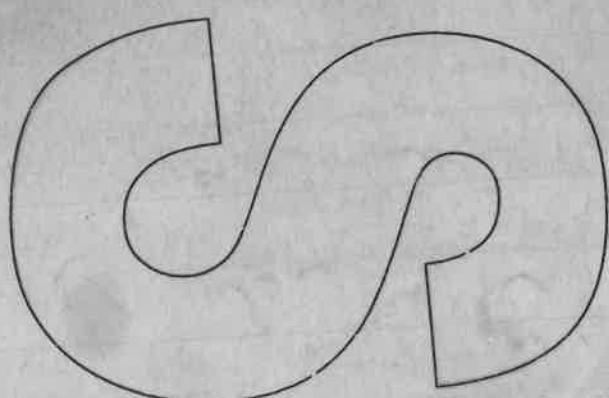
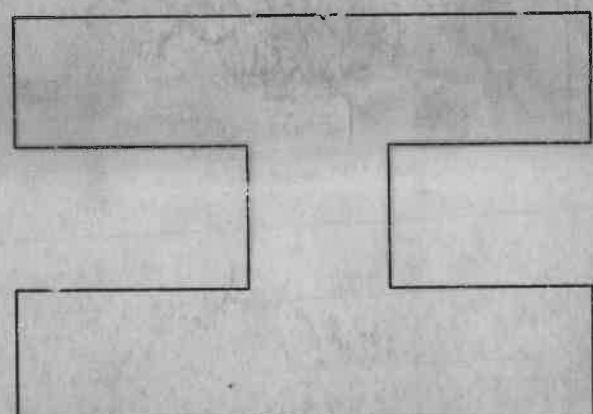
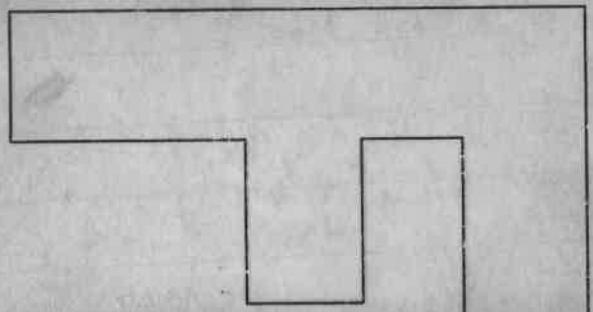


Official Copy for Major
J S Brinton Paymaster General
~~W.M.~~
Judge Advocate General



013234

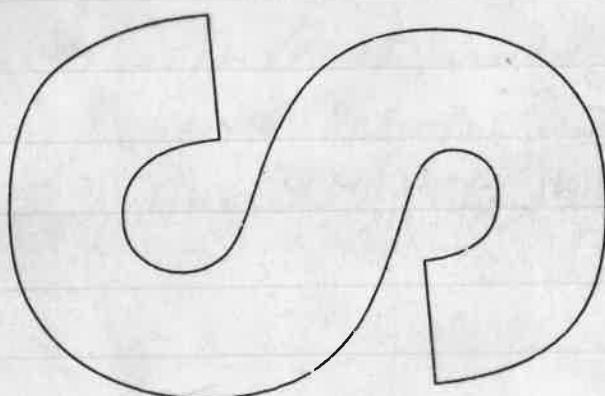
Proceedings
of a
Court of Inquiry

convened by the Special Orders No. 408

[Redacted] War Department Adjutant General's
Office, Washington, Sept. 11th 1863.

Destruction

[Redacted] of [Redacted]
Steamer Ruth
[Redacted] by fire!



Examination of

- Page 3. Major William H. Jamison Add^d. Paymaster U.S.A.
" 7. Major James A. Farris I I I
" 8. George L. Feiger Paymaster U.S.A.
" 12 Benjamin R. Pogram, Captain Steamer Ruth.
" 16 Humphrey G. Root Clerk Treasury Dept. Washington D.C.
" 19 Peter Vandernort, chief Engineer Steamer Ruth.
" 22 Major A. S. Burton Add^d. Paymaster U.S.A.
" 29 Henry Goddard clerk to major Burton.
" 31 Andrew Fleming, Pilot on Steamer Ruth -
" 31 James A. Spencer, second clerk on Steamer Ruth.
" 33 James Cain, First mate on Steamer Ruth -
" 37 Milo S. Moore, carpenter on Steamer Ruth.

Rolls Nos. 1 & 2 -

Being the evidence

taken before the Board of Inquiry on the burning
of the Steamer Ruth, instituted by orders of
Major General Schopfield.

Aug. 13th 1863.

Proceedings of a Court of Inquiry
convened at St. Louis Mo., by virtue of the
following order:-

Special Orders
N^o. 408

War Department
Adjutant General's office

Washington Sept. 11th 1863.

Extract

6. By direction of the President, a court of Inquiry will assemble at St. Louis Mo., on the 15th instant or as soon thereafter as practicable, to investigate the circumstances attending the loss of a large amount of funds by the destruction of the steamer "Ruth" by fire -

Detail for the Court -

Major General Daniel Hunter U. S. Volunteers
Brigadier General George L. Strong U. S. Volunteers
Major F. D. Gallunder, Ordnance Department -
who will also act as Recorder -

The Court will thoroughly investigate the manner in which the loss occurred and its attending circumstances, and will make a full report of the evidence and their opinion thereon -

This report will state to whom the responsibility for the loss of these funds, or for that of any part of them, properly belongs; and

2

whether any Government Officers, or agents of
the funds, or being in any way connected with
them has been to blame for misconduct or
neglect of duty in the premises.

By order of the Secretary of War.

E. D. Townsend
Assistant Adjutant General.

Saint Louis Mo.
September 21st 1863.

The Court met pursuant to the above order -

Present,

Major General David Hunter U.S. Volunteers
Brigadier General W. H. Strong U. S. Volunteers
Major G. D. Ballender, Ordnance Department -
member and recorder.

General Strong called the attention
of the Court before being sworn to the fact, that
his name was erroneously set out in the above
order, it being W. H. Strong, instead of George
K. Strong. This record is therefore corrected
accordingly.

The Court including Major F.
D. Ballender member and Recorder was
duly sworn by the Recorder, and the Recorder
by the President. The Court then adjourned
to meet again at 12 o'clock A.M. to-morrow-

D. Ballender member and Recorder" was
only sworn by the Recorder, and the Recorder
by the President - The Court then adjourned
to meet again at 12 o'clock A.M. to-morrow

Second Day.

St. Louis, September 22d 1863.

The Court met pursuant to adjournment.

Present.

Major General David Hunter - U. S. Volunteers -
Brigadier General W. K. Strong U. S. Volunteers -
Major F. D. Ballender Ordnance Department
member and recorder - The proceedings of yesterday
having been read, Major William H. Jamison
additional Paymaster U. S. Army being duly sworn,
read two statements, as a part of
his testimony addressed to Major Gen. L. C. Febiger
chief paymaster of the District of the Mississippi
each dated August 7th 1863, marked A-B
respectively, with an additional statement
on the one marked A - dated August 12th
1863 and appended to the record herewith -

Question:

What day did the steamer "Puth"
leave St. Louis, and was you on board?

Answer -

She left on the 3d day of August 1863,
and I was on board -

Question -

Do you know the amount of Government money
that was on board, and in whose charge was it?

Answer;

There were four boxes of Government currency
said to contain, two millions, six hundred

4.

thousand dollars - the property of the United States, in charge of Major N. S. Buriton Addt^t Paymaster U. S. A. There was also on board the steamer "Ruth" at the time she was destroyed, in my iron safe \$ 959 $\frac{14}{100}$ in postal currency, property of the U. S. & in two vouchers. As near as I can judge the four boxes referred to, were wooden boxes about five feet long and eighteen inches square and strapped with iron bands -

Question:

Has the steamer Ruth destroyed by fire, and was the money referred to in the previous answer on board and if so, when and where was the steamer so destroyed?

Answer:

She was, and the fire was first discovered about 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ P. M. August the 4th 1863. about ten miles below Cairo on the Mississippi river, and the money was on board.

The fire was first discovered in the extreme rear part of the boat, under the ladies cabin. I was in bed at the time, and had but just time, to throw on a portion of my clothing, when the fire and smoke compelled me to leave the cabin. In four or five minutes the whole cabin was enveloped in flames - the money was in the cabin, in the forward part, and I

yelled me to reuse the cover -

Five minutes the whole cabin was enveloped in flames - The money was in the cabin, in the forward part, and I

noticed the boxes as I passed out of the cabin, being unable to remain, on account of the smoke and fire.

