

Evidence taken before the
Board of Survey on the Burning
of the Steamer "Ruth".

Examination of

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J. S. Greves	Paymaster's Clerk
Major J. W. Brigdon,	Paymaster
Charles A. Clark	Teamster
Delany Blackwood	Chambermaid
Margaret Ann Hill	Do.
Major George L. Feiger,	Paymaster
H. H. Wernide	Teller Ass't. Tr. U.S.
Daniel Kelcher	Watchman U.S. Treasury
Sergt. Sebastian Worth Co. "I" 9 th Wis Vol?	Guard
Benjamin Farrar	U. S. Treasurer
Corpl. John Dieterle Co. "I" 9 th Wis. Vol. Guard	
Private Phillip Shons	" " " "
" Anton Wibes	" " " "
Capt. Benjamin R. Agram	Master of Ruth
Peter Van de Port	Captain of "Ruth"
Maj. W. P. Mendenhall	Paymaster
Capt. Phillip Kruer	Com'g the Guard
Maj. N. S. Brinton	Pay master - recalled

J. S. Greves.

Being duly sworn deposes as follows;
I am Paymasters clerk for Major White and was on
the "Ruth" at the time of the burning.

I escaped to the shore by the plank. a few
minutes afterwards with Mr Loomis, a clerk for
Major Brigden, I went down bank and finding
a skiff, we entered and put off for the burning
wreck. Our object was to pick up all persons or
property that might be floating to the shore.

We cruised about for some time, we found
nothing of any value. We put out for the burning
wreck and seeing that the yawl was towing aft,
we detached it from the burning wreck, we took
to the yawl and towed our skiff. We then rowed
up on the larboard side of the "Ruth" and finding
no human beings we pulled up the river to where
we started. At the time we left the "Ruth" I think
I think she was on a bar, her upper works and
her smoke stacks had fallen in, and the boat
was an entire mass of flames except the extreme
part of her bow on which were clustered the three
pet kids of the boat.

There was perhaps 6 or 8 feet of the extreme part of
her bow that was not burning. I am satisfied
that there could have been no human beings alive
on the boat - I think the smoke stack had fallen
in before we left to come down in the small
skiff. As the rate the fire was burning when

we left the boat, I am satisfied that every thing must have been consumed, even the safes.

(signed) James S. Greves.

Pay masters Clerk.

Major J. W. Brigden.

Pay master U. S. A.

Being duly sworn deposes as follows;

I submit my Report I made to Major Febiger chief Paymaster District of the Mississippi, the statements of which are all true.

"St. Louis Mo. Aug. 8. 1863.

"Major

Your communication of yesterday directing me to render a statement of what I know of the position and condition of the money on board of steamer "Ruth" at the time she was burned, and also my opinion, with reasons, of its partial or total destruction, and any other information which may be valuable in relieving Major Brinton from responsibility on its account, is received and I will reply to the best of my ability.

I was on board the "Ruth" in company with other paymasters at the time she took fire. The money was near the clerks office at the bow of the boat between the office and the forward state room on the cabin floor and on the larboard

side of the boat. In short it lay immediately in

other paymasters at the time she took fire. The money was near the Clerks office at the bow of the boat between the office and the forward state room on the cabin floor and on the larboard

" side of the boat. In short it lay immediately in
" rear of the door through which I passed to go down
" the gangway to make my escape. The boat went
" ashore on the Missouri side, with her bow up
" stream bringing the money almost over the spot
" where all escaped who were saved.

" When the alarm of fire was given I had retired to
" my state room near the bow of the boat, and gone to bed.
" I hurried up as soon as possible, put on such garments
" as were most convenient went into the hall and passed
" forward. I saw the boat was very near the shore,
" and at the same time saw Major Brinton standing
" with the guard of soldiers near the money, and
" heard him assuring them, that the fire would soon
" be put out. At this time there was a great rush to
" get down the gang way plank - and at about the
" same instant the ^{bow} of the boat struck the shore with
" a crash which I thought would stave her all to
" pieces, and I saw no more of Major Brinton until
" I reached the shore.

" As soon as the boat struck the whole cabin was
" enveloped in smoke and flames so that it was
" impossible to remain. I was then satisfied that all
" efforts to save any thing but life was perfectly useless
" and I hurried down the gang way.

" When I got on the lower deck I noticed that a
" plank had been run out over which a great
" number were rushing and that the boat was ra-
" pidly receding from the shore. In an instant the

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" plank dropped precipitating a number into the water
" As soon as I thought I could do so with safety I
" jumped into the water and swam to the shore,
" being I am confident the last one who left the boat
" alive. When I left no person could have lived for
" a moment on the upper works and I am satisfied
" that no person or persons could by any possibility
" have thrown over a box or boxes of money after the
" time I saw it last, at which time its position I
" think had not been changed to have thrown it
" over on the larboard side, it must have crushed
" those going on shore, and been noticed by some of
" those on the shore.

