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**A Sorrowful Story**

*(Special Correspondence of The Star)*  
*Chatterton's Landing, Va., August 10, 1873*

The dreadful disaster last Friday by the burning of the steamer *Wawaset* off Chatterton's landing, some forty miles down the Potomac, and destruction of many women and children by burning and drowning is the subject which most engrosses the attention of the public at this time. In order to give the readers of *The Star* the latest and fullest particulars of the shocking affair obtained directly from the scene, on Saturday evening a *Star* reporter took passage on the steamer *Georgianna*, Capt. Field, bound down on her bay trip, and by the kindness of the captain was put ashore at Stewart's landing, some five miles below the point of the disaster. The boat left the wharf foot of 7<sup>th</sup> street at 6 o'clock, with a large number of passengers bound for the several landings, most of them for Point Lookout. Before she reached Alexandria, the tugboat "*Mary Lewis*" was passed having on board Captain Samuel Gedney on his return from the fatal spot, where he had spent the day in

*Dragging For The Bodies*

of the drowned. In passing, the effects of the day's work were plainly visible on the deck of his tug, several rude boxes being ranged side by side with green boughs covering them. Captain Frank Hollingshead, who was on board the *Georgiana*, hailed Captain Gedney: "How many bodies have you recovered, Captain. "Twenty odd" was the answer, as she shot on towards the city. This information

*Cast A Gloom*

over the passengers, and many an expression of sympathy was uttered by them. After stopping at Glymont a few moments the boat proceeded on her way, making no other landings until she arrived at Stewart's Landing, about 10.45 o'clock. Some dozen friends of the passengers here went ashore with the view of learning some tidings of the lost ones. Finding no accommodations for sleeping here (except the bare wharf), the party started on foot for Chatterton landing some five miles above. The undertaking of walking five miles on the old Virginia shore by moonlight was, by the advice of the keeper of the landing at Stewart's, who assured the party that good shelter could be obtained there, and the distance was not above two miles. The party thought differently when they arrived at Boyd's Hole about 2 o'clock, wet with perspiration, shoes filled with sand, and completely worn out. All the way along, the beach was strewn with

*Charred Fragments Of The Lost Boat*

and when about half the distance some recent hurriedly made graves were passed. The next object was the body of a colored woman which had floated ashore, and was rocking up and down by every wave which came surging in. The sight was not a very pleasant one, and as there was no danger of the tide taking it out again, the party plodded on. She appeared to be a very large woman, and was dressed in homespun. A little further along the body of a colored youth

lay dead; next were found the bodies of four more colored women, which had been dragged ashore and ranged side by side in the sand. Further along were two small colored children and another colored woman who was afterwards ascertained to be the wife and children of one Hoban, who lives on a small farm about four miles inland. They were all removed by Hoban himself yesterday, there being no one to assist him.

#### *The Searching Party*

Our party were as follows: Messrs. Harvey H. and Will. H. Hazard, of this city, who were in search of their father, one of the passengers of the *Wawaset*, who has not yet been heard from since the disaster; their brother-in-law, Mr. George W. Pratt, in one of the government departments; Mr. W.R. Reed, brother of Policeman Joseph W. Reed; Mr. Thomas Norfleet in search of friends; Mr. Paul T. Lansteup, artist for the New York Graphic and The Star reporter. Being strangers to the locality, Boyd's Hole was mistaken for Chatterton, and no shelter in sight, we started out prospecting about the country for some habitation, and after traveling for miles came to the conclusion to return to the shore and camp out until morning. A supply of roasting ears from a cornfield was first secured, and on arriving on the beach

#### *A Large Fire Was Made On The Sand,*

And after a meal of roast corn and river water all hands threw themselves on to the sand by the fire and got a few hours rest before daybreak. Early in the morning stragglers began to make their appearance about the shore, both white and colored, and from them we learned that breakfast could be obtained about two miles above, at "Eagles Nest," a large farm with an old Virginia mansion, owned by Mrs. Edmonia Grymes. The walk was at once undertaken, and a sorry looking party of seven soon presented themselves before the astonished household, where a good breakfast was soon spread out, and to which ample justice was done. Here we found Miss Kate M. McPherson, of Pamunkey, Charles county, Maryland, who was the companion of Miss Virginia Marbury, of whom no tidings has as yet been heard.