Within twenty minutes from the time the alarm was given, the whole upper works of the steamer fell into the hull, carrying the money with them - The steamer continued burning and floating down the river - I last saw the light of her, at about 5 o'clock the next morning. I am informed however, that she burned until six, when the wreck sank. My opinion at the time was, that the money was entirely destroyed, by the fire, but since some of the notes have been recovered from the wreck, in a charred state -

Question -

From your knowledge of the circumstances attending the loss of this money, have you any reason to believe that any Government officers or agents of the funds, or being in any way connected with them have been to blame for misconduct or neglect of duty in the premises?

Answer - I have no reason to believe that any Government officers or agents of the funds or being in any way connected with them have been to blame for misconduct or neglect of duty in the premises, for the following reasons -

The money was taken from the Asst. Treasurer's office, St. Louis and placed on board, in the cabin

of the boat, under a guard of soldiers, and confined under the guard of the soldiers, until the time of the destruction of the boat, and it was utterly impossible for the boxes to be opened or have any of the money removed, without the knowledge of the guard and passengers, who were constantly around it or in the cabin.

The rapidity of the fire and the short time the boat remained at the shore about one minute (she having been immediately headed for the shore on the first discovery of the fire,) rendered it impossible to remove the money - Indeed everything on board the steamer was lost so far as my knowledge extends, except two trunks, one of which was my own, which I threw overboard when the boat was about 300 feet from the shore, to be used as a flat to assist me in gaining it and the other I understand belonged to the watchman of the steamer.

Question -

Please state what was done subsequently to protect the interests of the Government in regard to the destroyed steamer?

Answer -

Major Bullock and myself, proceeded the next morning to the wreck in a steaming and found it sunk in about from 20 to 25 feet of water - since which time it has been constantly under the guard

Major [redacted] -
the next morning to the wreck in a steam-
ing and found it sunk in about from
20 to 25 feet of water - since which time
it has been constantly under the guard

of a gun boat or soldiers and either Major Bunting
or Major Garnish or myself, have been constantly
there. Considerable quantities of charred and
partially destroyed notes by fire, have been
brought up by a submarine diver under the
direction of the officer in charge and with
the exception of a small package sent to the
Paymaster General, have been placed in the
custody of H. G. Root Esq. Special Agent of the
Treasury Department -

The Court then adjourned to meet again
at 12 o'clock A.M. to-morrow-

Third Day.

[redacted] St. Louis September 23rd

[redacted] 12 o'clock M.

1863

The Court met pursuant to adjournment.

Present -

Major General David Hunter
Brigadier General N. R. Strong

U. S. Volunteers

U. S. Volunteers

Major F. D. Ballouder Ordnance Department
member and Recorder. The proceedings of yesterday
having been read. Major James A. Garnish
Add'l Paymaster U. S. A. being duly sworn
testifies as follows.

Question. Please state whether or not you were on board
the steamer Ruth at the time she took fire, or
if you visited the wreck afterwards, and whether
from your knowledge of the circumstances
attending the loss of the public money on board

you have any reason to believe that any Government officers or agents of the funds, or being in any way connected with them, have been to blame for misconduct or neglect of duty in the premises?

Answer - I was not on board at the time the steamer "Ruth" took fire - but visited the wreck afterwards viz, on the 7th of August 1863, by orders from Major Feiger, dated August 5th 1863 and I have no reason to believe that any of the officers or agents named in the question have been to blame for misconduct or neglect of duty in the premises.

George L. Feiger, Paymaster U. S. Army
being duly sworn testifies as follows.

Question - What is your position in the Government service?

Answer - I am Paymaster of the U. S. Army at present commanding the Pay-District of the Mississippi, the principal office of which is at Saint Louis.

Question - Please state what you know about the circumstances attending the loss of a large amount of Government Funds, by the destruction of the steamer Ruth by fire.

Answer - On the 3rd of August 1863, I turned over to Major V. J. Brinton, Adcl. Paymaster two millions and one hundred thousand dollars and took his receipt for the same. This money was turned over by giving my

check on the Asst. Treasurer St. Louis. I directed

To Major N. S. Brinton, Adm'l Paymaster
two millions and six hundred thousand
dollars and took his receipt for the same.
This money was turned over by giving my

check on the Asst. Treasurer St. Louis. I directed
Major Brinton by written orders, to proceed to
Memphis Tenn., and there distribute it among
the different Paymasters, as occasion might
require. At the same time I ordered the follow-
ing Paymasters to accompany him -

Majors J. W. Brigden - H. W. White - H. H. Jameson,
Josiah Gilden - T. D. Greenwald - J. M. Humphrey,
& H. B. Mendenhall - I also at the same time
made a requisition on General Strong for a
guard of thirty men and one officer, to pro-
ceed to Memphis, in order to guard the funds.
The request was complied with and the detail
ordered to report on board the steamer
~~Patch~~ at St. Louis, at 4 o'clock P.M. on
the 3^d of August 1863 - On the morning of
the 5th of August 1863 I received a telegram
from Major N. S. Brinton, stating that the
boat and funds had been destroyed by fire,
the previous night about midnight -

I immediately telegraphed to the Paymaster
General, notifying him of the fact and to
Major Brinton to at once apply to General
Bruford, comdg. at Cairo, for a guard to be sent
down to the neck, to prevent any pilfering -
or attempt to disturb the freight. I also ordered
Major J. A. Farish to proceed at once to the
neck, to look after the interest of the Pay
Department and to take such measures as
might appear necessary for the security or

10.

possible recovery of the money, and to remain in charge of the wreck until further orders.

Application was also made to the Quarter Master at St. Louis, for means of investigating the wreck and if possible to recover the funds - a diving bell was in a few days placed in operation but without finding anything of the money - afterwards a man with a submarine armor was employed, who succeeded in finding considerable portions of the remains of the money. Operations are still in progress under a contract made by the Quarter Master, to have the machinery and remains of the freight taken up and the wreck thoroughly explored.

Question - From your knowledge of the circumstances attending the loss of this money, have you any reason to believe, that any Government officers or agents of the funds, or being in any way connected with them, have been to blame for misconduct or neglect of duty in the premises?

Answer - I have no knowledge of misconduct of any officer connected with this matter - but there seems to have been an unaccountable neglect at Washington City in not having a duplicate of the list of the series and numbers of the notes sent to the Asst. Treasurer at St. Louis for my credit, made and retained there - the one sent here, having been given to Major Punton with the money

numbers of the notes sent to the Asst. Treasurer at St. Louis for my credit, made and retained there - the one sent here, having been given to Major Burdon with the money

and burned in his safe on the Ruth - had a duplicate been kept, each note lost, could have been identified thereby.

Question. Was this money packed in your opinion in a suitable manner -

Answer - I consider that it was - it having been forwarded to Memphis for distribution to Paymasters at that point - without its being opened or interfered with - in exactly the condition in which sent from Washington city to this point - with the exception of one box - which was opened by the Asst. Treasurer here - for the purpose of taking out enough, to reduce the amount in the whole lot, to the amount of the check -

The Court then adjourned to meet again at 12 o'clock A.M. to morrow.

Fourth Day

St. Louis September 24th/1863.

12 o'clock M.

The Court met pursuant to adjournment.

Present -

Major General David Hunter U. S. Volunteers.

Brigadier General W. H. Strong U. S. Volunteers.

Major F. D. Gallender Ordnance Department
member and Recorder -

The proceedings of yesterday having been read by the Recorder - the Court adjourned

to await the attendance of a witness, until
12 o'clock to-morrow—

Fifth Day.

St. Louis Mo. Sept. 25th 1863.

12 o'clock M.

The Court met pursuant to adjournment.

Present—

Major General David Hunter U. S. Volunteers
Brigadier General W. H. Strong U. S. Volunteers
Major H. D. Ballender, Ordnance Department
member and Recorder—

The proceedings of yesterday having been
read by the Recorder—

Benjamin R. Pogram

being duly sworn testifies as follows.—

Question - Were you Captain of the steamer Ruth
when she was destroyed by fire?

Answer - Yes sir -

Question - Did you testify in regard to the destruction
of said steamer, before a Board of
~~Inquiry~~, of which Major ~~H. H.~~ B. Jones, Pay-
master U. S. Army was President, which
convened at St. Louis in August last, and
will you please state any additional mat-
ter, if any, that may have come to your
knowledge, in regard to the destruction
of said steamer?