" To have thrown it over on the other side would
" have been an utter impossibility as the three or four
" persons necessary to remove it must have been suffo-
" cated before they could have accomplished it.
" As to the question whether the money was consumed
" by the heat I can only say that in my mind there
" cannot be a doubt of it, an unusually large amount
" of fuel, besides large quantities of bacon, (I am told)
" and other inflammable material was on board
" directly under the money. The money could only
" (when the upper wood works burned away) fall
" into this mass of burning matter below, and if it
" be possible that any degree of heat could con-
" sume it, it certainly has been consumed.
" I feel confident that it with every thing else
" of an inflammable nature left on the boat was

" be possible that any degree of heat could con-
" sume it, it certainly has been consumed.
" I feel confident that it with every thing else
" of an inflammable nature left on the boat was
entirely destroyed."

Respect^{by} Your Obt. Servt.
(signed) J. W. Brigden
Addl. Paymaster U. S. A.

Major G. L. Feiger
Senior Paymaster U. S. A.
St. Louis Mo.

Charles A. Clark.

Being duly sworn deposes as follows; — I am a Govt. teamster employed by Quarter Master Capt. Ford. I was sent by the Assistant Wagon Master to the pay master's office to take things to the Steamer "Truth". I do not recollect the date, but it was a few days after that, I heard of the loss of the Steamer "Truth". I took from Major Feiger's building a trunk and money safes, and four large boxes from the office of the Assistant Treasurer. I do not know what was in any of those boxes.

I assisted to move the four Boxes from the Sub Treasury to my wagon, it took four of us to carry each one. The boxes were sufficiently heavy for the four to carry. I think the Boxes were of three or four hundred weight.

I do not remember that any one was heavier than the others. We brought the boxes from where they were near the counter in the Treasurer's office.

On the boxes being loaded on my wagon we proceeded on the way to the Steamer "Ruth", stopping only once to adjust the boxes which were becoming displaced. It was in front of the "Olive Street House". — where we stopped and were delayed only a minute. (The gentlemen who was just in the room Major Brinton) accompanied me to the boat walking on the side walk, there was also another person, who I think was Major Brinton's clerk, who went down with us. He came to the wagon and helped to arrange the boxes when we stopped on Olive Street. It was between three and four o'clock, when I went down to the boat with the boxes — on arriving at the boat the boxes were removed toward the boat by some of the deck hands, & some of the soldiers, Major Brinton and the clerk remaining with the boxes.

Every thing I had on the wagon was taken off on to the boat, and I went down to the Iron Mountain Depot.

(signed)

Charles A. Clarke

Delany Blackwood

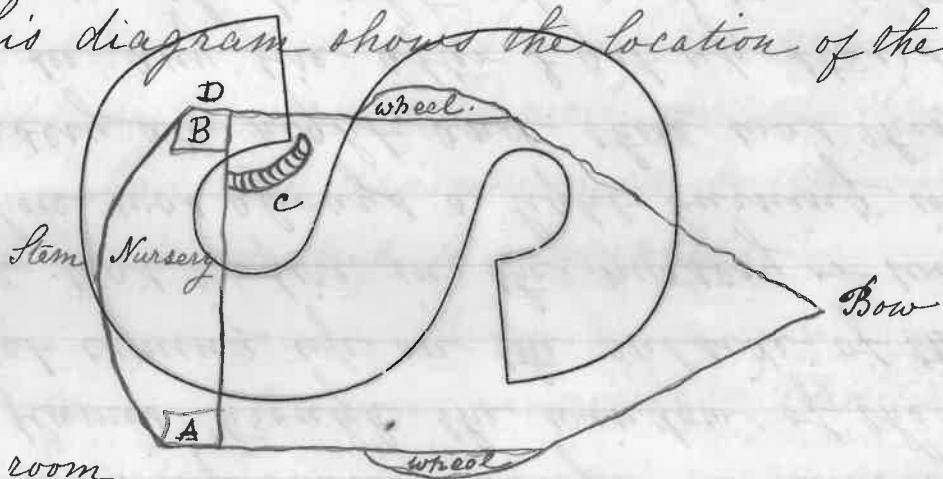
Being duly sworn deposes as follows

Delany Blackwood

Being duly sworn deposes as follows,
I am Chambermaid of the Steamer "Ruth" I
reside in St. Louis on Eleventh St. between Carr
and Biddle - I was on the Steamer "Ruth" at
the time she was burned. I had been in bed
about an hour when I was awakened by the
asst. Chambermaid. My room was at the end
of the nursery. In going to the nursery you
descend the flight of stairs going down from
the larboard guards aft of the wheel house.
The nursery was about as large as this room,
(say about 18 by 10 feet,) and is on a half deck.
between the Saloon and the Boiler deck.

My room was right aft of the nursery opening
from it by a door way, and from the front
end of the nursery a door led into the water
closet close by the stairs going up the guards.

This diagram shows the location of the nursery &



- A. my room
- B. water closet
- C. Stairs leading up to the Saloon deck.
- D. Place where I saw the flames through the water closet window.

when I was awokened by the other woman, I jumped out of bed and ran through the nursery up stairs to the saloon.

