

The Aftermath:
Body Count
Ascertaining the Dead

The Southern Patriot
(Charleston, S. C.)

Friday afternoon, August 20, 1841

Vol. XLVI., No. 70,18 [sic]
p. 2

Providential Escape. —Mr. Willet Weeks and his wife, who took passage on board the ill-fated steam packet *Erie*, and intended to sail in her, by some accident were detained, and thereby their lives preserved. They have arrived at Brooklyn safe, much to the satisfaction of their friends.

The Sun
(Baltimore, Maryland)

Wednesday morning, August 25, 1841

Vol. IX., No. 86 (Whole No. 246)
p. 2, c. 3

THE STEAMBOAT ERIE.—The lake continues to give up the dead bodies of those who lost their lives by the destruction of the steamboat *Erie*. Every day additional bodies are found. A belief is expressed that very few of the German women will ever be found, as they had a considerable quantity of specie quilted in their clothing, which would tend to prevent the bodies from rising.

The Weekly Herald
(New York City)

Saturday, August 28, 1841

Vol. V., No. 49 (Whole No. 246)
p. 404, c. ?

STEAMER ERIE.—MORE OF THE DEAD—OPINION OF THE JURY—Yesterday evening the *De Witt Clinton* brought in five of the dead, and delivered them to the coroner. One was a female badly burned—We think she was one of the Swiss.

Five more bodies were found yesterday by boats and schooners, and carried to Cattaraugus and Silver creeks. Among them there was also a female, supposed, from her dress, to have been an English woman.

Among the dead at Silver Creek or Cattaraugus, was Mr. Snyder, one of the Swiss, and Mr. Granger. Among those brought in here, was one supposed to be Mr. Sackett, of Michigan.

Two of the bodies brought in here, had watches in their pockets, and one, we think, had money, but as we were not able to see the coroner after the inquest, we are not certain. There was a strong appearance, however, that there was specie in one pocket.

The jury, in the investigation in the case of the *Erie*, have given it as their opinion that the fire on said boat was caused by the bursting of one or more demijohns of spirits of turpentine standing on the boiler deck and communicating the fire in the furnace of the boilers.

—*Buffalo Republican*.

New-Hampshire Sentinel
(Keene, New Hampshire)

Wednesday evening, September 1, 1841

Vol. XLIII., No. 35
p. 2, c. 6

THE DEAD.—*The Buffalo Commercial* states that a few more bodies of the unfortunate victims by the *Erie* have been found and brought to Buffalo. One of them is ascertained to be the body of J. D. Woodward, of this city. The rest are principally Swiss and Germans. It was thought but few of the bodies of the Swiss women would be found, as they had too much specie quilted in their clothes to admit their rising. The effects of each person are kept carefully by the Coroner in separate parcels, and all information coming to his knowledge is willingly communicated to the friends of the dead. A number of boats were yet cruising in search of bodies, not all with good intentions, however. A party of villains, supposed to be from Buffalo, had made their appearance at silver Creek, for the purpose, it is believed, of pirating upon and plundering such dead bodies as they could find. A number of the inhabitants of the place having gone in search of them, they decamped post haste. Two of the bodies found, however, had been stripped of their clothing, which afforded sufficient proof of the motive of the visit. If caught, such villains should receive no mercy.

Milwaukie Sentinel
(Milwaukie, Wisconsin)

Tuesday, September 7, 1841

Vol. V., No. 10
p. 3, c. 1

BODIES FOUND.—The steamboat *DeWitt Clinton* picked up five of the bodies of those who were lost by the burning of the *Erie*, and carried them into Buffalo. One of the number was D. Sackett, of Michigan. His body was identified by his friends. The other four were Germans, names unknown. The body of Mr. Camp was also picked up on shore, on which was found about \$900. The body was taken to Buffalo, and the money placed in the hands of the authorities of Buffalo, who are using every exertion for the recovery of the bodies of those who perished by that horrible catastrophe.

The North American & Daily Advertiser
(Philadelphia, Pennsylvania)

Tuesday morning, September 7, 1841

Vol. 3., No. 702 (Vol. 70 – whole No. 20,201)
p. 2, c. 2

Vessels are out constantly from Buffalo in search after the bodies of the sufferers in the *Erie*. One Steamer [sic] picked up at one trip not less than 21 bodies. Many of them contained specie in their clothes, and one had over a \$1000 in paper money. The vampires in the shape of men are scouring the lake, plundering the dead bodies!