#### *Statement of Miss Kate M'Pherson*

Miss McPherson states that she went aboard the *Wawaset* with Miss Marbury at Glymont, and kept with her during the first part of the excitement, until the smoke drove them down the gangway; that she missed her on the main deck, and the rush of colored people was so great towards the life-boat that she could not turn to find her; that she was hustled overboard after the life-boat was stove in, with many others, by the rush of the colored people toward the gangway; that she immediately sunk and rose twice, and knew nothing more until she found herself in a boat and being carried ashore. She was taken to the residence of Mrs. Grymes, when it was found that she was uninjured, with the exception of a slight burn on one shoulder. She described the scene of the burning boat as most terrible to witness. The flames burst out all around and swept aft, driving women and children over into the water. She saw four little children hanging by their hands on the waist of the steamer, and one after the other drop into the water, the flames driving them off. The colored people were perfectly wild, and no remonstrance on the part of the officers was heeded, they jumped into the boat, piling it full, and declared that it was the colored people's boat; refusing all whites admission; when it went down all were dumped into the water together and many others followed, being pushed overboard. The flames burst into the main deck, setting fire to the clothing of women and children, who were hoping for some relief; that no one could pass the gangway for the flames, and the screams of the women and children were deafening.

During the recital of her experience, Miss McPherson could not refrain from bursting out into sobs, especially when allusion was made to Miss Marbury, who was a near and dear friend. Her anxiety seemed to be great about her people, who live in Charles county, and her uncle, Henry Marbury, esq., of Alexandria, thinking of the distress of mind they must be in on account of her absence since the disaster.

Miss McPherson is very intelligent, and could picture very vividly the distressing scenes she witnessed on board the steamer. She was pulled up out of the water some ten yards from the boat, just as she was sinking the last time, by Mr. Robert Adams and taken ashore in an insensible condition, and she feels that her escape was almost miraculous.

Mr. Adams, with a number of his companions, deserve much credit for their exertions in saving many from drowning.

After breakfast we returned to

#### *Boyd's Hole*

Where a crowd of persons had assembled, and all along the shore, a distance of five or six miles, groups of men and women, both white and colored, were seen straggling along the beach, in search of bodies.

#### *Scenes At Chatterton*

Our party started at once for Chatterton landing, and on the way several bodies were passed, which had floated ashore. Near Chatterton landing we found a grave containing two white children, a boy and girl and from the description of the clothing, this girl was thought to be the missing daughter of Mr. Reed. Many incidents are related by the boatmen living on the line of the river. They state that

#### *The Screams of the Women and Children*

Could be heard for miles; that all the boats available were at once brought into service, and every effort made to extend relief. On the way up to Chatterton several bodies of colored men and women were passed, which had been dragged ashore the night before.

The wreck of

#### *The Fated Steamer*

lies about two hundred and fifty yards below the landing and probably one hundred and fifty from shore. The boiler smoke stack, and all the metallic portion seems to rest firmly on the bottom, and nearly all the machinery is exposed to view at low water, not a particle of combustible material remaining of her, and the iron work burned to a whitish tint. The shaft seems to have either bent or broke in the middle, showing the iron work of the wheels careened out on each side. On arriving at Chatterton only two row boats could be found, one of which we secured, and our party proceeded to the wreck. The tide being high, the oarsman thought it imprudent to attempt to board her, fearing some iron snag might damage the bottom of the boat, and we made a circuit around her, keeping of a safe distance. At this time two bodies were seen floating at some distance northeast, but the crew of the other boat seemed to have got the start towards them, and our boat returned to the shore, where Mr. Lautreup, the artist, took a sketch of the wreck. During this time the boat landed the bodies of two colored men just

below us. Their faces and ears were completely eaten off by crabs, leaving the teeth and bones of the face clean. In the pockets of one of these men were found a memorandum book, from which it appeared that his name was Roda Rice from Washington. He was evidently a young man. A silver watch, with gold plated chain attached was found in his vest pocket; linen pants, black coat. The other man was so much disfigured about the face that recognition would have been impossible by his nearest friends. He was dressed in dark clothing and gaiter boots. While sitting on a log of driftwood where Mr. Lautreup was engaged in sketching the wreck, the body of a colored boy drifted ashore near by and was dragged out on the sand.

