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on the Columbia River

# The Daily Astorian

FULL ASSOCIATED PRESS REPORT.

THE DAILY ASTORIAN is the  
biggest and best paper  
on the Columbia River

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## ROUGH SHOES FOR LITTLE GIRLS



Sometimes, especially school times, they  
need them; good, easy ones, but strong  
and hard to wear out. As for the boy, O,  
we sympathize with you all the year  
through, for the boys are a great tax  
on head, heart and pocketbook, but right  
here our sympathy takes a practical turn.  
Have you seen our special shoes for boys?  
**Petersen & Brown.**

## THE PARKER HOUSE

First-Class in  
Every Respect.

## BAR AND BILLIARD ROOM

Special Rates  
to Theatrical Parties

**A. J. MASON, Prop**  
ASTORIA, ORE.

1873 1892  
LUBRICATING  
OILS  
A SPECIALTY  
**Fisher Brothers**  
ASTORIA...

SELL  
SHIP CHANDLERY  
HARDWARE  
IRON AND STEEL  
COAL  
GROCERIES AND PROVISIONS  
FLOOR AND MILL FEED  
PAINTS OILS AND VARNISHES  
LOGGING SUPPLIES  
PAULSEN'S SCALERS  
DOORS AND WINDOWS  
AGRICULTURAL IMPLEMENTS  
WAGONS AND VEHICLES

## ASTORIA AND COLUMBIA RIVER RAILROAD.

Leave	Astoria (Daily)	Arrive
8:00 a.m.	Portland and Astoria Ex- press trains via Knappa Jiffon, Westport, Clatskanie, Goble, connection at Goble for the East and Pu- get Sound points.	4 p.m.
12:30 p.m.	Astoria, Seaside and New Astoria Passenger trains, via W. tenton and Flavel.	5:45 p.m.

All trains leaving Astoria going to Sea-  
side and returning from Seaside run on  
the Flavel Branch.  
**J. C. MAIO,**  
G. F. & P. A.

## The Only Stove Store ... IN ASTORIA ...

Our Specialty: **STOVES AND RANGES**  
We know the business. Twenty years experience. If you want a  
GOOD Stove, see the stock at the  
**Eclipse Hardware Co.**



**CITY BOOK STORE**  
Headquarters for  
**SCHOOL BOOKS,  
SCHOOL SUPPLIES,  
STATIONERY,  
BLANK BOOKS,  
TYPEWRITER  
PAPER,  
RIBBONS,  
ETC., ETC**  
**GRIFFIN & REED**

## Foard & Stokes Co.

OUR MOTTO:  
"We Buy and Sell Everything."

Specialties Just Arrived...

## CARLOAD OF AIR-TIGHT HEATERS

AT LOWEST PRICES.

## CAR LOAD OF LAMPS

ALL KINDS—LOW PRICES.

## SEVEN MEN ARE BURNED TO DEATH

### Terrible Disaster Overtakes the Torpedo Boat Davis On Her Official Trial Trip.

### HER BOILER TUBES EXPLODE

### Six Men in the Forward Fire Room Caught Like Rats in a Trap and Burned to Death by Fire and Steam.

### ALEXANDER JOHNSON'S HEROIC DEED

Bravely Dropped Into the Sea of Fire in an Effort to Save  
His Imprisoned Companions and Lost His Life--  
Terrible Sufferings of the Unfortunate Men  
As Told by Several Eye-Witnesses.

### THE DEAD.

- CHARLES M'NELLY, Fireman.
- PAUL LUTHLE, Coal Passer.
- HARRY WOOD, Fireman.
- WILLIAM WOOD, Superinten-  
dent Boiler Room.
- JAMES RYAN, Fireman.
- ALEXANDER JOHNSON, Fire-  
man.
- ALBERT BUEHLE, Fireman.