The Sun
(Baltimore, Maryland)

Thursday morning, September 9, 1841

Vol. IX., No. 99
p.1, c. 6

THE DISASTER ON LAKE ERIE.—Thirty-two bodies have just been discovered floating in Lake Erie, the most of which were those of Germans. We subjoin all the names that are given: “Justis Sherman, Wm. Williams, Jr., E. S. Cobb, J. Wilbur, Edmund Griffin, Eliza Packingham, Aleathen Miller, — Litbold, and D. S. Slown, of Geneva.”

The North American & Daily Advertiser
(Philadelphia, Pennsylvania)

Thursday morning, September 9, 1841

Vol. 3., No. 764 (Vol. 70-Whole No. 20,203)
p.2, c. 4

MORE OF THE DEAD.—By vessels from the West, this morning, we learn that quite a large number of bodies have been recovered and taken in at points near the scene of the disaster. Capt. Blair, of the schooner *Adelaide*, informs us that he picked up fifteen persons, two of whom were Swiss females, yesterday, and took them into Silver Creek. He should judge from the appearance of the others that they were mostly Americans and cabin passengers. Two of them had silver watches in their vest pockets, and one, a small sized man, a black colored life preserver on, uninflated. His apparel was black or dark color; can't say whether he had a watch or not. (This is probably the body of Mr. Lynde.) Another was a colored man with a check apron on, similar to those worn by cooks. The whole were delivered to the Deputy Sheriff Philips, of Silver Creek.

Capt. B. also informs us that thirteen persons, including five females, were picked up and taken into Dunkirk by the steam boat *Perry*, and that three more bodies were found on Grand Island, last evening. We shall give, at our earliest opportunity, a minute description of each body found..

The *Rochester*, last evening, brought into this port five bodies, and among them was that of Miss Miller. Her funeral took place to-day.

The following is a description of some of the bodies brought in by the *Rochester*:

E. S. Cobb: gold watch, 2 rings, pocket handkerchief, gold pin, bunch of keys, knife, gloves, purse with \$1,13 in change, and \$24 in bills, \$50 in Detroit shinplasters, and check on the Treasurer of the State Bank of Michigan, for \$156.

Edmund Griffin: black frock coat, figured pants, white shirt, calf boots, silver watch, tobacco box, \$196 in bills, \$2,30 in change, pencil case, gold pin, knife, comb; note from Webster & Griffin to Edmund Griffin for \$2000 dated New York, 21st March, 1836.

A man, dark pants, striped shirt, thick boots, supposed to be one of the hands; knife wallet, \$3 in bills, a receipt signed by Florence Crouell to Jerry Shesan for \$268 and 7 sovereigns left in his hands, payable on demand, dated Aug 3, 1841.

Eliza Packingham, chambermaid.—*Buffalo Com. Adv.*

The Southern Patriot

(Charleston, S. C.)

Saturday afternoon, September 11, 1841

Vol. XLVI, No. 70,17 [sic]
p. 2, c. 3

More of the Lost. —The *Buffalo Commercial* of Saturday last reports the arrival of the steam boat *Rochester* with the bodies of *twenty-six* of the unfortunate persons who perished by the burning of the steam boat *Erie*. Letters from Evans, in the same paper on the 2d and 3d inst. Capt. Blair, of the schooner *Adelaide*, picked up fifteen persons, two of whom were Swiss females, and took them into Silver Creek. He should judge from the appearance of the others that they were mostly Americans and cabin passengers. Two of them had silver watches in their vest pockets, and one, a small sized man, a black colored life preserver on, uninflated. His apparel was black or dark color; can't say whether he had a watch or not. (This is probably the body of Mr. Lynde.) Another was a colored man with a check apron on, similar to those worn by cooks. The whole were delivered to the Deputy Sheriff Philips, of Silver Creek.

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The Weekly Herald

(New York City)

Saturday, September 11, 1841

Vol. V, No. 51
p. 425, c. 3

MORE OF THE DEAD.—The *Rochester* came in yesterday evening from the place where the *Erie* was lost, bringing in twenty-one dead bodies, four females being among them. The body of Mr. Cobb, late cashier of the bank of Washtenaw, was recognised. Mr. Cobb had a sum of money with him, not counted. The body of Mr. Griffith was recognized, and on it was found a sum of money, we have understood \$1800, also a ticket for himself and daughter. One of the females found is supposed to be the daughter of Mr. Griffith. The body of Eliza Parkinson, the chambermaid of the *Erie*, was likewise recognized. On one of the bodies was found a ticket for C. Wilber and six persons. One German was found, linen marked L S, another A. S, another H. K, and a female with linen marked C.L.W Money was found on several of the bodies, but the amount is not ascertained.