By this time the shore was

#### *Dotted For Miles*

with people watching the bodies afloat, and all the row of sail boats available were manned and put out to pick them up. The wind freshened up, making the water rough, which had the tendency to bring up the bodies, and for hours the boats were incessantly occupied in grappling them and towing them in. Between Boyd's Hole and Chatterton the shore was lined with pieces of the wreck, among other things many peach boxes and hen coops, and about half-way between the points named was the ill-fated life-boat, with the entire stern out. Shreds of clothing,

#### *Hats And Bonnets, Fans and Smaller Articles,*

were floating promiscuously about in the surf. During the morning five more bodies of colored women were caught and towed in, and the stench from these corpses after the sun beamed out hot was intolerable.

At Chatterton we met Mr. C.G. McClelland, a magistrate of King George county, with a corps of laborers, who set to work burying the bodies at the base of the river bluffs. Also Messrs. Robert Adams, (who saved Miss McPherson,) George T. Lee, Price Hamilton, Nathaniel Burchell, and Daniel Mifflin, who stated that they had recovered nineteen bodies during the forenoon of yesterday. These gentlemen all have done good service, both in saving persons from the wreck during the fire and since in recovering bodies from the water. Mr. McClelland stated that he had been authorized by Capt. Gedney to bury the bodies, take charge of any valuables which might be found on them; take

#### *A Full Description*

Of the clothing and number the graves, retaining a full record of such description corresponding to each grave, so that friends of the lost can have the bodies disinterred at their leisure. Just north of Chatterton landing was found a grave where, we were informed, were buried two children, a white boy and girl. From the description given of the girl, Mr. Reed, one of our party, thought it might be his little niece, daughter of Policeman Reed, and later in the day the children were uncovered, but Mr. Reed failed to recognize her and the little children were covered over again.

#### *A Father and Daughter Saved*

Here we found Mr. Charles Haburn, who lives near the court-house. This gentleman, with his little daughter, about five years old, was on board the *Wawaset*, and seeing the confusion, he seized his little girl and jumped overboard in deep water, and swam ashore safely. Later in the day we came across Mr. McClelland, who stated that he had buried twenty-two bodies; that it

was impossible to find a colored man who could be prevailed upon to assist him, and his assistants were all white men. The colored people there all seemed to have a superstitious horror of

*Touching A Corpse.*

Col. Lewis, a neighboring farmer, was present, and hailed a colored man named Dan, who was looking on while the men were at work digging graves. Dan came up and Col. Lewis asked him why he did not jump in and assist in burying his own color. Dan shrugged his shoulders and replied, "I can't get up the heart to do it." Said Col. Lewis, "You mean that you are afraid to work." "No," said Dan, "I never would have any more luck if I should touch one of them poor corpuses." It appears to be the general belief among the colored people in this section that bad luck will follow them if they touch a dead person.

*Description Of The Bodies Found.*

From Mr. McClelland's description list was obtained as follows:

Grave No. 1, unknown colored woman, 20 or 22 years of age, 5 feet 2 inches high; calico dress, white ground, with broad blue stripes, and purple vine on skirt, made plain; white bodice, dotted with small blue spots.

No. 2, unknown colored woman, 25 or 30 years of age; black skirt, with three flounces, and overskirt; bodice of striped calico; black lasting gaiters, foxed with morocco.

No. 3, unknown colored woman, 60 years of age; black dress, black lasting gaiters.

No. 4, unknown colored male infant, about 10 months old, (since identified.)

No. 5, unknown girl about 6 years of age; striped dress and black basque (since identified by its mother living near Boyd's Hole.)