As I went up stairs through the nursery, I saw the flames through the window of the water closet coming up on the outside of the boat. There was no fire in the nursery or water closet - There was always a light burning in the nursery all night, and there was then - I did not see any fire after I got up stairs. I was very much frightened and ran into the saloon to wake up the passengers.

There was no body up in the saloon when I reached it; I cried fire; and the passengers came out directly. The flames spread very rapidly, I did not go back to the nursery at all. I had nothing on me but one piece. There was five of us that slept in the nursery, we three Chambermaids, and a colored woman who was a passenger and an old woman who was lost, these five were all colored women.

I do not know what white persons were lost. - I was so much frightened I could not say how long it was after the fire broke out, before I got ashore. I do not think there was any fire in the saloon itself, at the time I went down on the main deck. The boat went off very soon after I got ashore.

before I got ashore. I do not think there was any fire in the saloon itself, at the time I went down on the main deck. The boat went off very soon after I got ashore.

I do not know what the fire started from, it was a bright clear blaze streaming right up by the window.

The fire must have started down on the guard, where the cattle were stowed. I heard no crackling of the fire, every thing was still and no noise about the boat, when I ran upstairs. There is a stove in the nursery there has been no fire in it this summer, it was filled with peach stones and rubbish.

The lamp was an oil lamp fastened against the wall to my room in the nursery. We had been ironing that afternoon, the irons were heated in the wash room, which is aft of the star board wheel house; we never have a fire in the nursery to heat flat irons with. — I was the first person of the five in the nursery who went to bed that night, I do not know what time the others went to bed. I did not see any body, except the woman who woke me, in the nursery.

I had been chambermaid on the trip before and made one trip to Memphis.

Witness

Geo. B. Folson

Clerk.

Delany her Blackwood
mark

Margaret Ann Hill,

Being duly sworn deposes as follows.

I board at Mrs Williams near the corner of Eighth Street in an Alley running south from Market: opposite the marble yard. - I was second chambermaid on the "Ruth" at the time she was burnt. I was sitting in the recess back of the ladies saloon up stairs, getting cool.

It was about half past 12 o'clock, every body had gone to bed and it was all still about the boat. - I had been sitting there for one or two hours: I was sitting by the window on the larboard end of the recess; and hearing a row among the mules I looked down on the guards to see what the matter was, I saw a man going about the mules with a globe lantern; he was a shortish white man, light trowsers, straw hat, and no coat. - He was not one of the deck hands or crew of the boat, I knew them all; he was a person who had charge of the mules. I had seen him feeding and watering them all the way down it was moonlight. - I do not know what this man was doing among the mules; he did not seem to be feeding them or watering them - One of the mules kicked at him and I heard him curse them. This man went along towards the carpenters closet which is directly aft of the larboard wheel house -

them - One of the mules kicked at him and I heard him curse them. This man went along towards the carpenters closet which is directly aft of the larboard wheel house -

I thought he was after some of the chickens in the coop and I watched him. He squatted down just back of the carpenters closet, and then he went across the guards under the upper deck, and I did not see him any more.

Directly afterwards I went down to the bath room to take a bath; which is on the star board side just aft of the wheel; and while there I smelled cotton burning quite severely; the smell came in through the open windows I looked out the window but did not see any fire; but smelled the smoke quite severely. - I went directly to the wash room to see if there was any fire there, I found none and saw that the fire was all out of the stove. I then went around and looked out of the recess windows and saw smoke pouring over the mules heads; and the flames seemed to be coming from the carpenters shop aft. The flame was very red and a good deal of smoke: it was perfectly light from the fire.

The fire seemed to come from under the deck and the floor of the recess was very hot to my bare feet; I then ran into the nursery and woke up the women there, then we went up into the saloon.

It was about a half hour after I lost sight of the man with the lantern on the guards, that I first smelled the smoke. I do not know that there was any watchman on the boat that night.

I knew the mates: the chief mate got off at Cairo, to go up to Louisville to bring some boats down. The only white persons that I saw on the boat after we left Cairo that night were: Mr Oglesby the man with the lantern and some of the passengers - I had never seen the man with the lantern until this trip. I saw the man on the shore after we landed, he stood by me on the bow of the boat as it neared shore. he jumped off the moment the boat struck the shore - while we stood on the bow he shouted out! hurrah! for old Abe Lincoln's boat burning up: and wished all the god-damned niggers would get burned up. I said to him; "for God sake gentlemen don't talk so while the boat is on fire." This man did not have any thing with him, then, neither trunk, or any thing else. - There were a good many boxes and trunks thrown over board; and the men afterwards swam out to try and get them - I should know the man again if I saw him; I saw him this morning at the Provost Marshal General's office; he was sitting down seeming as if he was waiting for some body. I do not know what he was doing there.

Margaret X Ann Hill
mark.

witness

Geo. D. Tolson clerk.

The Board adjourned until 9 o'clock a.m. 18th

Margaret X Ann Hill
mark.

witness

Geo. D. Folson clerk.

