

Albany Evening Journal

Thursday Evening, August 12, 1841

Vol. 12, No. 3559
Page 2, Column 5

**DREADFUL CATASTROPHE!
BURNING OF A STEAM-BOAT ON
LAKE ERIE!!
One Hundred & Seventy Lives Lost !!!**

By the Cars from the West, we have the appalling intelligence that the steam-boat ERIE, Capt. Titus, was burnt on Lake Erie on Monday evening last. She was on her up trip and about 40 miles from Buffalo, near the same place where the WASHINGTON was burnt two years since. She had over 200 passengers on board, only 27 of whom have been saved! The subjoined are all the particulars that we have been able to collect of this awful occurrence. The following letter was received at the office of the *Daily Advertiser*:

OFFICE OF THE COM. ADV. AND JOURNAL,
BUFFALO, AUG. 10, 7 A. M

Awful Catastrophe! — STEAM-BOAT ERIE BURNT !!

Over one hundred and seventy lives lost !!!

Gentlemen, — I have barely time to write you that the steamboat *Erie* was entirely destroyed by fire last night off Cattaraugus Creek. She left here last evening for Chicago with something over 200 souls on board, including crew, (having recently been repainted and repaired) and the steamboat *Clinton* brings twenty-seven only of the whole number of persons who were on board, with the most heart-rending intelligence that the rest are all drowned or burnt! — The Captain of the unfortunate *Erie* is among the number brought by the *Clinton*. I cannot send you the names of the sufferers for want of time; in fact I have not yet learned whether the way-bill* was saved or not. About 150 passengers, however, I learn were German immigrants.

It is said (with how much truth I know not) that the varnish was not entirely dry when she left this port, and that when the fire took, it spread with such rapidity that those on the upper deck had not even time to go below before they were enveloped in the flames. The persons saved were taken from the wheels of the boat, pieces of furniture, chests, &c.

Yours truly, B.

FURTHER PARTICULARS. — The following is all the additional information received this morning. The *Rochester Democrat* of yesterday says:

The fire is said to have originated from a demijohn of varnish setting over the boiler, which exploded from the heat. The boat was owned by Chas. M. Reed, of Erie, Pa.

We have just learned the following particulars. The *Erie* took fire about 8 o'clock, when she was 6 miles from shore, and 40 from Buffalo, a very high sea running at the time. The

steamboat *De Witt Clinton* reached the boat about 11 o'clock, took off 27 passengers, and waited till morning to pick up bodies.

Mr. Lines of Milwaukee, lost — wife saved by a life preserver. Mr. Williams of Syracuse, saved — wife lost.

A letter from Horatio Gates, Esq. of Buffalo, to the Postmaster in this city, says, in reference to this sad event, "Our city has not been so wrapt in gloom, since the loss of the ill-fated *Washington*."

*way-bill: list of passengers and statement of goods on board