

VICTIMS OF RIVER DISASTER OVER 150

Sixty-three Bodies Recovered
From Wreck of Excursion
Steamer Columbia.

MANY DEAD STILL IN WRECK

Scores of Prostrated Survivors Are
Taken to Hospitals at Peoria and
Pekin; Search of Ill-Fated
Vessel Continues.

PEORIA, Ill., July 6.—With 63 bodies recovered and the total number of dead tonight estimated at 150 to 200 persons, Government, state and county officials began searching inquiries into the cause of the wreck of the excursion steamer Columbia Friday night.

Survivors have charged that the big steamer, carrying 600 passengers on a return trip from Peoria to Pekin, Ill., was driven against a sandbank scarcely 10 feet from shore and about five miles south of Peoria, during a heavy fog. First reports were that the craft had struck a snag or submerged log.

While the orchestra continued to play on the dance floor, which proved a death-trap to most of the 200 dancers, the vessel, it was said, broke into deep water, where it suddenly lurched in two and immediately settled on the bottom of the river with only the pilot-house and part of the superstructure appearing above the water.

Excessive Drinking Reported.

Harry Smith, chief of police of Pekin, said: "Reports have come to me that the drinking on board the Columbia the night of the tragedy was carried to extremes. This phase of the case will receive rigid attention after we have buried our dead. The results may be amazing."

The Columbia was condemned eight years ago, just before she was purchased and repaired by Captain Mehl, according to R. V. Downer, Federal inspector of hulls, of St. Louis, and his assistant, G. R. Bowers, who have been an investigation of the accident.

It was on the return trip to Pekin from Peoria Friday night that a faint jar, extending from stem to stern, gave the first intimation of the onrushing tragedy.

The tragedy came without warning when the 500 merry-makers aboard, after a night's dancing at Alton Park in Peoria, were ending the evening's entertainment with dancing and concerts by the orchestra.

Seventy-five survivors are in hospitals of this city and Pekin. There were 497 persons on the boat.

Passengers Panic-Stricken.

Soon after the steamer struck a panic occurred among the passengers, and many jumped into the water without securing life preservers. Those who could swim reached shore, which was only a few feet away.

The second deck of the boat, where the dance hall is located, was crowded when the crash came, and it was there that many were crushed to death in the panic.

Ray Jones, fireman on the steamer, estimated that between 150 and 200 persons were on the dance floor when the boat struck, and he believed that many of those had perished.

When the boat settled on the bottom the water reached the staterooms immediately below the pilot house on the listed side.

The pilot, when he found his boat was sinking, sent distress signals, and within a short time boats from various directions hastened to the rescue and began to pick up those struggling in the water, but the effort was badly hampered.

Search Resumed at Daybreak.

Search for bodies was abandoned at 4 o'clock this morning, but tonight, approximately 20 had been recovered, only a portion of whom had been identified.

With the break of day two divers went down into the sunken wreck of the Columbia to bring up bodies of the victims.

Almost at the same time hearse began arriving in Pekin from the scene of the disaster, bringing the first of the bodies of the victims to the city.

A large crowd gathered at the morgue in the little river city and there were many pathetic scenes. Members of the Home Guard arrived in Pekin early to preserve order.

Out of the first 24 bodies recovered, only one was that of a man, two were children and the majority were those of girls between 10 and 20 years old.

Divers chopped a hole through the deck into the main cabin and hauled out the body of a woman whose hands were tightly to the handle of a baby carriage. The carriage was empty. A little later a baby was removed.

Watches Record Disaster.

The bodies of two women wearing wrist watches were recovered by the divers. Each watch had stopped at exactly 12:05 o'clock.

Diving and wading knee deep in water between docks, volunteers and workers prosecuted the search for missing bodies.

Shoes, hats, dancing pumps, sweaters and wraps of all character were hauled from the water-covered checking-room in the dance floor lobby.