The Board adjourned until 9 o'clock Aug^t 18th

St. Louis August 18th 1863.

The Board met pursuant to adjournment.

Present all members of the Board.

Major George L. Febiger.

Paymaster U. S. A. being duly sworn deposes as follows.

I am chief Paymaster Commanding District of the Mississippi Head Quarters at St. Louis.

On the day of [redacted] I turned over to —

Major N. S. Brinton Paymaster the sum of Two Million Six Hundred Thousand dollars.

(This was a check on the United States Assistant Treasurer at St. Louis) and received his receipt for the money. I never saw the money nor the boxes in which it was contained, Major Brinton told me that he had received the money in four boxes. On the 3^d August —

Major Brinton left for down the river under the following orders.

Office pay District of the Mississippi
St. Louis August 3^d 1863.

" Major

" You will, with the funds turned over; and the Paymasters ordered to report to you proceed to Memphis, at which point you will on consultation with Major A. W. Hendricks and informing yourself as to the probable requirements both at that point and Vicksburg of disbursing

" force and funds, detach such number of Pay-masters as you may judge necessary; with an amount sufficient for the payment of that region. You will also turn over to the local office such amount as the officer in charge may estimate for his disbursements to Sep^t. 15th after which you will proceed to Vicksburg, with the remainder of your detachment and funds; and report for duty to Major M. H. Hazleton."

Yours respectfully,
 (signed) Geo. L. Feiger
 Paymaster U. S. A.

Major N. S. Brinton
 Add^d. P. M^r. U. S. A.
 St. Louis Mo.

" Office Pay District of the Mississippi
 St. Louis Aug^t. 3rd 1863.

Order

The following Pay masters will report to Major N. S. Brinton, to accompany him to such points for duty as may be hereafter determined upon,

Major J. W. Bragdon
 " W. W. White
 " W. H. Jameson
 " Isiah Holden
 " T. D. Greenawalt

" I. M. Pumphrey

" W. W. White
" W. H. Jameson
" Josiah Gilden
" J. D. Greenawalt

" L. M. Pumphrey
" W. B. Nenden Hall
(signed) Geo. L. Feiger
" Paymaster U. S. A.
" Comdg Dist.

" On the morning of the 3^d August (which was
the day the boat left) I made application to
General Strong Comdg District of St. Louis, for
a guard of 30 men with a Commissioned
Officer to Memphis on the Ruth as a guard
with the money — On the morning of the 5th
August about $\frac{1}{2}$ past 8 O'clock A.M. I received
a telegram from Major Brinton at Cairo inform-
ing me that the steamer "Ruth" had been de-
stroyed by fire and Major Greenwalt and three
of the clerks and all of the money had been
lost, — I immediately telegraphed to Major
Brinton to apply to General Buford for a guard
to proceed to the wreck and prevent persons
from fishing up money. I also at the same time
ordered Major Farrish and Clerk to proceed to
the wreck and take measures to permanently
guard the same, which he did until he was
relieved by Major Jameson on the 13th inst. and
who was appointed to continue the same opera-
tions. On the 8th inst. I made requisition upon
the chief Quarter Master, General Allen; for a Sub-
marine boat to proceed to the wreck and make

" examinations, but owing to difficulties in pro-
" curing, we have concluded to substitute a man
" clothed in Sub Marine Armor as soon as he
" can be obtained.

" Major Brinton who has gone on duty to
" Memphis has been ordered, on the completion
" of it, to return to the wreck and assist in
" the completion of the investigations.

(signed)

George L. Febiger
Paymaster U. S. A.

The Board adjourned to 9 o'clock A.M.
August 19th

St. Louis

St. Louis Mo. August 19th 1863

The Board met pursuant to adjournment.
Present all the members, of the Board.

H. H. Wernse

Being duly sworn deposes as follows,

I am Teller in the office of the United States
assistant Treasurer at St. Louis - I remember the
occasion when Major Brinton took away the
4 boxes from the Treasury on the 3^d day of
August. - These four boxes were a portion, 6
that were received from Washington on the 1st
of August accompanied by an invoice that called
for three millions of dollars. These Boxes were

numbered respectively Nos. One, Two, Three, Four
in Nos one two three and four

of August accompanied by an invoice that called for three millions of dollars. These Boxes were

numbered respectively Nos. One, Two, Three, Four Five and Six. Nos. one, Two, Three and Four were the boxes taken by Maj. Brinton.

I never opened or examined the Boxes and do not know what they contained.

Major Brinton gave me Major Febiger's check for the money and took charge of the money a few moments (ten or fifteen minutes) after it was delivered at our office by Adams Express Co.

The total amount being for three millions of dollars, and Major Febiger's check being for Two million six hundred thousand dollars

which Major Brinton presented. Major Brinton as the Agent of the Adams Express Co. and our Watchman selected from the boxes, the sum of four hundred thousand dollars, according to the following memorandum.