Answer - I did so testify - In regard to the origin

of the fire, I have since seen the deck hands

will you please state any additional matter, if any, that may have come to your knowledge, in regard to the destruction of said steamer?

Answer - I did so testify - In regard to the origin

of the fire, I have since seen the deck hands who occupied the rooms below, and just aft of, where the fire was first seen, and I now think that the fire did not occur in those rooms, but did occur in the carpenter shop which was below the life-boat, around which the flames were lapping when I first saw the fire - At the time I gave my testimony before the Board referred to I was under the impression that the life boat set a little further aft than it really did.

Question - What is your opinion in regard to the origin of the fire, by which the steamer Ruth was destroyed on 4th August last-

Answer - I think it was the work of an incendiary. There were no lights used in that part of the boat there was nothing combustible there, and I never saw sparks fall from the chimneys sufficiently large to set anything on fire.

Question - Did you know of any funds being on board the steamer Ruth belonging to the U. S. Government, at the time of the destruction of the steamer by fire and if so, what amount?

Answer - There were a number of wooden boxes said to contain about three millions -

Question - On what part of the steamer were these

14. boxes deposited, and how guarded or protected
and in whose charge did they seem to be?

Answer - They were deposited in the cabin near
the office - There was a guard of about thirty
U. S. soldiers with an officer & Major Brinton
seemed to be in charge -

Question - At the time of the fire, was it in your opinion
possible for the guard or other persons in
charge to have got those boxes ashore?

Answer - I don't think it was possible.

Question - In your opinion, were the bills contained
in the boxes referred to above, so badly burned
or destroyed by the fire, as to prevent their
use for circulation in case of their recovery?

Answer - I have seen some of the bills, said to have
been taken from the wreck - Some of the
bills that I saw, the centre was good, having
been charred around the edges - Most
of those I saw were utterly worthless -
None that I have seen, could in my opinion
be used for circulation.

Question - From your knowledge of the cir-
cumstances attending the loss of this money
or from any other cause have you any
reason to believe, that any Government
officer or agent of the funds, or being
in any way connected with them, have
been to blame for misconduct or neglect
of duty in the premises?

reason to believe, that any Government
officers or agents of the funds, or being
in any way connected with them, have
been to blame for misconduct or neglect
of duty in the premises?

Answer - I have no reason to believe that there
was any one to blame -

Question - Please state, what conversation took
place between you and Major Brunton
on the deck of the steamer Ruth, just
previous to the fire -?

Answer - We were sitting on the roof of the boat
near the forward end, just previous to
the fire and at the time the alarm was
given - Our conversation was mostly on
the dangers of navigation - He asked
who the owners of the boat were and I think
he asked what insurance I had on her,
and he also wanted to know why I had
left Cairo that night - He was asking me
also about the different boats, that my
brother was interested in. He also made
~~this remark one of the last remarks made -~~
he said that it was a very dangerous and
risky business and he would not like to
own any Steam Boat Stock - or words
to that effect -

Question - Was there anything in the manner
or conversation of Major Brunton to lead
you to suspect him at the time?

Answer - I did for several days think that there
might have been something wrong - but
I do not now think, that there was any-
thing wrong in regard to Major Brunton -

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The Court then adjourned to meet again at
12 o'clock A. M to-morrow -

Sixth Day

St. Louis September 26th 1863
12 o'clock M.

The Court met pursuant to adjournment.

Present -

Major General David Hunter U. S. Volunteers.

Brigadier General W. K. Strong U. S. Volunteers.

Major F. D. Callender Ordnance Department
member and Recorder -

The proceedings of yesterday were
read and at the request of the Recorder the
Court adjourned to meet on Monday at 12 o'-
clock M.

Seventh Day.

St. Louis, September 28th 1863.

The Court met pursuant to adjournment

Present -

Major General David Hunter U. S. Volunteers.

Brigadier General W. K. Strong U. S. Volunteers.

Major F. D. Callender, Ordnance Department
member and Recorder -

The proceedings of Saturday were read -
Humphrey L. Root being duly sworn
testifies as follows:

Question - What is your official position in the
Government service and please state

The proceedings of Saturday were read -
Humphrey G. Root being duly sworn
testifies as follows,

Question - What is your official position in the
Government service and please state

what your action has been in relation to certain
Government funds destroyed on the stea-
mer Ruth -

Answer - A clerk in the Treasury Department
Washington - Have charge of the division
of "Issues of funds", that is, notes and pos-
tal currency - On the 29th of July last
I delivered the agent of Adams Express
Company, three millions of U. S. notes and
Postal currency, to be transported to Saint.
Louis, and delivered to Benjamin Farrar
U. S. Ass't. Treasurer there, as follows viz.

30 Packages U. S. notes -	Ones \$ 120,000
15 "	Twas \$ 420,000
40 "	Fives \$ 800,000
25 "	Tens \$ 1,000,000
11 "	Twenty \$ 880,000
	\$ 2,920,000

Postal currency \$ 55,160.00

" sheets 10¢	14,000
" " 5¢	20,000
	\$ 80,000

\$ 3,000,000

The above were packed in boxes as follows.

The 30 packages of ones in box No 1 - Box No. 2
contained 15 packages of twos and 15 packages of
fives - Box No. 3. contained 25 packages of fives
and five packages of tens - Box No. 4. contained
20 packages of tens, and 10 packages of twenties -

18.

Boyes No. 5 & 6. contained \$ 80,000 Postal currency and one package of twenties - When "package" is spoken of herein, it means 4,000 notes, no matter what their denomination may be.

I am informed that the Asst. Treasurer at St. Louis, delivered to Major Brunton, add^d Paymaster - and which were put on board the steamer Ruth - Boxes No. 1, 2, 3. & 4 - neither of which, except No. 3 had been opened - From No. 3, was taken, 10 packages of fives and one package of tens, leaving \$ 2,600,000 as delivered to Major Brunton -

I arrived at the wreck of the steamer Ruth on the 3^d of September - of the present month - By means [redacted] of a submarine arrow were recovered from the wreck, fragments of notes of the denomination [redacted] of ones, twos, fives, tens and twenties, which proves that the ones came from Box No. 1, and the twos from Box No. 2, and the twenties from Box No. 4. for the reason that these boxes contained notes of these denominations - The twenties which have been found, were completely charred - Some of the tens which we have found - a large portion of the note was not charred - I therefore think it must have come out of box No. 3 - If I am correct in this last inference, it proves that we have found fragments of notes from each of all four of the boxes containing the \$ 2,600.00 shipped on

board the steamer Ruth -

Question - From your knowledge of the circumstances attending the loss of this money, or from any other cause, have you any reason to believe that any Government Officers or agents of the funds, or being in any way connected with them, have been to blame for misconduct or neglect of duty in the premises?

Answer - I have not, except as to the propriety of delivering so large an amount of Government funds to a Paymaster - thus making him the depositor and transporter of the funds.

Question - Have you now a record in the Treasury Department at Washington of the contents of each of these boxes, and of the numbers of each of the notes sent?

Answer - We have such a record, except as regards the numbers - we have a record of the denominations and contents of each box.

Peter Vandernort being sworn testifies as follows:

Question - What was your position on board the steamer Ruth when she was destroyed by fire on the 3d of August last?

Answer - Chief Engineer.

Question - From your knowledge of the circumstances, attending the loss of money belonging to the Government on board the steamer Ruth or from any other cause, have you any reason to believe that any Government Officers, or agents

20. of the funds, or being in any way connected with them, have been to blame for misconduct or neglect of duty in the premises?

Answer - So far as the persons, named in the question are concerned, I do not believe that they had anything to do with the burning of the boat.

Question - Were these boxes of money or boxes said to contain money, placed immediately on the floor of the cabin of the Ruth, or were they raised, so as to prevent the possibility of cutting through the floor, and thus abstracting notes, unobserved, from the lower parts of the boxes - they being cut through at the same time with the floor?

Answer - So far as I could see they were stored on the cabin - floor, without any damage under them - to the best of my recollection.

Question - Was the fire in your opinion caused by accident, or was it the work of an incendiary?

Answer - In my opinion it was set afire - that is the work of an incendiary -

Question - Who was mate on the Ruth at the time of the fire, and how long had he been acting as such?

Answer - James Bain, and had been 2^d mate for some time previous?

Question - Was he a loyal or disloyal man?

Answer - I should say he was loyal and a very good one at that.

Question - Have you ever heard him use disloyal expressions?

Answer - Never to my knowledge.

Question - Where does he now reside?

Answer - He is on the steamer Jeelha.

Question - Who was carpenter on the Ruth at the time of the fire?