Perhaps one of the worst, and certainly  
the most horrifying accident in the his-  
tory of civilization on the Columbia river  
occurred on the torpedo-boat Davis, 25  
miles above this city, yesterday. It was  
an accident that possibly no human vigi-  
lance or foresight could have guarded  
against. Seven homes rendered desolate,  
and seven frightfully mutilated bodies  
of somebody's loved ones, stark and  
ghastly, lie in the Astoria morgue, await-  
ing shipment today to Portland.  
Such is the terrible result of what was  
to have been the Davis' triumphant and  
final official trial trip down the broad  
Columbia to this city. Cooped in a little  
low, steel-walled room, 120 feet, filled  
with flames, scalding steam and boiling  
water, six human beings were literally  
cooked until the flesh dropped from their  
bones, while to them was added later a  
seventh victim, who nobly gave his life  
in an unsuccessful effort to relieve them.  
Eye-witnesses say the death of these  
men was that of human creatures cast  
bodily into the jaws of a fierce, devour-  
ing furnace fire. Strong men paled and  
sickened and visibly trembled at the  
spectacle.  
The Davis, in command of Captain W.  
H. Patterson, and with a picked crew,  
consisting of the finest and most trust-  
worthy workmen of the great plant of  
Wolf & Zwicker, in charge of the ma-  
chinery of the vessel, left Portland at  
5:30 Wednesday evening. On the vessel  
were the government official trial board,  
consisting of Lieutenant-Commander  
Drake, president; Chief Engineer W. S.  
Smith, and Constructor Spear, of the U.  
S. N.; Messrs Wolff and Zwicker, and  
Chief Engineer Cruik, a government of-  
ficial stationed at Portland. All went  
smoothly and, after a pleasant run, Rainier  
was reached, where the boat was  
moored for the night and prepared for  
her critical run of yesterday. At 10 a. m.  
she got under way and ran a mile up  
the river, waiting for the fog to raise

sure, this being the normal pressure  
under forced draught.  
"I immediately gave the alarm, and  
everyone left the engine room, knowing  
there was an accident somewhere, ex-  
cept myself; I being forced to remain in  
order to answer signals from the captain,  
who, having discovered something was  
wrong, but being unable to locate it,  
had turned the boat in the direction of  
shore.  
"Discovering later what the trouble  
was, Captain Patterson kept in the mid-  
dle of the stream and let go the anchor.  
On receiving the 'O. K.' bell I left the  
engine room and went on deck.  
"By this time the hatch was open and  
the victims were being lifted from below  
to the deck. None of them was at that  
time dead and the scene was one of the  
most agonizing I ever witnessed.  
"As the injured men were dragged on  
deck the flesh in several instances  
dropped from their hands and other ex-  
posed portions of their bodies.  
"Alex. Johnson, one of the injured  
firemen now in the hospital, performed  
a heroic deed which will probably cost  
him his life. As soon as the hatch was  
lifted, Johnson, who is one of the men  
in the after fire-room, descended to re-  
scue the men and was overcome by the  
flames and boiling water, and had to be  
lifted himself out of the fire-room,  
scalded in a horrible manner.  
"Johannes Wolff, son and partner of  
the senior member of the firm of Wolff  
& Zwicker, was the second man to de-  
scend to the rescue of the injured men.  
He fortunately escaped without serious  
injury, but that detracts nothing from  
the bravery of the deed.  
"As fast as the men were taken out  
of the fire-room they were placed in  
charge of Dr. Thornton, the firm's sur-  
geon, who was aboard.  
"Johannes Wolff and one of the crew  
by this time had launched a life boat  
and left for the Oregon shore to tele-  
graph for assistance. Within half an  
hour the Harvest Queen with a ship in  
tow hove in sight. The Queen, on being  
signalled, anchored the ship and came  
to our relief and took us in tow and  
headed for Astoria.  
"In the meantime fireman McNelly  
and Luthle had died.  
"Just above Tongue Point we met the  
tug Relief with Drs. Fulton and Tuttle  
on board, responding to the telegram sent  
by Mr. Wolff. Just as they boarded us  
fireman Wood died. The arriving phy-  
sicians had a consultation with Dr.  
Thornton and decided that nothing could  
be done for the remaining injured men  
until Astoria was reached.  
"As to the cause of the accident, of  
course I have my own theory. But, since  
the boat was in charge of the official  
trial board at the time, it would not be  
proper for me to advance any opinion  
until their investigation is made."  
From another member of the crew who  
was on board, it was learned that the  
accident was due to the explosion of  
some of the boiler tubes. The collapse  
of these tubes in the after end of the  
boiler allowed the steam and water to  
enter the fire boxes, blowing open the  
furnace doors and filling the little room  
with the mingled horrors of living  
flames and boiling water.  
As soon as the Davis arrived at the  
dock Coroner Pohl was summoned and  
took charge of the bodies of the dead  
firemen. The four injured firemen were  
taken on stretchers to St. Mary's hos-  
pital and placed in a small ward on the  
second floor.  
The unfortunate men presented a hor-  
rible sight. Their entire bodies had the  
appearance of being literally cooked.  
Patches of the flesh hung in shreds and  
the face of fireman Wood was swollen  
badly, and all of them appeared to be in  
terrible agony.  
At about 10 o'clock last night the re-  
maining sufferers succumbed to their  
frightful injuries; all dying within brief  
intervals, making seven victims of the  
disaster.  
**PILOT PATTERSON'S STORY.**  
Pilot W. H. Patterson was in charge of  
the Davis when the accident happened.  
He told the following story to an As-  
torian reporter:  
"We left Portland at 5:30 p. m. and  
steamed down to Rainier, where the  
Davis was moored for the night. Leav-  
ing Rainier at 10 next morning we  
steamed up the river about a mile, wait-  
ing for the fog to lift. The weather  
soon cleared, and we started down  
stream, passing Mount Coffin at 10:22.  
At 10:28 we passed Puget Island, under  
full head of steam, and eight minutes  
later, while opposite Tenas Inhaee Island,  
the accident occurred.  
"When the hatchway was opened the  
flames and steam went out like a blaze  
from a blast furnace, throwing caps,  
hats, and jumpers 50 feet in the air.  
Alexander Johnson, one of the firemen,  
dashed toward the open hatch and  
dropped down, in an effort to rescue the  
men beneath. The heat was terrific and  
Johnson was soon overcome. John Wolff,  
son of the senior member of the firm,  
then descended, and succeeded in get-  
ting ropes around the men in the fire  
room.  
"Dr. Thornton, of Portland, who was  
along to render aid in case of accident

