

where they were rescued by Dr. Kain and party, and today are nearly as well as ever.

#### CAPTAIN WEATHERN,

proprietor and commander of the *Sea Wing*, has been severely blamed by citizens and others for what they allege to have been criminal negligence on his part in pulling out into the lake with such a crowd when the sky looked so threatening. The captain's wife and two of his three children lost their lives under the waves, and that fact, together with the loss of his vessel and the great loss of life, unnerved him so that he kept out of sight during the day, and those who did see him got but imperfect statements from him. He stated that he did not consider the danger very great, and thought he saw a break in the clouds, promising a clearing away of the storm.

This is not well taken by the people in this neighborhood, who say the sky was black with the most threatening kind of clouds and that it was clearly evident that a very heavy storm was about to break. His other excuse, if such these may be called, is that the manager of the excursion, whose profits would be cut down by any delay in the departure of the boat, was so urgent in his insistence upon immediate departure that the captain yielded and took the boat out to her destruction.

Following is a dispatch from Red Wing, Minn., dated July 14: Further details of the terrible steamer disaster on Lake Pepin are received this morning as follows:

When opposite Lake City the boat began to feel the effect of the storm, but the officers kept on their way. The gale increased as the boat continued up the lake, and in fifteen minutes was at its height. When near the central point, about two miles above Lake City, the steamer was at the mercy of the waves, which were washing over the boat, and all was confusion. The bow was then run in and the barge cut loose, but the wind again set the steamer adrift in the lake. A number of those on the barge jumped into the water and swam ashore.

As the barge floated again in deep water, those on board saw the steamer as it was carried helpless out in the lake, and being tossed about on the raging waters. They were horrified a moment later to see the steamer capsize, carrying with it its cargo of 150 people. These on the barge remained there until they were drifted near the shore and all were rescued or swam ashore.

There were only about 50 people on the barge, the remainder being on the steamer. The events that transpired on the steamer after it separated from the barge are most clearly related by those who were rescued from the wrecked vessel. As soon as the storm began to affect the progress of the boat Captain Weathern gave instructions to run her into the Wisconsin shore, but it was of no avail against the terrible force of wind and waves. In five minutes more the waves began to wash into the boat and fill the lower decks, while hailstones came down

on the heads of the unfortunate crew huddled on the deck.

Suddenly a huge wave struck the craft at the same moment that a terrific blast of wind, more violent than ever, swept down upon her. The terrible force capsized the little vessel and all of the people on board, 150 or more, were thrown into the water, some being caught underneath and others thrown far from the craft.

The boat turned bottom side upward and only about twenty-five people were observed to be floating on the surface. These caught hold of the boat and climbed upon the up-turned bottom, those first securing a position assisting the others. In ten minutes more the twenty-five who had obtained momentary safety on the boat could observe no others of the crew or passengers floating on the surface of the water. Afterward, however, as a flash of lightning lit up the surface of the lake, the sight of an occasional white dress of a drowning woman or child was observable, but it was impossible for those who witnessed the sight to lend any aid.

Those remaining began calling for help as soon as the storm began to abate and in half an hour a light was observed flitting about the dock at Lake City, opposite which point the upturned steamer had now been driven.

Before help could reach them, however, the poor creatures who yet remained to tell the horrors of the time were again submitted to another battle with the elements, with no word of warning, and as they were just beginning to hope they would be taken off by citizens of Lake City, the boat again turned over, this time on its side, and all of the twenty-five remaining were hurled into the water. Of these, several were drowned before they could be brought to the boat. Those who succeeded in remaining afloat again secured hold on the boat's side, and as the men hung on to the railing they were in danger of being dashed away by the waves. One man observed the forms of two women wedged in between stationary seats, both pale in death, as the lightning gleams lit up their up-turned faces. Another man saw two little girls float past him as he clung with desperation to the steamer's side.

Half an hour after the passage of the storm the people went to the dock where the steamer *Ethel Howard* was anchored. It was presumed that the steamer would at once proceed to the rescue of the drowning, but when Captain Howard was asked if he was going out to the rescue he replied that he was not going to run his boat from shore until the indications of another approaching storm had disappeared. He said, also, that he did not propose to run the risk of losing his boat in order to look for dead people on the lake.

In a moment a dozen or more rowboats were manned and put out from shore, and the twenty or more remaining people clinging to the hull were rescued and brought to shore, most of them being men who could swim.

During the night fifty-five bodies were recovered. This morning, up to 10 o'clock, seven more had been pulled out. At 10:30 the bodies of a woman and child, to which ropes had been attached, were drawn from the water. The child was the daughter of John Winters of Red Wing. Fred Seivers, a blacksmith, was taken out a few minutes later, making a total of sixty-five, probably about half of the total number of drowned. From early morning a patrol of row boats was kept all over the neighborhood of the wreck, looking for bodies. Several were found that way last night, and a small boy was found floating and yelling, three miles down the lake from the scene of the disaster.

Battery A of St. Paul kept up a cannonading during the day, trying to trace the bodies, but without success. Tugs pulled out the shattered wreck of the *Sea Wing*, releasing three bodies, one woman and two young men. Alice Palmer of Treuton was one of these, but the two men have not been identified up to 1 o'clock. That makes a total of sixty-eight bodies now found.

Estimates vary as to the total number of dead. There were over two hundred on the steamer and barge when they started to return to Red Wing, a very few remaining behind on account of the storm, although many protested against the proposal to steam up the lake in the face of such a gale as was then blowing. Of the whole number it is known positively that about fifty were saved. More may have escaped, but only this many are known at this time to be safe. That would leave about 150 victims, but every one hopes the number may not go beyond 125. A number are still in the wreck and a great many in the bottom of the lake, where the gale first struck the steamer. Just how many will not be known for some time yet, possibly not for several days.

Following is a dispatch dated St. Paul, July 14: According to the testimony of those who witnessed the storm, it first gathered in the vicinity of Snail Lake, several miles to the northwest of Lake Gervaise, and something like eight miles from St. Paul. It proceeded in its general movement and first began its work of destruction about two miles from the Schurmeier and Good cottages by demolishing a barn and several windmills. After this it seemed to bound into the air, striking the earth again near the hamlet of Little Canada, where the first serious damage was done. Again, it skipped the space of about a mile and once again lowered to the earth and resumed its work of destruction, its fury centering near the shore of Lake Gervaise, where five deaths were caused. Once again the storm seemed to rebound into the air, only to regain the earth half a mile further on, where the ruins of the Gaetzke place and the bruised inmates were left to bear witness to its relentless power. Here its force seemed to be spent. As it proceeded eastward it assumed the simple nature of a high wind, accompanied by a thunderstorm. Half as large as medium sized olives