Worn, bandaged men, women and children, survivors of the wreck of the steamer Columbia, today gathered about the little store in the heart of the business district which had been turned into a temporary morgue to receive the bodies of victims of the disaster. The tragedy had brought all business to a standstill.

Officers of the boat said that a faint jar was their first intimation of the approaching tragedy.

Captain Tells of Wreck.

"It was not a hard blow," said Captain Herman Mehl. "We were headed down stream and it was awfully foggy. The boat had worked over pretty well to the Peoria side. When she hit, I went up to the bridge as fast as I could."

"She backed off, squared away and headed down stream again. Many of the passengers rushed to the starboard side and she listed a bit."

"I ordered one of the crew to go down into the hold and he yelled that there was two feet of water there. I told the passengers to hurry upstairs and instructed the crew to keep order."

"Then the lights went out and she settled in a couple of minutes."

PEKIN, Ill., July 6.—After a day spent in collecting the dead from the wrecked excursion steamer Columbia, many citizens, excited by the harrowing scenes tonight, gathered in saloons and other places and threatened to wreak vengeance on any of the ship's officers whom they should find in any way at fault for the sinking of the ship with the loss of a hundred or more lives.

Extra Patrols Established.

Precautionary measures against any mob violence were taken by the city police. Extra patrols were thrown about the streets, and the closing of

ALLIED OFFICERS LEAVING CONFERENCE.



These four officers, leaving the conference hall at Versailles, near Paris, the seat of the inter-allied council, where conferences are held almost daily, represent America, France, England and Italy. From left to right, front row, are: General Belin, France; General Robillan, Italy; top row, left to right, our own General Bliss, accompanied by an English officer, unmentioned.

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PRESIDENT WILL BLOCK \$2.40 WHEAT

Agricultural Bill Carrying Price
Fixing Rider Certain to Be
Vetoed.

CONGRESS GETS NOTICE

Officials Estimate That Increased
Figure Approved by Both Houses
Would Add Three Cents a Loaf
to the Cost of Bread.

WASHINGTON, July 6.—President Wilson will veto the annual Agricultural Appropriation Bill because of the rider agreed to by both Senate and House today fixing the Government minimum guaranteed wheat price at \$2.40 a bushel.

This information was transmitted to Chairman Lever of the House agriculture committee today through Postmaster-General Burleson just before Speaker Clark had signed the bill preliminary to sending it to the White House.

Officials estimated that if the \$2.40 price for wheat were to be approved the price of flour would be increased by approximately \$2 a barrel with an increase of from 2 to 3 cents in the price of a loaf of bread. With \$2.40 as the basic price, wheat probably would sell in New York at \$2.75 a bushel, it was said.

Should the President veto the bill, the \$2,000,000 annual appropriation for the Department of Agriculture would be tied up until Congress re-convenes. The Department, however, would not be without funds, as Congress today adopted a resolution continuing last year's appropriation until the appropriation bill is finally enacted.

The \$11,000,000 emergency agricultural appropriation measure will go over until the recess, its passage having been blocked in the Senate because of the Norris amendment providing for war-time prohibition.

The House previously rejected a substitute by Representative Morgan, of Oklahoma, which proposed a guarantee price of \$2.65 a bushel. The bill now goes back to the Senate for concurrence and House leaders predicted approval without further conference.

MEDFORD BOY LIKES WAR

Frank Hubbard Eager to Recover of
Wound and Return to Front.

MEDFORD, Or., July 6.—(Special.)—The first official news of the wounding of Frank N. Hubbard, son of Mr. and Mrs. H. T. Hubbard, of this city, was received today. Mr. Hubbard was among the first Medford boys to enlist in the Marines, shortly after the outbreak of the war.

A letter recently received by his parents stated he was in a hospital and expected to get out and into the fight again in 30 days. Mr. Hubbard was at the Chateau Thierry battle several weeks ago, receiving a bullet through the leg.

"It is some sport," he wrote in his letter, "and the Marines are some boys. The only thing I am worrying about is how long it will be before I can get back in the front lines again."

HOOD RIVER SPIRIT WINS

Los Angeles Man Likes Celebration
So Well That He Buys Farm.