## WET WEATHER GOODS

Mackintoshes  
Umbrellas  
Rubbers

FOR LADIES, GENTS, MISSES,  
YOUTHS AND CHILDREN

Reliable Goods; Lowest Prices

**C. H. COOPER,**  
THE LEADING HOUSE OF ASTORIA

did all in his power to relieve the suffer-  
ing of the injured men, and was given  
valuable assistance by Constructor Spear,  
of the trial board.  
"McNelly and Luthle died shortly after  
being removed from the hold, and Harry  
Wood breathed his last as the boat was  
landing in this city. The men were all  
frightfully burned, and their suffering  
was awful.  
"The accident was caused, I think, by  
the failure of the automatic water gauge  
to work properly, causing the forward  
boiler to run dry. After the bursting of  
the tubes in the boiler, the heat blew the  
flames from the furnace, and the room  
was a mass of seething flames and scald-  
ing steam. When the accident happened  
we were making about 23 miles an hour."  
**ALEXANDER JOHNSON,  
HERO OF THE DAVIS.**  
Brave Fellow Went Nobly to His Death  
in an Attempt to Rescue His Im-  
prisoned Friends.  
At St. Mary's hospital in this city last  
night Alexander Johnson, one of the  
firemen on the Davis, succumbed to the  
terrible burns received when the explo-  
sion occurred. Johnson's name will  
live in the Northwest for years to come,  
for he was a hero whose act is seldom  
equalled—an act which even Lieutenant  
Hobson's did not surpass.  
Johnson was in the after fire room  
when the accident happened. With the  
opening of the forward hatch, which led  
to the fiery prison of the men who were  
being roasted to death below, the flames  
shot upward, while mingled with the  
hissing of the steam, could be heard the  
groans and cries of the unfortunate men  
in the hold. Without one moment's hesi-  
tation, this hero in overalls dropped  
through the opening into the literal fur-  
nace that raged beneath. In an instant  
he, too, like the other victims, sank  
powerless and quivering on the heated  
steel floor.  
But another hero immediately stepped  
to the front. This time the son of the  
senior member of Oregon's firm of ship-  
builders descended the blazing pit and,  
in spite of its stifling and torturing at-  
mosphere, fortunately by this time con-  
siderably relieved through the open  
hatch, stuck to his heroic mission until  
the last unfortunate was handed up to  
the outstretched arms of those who  
were waiting on the upper deck. As the  
men were drawn through the open hatch,  
patches of cooked flesh dropped from  
their persons, and they were laid, a  
quivering and unrecognizable mass, on  
the deck, under the clear atmosphere of  
heaven. Young Wolff was then helped to  
the opening and, after a time, received  
the attention of the attending surgeons.  
Strange to say, he was only slightly in-  
jured, and during the subsequent run  
down to Astoria devoted his time to the  
attempted alleviation of the living suf-  
ferers on deck.  
**SPECULATION AS TO CAUSE.**  
The exact cause of the disaster must be  
determined by an examination. It is  
impossible that the vessel was faulty, as  
every piece of her was tested before be-  
ing placed. At the time of the explosion  
the boat was carrying but 120 pounds of  
steam. The boilers had been tested at  
25 pounds' pressure, so the accident was  
not the result of weak tubes. Doubtless  
the automatic water gauge failed to per-  
form its work, and in this manner the  
forward boiler was not supplied with  
water. The steam from the after boiler  
rushed forward and the great pressure  
caused the tubes to burst. Great care  
had been taken by the builders in the  
construction of the Davis, and the acci-  
dent is a most unfortunate blow to the  
firm. Mr. Wolff, of the firm, who was  
(Continued on page three.)

The Royal is the biggest grade baking powder  
known. Actual tests show it goes one-  
third farther than any other brand.

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Absolutely Pure

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