1 Package	20 ^{\$}	80.000 Dollars.	
1 "	10 ^{\$}	40.000 "	{ series 30 from \$ 80.000 & 84.000
10 "	5 ^{\$}	500.000	
11 "	10cts Postal, ay.	44.000	
10. "	5" "	20.000	
33. "	assorted	16.000	
	Total	\$ 400.000	

I do not think there was any Postage Currency in the amount Major Brinton took, because the descriptive list or invoice which accompanied the list from Washington, did not call for any more than that which was delivered to me. This descriptive

56. list I gave to Major Brinton at that time - no copy retained in our office - being. This descriptive list was a statement of the amounts, denominations, series and numbers of every package and note, except Postal Currency. At Major Brinton's request I took charge of these Boxes and placed them in our safe where they remained undisturbed until the 3^d of August at which time Major Brinton took them away. The money came from Washington to the Assistant Treasurer.

I cannot give the denomination with any certainty as I only saw the numbers from glancing over the list.

(signed)

H. H. Wernse.

Teller Asst. Tr. U. S. A.

Daniel Helcher.

Being duly sworn deposes as follows,

I am the day watchman at the Sub-Treasury in St. Louis. - On Saturday the 1st day of August we received through Adams Express Co, Six Boxes of Money forwarded to us by the Treasury Depot at Washington. Three boxes were then opened. The contents of Two, being mostly Postal Currency and several packages of the 3^d box were retained by Mr. Wernse, the remainder of the money was delivered to Major Brinton in payment as I suppose of the check presented by him. I know nothing of the

contents of the three boxes as they were not opened. Those opened were found to be all right as far as could be determined. We then filled in the space of the third box (out of which part of the money had been taken) with shavings and nailed the box up. Major Brinton afterwards brought some blanks, and sent for a Carpenter and had the box opened, took out the shavings; put in the blanks and had the box re-closed. Nothing was taken out at this time except the shavings, no part of the money was removed - The Boxes were put in the Vault of the Treasury that evening and remained until Monday afternoon, when they were taken away by direction of Major Brinton -

The boxes were in the same condition when taken by him on Monday; as when he left them in the Treasury on Saturday evening no part of their contents having been removed.

Boxes No. One, Two, Three, and Four were delivered to Major Brinton - Five and Six; were left in the Treasury.

(Signed)

Daniel Kelcher.

The Board adjourned until Friday Augt.
21st 9 o'clock A. M.

St. Louis August 21st 1863

The Board met pursuant to adjournment
Present all members of the Board -

Sebastian Worth -

Sergeant Co. "I" 9th Wis. vol. Inf.

being duly sworn deposes as follows -

I was Sergt. of the Guard to the money at the time of the burning of the Steamer "Ruth" on the night of the 4th August about 12 o'clock -

I was sitting out side of the Cabin door at the time the alarm of fire was given and could see the boxes of money from where I was sitting - Myself, Corporal John Diterle and Privates Phillip Shons, Antone Weber, were on guard at the time of the fire broke out.

We went on guard about 4 o'clock in the evening. The two privates named went on duty about ten minutes preceding the alarm of fire - I think there were 6 Boxes piled all together - four large ones and two short ones. We do not know what was in them.

The Paymasters told us there was money in these wooden boxes. I saw these boxes placed on board the boat and was on the boat all the time up to the breaking out of the fire - The boxes had not been moved from the time we left Port at St. Louis; until the fire broke out. I am confident of this from

the fact that I noticed the position of the boxes and was there the most of the time myself. When the alarm of fire was given I shouted out "there was fire on the boat." The guard and the remainder of the Company that was on duty on the boat, took position around and near the money, we remained in that position until the fire and smoke drove us away.

When the fire drove us away from the boxes, Lieut. Kauer and myself took one of the boxes from the pile and carried it outside of the cabin to the head of the gangway stairs and threw it down. I could not see whether the box stopped on the deck or went into the water. I then jumped overboard and swam ashore. Before we threw the box down stairs it fell on the Lieut., we then raised it up again and threw it down stairs, this was one of the long boxes. The box we carried out was lying on top of one of the shorter boxes. — When the Lieut. and I took this box away from the pile; none of the soldiers were near the money except the Corp. and two privates on guard. — I do not know whether the guard removed any of the boxes when the Lieut. and I took away the one mentioned. We took the box from the saloon, to the head of the stairs easily; we carried it in our hands without much trouble.

(Signed) Sebastian Worth.

Benjamin Farrar.

United States Assistant Treasurer at Saint Louis, being duly sworn deposes as follows; On the 1st day of August Adams Express Co. delivered to us a shipment of Three Millions of Dollars in boxes. I did not count the boxes and do not know how many there were. On the same day Major Brinton presented a check on me for Two Million Six Hundred Thousand Dollars (I did not see the check) in payment of this check we delivered to Major Brinton these boxes said to contain "Three Millions of Dollars", Major Brinton opened some of the boxes and returned to us "Four hundred Thousand Dollars - I do not know how many boxes he opened. I know nothing of the contents of any of the boxes except from seeing Major Brinton take money out from those he opened. The descriptive list which accompanied the money from Washington was delivered to Major Brinton - We have been in the habit of receiving Boxes of the same description from the Treasury before.