Answer - His name was Moore - Don't know his given name.

Question - How do you regard his loyalty?

Answer - It is a matter I never questioned him on. I don't remember of ever hearing him express an opinion.

Question - Where does he live now?

Answer - I think he lives at Gray Summit on the Pacific R.R.

Question - In your opinion was the boat fired for the purpose of destroying a Government transport, or for the purpose of obtaining the money?

Answer - I am not able to give an opinion on the subject.

Question - Have you any reason to suspect the Ruth to have been set on fire by any of the employees on board?

Answer - I have not

The Court then adjourned to meet again at 12 o'clock tomorrow.

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Eight Day.

St. Louis September 29th 1863.

The Court met pursuant to adjournment.

Present.

Major General David Hunter U. S. Volunteers
Brigadier General H. K. Strong U. S. Volunteers.
Major G. D. Ballender, Ordnance Department,
member and Recorder -

The proceedings of yesterday were read.

Major N. S. Brinton being sworn testifies
as follows.

Question - What is your position in the Government
service?

Answer - I am an Addt^t Paymaster U. S. A.

Question - Please state the circumstances attending
the loss of a large amount of Government
funds by the destruction of the steamer Ruth
by fire, and who was responsible for the funds
and their amount?

Answer - On the 3^d of August last I received from the
Asst. Treasurer of the U. S. Saint Louis 4 boxes said
to contain \$2,600,000 in U. S. Treasury notes, packed
in the following manner -

Box 1. cont'd	30 packages	\$1-4-120,000	120,000
" 2 "	15 "	\$2-8-120,000, 15, \$5-20-300,000	420,000
" 3 "	15 "	\$5-20-300,000, 4 \$10-40-160,000	460,000
" 4 "	20 "	\$10-40-800,000, 10 \$20-80-800,000	1,600,000
			\$ 2,600,000

I also received from Mr. Farrar the Asst. Treasurer an invoice or statement of the original shipment from Washington, which I placed with other valuable papers in my iron chest. This statement recited the series and numbers of the notes contained in each package. The boxes were placed on a government wagon ~~furnished by the Quarter Master~~ and taken immediately to the steamer Ruth, laying at her wharf in St. Louis. This transit occupied about twenty minutes, and during the process the boxes were under the charge of the driver of the wagon, my clerk and myself. On reaching the boat, the money was placed on board and a guard of soldiers stationed around it. The boxes of money were placed in the fore part of the cabin, a short distance from the office of the boat. Several sticks of cord wood were placed on the floor and the boxes piled on top of them. The guard of the money consisted of about thirty men, under command of Lieutenant Krieger, U. S. Volunteers. Seven Paymasters, who were ordered to proceed with me to Memphis Tenn. came on board with their clerks and shortly before dark, we left St. Louis. The steamer made slow progress and did not reach Cairo until about 9 P.M. of the 4th of August. A landing was made there.

24. to enable the custom-house officers to furnish the necessary clearance, and at about 11 P.M. we left the wharf at Cairo. Everything about the boat at that time seeming to be secure and in order. I remained near the boxes of money until after we had gotten away from the shore, and saw that it remained undisturbed -

I then passed out of the cabin to see that no suspicious persons were on the upper portion of the boat and finding the Captain sitting on the hurricane deck, I remained conversing with him until about 12 o'clock P.M. when a man came up and informed him the boat was on fire. The Captain left me alone, and ran down to the cabin, finding the boxes of money and the guard with it, in their proper place. I instructed the guard to be vigilant and not allow the boxes to be touched. I then awakened my clerk who had retired and returned to my post near the money. By this time the flame and smoke were enveloping the whole of the after part of the boat and were so driven forward by the wind, that the front part of the cabin was becoming uncomfortable. On looking out to see where the boat was going, I found we

that the forepart of the ~~car~~^v was
uncomfortable - On looking out to see
where the boat was going, I found we

were approaching a high bluff bank, and in
a moment after, the boat ran against it, with
great violence - I then hoped it would re-
main sufficiently long to enable us to get
the money on shore, but the boat receded
from the bank, in an instant after stri-
king it, and it was a struggle with all to save
their lives. No time was permitted to take
anything off and it was utterly impossible
to do anything better with the money, than
to let it remain in the flames.

Question - Did you count any of the \$2,600,000
or do you know positively that there was
any money in the boxes destroyed by fire
on the steamer Pastor?

Answer - Before taking the boxes of money
from the office of the Ass't. Treasurer, one
of them was opened in my presence, and
a sufficient amount of money taken out
by him, to reduce the sum turned over
to me, to the proper amount. The space
occupied by the packages, was filled up
with gray blankets and waste paper.
In making this change, I had an oppor-
tunity to see that the box contained ori-
ginal packages of money as it usually
comes from the treasury at Washington
and the seals unbroken - This was the
only evidence I had to prove positively,

26.

that the boxes contained money.

Question - Were the Paymasters on the Ruth under your orders, and did you arrange so as to keep one or more of them at all times, in charge of the boxes?

Answer - The Paymasters were ordered to proceed with me to Memphis and were then to report to the Paymaster in charge there - During the ^{I presume} journey they were subject to my orders - The arrangement in reference to the charge of the boxes was such as is our usual custom - Whilst the boat was not at shore, we did not consider it necessary for a Paymaster to remain at all times immediately at the boxes - Through all the watchful care, that they were properly taken care of - The guard was on duty all the time and was instructed to permit no one to touch the boxes containing the money.

Question - Could not the cabin floor and the boxes have been cut through from below and the money or part of it have been thus abstracted?

Answer - If proper facilities were furnished it would have been possible by cutting away a large portion of the floor of the cabin, to cut into the boxes, and remove the money - though it would have been

it would have been impossible to remove any portion of the floor of the cabin, to cut into the boxes, and remove the money - though it would have been

impossible to remove any portion of it, whilst the guard was present without their knowledge.

Question - About how much did each of these money boxes weigh, and how many men were required to handle each?

Answer - I should estimate the weight of the boxes at about eight hundred pounds each - Three men were required to remove each one of them from the man to the boat -

Question - Please state what measures have been taken since the destruction of the Ruth by fire to protect the interests of the Government, and if any portion of the money or other public property has been recovered?

Answer - The wreck of the sunken steamer Ruth has been carefully guarded since the fire and is now being raised.

Considerable quantities of burned or charred treasury notes have been recovered and taken possession of by a special agent of the U. S. Treasury - The submarine diver reports large quantities of this charred paper in the hold of the steamer, but the greater portion of it crumbles to ashes on being touched, and cannot be brought to the surface -

Four iron chests belonging to the Paymasters have been recovered and their

contents proved to have been entirely consumed - Mine was amongst the number recovered, and on opening it, he found nothing but charred papers and mud. The incense referred to in a previous part of my testimony describing the money, was burned up in it.

Major Brinley here presented a copy of his official report dated August 7th 1863 to Major Geo. E. Febiger Paymaster in charge of the District of the Mississippi; with a request that it be appended to this evidence - marked "D".

The Court then adjourned to meet again at 12 o'clock to-morrow.

Ninth Day

St. Louis September 30th
1863.

The Court met pursuant to adjournment.

Present.

Major General David Hunter. U. S. Volunteers.
Brigadier General H. H. Strong U. S. Volunteers.
Major G. D. Ballender, Ordnance Department
member and Recorder

The proceedings of yesterday were read.

Major G. D. Ballender, Chairman
member and Recorder -
The proceedings of yesterday were read.

Henry S. Goddard being sworn testifies
as follows:

Question - What is your position in the
Government service?

Answer - I am Paymaster's clerk to Major Brunton.

Question - Was you present at the office of the
Asst. Treasurer in this city, when the boxes
containing Government funds were opened
and which are alleged to have been destroy-
ed by fire on the steamer Ruth. If so
state how many boxes there were, how
many opened, what amount was taken
therefrom and to whom was it delivered?

Answer - I was present. There were 4 boxes, one
box only was opened and \$240,000
were taken therefrom and handed over
to the cashier of the U. S. Asst. Treasurer.

Question - Was the box which was opened and
from which the money was taken as
stated above, again nailed up in your
presence and were these four boxes with
their contents taken on board, or seen
by you on board steamer Ruth after leaving
St. Louis, and were they still on board
the Ruth at the time of the fire, in the
condition in which they came from Asst.
Treasurer's office -

Answer: It was nailed up in my presence - I ac-
companied the boxes from the Treasury office
to the steamer and remained with them until

30.

all were conveyed on board. I saw them frequently during the journey - Having been asleep when the alarm of fire was given, I did not leave my state room until after the boat had receded from shore - in passing the boxes I noticed that all were there and apparently untouched -

Question - Do you know the amount of Government funds, contained in the four boxes referred to above, and which were destroyed by fire by the burning of the Ruth -:

Answer - Not having seen the contents, I am unable to state; but was informed they contained \$ 2840,000 from which we took \$ 240,000 to reduce it to the amount requisite for the payment about to be made.