No. 6, unknown white boy, about 7 years of age; gray cassimere pants, checked calico bodice, lace boots.

No. 7, unknown white female child, about 5 years of age; white worked dress and pantelettes.

No. 8, unknown colored boy, about 10 years of age; dark dray suit, lace morocco boots; about 4 feet high.

No. 9, unknown colored woman, black striped dress; about 25 years of age; quite dark and stout.

No. 10, unknown colored woman, about 30 years of age; purple calico dress; black lasting gaiters.

No. 11, unknown colored woman, about 25 years of age; large-figured red and white calico dress; black lasting gaiters, with top edge blue.

No. 12, unknown colored woman, about 30 years of age; calico dress of madder color, made plain; black lasting gaiters, foxed.

No. 13, unknown colored woman, about 30 years of age; light dress, body of sacque white, dotted with green spots, ring on left fore-finger, with black pocket-book containg \$1.92; no papers.

No. 14, unknown colored woman, age 25 or 30; black skirt and blue bodice.

No. 15, unknown colored woman, about 20 or 25 years of age; light calico dress, with dark binding, made plain; on her person was found a green morocco pocket-book containing \$4.16.

No. 16, unknown colored woman, 4 feet 6 inches high; hair short nap; green dress, black overshirt, white apron, black gaiter shoes.

No. 17, unknown colored woman, about 30 years of age; black-ground dress with red dots; bodice of light calico; cloth gaiters; two plain gold rings on left hand.

No. 18, unknown colored woman, about 25 years of age, very dark; hair short nap; red calico dress. A letter was found on her person from a Mrs. Scott, of Washington, to Mr. Thornton, enclosing one dollar for Salem church.

The above are all the descriptions taken up to about 11 o'clock, the last time Mr. McClellan was seen by our party. There were many bodies lying about which had not been examined by him, description of which will be given as fast as procured. About 11 o'clock

#### *The Body of Mrs. Reed*

Was brought in just above Chatterton. It was so much disfigured that it could only be recognized by the clothing and jewelry. Her brother, Mr. George W. Walker, and the brother of Mr. Reed were present, and after consultation it was deemed advisable to put the remains in a coffin and remove them to Mount Holly, King George county, for burial. Mr. Reed was very loth to consent to this, having promised to have it sent to Washington for burial with the children; but the body was in such a condition that he concluded not to do it now, leaving it for the future. It was placed in a wagon and started immediately off to its destination.

About this time an unknown light colored woman about 25 or 20 years of age, with long black hair nearly a yard in length, very poorly dressed in blue calico dress, with drown stripes, body of dress dotted with pink spots. This body was seen to rise suddenly about one hundred and fifty yards from shore, fully one-half her length coming above water and then falling immediately back, floated off with the tide. A boat was sent out and in a few minutes it was brought in. In a brown leather pocket book, which was taken from her pocket, was found \$8.66; around her waist a black leather belt with clasp made of imitation silver dollar having the appearance of brass. She was terribly disfigured about the face by the crabs, and was buried above Chatterton.

About this time another body was seen to rise near the same place. On being brought in it was found to be that of an aged white man. On one little finger was a plain gold ring, and in his purse was found \$9; a briarwood pipe, some smoking tobacco, vial of medicine; leather bag containing two keys, one of brass, the other of iron but no papers by which his name could be

identified. On one foot was a boot, and the other foot naked, having the appearance of a sore on it; the hair was quite gray, with short beard of the same. The body was buried yesterday afternoon above Chatterton. On hearing of this circumstance the Messrs. Hazard, with Mr. Pratt, hastened up to the spot, but failed to recognize it as the body of their father.

*The Body of Mr. George W. Cook,*

Of South Washington, was brought in between Chatterton and Boyd's Hole, about 12 o'clock, by Mr. Robert Adams, and was at once recognized. On his person were found \$54 and a silver watch. By the papers in the pockets he was at once known, and the body sent aboard the Vanderbilt, which had arrived down off the wreck.