HOOD RIVER, Or., July 6.—(Special.)—The spirit of patriotism in the celebration here Thursday has probably won the most enthusiastic response of R. R. Armstrong, of Los Angeles, Cal., on prospecting tour of the Northwest, came here to observe the Birthday of Independence. Participation in the entertainment features provided by the Red Cross chapter, in charge of the day's celebration, was enthusiastic.

Mr. Armstrong left for Des Moines, Iowa, Friday.

"I am going up there and buy a ranch. The Hood River spirit certainly strikes me just right."

Motor Truck Party Visits Hood.

An unusual Fourth of July outing took place when Henry Kruger, of Hillsdale, took a motor truck party to Mount Hood. Leaving Portland July 3 at 5 o'clock and motoring as far as the Government Forest Reserve Station, where camp was made for the night, a start was made at daybreak July 4 for the Government Camp. After reaching Government Camp the party climbed to the snowfields of Mount Hood. They returned to Portland the same day. Those who made the trip were:

Henry Kruger, Will Lohr, Billie Rhedler, Bernie Brentano, Mr. Maxen, Mrs. Looney, Mrs. H. T. Hubbard, Mary Elmer, Mary Brentano, Anna Beck, Clara Bode, Lena Beck, Elizabeth Brentano, Elizabeth Spooner, Minerva Kirkendall, Rose Friday, Bertha Shedler, Anna Moor, Edna Smith, Elsie Shedler.

Grays Harbor Youths to Be Called.

ABERDEEN, Wash., July 6.—(Special.)—Youths of 21 will be called to the colors here for the August draft, according to advice received by the local exemption board. Orders for the examination of the new registrants are now out.

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Running Over Child Held Assault.

ASTORIA, Or., July 6.—(Special.)—H. H. Zapf was arraigned in the Justice Court this morning on an information charging him with assault with a dangerous weapon in running over a child with an automobile. He waived examination and was held to await the action of the Circuit Court grand jury, with bonds fixed at \$250. He was later released upon his own recognizance.

Clothes
that invite
Summer Comfort
Fabrics of Wool
\$25 to \$50
Ben Selling
Leading Clothier
Morrison at Fourth



WHEAT IMPORTS LARGE

PACIFIC MILLING DIVISION HEAD
RETURNS FROM EAST.

J. W. Ganong Receives Assurance
That Northwest Mills Will Have
Protection From Government.

Imports of Australian wheat into California continue in large volume and the movement is likely to run throughout the winter.

In past seasons the Pacific Northwest has shipped several millions of bushels of wheat to California millers each year, and large quantities of flour, as well, have gone south. This trade has now practically stopped, because of the bringing in of the Australian cereal, and other arrangements will have to be made for marketing the Northwestern crop and the product of the mills here.

J. W. Ganong, chairman of the North Pacific Coast milling division of the Food Administration, who has just returned from the East, laid the matter before Julius Barnes, head of the Grain Corporation, and pointed out that under this arrangement the only buyer of flour would be the Government, and the mills here would have to compete with the millers of the East and Middle West.

Assurance was given by Mr. Barnes that the matter would receive attention and it is hoped that the flour purchased by the Government will be sufficient to keep the mills running and thus provide stockmen with an adequate supply of milled feed during the winter months.

The chairman of the milling division have tendered their resignations, which Mr. Hoover has accepted, and the divisional offices will close on August 1.

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The operations of the department will be conducted hereafter by Fred J. Litcham, who has been appointed chief of the milling division of the Food Administration, with headquarters at New York.

Farewell Given Minister.
LEBANON, Or., July 6.—(Special.)—

A joint reception was tendered Rev. Frank James last night in the Methodist Episcopal Church by the Lebanon Home Guards, of which he had been Captain. Rev. Mr. James left this morning for Louisville, Ky., for service as chaplain in the Army. Addresses were made by Mayor Underwood, representing the church, and T. D. O'Brien, on behalf of the guards.

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