Question - From your knowledge of the circumstances attending the loss of this money or from any other cause, have you any reason to believe, that any Government Officer is or agents of the funds, or being in any way connected with them, have been to blame for misconduct or neglect of duty in the premises?

Answer - I have no reason to suppose that any have been to blame, with the exception of the officers at the Treasury Department at Washington - who I think should have retained the original wire and forwarded

have been to blame, with the exception of
the officers at the Treasury Department
at Washington - who I think should have
retained the original wire and forwarded

a duplicate to the office here -

Andrew Fleming being sworn
testifies as follows:

Question - Was you an officer on board the
steamer Ruth at the time of her de-
struction by fire in August last, if so
state all the facts and circumstances
within your knowledge relating thereto -

Answer - I was pilot on board the Ruth on
the trip on which she was destroyed
by fire - I was asleep at the time she
took fire - can't say how she took
fire, ~~for I don't know~~ - I first saw
the fire as I came out of my room
and the flames had not then got
above the hurricane deck - The boat
was then running head on to the bank
or shore, with a full head of steam
until she struck it -

Question - Did you ever hear James Cain, the
mate of the Ruth, make use of any
disloyal expressions, and did you
consider him a loyal man?

Answer - I never did - and I consider him a loyal man.

Question - What is your opinion as to the origin of the fire.

Answer - My opinion is that she was designedly
set on fire - that it was the work of an incendiary.

James A. Spencer being sworn testifies as
follows:

32.

Question - What was your position on the steamer Ruth at the time of her destruction by fire in August last?

Answer - I was second clerk -

Question - Please state the circumstances attending the loss of a large amount of Government funds by the destruction of the steamer Ruth by fire?

Answer - I was standing on the larboard guard when I first saw the fire - I started for the pilot-house to notify the pilot that the boat was on fire, but before I reached it I heard him ring the engine bell to stop her - I then came down into the cabin and commenced taking the passengers asleep in the staterooms - I passed along down the cabin and went into the office to see if I could save any of the books or papers - just as I was going into the office I noticed that the boxes said to contain money, were still in their places, and the guard was there guarding them - I think that they were all there but I am not certain, as I did not count them - I then left the cabin to go below, to get ashore, as the fire was then coming through the cabin and I could stay no longer -

left the cabin to go below, to get ashore,
as the fire was then coming through
the cabin and I could stay no longer-

I saw nothing afterwards of these boxes,
said to contain Government funds.

Mr. James Cain being sworn testi-
fies as follows.

Question - Where is your residence and what
your occupation, and what was your
position on board the steamer Ruth
at the time she was destroyed by fire.

Answer - My residence is in Randolph county,
Ills. I follow making on steamboats
and I was first mate on board steamer
Ruth, at the time she was destroyed by
fire in August last.

Question - Please state the circumstances attending
the loss of a large amount of Government
funds by the destruction of the steamer
Ruth by fire.

Answer - I was in bed when the fire was
first discovered - The captain came
running past my room and said the
boat was afire, and said for me to
get up - I jumped up and ran out
without my clothes, taking my shoes
in my hand & went down on deck, took
the hose which was throwing water heavily,
from the man who had it & stepped two or
three steps further back, towards the fire
and I played on the fire, I don't know
how long, not very long, as it was coming

34.

forward very rapidly - I then came forward to the after end of the boilers, and met the chief-engineer, who was on watch at the time. He said, Chain its of no use, we can't do anything with it meaning the fire. I still at that time had the hose, - I then threw the hose down and started forward, and tried to pull the chain out of the hole of the boat. I couldn't do it. I then went ashore and got hold of the chain there. She then sprung out into the river and hauled the chain away from us.

Question - Who was 2^d mate on board the Ruth at time of fire?

Answer - Brown Leslie -

Question - Was he a loyal man?

Answer - As far as I know he was.

Question - Did you ever hear him say that he would rather have Jeff. Davis for President than Abe. Lincoln?

Answer - I never did.

Question - Did you ever state you would rather have Jeff. Davis for President of the United States than Abe. Lincoln, or words to that effect or make use of any disloyal language on board the steamer Ruth?

Answer - I never made such a statement and never made use of any disloyal

language on board the steamer Ruth.

Question - No -

effect - or make use of any disloyal language on board the steamer Ruth?

Answer - I never made such a statement and never made use of any disloyal

language on board the steamer Ruth?

Question - Was there any other mate besides yourself and Sible on board the Ruth when she left in August last before her destruction by fire - if so what was his name - Where did he leave the Ruth, on that trip and where do you suppose he is now?

Answer - William Patterson a mate, was on board, and left the steamer at Cairo - He had been mate of the Ruth up to that trip except perhaps one trip before when I understand he was sick, and I dont know where Mr. Patterson is now.

Question - What do you know, or what have you heard in reference to his loyalty?

Answer - I have heard that he was in the Southern Confederacy since the rebellion broke out - I heard that he was down there and came up to St. Louis, and was arrested and put in prison.

I understood that he went to Louisville from Cairo -

The Court then adjourned to meet again at 12 o'clock ^M to-morrow.

Tenth Day.

St. Louis Mo. October 1st 1863.

The Court met pursuant to adjournment -

Present -

Major General David Hunter U. S. Volunteers
 Brigadier General W. H. Strong U. S. Volunteers
 Major F. D. Callender, Ordnance Department
 member and Recorder -

The proceedings of yesterday were
 read and the Court then adjourned
 to meet at 12 o'clock M. to-morrow -

Eleventh Day.

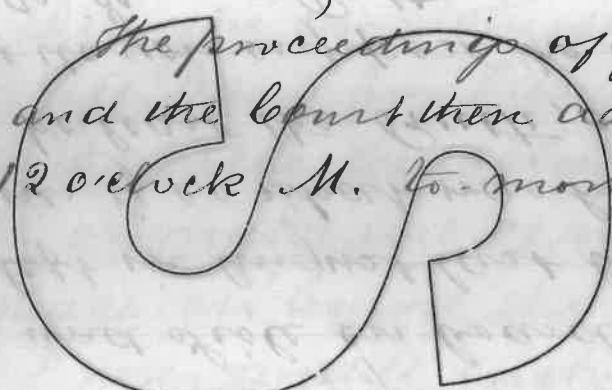
St. Louis Mo. October 2^d 1863

The Court met pursuant to adjournment -

Present -

Major General David Hunter - U. S. Volunteers.
 Brigadier General W. H. Strong U. S. Volunteers.
 Major F. D. Callender, Ordnance Department
 member and Recorder -

The proceedings of yesterday were
 read and the Court then adjourned to meet
 at 12 o'clock M. to-morrow -



at 12 o'clock M. to-morrow

Twelfth Day.

St. Louis Mo. October 3^d 1863.

The Court met pursuant to adjournment.

Present -

Major General David Hunter U. S. Volunteers.

Brigadier General H. H. Strong U. S. Volunteers.

Major F. D. Ballender Ordnance Department
member and Recorder -

The proceedings of yesterday were read -

Milo S. Moore being sworn, testifies
as follows:

Question - Where do you reside and what is
your occupation?

Answer - My residence is in Franklin county
Mo, and my occupation a carpenter -

Question - Was you on board the steamer Ruth,
at the time of her destruction by fire in
August last, and if so, in what capacity?

Answer - I was on board the steamer Ruth in the
capacity of carpenter at the time of the de-
struction by fire in August last.

Question - State all the facts and circumstances
within your knowledge, relating to the
destruction of the steamer Ruth - and your
opinion as to where and how the fire originated.

Answer - The steamer left Cairo at about 11
P. M. on the night of the 4th or 5th of August
last. I am not positive which - When she

38.

left Cairns, I went to bed and about half an hour after, the alarm of fire was given - I got up and started out to look, but the flames were coming so fast just after the larboard wheel, over the carpenter shop that I returned to my berth to see if I could get my clothing, but the flames were so thick that I had to leave - By the time I got down the boat was swinging out from the shore and I jumped ashore - I cannot say, whether the fire originated in the carpenter shop or not - but it must have originated there or somewhere near. The carpenter shop had all been cleaned out in the afternoon of the day that the fire took place. There were no shavings there, as I had cleaned them out when I quit work in the afternoon of that day - There was some oakum in a bag in the shop. When I quit work on the afternoon of the day of the fire, I shut up the shop - There were two doors both of which were fastened one on the inside and the other locked, and I had the key. There was one window which was nailed in - My opinion is, if the fire originated in the carpenter shop, that it was set on fire that is, the work of an incendiary.