The body of a colored man rose about the same spot shortly after, and was towed in. It had on a striped colored shirt, striped pants, and black frock coat. No one could have recognized him except by his clothing; every particle of the flesh being eaten from his face, his eyes and ears gone, and large spots eaten to the skull-bone. He was buried at once.

Another colored woman suddenly appeared further up. When she rose her white apron appeared to cover her face, and all on shore supposed it to be a white woman until she was floated in. On the body was a white and black striped dress and black leather boots.

About this time two boatmen came in from the wreck, and reported that they could see down in the hull, and that the bones of

*The Charred Bodies*

There looked to be about knee-deep. One of these boatmen was W.H. Lee, and the name of the other was not given. The Vanderbilt took a circuit up and down the river, approaching as near to each shore as possible, probably a distance of 12 or 15 miles, during which they picked up five bodies, one white girl and four colored men, one of the bodies of the men was at once recognized as that of George Tibbs, the deck hand on the *Wawaset*. The other three men could not be identified.

*The Body of the White Girl*

Was picked up near the can buoy, Maryland Point. She seemed to be about 12 or 14 years of age, buff dress, blue silk sash around the waist, plain gold ring on the third finger of the right hand, hair jet black, green top gaiters. The body was placed in a box, with ice, and brought to the city last night. No one could identify it.

About 2 o'clock the body of an elderly colored man was towed in near Chatterton, dressed in gray pants, black coat and vest. In one of his vest pockets was found a white cambric handkerchief carefully folded; a red leather pocket-book was found in his pants, in which were ten one dollar bills; also, a letter directed to Samuel Bailey, Northumberland county, Va., signed by J.H. Wiggins. The letter appeared to have been torn open, and related to business matters, but was so badly written that it could not be deciphered. It is most likely his name was Bailey.

Many incidents are related by the boatmen about the shores. One, that a large bull on the deck of the *Wawaset* could be heard bellowing with pain from the fire which swept over the deck, and soon afterwards he floated ashore completely cooked.

### *Two Little Pigs*

Broke loose from their coop and swam ashore unhurt, and were caught by some colored men.

### *Robbing The Dead*

One of the worst features among the shore scenes yesterday was the disposition among both white and colored stragglers to plunder and rob the dead. Several instances of this kind were noticed, but could not be prevented by Mr. McClelland, who alone was authorized to take charge of valuables found. This was by reason of the long extent of shore, and the bodies could not in many instances be reached by him until they had been rifled and the guilty parties had got off.

### *Statement Of A Survivor*

Hiram Smith, colored man who was saved, states the he was present and witnessed the loss of the life boat. As soon as she was lowered to the main deck, the colored men took possession of her by force, and no threats or persuasion of the officer's could prevent them. The boat was heaped full of baggage and men, and he saw a yellow man cut the bow rope, and she fell headlong down with such force as to tear out the stern because of the davit holding at that end, and all in her sunk; that the boat floated off, some two or three persons hanging to her; he was forced by the flames to jump overboard and saved himself by swimming. The Vanderbilt, after cruising about the river, sent a boat on shore with Capt. Wood, who commanded the *Wawaset*, and a gentleman from Alexandria, cousin to Miss Marbury, the latter to look for the remains of his relative, and the captain to aid in taking care of the dead and perform such other missions as circumstances may suggest. H.O.N.

### *A Distressed Mother*

This morning Mrs. Margaret Lewis called at The Star office and stated that she had been to the steamboat landing, where she was told that a reporter of The Star had returned from Chatterton last evening and might give her tidings of her four children who were on board. She seemed in great distress of mind, and said she had walked from Laurel, Md., on Saturday last to Washington, having heard of the disaster; that her daughter, about 14 years of age, and three sons younger, were on board the *Wawaset* and she had no tidings of them. No hope could be extended her, and she returned to the landing to watch and wait for tidings. She stated that she has twin infants remaining to her, and that about one year ago the body of her husband was returned to her crushed beyond the possibility of recognition by a railroad accident.