These Boxes were I should think about 5 feet in length and nearly 18 inches square and generally bound with hook iron - We usually open the boxes before receipting for the money, but did not on this case. An agent of the Express Co. is usually present when the Boxes are opened, but do not know whether he was on this occasion or not - (signed) Benj. Farrar.

John Dieterle

Capt. Co. "D" 9th Regt. Wis. Vol.
stationed at St. Louis during the

but did not in this case. An agent of the Express Co. is usually present when the Boxes are opened, but do not know whether he was on this occasion or not - (signed) Benj. Parran

John Dieterle

Corp. Co. "D" 9th Regt. Wis. Vol.
stationed at St. Louis being duly sworn deposes
as follows;

I am one of the guard on the Steamer "Ruth" and was on guard at the time the fire broke out - I was also on guard the time the boxes were put aboard at St. Louis; I saw the boxes piled up in the saloon, there was five or six of them three or four long ones and two short ones. I do not know whether they were five or six I cannot tell. I do not think there was any change in the position of the boxes from the time we left St. Louis until the breaking out of the fire. I had relieved my guard about ten or fifteen minutes before the alarm of fire was given. Two of the guard were with the money boxes and one with the rations down stairs. I think there were none of the soldiers up except the guard at the money. The Lieut. Sergt. of the guard and myself were up at the time of the fire.

I was laying down outside of the Saloon, but not asleep, when I heard the alarm of fire, it seemed to come from below, it was repeated on the upper deck and the alarm became general, our Lieut. rallied the whole guard around the boxes immediately, some in the saloon and some on the guards. The Lieut.

assisted one of the guard to try and move one of the boxes, but the fire had spread too rapidly. I was standing outside of the Saloon door, and there was much noise, confusion, and smoke, I am not sure, but think, it was a long box, my impression is they did not remove it outside of the saloon door. Directly afterwards the boat struck the shore with a great crash and every body jumped ashore or got off the best way they could - The only definite order that was given, after the fire, was to save the boxes, but it was impossible to do so on account of the rapid spread of the flames.

Neither of the guard that I had stationed at the money boxes were lost. Five of our men were lost however - I did not see any boxes carried down below, thrown over board, or carried to the shore. It was light enough to see any thing.

(Signed)

John Dieterle

Philip Johns

Private Co. "I" 9th Regt. Wis. Vol.

being duly sworn deposes as follows;

I was one of the guard detailed for duty on the Steamer "Truth" and was on guard at the time of the burning of the boat. I do not remember the date. I was standing guard right by the boxes at the time the alarm of fire

was given. I do not remember exactly how many boxes, five or six - The guards remained at

time of the burning of the boat. I do not remember the date. I was standing guard right by the boxes at the time the alarm of fire

was given. I do not remember exactly how many boxes, Five or Six - The guards remained at their posts when the alarm was given, none of them leaving. I was the last one to leave the boxes: when I left the guard, all the soldiers had left the cabin, some passengers were still running up and down the cabin.

At the time I left, the boxes were all on the pile except one, which was removed by the Lieut. and Sergt.

I was watching the other boxes and do not know where that one was taken to - There were some long and some short boxes on the pile; the long ones were about 5 feet in length and about 18 inches in width and depth. The short boxes were 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ or 4 feet in length. I think they were about square, a little wider than they were thick.

I do not know whether the box removed by the Lieut. & Sergt. was one of the long, or short boxes. The short boxes were on top of the pile the long ones below resting on some sticks of cord wood. When I left the boxes of money I went down stairs with the chief Pay master of the party. I helped him carry a trunk down when we got below he dropped the trunk down on the deck and we both jumped overboard - I saw nothing of the box removed

by the Lieut. and Sergt. as we went down stairs. I do not know what became of the boxes when I left my post.

(signed)

Phillip Sohns

Anton Wiber

Private Co. "I." 9th Wis. Vol.

being duly sworn deposes as follows.

I was one of the guard detailed for duty on the "Ruth" - I was on guard at the time of the & breaking out of the fire my post was right at the foot of the stairs on the lower deck, leading up into the cabin.

I was guarding our rations and was not guarding the money.

while on my post one of the deck hands came out and cried fire, I looked back and saw the fire; I then ran up a few steps and cried fire; and returned to my post. I did not see the boxes when I ran up to give the alarm.

After returning down stairs I went off on the front part of the boat and staid there until she struck the shore, I then jumped off. I did not see any of the boxes down stairs nor did I hear them falling.

(signed.)

Anton Wiber

Adjourned until 9 o'clock A.M. Aug. 22^d

jumped off. nor did I hear them boxes down stairs nor did I hear them falling.