Question: Do you know Mr Patterson, formerly mate on the Ruth - how long a hand -

I had the key - There was one window
was nailed in - My opinion is, if the fire
originated in the carpenter shop, that
it was set on fire - that is, the work of an
incendiary -

Question: Do you know Tom Patterson, formerly mate
on the Ruth - how long had you known
him and was he on board at the time she
was burned?

Answer - I do, and have known him about eight
months. He was not on board - he left at
Cairo on that trip.

Question: When came Patterson to leave the
boat at Cairo?

Answer - I understand he was going to take
charge of a new boat at Louisville,
~~Ky., owned by the same company that~~
owned the Ruth.

Question: Did you ever hear Patterson say
that he would rather see Jeff. Davis,
President of the United States, than
Abe Lincoln, or words to that effect?

Answer - I never did.

Question: Did you ever hear him utter any
disloyal sentiments during the time
you was employed with him on the
Ruth or elsewhere?

Answer - I never have and never heard him
talk much on the subject.

Question: Were the officers and employees on
the Ruth, at the time of her destruction, so
far as you know all loyal men, and have
you reason to suspect any of them as
being implicated in the destruction of

40.

Answer - They were loyal men as far as I know
and I have no such suspicion -

Question - Were you knowing to the fact of a
large amount of Government funds
being on board at time of destruction
of the steamer?

Answer - There were boxes said to contain Gov-
ernment funds in the cabin near the
officer. As I passed down to go ashore
I looked into the cabin and saw the
boxes there still - no doubt they were
all destroyed by fire -

The Court then adjourned to meet
on Monday at 12 M.

Thirteenth Day.

St. Louis Mo. October 5th 1863.

The Court met pursuant to adjournment -

Present -

Major General David Hunter U. S. Volunteers -

Brigadier General N. R. Strong U. S. Volunteers -

Major F. D. Calender Ordnance Department
member and Recorder -

The proceedings of Saturday
were read and the Court then adjourned
to meet at 12 o'clock Mo. to-morrow.

Fourteenth Day,

St. Louis Mo, October 6th 1863.

The Court met pursuant to adjournment -

Present.

Major General David Hunter, U. S. Volunteers -
Brigadier General W. R. Strong U. S. Volunteers -
Major G. D. Callender, Ordnance Department
member and Recorder -

The proceedings of yesterday were read,
and the Court considering it unnecessary
to take any further testimony, proceeded
to deliberate upon their opinion, and
after mature deliberation declare it as
follows, viz:

Opinion

After the examination of many witnesses
and documents, and a careful inquiry into
all the circumstances of the case, the Court
is of the opinion, that the steamer Ruth
was fired by an incendiary - not for the
particular purpose, although that may
have been an additional object, of destroying
the public funds on board, but in con-
formity with what appears to be a plan
of the Rebels, for the destruction of the water
transportation in the valley of the Missis-
sippi, and thus crippling the movements
of our Armies -

The Court is of opinion that no

42.

Government officer, or agent of the funds has been to blame for misconduct or neglect of duty in the premises -

The Court however, cannot but think the practice of transferring large amounts of Government money from one agent to another, without counting or opening the boxes even to see if they contained the number of sealed packages specified, is altogether erroneous - Only one out of the four boxes destroyed by fire on the ~~Rush~~, had been opened after they left the Treasury Department at Washington, If these which had not been opened, had arrived safely at Memphis, and on being opened, had been found to contain nothing but waste paper, on whom could the responsibility be fixed?

D. Hunter

Maj. Genl.

J. H. Strong

Brig. Genl.

N. S. Vols.

J. D. Calender

Maj. Ord. U. S. A.



J. D. Ballender
Maj. Ord. U. S. A.

St. Louis, Mo.

October 9th 1863.

Yo

The Adjutant General
of the Army.

[redacted] Washington D. C.

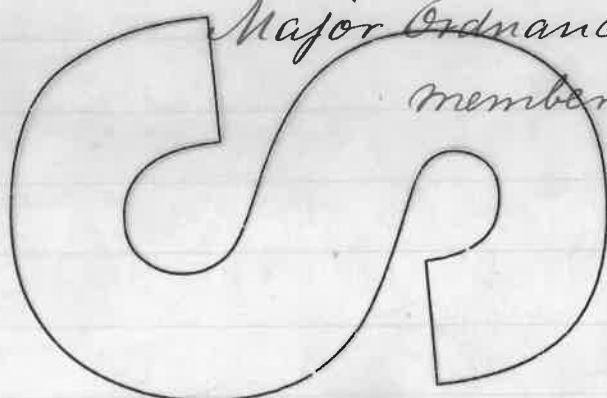
Sir:

I have the honor to transmit the proceedings of a court of inquiry convened in this city by special orders No. 408.
War Department, Adjutant General's office [redacted] Washington, September 11th 1863.

[redacted]
very Respectfully
your obt. ser.

J. D. Ballender

Major Ordnance Department
member and Recorder



"A"

Saint Louis August 7th 1863.

Major -

Your communication of this date, in regard to the position & condition of the money in charge of Maj. Brinton on board the steamer "Ruth" at the time she was burned, & also asking my opinion, ~~with reasons, as to its~~ partial or total destruction, is received.

And in reply I should state that the Boxes containing said money were piled in the cabin of said boat in front of the smoke stack & were under the guard of a detachment of soldiers —

After the fire broke out on the boat, I was one of the last to leave the cabin, & the fire and smoke was then coming up through the cabin floor around the money: the boxes had not been removed or opened, nor could they have been in the short time (not more than five minutes) which elapsed between the time the alarm was given & the time the entire cabin was enclosed in flames. In twenty minutes from the time the fire was first discovered, the entire upper works of the cabin fell into the hull of the Boat carrying with it the boxes of money and in my opinion the money was entirely destroyed, by fire, for the following reasons —

The Boat had a large quantity of bituminous coal on board, in addition to which a large amount of dry wood had been taken on board the boat just before our arrival at Barro, and in the hold of the boat was an immense quantity of bacon - Into this huge pile of various kinds of combustible materials directly under where the boxes were situated, the money fell, & was exposed to the most intense heat from $\frac{1}{2}$ past 11 o'clock at night till near six o'clock in the morning at which time I last saw the light of the fire from the boat. Such an intense heat under & over the money for so great a length of time, must in my opinion have entirely consumed it.

On Wednesday morning I went with Maj. Bullock & others on a steam Tug to the wreck which we reached about eleven o'clock, and found the wreck sunk in from 15 to 20 feet of water. We landed at several points & made several enquiries in regard to the missing Paymaster's clerks, but could learn nothing about them, nor could we discover any trace of any property belonging to the Government.

Very respectfully

Your obedient servant
Wm H. Jameson
Asst. Paymaster U.S.A.

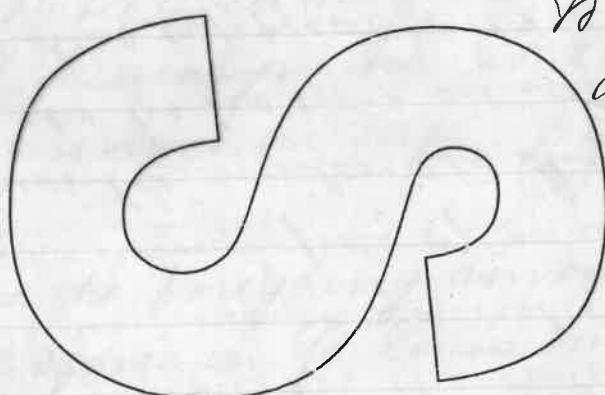
Major George L. Feiger
Chief Paymaster
of the District of the Mississippi.

23
Saint Louis Aug. 12th 1863

On the 9th inst I again visited the wreck of the Ruth for the purpose of obtaining the body of Mr. Lamson my clerk, & of examining the condition of the wreck. I found the wreck in the same position as when I visited it on the morning of the 5th inst, could discover no traces of the money or other property belonging to the Government. The only change which I discovered was that the wreck seemed to be gradually sinking in the quick sand - I found Major Farrish in charge of the wreck & faithfully looking after the interests of the Government.