### *Statement of a Boy who was Saved*

#### *A Graphic Narrative*

Leslie Cook, son of George W. Cook, one of the victims, about thirteen years of age, was with his father on his way to see his mother, who was visiting some of her relatives near Stewart's wharf, about five or six miles below the scene of the disaster, and he reached Washington last night with his mother in the steamer Columbia. He is quite a smart-talking lad, but seems to be greatly depressed in spirits by the loss of his father. He this morning made to a representative of The Star the following statement;--I was right in front of the engine-room a little before 12 o'clock, when I saw smoke coming out, and just as I noticed it a man came running out and said to one of the engineers, who was standing by the bar-room, "The boat's afire." I got frightened and rank back towards the saloon, and the place was full of smoke, and saw father when he came down the steps, and we went on that place round by the stern and climbed over. I believe they call the place we came on the waist. We got on the rudder chains and held to them, and



we could see the smoke and flames above us. All this time the people were screaming and hallooing, and we were both frightened. The people kept jumping over the stern and getting on the rudder chains, and I was crowded off; but I got hold of father and clasped him round the waist, but we were both shoved off and sank. I let go my hold and went to the bottom, but I rose in about the same place, and got hold of the chain again. I looked around for father, but did not see him again. I was not on the chains very long – but it seemed a long time – before a boat took me off, and when I got to shore I went over towards the Rappahannock, and Dr. Price sent to me where my mother was.”

Mr. Cook was a member of Harmony Lodge, Knights of Pythias, as also a member of Ryland chapel, and during the war was in the confederate service, serving as captain in the 15<sup>th</sup> Virginia cavalry. He has been in the grocery business latterly on 7<sup>th</sup> street southwest and had just rented a stall in Center market to go into business there. His funeral took place this afternoon.

#### *The Search Continued*

A party started down at 6 o'clock this morning on the tug Mary Lewis, and will spend the day in cruising about for bodies, returning late this evening. They took down with them some coffins and boxes, also lumber with [rest missing].

President Howison, of the Ferry company, was on a visit at Fredericksburg when the disaster occurred, for the purpose of bringing to her home in Alexandria his invalid wife, who was quite feeble, and after seeing her home, came at once to Washington, arriving here late on Saturday. Knowing well that Captain Gedney and his crew, who had gone down with the tug-boat, would spare no exertion in extending succor to all who had escaped, and that there could be no hope of the drowned rising until the third day, he declined the proffer made by Capt. Hollingshead of his boat, and accepted the offer of the Vanderbilt, and himself, Capt. Gedney, and his crew, went down to the scene of the disaster, and spent the entire day, as already stated.

#### *Further Particulars*

The failure of the boats of the *Wawaset* is explained as follows: Mrs. Reed and children and one or two others were to have landed at Chatterton, that place being 4 miles from her father's, Mr. Walker, and one of her brothers was at the landing waiting her landing. The boat had been lowered so that parties could have stepped direct from the deck, and the packages, baggage, etc., had been placed in it while the clerk had gone up to bring the ladies. The *Wawaset* had perhaps five minutes to run before the boats would be lowered and in the meantime the cry of "fire" was raised, the panic commenced, and the boat was taken possession of by the first comers – the colored people. The crew were all forward fighting the fire, and the parties in the boat vainly called for some one to lower it, and finally some person in it getting impatient cut the ropes at the bows, and it fell one end first, the stern giving way and the whole load was lost probably, and the boat rendered useless, being stove in.

There were on board the boat 420 six-pound cork life preservers and 75 four-and-a-half-pound preservers.

Last winter, when the boat was being overhauled, Capt. Gedney was requested to supervise the repairs, and he superintended them personally, using the greatest care. The opening in which the boiler was placed was enlarged one foot, and lined with iron, and a new jacket was also placed in it.

### *An Investigation Ordered.*

The supervising inspector of steamboats for this District was at the Treasury department this morning examining the papers of the *Wawaset*, and will commence the investigation of the disaster on Wednesday morning. The certificate of inspection on file in the Treasury department shows that the *Wawaset* was only authorized, on her regular trips, to carry fifty passengers, with officers and crew, numbering fifteen, making altogether sixty-five persons, and was required to have lifeboats to accommodate all. For excursions she was authorized to carry more passengers whenever a special permit was asked for and obtained, but it was then required that she should have a sufficient number of plank floats and life-preservers placed where they could be accessible in any emergency. The investigation will be held in Washington, and will be conducted by the local board, Messrs. J.D. Lowry and W.O. Saville. It will be their province, by the examination of witnesses to determine whether the officers of the boat did their duty, and whether the equipment of the boat was properly distributed. Subpoenas for witnesses will be issued tomorrow morning.