(signed)

Anton Wiber

Adjourned until 9 o'clock A.M. Augt. 22^d

Saint Louis Augt. 22^d 1863

The Board met pursuant to adjournment
Present all members of the Board-

Capt. Benjamin R. Pegram -

Being duly sworn
deposes as follows:

I am Captain of the Steam-boat "Ruth" at the time she burned up. I was sitting on the forward part of the hurricane deck talking with Major Brinton about 12 o'clock in the evening, when the Pilot called from the Pilot house saying "the Engineer says the boat is on fire, I asked where? some one replied at the Stern I ran back near the Stern on the larboard side and looked over and saw she was on fire between the Boiler and main deck for nearly the whole distance aft of the wheel. The flames were just beginning to rise over the cabin guards for the space of about 40 feet. I immediately called to the Pilot, to run to the Missouri shore as soon as possible, I saw in an instant there was no chance to save her. I sent a man below to awaken the passengers and crew, and com-

menced to awaken the men in the Texas - We were about a third of the way from the Missouri shore, the Pilot immediately headed for that shore. About this time one of the deck hands came on the roof, we started back to the stern with buckets of water, when we got back near the wheel we saw the flames had caught the Cabin and were coming on to the roof, We then threw down our buckets there near the wheel house, and I then ran forward - We had a Hose and Steam fire engine on board but could not use them on the outside of the boat, and could not get at it on account of the mules on the guards - I then called to the Pilot to tell the engineer to "whale if to her" as she was burning very fast.
 The boat standing square across the river, I told the Pilot I thought the head way would take her to the bank, and ordered him to stop the engine and the engine I told him again to stop her and back her on the Starboard wheel - The Pilot answered he had rung the bell, I ordered him to ring them again, he did so, and got no answer - I then saw the flames coming out from the engine room over the larboard cylinder forward of the

wheel house. The flames had spread so by the time she reached the bank that all was

him to ring them again,
got no answer - I then saw the flames
coming out from the engine room over
the larboard cylinder forward of the

wheel house. The flames had spread so by
the time she reached the bank that all persons
had been driven forward onto the fore-castle.
She ran into the bank at least 20 feet, the bank
was very near a bluff bank about 30 feet
high. (a dry sandy bank) The mate and his
crew jumped out immediately with the chain
to make her fast, the mate calling upon
all persons to assist him to get the chain
up the bank. She swung off before they
could make the chain fast on account of
the banks being so steep - when she struck,
she swung around both engines were still
working. The larboard wheel caught on the
bank, and pushed her bow out, she then
started out, quartering up the river, when
about her length from the bank her engines
stopped working; her head way took her
across to the middle of the river, which
was here about a mile wide, just as she
got across the channel her larboard wheel
fell and anchored her, for I should think
a half hour, she commenced floating slowly
down the river, when she had floated about
four miles, the chain which was still drag-
ging over her bows got fast among some
snages and held her there until she sank -
at the time the boat drifted away from where
she struck, every thing of her upper works had

burned down, except her stanchion. Sampson Post and part of her star-board wheel and perhaps her larboard wheel which I could not see on account of the smoke and flames.

There was about fifty cords of wood on her when she burned, two thousand bushels of coal (of which about one third was stowed forward of the boilers) and (183) one hundred and eighty three boxes of bacon, stowed forward of the boilers, all of which must have been on fire at the time the boat struck opposite where where she had struck the bank.

The safes or any thing stowed around the smoke stacks in falling through the upper deck would fall into or near the ash pans.

I know where the money boxes were stowed they in falling through the upper deck,

would have struck on to the wood and coal. I do not think it was more than

five minutes after she quitted the bank, before the Saloon deck fell in, and from

the fire and heat which was there, I do not think it would be more than two hours

before the money boxes and contents would be entirely consumed. I know how long

it takes to burn papers and bills, I have tried it, and base my statement as to the time it

would take to burn these boxes, on that experience and my observation of the character of

of the fire. I do not know how the

it takes to burn papers and bills, & have over it, and base my statement as to the time it would take to burn these boxes, on that experience and my observation of the character of

of the fire. I do not know how the fire originated it could not have come from the deck aft, as it was full of loose mules, nor could it have occurred in the deck hands room, as the engineers would have seen it.

In talking the matter over with McCrory a mate I think it must have started in the deck hands room off of the larboard wheel, there were three of these rooms and each one has a window opening out and I think there was no glass in them, as the mules and horses kicking around had shattered them, and if a fire had caught in any of these rooms it would have manifested itself exactly as it did.

These rooms on the larboard side were unoccupied, because the men who occupied them, left at Cairo and had gone up the river after a boat, a half hour before. The escapes from the chimney's threw very few sparks I do not think the fire could have caught in that way. There was no fire aft of the engines and there were no candles or open lights ever allowed on the boat.

(signed) B. R. Pegram

The Board adjourned until Monday Augt.
24th 10 o'clock A. M.

Saint Louis August 24th 1863.

The Board met pursuant to adjournment.

Present all members of the Board.

No witnesses appearing the Board adjourned until 10 o'clock A. M. August 25th 1863.

Saint Louis August 25th 1863.