We learn from the *Commercial*, that the body of another German was brought in by the *Chataque* [sic], night before last, with four or five franc pieces and six shillings in his pocket, appeared to be about 50, 5 feet 10 inches high. Also, that an inquest was held on the body of a man found in the river, about one mile below Black Rock dam. The name of F J. Lapham was found on his person. There was also about him \$114,50 in good money, and \$72,50 in broken bills. He was well dressed, and aged about 30. The *Wayne* reports fifteen or twenty bodies afloat off Silver Creek, but picked up done [sic]. The probability is that the thunder this morning will bring up more. The body of a German was found yesterday, and brought ashore, about eighteen [sic] miles up the lake. He had five 5 franc pieces in his pocket and a silver watch. At the same time the body of a young man was likewise found, with a gold watch, safety chain, seals and key. In his pockets were found \$120 in paper money. There was engraved on one of the seals "D. P. Sloane." The *Chataque*, we understand, brought in two bodies last night, but we did not learn whether they were recognized or not.

—*Buffalo Republican*, Sept. 3

Haverhill Gazette
(Haverhill, Massachusetts)

Saturday morning, September 11, 1841

Vol. XXII, No. XI
p. 3, c. 2

60 dead bodies have been picked up on Lake Erie, being a part of the passengers of the ill-fated steamboat *Erie*.

The Sun
(Baltimore, Maryland)

Monday morning, September 13, 1841

Vol. IX, No. 102
p. 2, c. 3

THE DEAD OF THE ERIE.—The *Buffalo Commercial* gives a description of an additional number of bodies which have been recovered, with the following names:

Hiram Carpenter, the owner of the race horse Half Moon, which was on board the *Erie*; two of the painters, Henry Weaver and Wm. Van Avery; G. Nergold, a Swiss; Patrick Foley, a deck hand; Noah Crittenden, of Geneva; P. Figair, musician; David Mills, black; Ambrose Stratton, of Collins; Thomas J. Moore, of Milo; Mr. Lynde; Osmun Maddock, of Genesee; Geo. Hacket, of Lockport; James R. Mittimore, of Atkin, Ohio; John Allen, 2nd Engineer; John Angel, of Providence; Philip Barber, a painter. More or less property was found on the bodies, all of which has been put in proper hands.

The Liberator
(Boston, Massachusetts)

Friday, September 17, 1841

Vol. XI, No. 38
p. 151, c. 5

Under: **“Items Shocking and Fatal Accident”**

The bodies of more than 100 of the sufferers by the burning of the steamboat *Erie* have been recovered.

The Mercury and Weekly Journal of Commerce
(New York City)

Thursday, September 23, 1841

Vol. XIII, No. 38
p. 1, c. 6

THREE MORE BODIES RECOVERED.—We learn from collector R. Graham, at Point Abino, U.C., per coroner Harris, that three bodies were found in that vicinity on Friday last and interred in a becoming manner. One of those found was Lloyd Gelston, the clerk of the *Erie*, and another person, supposed to be a Mr. Nelthrope. The third person was not identified, nor have we received any description of his wearing apparel. He had, however, about him \$85.

On Mr. Gelston were found his gold watch and \$30. Mr. Nelthrope (if such be his name) had on his person but a small sum of money.

On Saturday the steamboat *Buffalo* proceeded to Point Abino, recovered the body of Mr. G. and brought it to this city. It was subsequently conveyed to Erie for interment.

Those three are the only bodies that have been recovered in this vicinity during the week.
- *Buffalo Com. Adv.*

The Connecticut Courant
(Hartford)

Saturday, September 25, 1841

Vol. LXXVII, No. 4001
p. 3, c. ?

THE DEAD OF THE ERIE. —A late number of the *Erie Gazette* states that between 120 and 130 bodies have been taken from the Lake, chiefly found near where the *Erie* was burnt.

Easton Gazette
(Easton, Maryland)

Saturday morning, October 2, 1841

Vol. XXIV, No. 40
p. 2, c. 4

The Sea giving up its Dead. —Between 120 & 130 bodies have been taken from the Lake chiefly found near where the *Erie* was burnt, and all having rose to the surface near the same time. A heavy thunder storm passing over the spot, is said to have produced this sudden effect.