Yours obt. servant.

Jm H. Jameson
Add. Paymaster
U. S. A.



"B"

St. Louis August 7th 1863.

Major:

In obedience to your orders I took passage on the 3^d inst on board the Steamer "Ruth" to proceed to Memphis Tenn, to report to Major Brinton. On the night of the 4th inst. the Steamer Ruth was entirely consumed by fire - And I have to report the loss of an iron safe, & large Field Desk in my possession which belonged to the Government.

There was in my safe a sum of money belonging to the Government, the exact amount of which it is impossible for me to state for the following reasons.

On the 1st inst. I rendered my account current with the United States to the Paymaster General, at which time there was in my safe (mostly in postal currency) the sum of \$ 859.14 on the 3^d inst. I drew from the U. S. Treasury, in St. Louis & added to the amount in safe
$$\begin{array}{r} \$100.00 \\ \hline \$959.14 \end{array}$$

From the foregoing amount, I paid at the local office in St. Louis on the 1st & 3^d inst. two officers accounts & the vouchers were placed by my clerk either in my safe or Field Desk, both of which were on board the Ruth when she was burned -

The names of the two officers above referred to

and the amounts paid to them, I do not remember, as my cash book & the vouchers were lost on the Ruth, it is impossible for me to slate enter the names or amounts -

I can only slate my impression which is that the amount paid to the two officers is about Two Hundred & fifty Dollars.

I also paid Capt. J. S. Whitehead, by check on the U. S. Treasurer St. Louis \$ 118¹⁰/₀₀ his voucher was also lost on the Ruth, but I can no doubt find him & obtain duplicate vouchers. The payment was made to Captain Whitehead on the 1st inst.

[REDACTED]
very respectfully
your obedient servant

Major G. L. Feiger }
St. Louis. }

H. H. Jameson
add. Paymaster U. S. A.

Recapitulation

Amount of money lost in safe \$ 709. 14

Paid to officers whose names
are unknown, and uncertain } 250. 00

Total amt. of money & vouchers in
my safe, lost on Steamer Ruth \$ 959. 14

W. H. J.

W. H. J. Jameson

my safe, loss on summa

"C."

Columbus Ky., Aug. 5th 1863.
Maj. James A. Farish

Pay Mr. A. S. A.

Reports proceedings in regard to
wreck of "Ruth"

On board Steamer Crawford

Columbus Ky. Augt. 5th 1863.

Maj. [redacted]

In obedience to your order, I left St. Louis
on the afternoon of Aug. 5th and proceeded by
rail to Cairo, Ills. arriving at the latter point
on the morning of the 6th. I immediately
reported to Gen. Buford, making known
to him my mission and also to Captain
Wolfolk A. S. M. Gen. Buford then ordered
Capt. Wolfolk to place at my disposal the
Steamer U. S. Champion and proceed to
the wreck for the purpose of making obser-
vation. We left Cairo at 2 o'clock P.M.
and after sounding about the wreck and
ascertaining her position, we returned to Cairo
in the evening. Gen. Asboth however had
despatched a guard to the shore near the
wreck, for the purpose of protecting life and
property.

Capt. Wolfolk then promised
to send for a Bell Boat, or diving apparatus
at Mound city, but on the morning of the

7th informed me that this boat had been rendered unserviceable by some accident and that it would be necessary to send to St. Louis, for another - I passed the day in fruitless endeavors to procure a boat to be stationed at the neck, and in the evening, determined to proceed to Columbus Ky and communicate with Gen. Asboth; ^{upon arriving and reporting to Gen. Asboth} I was received with marked courtesy and attention, and found that the General had already taken many important steps towards our object, based upon good judgment and the necessity of prompt action - Three bodies had already been found and brought to Columbus by officers of his command

The General was of opinion that a gun boat should be stationed at the neck, and was surprised to learn that no such boat was there - On the morning of the 8th I proceeded to Cairo, to endeavor to bring about this consummation, but upon interview with Capt. Penwick U. S. N. failed utterly to convince him of the propriety of such a measure - Although three gunboats are anchored in the stream opposite, not one could be spared - Perhaps this refusal was owing to fears on his part that their services were needed at Cairo; inasmuch

a measure - although none
anchored in the stream opposite, not one
could be spared - Perhaps this refusal
was owing to fears on his part that their
services were needed at Cairo, inasmuch

as two attempts had just been made to fire
the immense naval Wharfboat and Can-
penter boat - Capt. Pennock left the same
evening for Mound City Ills, having de-
termined to move the naval station to
that point to avoid the dangers threatened
by enemies at Cairo - I left a copy of your
dispatch of the 7th inst. with his executive
officer during his absence, but as yet it has
received no notice - After having secured
a guard of ten men and a commissioned
officer from Gen. Buford, who were ordered
to proceed at once to the wreck in a yawl
boat I left for Columbus and again
reported to Gen. Asboth, as soon as
possible, the general ordered the steamer
Crawford to proceed with me to the
wreck and anchor for the night - A detail
of twelve men and a commissioned officer
of Gen. Asboth's command then joined
me and we passed the night at the anchor-
age mentioned - On the morning of the
9th I again reported to Gen. Asboth, who
telegraphed at once to Gen. Buford to
secure the small steamer "Rob Roy" by
charter, and place her at my disposal
for permanent anchorage at the wreck.
I then proceeded to Cairo, and found
that the dispatch had not been received
by Gen. Buford owing to the wire being

broken between Columbus and Paducah, I then immediately chartered the "Rob Roy" at \$20 per diem, with orders to report as soon as possible at the wreck, and embark the guards stationed on the shore -

A quantity of subsistence stores that had floated from the wreck were found in the possession of the farmers on shore, I seized them and turned them over to the ~~Quartermaster~~ at Columbus - I learn that some cattle and miles are in the possession of these people. The wreck is well situated for the purpose of submarine exploration, but the river is lined with skiffs, both day and night seeking what plunder and property may be found floating. I now proceed to the steamer "Rob Roy" at the wreck, and hope my action will meet with your approval.

All of the officers of the Government have treated me politely, but I feel that Genl. Asboth's prompt attention and kind courtesy deserves special mention -

Capt. Penwick U.S.N. seemed very desirous to impress upon my mind the danger of sending Paymasters and funds by the river packets - He says that below St. Louis, the river is infested with enemies whose sole object is to destroy

very anxious to ~~keep~~ ~~protect~~ ~~guard~~
the danger of sending Paymasters and
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Government property - It is known, he says,
all along the river, when such property
may be expected, and these depredators
have systematized their work - His opinion
is that Paymasters and funds should
in absence of rail facilities, be sent either
on Transports containing none but
~~Government employees~~ of known loyalty,
or upon Gunboats - When sent upon the
former he will, upon notice, order a convoy
for them from place to place on the river.
To such an extent has this insecurity
obtained, that he has administered a strong
oath ~~to all his employees~~, discharging
all who refuse ^{to} take it, which was quite
a number -

Nothing further can now be done
until the Submarine arrives. It is confe-
lined that a large amount of Subsistence
Stores, which were in the hull of the boat
are uninjured and ought to be looked
after by the Commissary Dept. There is
such a ~~contrary~~ ^{contracept} of opinion in reference
to the money, the probability of its safety
from fire, its floating propensities, its theft,
etc., that nothing can be accurately de-
termined without a thorough submarine
exploration.

There seems to be no reason to doubt

54.

that the "Ruth" was fired, either by some enemy on board or by slow-match affixed at Cairo. When the naval carpenter shop was fired, a large coil of fuse and a bottle of powder were found under the stern of the naval store boat - the evident intention of the incendiary being to draw attention to the fired carpenter shop, and in the melee to burn the storeship which contained an immensity of Government property. I enclose herewith copies of orders.

I desire to acknowledge the kind attentions of Capt. Woolfolk A. S. M.

Capt. Harris Asst. Adj't Gen. As both's staff and Capt. Mealyard, Gen. Buford's adjutant General - I desire also to favorably mention the services of my clerk Mr. J. J. Noah whose efficiency and judgment in many matters of detail, have been of great use -

Major G. L. Fibiger
Paymaster
U. S. A.
G. Louis, Dno. }
I am very respectfully -
your obt. servant,
J. A. Garrish
Paymaster
U. S. A.

Major H. L. Febriger
Paymaster
U. S. A.
St. Louis, Mo.

vaymusr.
U. S. A.

"D"

Statement of Maj. N. G. Brumley
Pay. M. U. S. A.

Pay office U.S.A.

