted from the bridge being misinterpreted or unheard. So far as the survivors here remember, there was no systematic distribution of the people to the boats, which were not adequately manned. No attempt was made by any of the survivors to save property. There was no time to make preparations.

Careful inquiry was made to discover why the Norge was

so far off her course. Rockall reef is known to every sailor on the North Atlantic and is marked plainly on the charts. A strong current sweeps in its direction, and it is presumed, owing to absence of definite knowledge, that the current drew the Norge to her grave; that a heavy mist prevented the lookouts from seeing the danger, and that there was no thought of Rockall reef until the ship struck and the captain called out that they had struck this terror of northern navigation.

#### ROCKALL ROCK

Rockall is a lonely pyramidal rock some 70 feet in height and 250 feet in circumference, rising sheer out of the wild Atlantic waves, about 184 miles west-half south from St. Kilda, in the Outer Hebrides, 290 miles from the nearest point of the Scottish mainland and 260 miles northwest from the nearest point on the Irish coast. More exactly, its position—at least, as nearly as this has been ascertained—is latitude 57 deg. 30 min. north, longitude 13 deg. 42 min. west. There is neither soil upon it nor sandy beach around it, the depth of water close up to it being twenty or thirty fathoms. A “rock,” therefore, it must be called, rather than an island or even an islet, and of all the rocks and islands, great and small, surrounding the British shores it is at once the most remote, the most desolate, the least known and in many respects the most remarkable.

Not only has it never boasted a human inhabitant, but no holiday tripper or sportsman has ever desecrated its shores, and only on one or two occasions is it even known to have been landed upon. Only in the finest weather, when the almost ceaseless swell of the Atlantic has subsided for an hour

or two, is it possible to land upon it, while in winter the ocean waves far overtop its summit. This summit can only be reached, even when a landing has been effected, by an ascent on the northeastern face of the rock, so precipitous are its other sides.

Yet, isolated as Rockall is, it forms, nevertheless, the summit or peak of an extensive submarine plateau known as "Rockall Bank," which extends in a northeasterly and southwesterly direction for about one hundred and fifty miles, which has a breadth of about forty miles and about half of which is submerged to a depth of less than one hundred fathoms. Probably within comparatively recent times (in the geological sense) the greater part of this "bank" was exposed as dry land, which disappeared partly through gradual subsidence and partly through the action of the sea waves.

Close to the main rock and with deep water between them lies a dangerous reef, exposed at low tide, known as Hazlewood Rock; while a mile and a half southeast lies another similar rock, known as Helen's Reef, from a vessel of that name whose wreck upon it first made it known.

That Rockall belongs, politically speaking, to Great Britain is a fact never likely to be disputed, for not only does it lie nearer to the British Isles than to any other land, but none except British fishermen have ever systematically resorted thither to fish. Yet Rockall is certainly no part of the British Isles, speaking strictly and in a physiographical sense, for while all the other islands lying adjacent to Britain, except the Faeros, lie well within what is known as the one hundred fathom contour line, including even St. Kilda, the nearest land, Rockall and the bank surrounding it are separated from

Britain by a sea giving soundings of from eleven hundred to sixteen hundred fathoms—depths which are truly oceanic and which indicate that the period when a dry land communication existed between Rockall and Britain (if, indeed, it ever did so), must have been immensely remote even as the geologist reckons time.

To the mariner Rockall presents itself as a serious danger. Neither the main rock nor the surrounding reef has ever been lighted, belled or buoyed, and the officials of the Trinity House regard them as lying outside their sphere of operations. Yet, though not in the main line of cross-Atlantic traffic, there can be no doubt that they have frequently proved fatal to vessels. There are several actual records of wrecks upon them, the earliest being in 1686, and it is probable that they are partly accountable for some of the disappearances of well found vessels which are reported annually from the Atlantic. Even in broad daylight the main rock is a menace, for, with its steep, tall sides and its pointed top, always whitened by the deposits of sea birds, it is invariably taken at first sight for a ship in full sail.

#### THE CAPTAIN'S STORY

Thirty-two survivors of the steamer Norge were landed at Stornoway, Scotland, on July 4th, by the British steamer Cervona. Seventy survivors were also taken off by the German steamer Energie. They were all in a pitiful condition. Many were taken to the hospital and most of them had to be carried ashore.

Among those on board the Energie was Captain Gundel, of the Norge. He said:

“All went well until about a quarter to eight o'clock last

Tuesday. When about eighteen miles south of Rockall I felt the steamer strike heavily forward on a sunken rock. There was a gentle breeze blowing from the south, with a cloudy sky.

"I was on the bridge with the chief officer, Carpenter. Soundings were taken and it was reported that there were five feet of water in the forward hold.

#### TRIED TO SAVE LIFE

"Orders were given to commence pumping and also to the passengers to put on life belts and be ready to get into the boats, which were ordered to be put out.

"The crew worked nobly under the leadership of the chief officer. Seven boats got safely away, the life rafts were cut adrift and the steamer went down by the bow. The chief officer told me she was sinking, and I told him to jump overboard, which he did. I did not see him again.

"I went down with the steamer. My right leg got jammed between two stanchions and was very much injured. When I rose to the surface I noticed a number of bodies floating.

"The Norge was afloat only about twenty minutes after striking. I swam for about twenty minutes and came across Second Engineer Brunn, who is a good swimmer. We kept company for about an hour and a half, when we noticed a boat some distance off, and we both made for it. I was hindered by my leg, and the engineer reached the boat first. Both of us were taken on board quite exhausted. We found that it was Lifeboat No. 1. It was crowded and under the charge of Able Seaman Peter Olsen.

"After recovering a little I took charge of the boat and the provisions, which consisted only of a box with bread and

two casks of water. The boat was steered for St. Kilda, one hundred and fifty miles distant.

"On Saturday morning we saw a large schooner-rigged steamer about four miles distant. We put up a blanket on an oar, but the steamer passed on without taking any notice of us.

"On Sunday morning a bark passed some distance off, but with the same result.

"At about twelve o'clock Sunday land was sighted and the drooping spirits of all were revived. It proved to be St. Kilda.

"Some time afterward a steamer was noticed coming from the west, bearing down upon our boat. She proved to be the *Energie*, and at six o'clock we were safe on board."

A pathetic little sequel to this tale of rescue is contained in the statement that one of the children in the lifeboat died, and "with the consent of the parents, who were in the boat, the body was buried at sea."

#### HARDSHIPS OF THE SURVIVORS

The seventeen survivors from the steamer *Norge*, picked up in a small boat near the island of St. Kilda and landed at Aberdeen by the steamer *Ratray Bay*, included twelve passengers, the third mate, and the quartermaster, a steward, a lamp trimmer, and one of the crew. They had lived for six days on thirty-four biscuits and six buckets of water.

The party drifted at the mercy of the Atlantic for six days. When both water and food were gone, and when the occupants were almost too exhausted even to hope, the *Ratray Bay* hove in sight. This was on July 4th, when the boat was about thirty miles off St. Kilda.

**ON VERGE OF STARVATION**

Those rescued had eked out an existence on two biscuits per day. When they started from the ill-fated ship there was only one small cask of fresh water in the boat. Before the Rattray Bay fell in with them this and the biscuits had been finished and the pangs of hunger had set in. They weathered a gale and continued as best they might, striving to reach the coast of Scotland against the heavy seas. From strips of life belts they constructed a crude sail. The men had scarcely enough strength to hold the oars.

When the survivors were dragged on board the steamer, the fishermen were obliged to prevent them by force from eating and drinking too much.









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