### *Funeral of Four of the Reed Family*

Yesterday a great number of the friends of Officer J.W. Reed called at his residence where were the bodies of four members of the family who lost their lives in the *Wawaset*, namely: his aunt, Mrs. Julia Kelly; his niece, Miss Bettie Reed, and two of his children, Lucy Reed, aged about 8 years, and Joseph Reed, aged about 4 years. The remains were in four caskets ranged side by side, and with the exception of that containing the remains of Miss Bettie were open, affording their friends an opportunity to view the faces of the deceased. Miss Bettie's remains were not in a good state of preservation and her face had been somewhat disfigured. The others looked quite natural and their features bore no impression of pain or anguish. As the hour designated for the funeral approached the number of visitors – friends and relatives of the family – largely increased, and there were so many persons attracted to the neighborhood of the house by curiosity, that the police had to interfere to prevent intrusions, it having been announced that the services would be held at 4 o'clock p.m. at the Mt. Vernon Place (Methodist South) church, corner of 9<sup>th</sup> and K streets, a large crowd of people also gathered there as early as two o'clock, and patiently awaited the arrival of the funeral procession. At a few minutes to four o'clock the organ pealed forth a dirge and the corpses (preceded by the minister, Rev. A.W. Wilson) were shortly afterwards carried up the aisle and placed in front of the pulpit, the bodies of Mrs. Kelly and Miss Bettie Reed each borne by six adults and the bodies of the two children each by six youths. The afflicted husband and father, followed by his brother and other relatives, came next, the family filling up the pews in the body of the church. The Sunday school followed and sang the hymn, "The Bright Forever," after which the pastor read the psalm commencing "The Lord has been our dwelling place." The choir, under the lead of Mr. Robert Ball, sang the hymn, "The morning dowers display their sweets." The pastor offered a fervent prayer, in which he invoked God to impart consolation to him so suddenly stricken by the sweeping away of his household; that he and his sympathizing relatives might feel the power of the gospel. Although his family are lost, he may be enabled, believing in the doctrine of the resurrection, to say, "The Lord gave; the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Appropriate selections of Scripture were then read, after which the hymn "Come, ye disconsolate," was sung, the Misses Daniel sustaining the solo parts, the chorus by the choir. Mr. Wilson then addressed the assemblage, and in the course of his remarks said that this extraordinarily large congregation had done well to assemble to sympathize with the afflicted. All households had been called upon at some time to mourn the death of some one, and had received the sympathy of friends;

but when an entire household is carried away at one stroke, the sympathy of the entire community was needed. Behind a single coffin we can go with but little of the broken spirit. But when the thunderbolts gather and fall with such fury as here, and utter desolation, then, truly, is sympathy needed. Here God had spoken in tones of terror. He could not give the sad detail of what had occurred on the waste of water; the cry of fire, the screams, the panic, then the leaping into the water. They knew what it was to linger around the bedside of a dying friend and follow the remains to the grave, but when death comes in such heavy and unexpected strokes as this there is no consolation to be found except in the Gospel. Notwithstanding the terror with which God delivers his strokes, he is good, and it should be forgotten. We are too apt to forget God, whose counsel stands forever. They should lay it to heart when these bodies are committed to the earth, that God has a purpose in all his doings, and not return to the secular affairs of the world with indifference. They should feel that it is not all of life to live and all of death to die. In conclusion, he exhorted the friends and relations of the deceased to look forward to the day when their loved ones will be met with again. The choir sang an appropriate hymn in conclusion, and the four coffins were returned to the hearses and the cortege proceeded to the Congressional Cemetery, where a large crowd of persons had assembled.