Saint Louis Mo.

August 7th 1863.

Major,

I have the honor to report, that in compliance with your order of the 3d inst. I proceeded on board the steamer "Ruth" about 4 P.M. of that day, taking with me "Two million, Six hundred thousand dollars" of Government funds, for which you hold my official receipts. This money had never been in circulation and was all in the original packages as issued from the Treasury. It was packed in the same boxes that contained it, when shipped from Washington - These boxes were made of pine boards about one inch thick and the ends strapped with iron. Four of them held the amount I have named above. I had them placed (as is our usual custom) in the fore part of the cabin, a short distance from the office of the boat. This position is the most desirable in consequence of its being light during the day and also the place near which a bright

light is kept burning during the night.

Genl. Kliewer of Co. "I" 9th Wisconsin Vols. with thirty men of his command reported to me, just as the boxes containing the money, were placed on board, to assist in taking charge of them - A guard was stationed around them, and all possible precautions, for the safety of the money was used.

The following paymasters, with their clerks, reported on board to proceed with me to Memphis as directed by you. viz: Majors J. M. Humphrey, J. H. Brugden, H. N. White, W. W. Jameson, Josiah Tilden, W. B. Mendenhall and P. D. Greenamald. The boat left Saint Louis about 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ P.M. of 3d inst. and reached Cairo about 9. P.M. of the 4th. On reaching the wharf I stationed a guard at the landing plank with instructions to prevent as far as possible, any suspicious looking persons from coming on board, and directed those on duty with the money, to be vigilant and watchful -

He remained at Cairo until 11 P.M. to enable the custom house officers to transact the necessary business, and then started again for Memphis - I was with the guard at the money boxes, when

nguard - He remained at Cairo until
to enable the custom house officers to
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then started again for Memphis - I was
with the guard at the money boxes, when

the boat left the wharf, and all was then safe.

Most of the passengers retired imme-
diately on leaving Cairo, and the boat
was very quiet. My clerk Mr. H. S. Goddard,
proposed to me to do the same, and I wal-
ked back to our stateroom with him.

He went to bed and I passed on through
the ladies cabin to a small apartment in
the stern to get a glass of water. A stairway
leads from this apartment to rooms under-
neath, which are used, as nursery, laun-
dry &c. - In passing the head of this
stairway I noticed a bright light from
a lamp, and saw cots and bedding of
various kinds, piled up. These rooms
were occupied by four negro women who
were the only females on board.

My impression is, that they had gone
to sleep with lights burning in these rooms.
After obtaining a glass of water, I passed
through the whole length of the cabin to
where the money was placed to see that the
guard was all right and every thing secure
for the night. Finding things there as I
wished, I went out on the guard and on
the hurricane deck, where the captain
of the boat was sitting, to have a short
conversation with him - I remained
there some time, and on looking at my
watch found that it was just about midnight,

so I rose to retire. As I did so a watchman rushed up and informed the captain that the boat was on fire. He left me in great haste, and I proceeded to the cabin, where I discovered that the stern of the boat was enveloped in flames, and the fire raging furiously - I stopped at my state room, wakened Mr. Goddard and told him to get every one up and prepare for the worst.

I then returned to the guard with the money and requested the officer to have his men fall in and prepare to act as circumstances might require. This he promptly accomplished, and I stepped on the guard to see where we were going. I found the boat sounding to, under full headway, and rapidly approaching a bluff shore, with banks about fifteen feet above the water. The fire was then gaining rapidly and it was evident, would cover every part of the boat in a few moments -

I instructed the guard to be prepared to commence removing the money the moment I gave them directions to do so and again stepped on the guard to ascertain when a landing was effected - I had just gotten out, when the boat ran full "bows on" to the bank and struck with prodigious force. A staging was run

out and in an instant most of the crew

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do so and again stepped on the guard to
ascertain where a landing was effected -
I had just gotten out, when the boat ran
full "bows on" to the bank and struck
with prodigious force. A staging was run

out and in an instant most of the crew
and a number of the passengers who were
crossed on the boat jumped off. The mate
had a chain cable ready and an effort
was made, to fasten the boat to the shore
but the fire had gained so rapidly that
the engineer was only able to stop one
engine, and the other keeping in motion
rapidly, veered the boat around and
it receded from the shore - At this in-
stant the flames and smoke rushed
forward, enveloped the front part of
the boat, a general rush was made,
and I was violently thrown from my
position on the guard of the cabin deck,
on to the boiler deck - Fortunately my
fall was broken, by first striking the sta-
ging and someone passing underneath.

I was still too much shocked to rise
up rapidly, but managed to reach the
long staging to the bank, which dropped
from the boat just as I reached it.
In this way I reached the bank and was
saved - From my position on the guard
of the cabin deck, I was in sight of the
money and saw it ^{was} all there when I was
thrown off and the boat leaving shore -
The flames enveloped it instantly and it
was unquestionably consumed. The majority

of the guard escaped when the last rush I alluded to was made, but the five who were immediately at the bores were lost. I must here pay tribute to the gallant behaviour of Lieut. Hixson and the brave soldiers with him.

They did their duty nobly and remained to protect the money at the imminent risk and loss of their lives. The Lieut. and a number of the men only escaped by swimming and drifting on shore.

The five who were lost were either burned or jumped off the boat when too far to reach the land. The burning steamer soon exploded her steam pipe and the wheel stopped. The heavy chain cable was dragging, and this retarded her progress so that she slowly drifted down the current, and finally was lodged either by her cable, or drifting against a snag in fifteen feet of water. As the last person jumped off, she was completely enveloped in flames, and having immense quantities of bacon, coal and wood on board, the heat was sufficiently intense to fuse iron. From our position on the bank we could see the burning wreck, until it was burned to the water's edge, and ample testimony can be furnished

of the utter impossibility of anything having been taken out of it.

to fuse iron.
bank we could see the burning wreck,
until it was burned to the water's edge,
and ample testimony can be furnished

of the utter impossibility of anything having been taken off the steamer -

On assembling those saved, on the bank, we were pained to discover, that Major Greenanald and his clerk Mr. Fisher, Mr. Samson, clerk to Major Jameson and Mr. Martin clerk to Major Tilden, were missing.

Every effort and search was made, but no bodies could be found - A steamer passed up about 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ A.M. and took us to Cairo. On reaching there I immediately telegraphed you and then obtained a Government steamer to proceed to the wreck. Several of our party returned with her to the place where the "Raft" had struck the shore, and carefully searched it in all directions. Nothing however, could be found, and we then followed to where the wreck was lodged. It had floated about two miles, and now lies about three miles below Norfolk on the Missouri side, and within about half a mile of the shore. The water was thought to be, over fifteen feet deep and nothing could be seen, but the tops of some of the charred posts - We then returned to Cairo, and called on Genl. Buford commanding there - It was also so fortunate, as to meet Genl. Asboth commanding at Columbus and

Capt. Pennock of the Navy. On consultation with these gentlemen it was decided that it would be best to send a Gunboat to the wrecks, and have it watched until an effort can be made to ascertain the contents of the hold, if any exist. Captain Pennock very kindly offered to place the gunboat "Tyler" at our disposal and she immediately left for the vicinity of the wrecks. The officer commanding her was also instructed to have two yanks manned and starting at the point the boat first struck to proceed closely along each shore for twenty miles below, carefully searching for any property that may have washed on shore. Major Tilden remained with the gunboat, to watch the result. Since our return here, I am gratified to learn, that Major Greenwaldt, was left at Cairo and therefore was not on the "Ruth" when she was burned. He probably proceeded to Memphis on a steamer which left Cairo soon after our departure. I fear however that the clerks named as lost will never be heard from. This loss of life is very sad.

Those of our corps who were saved have lost all their personal effects, and our loss in official papers, is very disastrous -

This report is more lengthy as

life is very sad.
Those of our corps who were
have lost all their personal effects, and our
loss in official papers, is very disastrous -

This report is more lengthy than I intended
it should be, but the responsibility I feel
under, in having so large an amount
of public funds, lost whilst under my
charge, is so great, that I could not re-
frain from giving a full report of my
whole course in taking care of it. If any
precaution has been omitted, it has been
an error of judgment, as I have consecu-
tively endeavored to do everything in my
power to fulfil my public trust.

Awaiting your further instructions and
suggestions as to the action you may think
advisable in this matter.

I am Sir,

very Respectfully
Yours obt. st.

Nathan S. Branton

Major Geo. L. Feiger

P.M. U.S.A.

Chief Paymaster

District of the Mississippi.