Not since the Arsenal disaster has such a distressing scene been witnessed in that cemetery. As the four bodies (of six dead in the family of one stricken man) were borne down the walk to the public vault, where they were deposited, the anguish of Mr. Reed expressed itself in heart-breaking sobs, which so affected those present that there was not a dry eye among those assembled. The burial service of the church was read and the bodies passed from sight, but the lesson of this dreadful visitation will long remain.

#### *Funeral of Another Victim*

The funeral of Mrs. W.S. Muse, another of the victims, took place from the residence of Mr. George Tucker, a relative, on F street, near 9<sup>th</sup>, yesterday, and was very largely attended. The body which arrived on Saturday morning, was taken in charge by Mr. Henry Lee, undertaker, and was in a remarkably good state of preservation. It was inclosed in a mahogany coffin. Rev. C.C. Meador, of the 5<sup>th</sup> Baptist church, officiated at the funeral, preaching a very feeling discourse. The remains were interred at the Congressional Cemetery. The body of the only child of the deceased, which was also among the victims, has not been found.

#### *Scenes at the Wharf in this City*

The excitement in this city, occasioned by the news of the disaster, continued after the latest edition of The Star was out on Saturday, and hundreds of persons remained around the steamboat wharf until a late hour, anxious to know the fate of loved ones whom they had reason to believe were on the ill-fated boat. As is usual on such occasions, there were all sorts of rumors in circulation as to the number lost and saved. The arrival of the tug Mary Lewis, on which Captain Gedney left the city Saturday morning for the scene of the disaster, was awaited with feverish anxiety. The tug, which arrived and made fast to the wharf shortly after seven o'clock, brought up three bodies only – a child of Policeman Reed, a girl 12 years of age; his cousin, Miss Bettie Reed; and the body of a colored woman named Willie Warrington. Capt. Gedney reported that he arrived at the scene of the disaster about 11 o'clock a.m., and immediately made arrangements to have all the bodies that were not recognized, temporarily interred in rough coffins. A description of each was made out and the graves numbered. As the bodies were washed ashore they were taken to a shady place and laid out, and if any were not recognized by the many persons present, they were interred as stated above. The people of

King George's county living along the river shore, and for miles back, were present, lending a helping hand. Thirteen bodies were recovered Saturday, up to the time he left, ten of which were interred. Boats were left to patrol the river. Capt. Howison met Capt. Gedney at the wharf, and was soon beset by numbers of persons who had friends on board, all clamorous for some way to get to the scene of the disaster. A telegram from the owners of the Vanderbilt, offering the boat to the company, was handed Capt. H., and preparations were immediately made to get a crew to man her, and 7-1/2 o'clock yesterday morning was announced as the time of her departure. A large crowd was about the wharf until dark, but gradually thinned out. Yesterday morning at 7-1/2 o'clock the Vanderbilt, with Capt. Gedney and Capt. Howison on board, left for the scene of the disaster, with about 150 persons, among them Messrs. Proctor, Lipscomb, Closky and Fisher, a committee of Harmony Lodge No. 21, Knights of Pythias, who went to search for the body of Mr. George W. Crook, which was recovered. The tug Johnson Brothers left here last evening for the scene, having on board Mr. Joseph Reed and others who have relatives among the missing, but were passengers on the boat.

*The Wawaset Disaster*

Mr. Editor: I would like to know how it was that Captain Wood (who was a man with such great presence of mind?) did not order some swimmer to go ashore with a rope to stop the boat from drifting, and at the same time to give the passengers a chance of saving themselves by taking hold of this line (shown to them by some one) and that way reach the shore? H.B.

*Washington D.C., August 9, 1873*

Editor Star: Two months ago, while on an excursion down the Potomac, we passed the *Wawaset* and another boat freighted with pleasure parties, and a learned professor of this city standing by my side remarked to me: "I see a terrible calamity in store for those vessels; my horoscope tells me there will be a terrible loss of life during the month of August." I paid no attention to the remark, and might perhaps have never thought of it again had it not been for the news received this morning, which verifies in one instance his prediction. Old Subscriber