The Board met pursuant to adjournment

~~Present all members of the Board.~~

Peter Vandebork,

Being duly sworn deposes
as follows;

I was engineer on the Steamer "Ruth" and was on watch at the time she was burned - I went on watch in the evening after supper (we change watch at 12 o'clock) and I had not been relieved at the time the fire occurred - I pulled out my watch to see what time it was, and found it was 10 minutes after 12 o'clock. I started forward to hunt the watchman, to see if he had called the other engineer to relieve me. On reaching the front part of the engine, I stopped to take a drink of water, when about to drink I discovered an unusual light on the larboard side of the boat, aft of the wheel house

Knowing the boat must be on fire, I called the man on watch with me and told him

the front part of the engine, I was about to drink take a drink of water, when about to drink I discovered an unusual light on the lar- board side of the boat, aft of the wheel house

Knowing the boat must be on fire, I called the man on watch with me and told him, to get the hose of the fire engine down im- mediately as the boat was on fire, he did so and passed the end of the hose down to me and I ran to the fire engine with it, I found it was the wrong coupling to make the at- tachment, I told the young man to disconnect them and give me the other end of the section. I then held so that I could make the attachment, while he was doing this I ran to the foot box and spoke through the trumpet to the Pilot, giving the alarm I told him to round the boat too as quickly as possible, as she was on fire. The Pilot rang the bell to stop (the starboard one) and told me through the trumpet to go ahead on the larboard engine. I stopped my engine and told my assistant to go ahead on his, he did so, directly afterwards the Pilot rang the bell for me to go ahead on my engine I did so, directly after starting my engine, I ran down from the foot boards, and the young man handed me the right end of the hose to make the attach- ment, while I was making the attachment the young man started the fire engine. I handed the nozzle of the hose to some person I think it was the young man spoken of, or the mate, - I then looked at the fire

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engine and found she was working, the mate had the hose and was playing on the fire. By this time the flames had reached the after part of the engine - I then said to the mate, "Jim its of no use we can't save her" the heat was then pushing us pretty hard he then threw down the hose; and we both started forward and I lost sight of the mate - I do not think it was over 2 minutes from the time we first discovered the fire; till we were driven from the engine room by it. Just as I reached the forward stairs the boat struck the bank the concussion was so severe, as to knock me down when she struck I then got up and looked around to save myself at that time the flames were coming out from under the deck forward of the engines, I went to the lar-board side (forward) and saw the boat was swinging off from the shore, I jumped off into the water, which was about 3 feet deep, I then saw the mate and of the deck hands with 12 or 15 fathoms of the chain cable on shore. The mate was urging the men to haul away on the chain; they were trying to get enough of it off to make her fast to the hill. - The chain becoming foul in some way, they could not get any more of it out; I looked around under the bank to see if any thing could

be found to make her fast, but could not find anything.

make her "fast to the hill." - The chain becoming foul in some way, they could not get any more of it out; I looked around under the bank to see if any thing could

be found to make her fast, but could not find any thing - The men held on to the chain as long as possible; but the weight of the boat took her out into the current.

I think at the time she swung from the bank the starboard engine was still working - at the time the Mate and I left the engine room I did not see any thing [of the young man] my assistant; I supposed he had gone forward when we left the engine room. Both of the engines were [] working forward.

Before leaving the engine room I received no other orders than those mentioned; either by speaking trumpet or bells at the time I left the engine room, It was not safe for me to remain on duty any longer. I could not have delayed long enough to have stopped the engine.

at the time I discovered the light as mentioned, there was no alarm given above. I think there was no deck passengers on the boat and none of the crew slept back in the deck room aft of the shaft, both in and out side of the deck room was stowed with mules.

I know of no lights aft of the shaft, except two lamps hanging in the deck room: I had not noticed any person

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passing back there with a lamp or light in their hands. I have no idea as to how the fire originated; I do not think she could have caught from a spark as we were burning but little wood and the boat escapes through her chimnies and throws but few sparks - From appearances I am satisfied the fire originated outside of the deck room

(signed) Peter Vandervort.

At this stage of the proceedings no other witnesses being present; and it being impossible to determine how soon the Board may be able to procure other witnesses; The Board adjourned subject to the call of the senior member of the Board.

St. Louis August 28th 1863

The Board met pursuant to the call of the President - All members of the Board present except Major Jones.

Major W. B. Mendenhall

Pay master U. S. A. being duly sworn deposes as follows;

I am a Paymaster of the District of the Mississippi of which Major Febiger is the

chief. I submit the following report I made to Major Febiger concerning the Starman "Rutt"

Paymaster U. S. A. being duly
sworn deposes as follows;

I am a Paymaster of the District of the Mis-
sissippi of which Major Febiger is the

chief. I submit the following report I made
to Major Febiger concerning the Steamer "Ruth"

"Coatesville, Chester Co. Penn."

Aug. 11th 1863.

"Major

"By your request I herewith furnish you my state-
ment in reference to the money on board the steamer
"Ruth" burnt 11 3/4 P.M. Aug. 4th 1863 - 8 miles below Cairo
"on the Miss. A short time after the boat was discovered
"to be on fire I saw the boxes containing the money
"still in the same position piled on top of each other
"near the office, the soldiers were still guarding the
"boxes, Major Brunton was present and I heard him
"make the remark - "Stand at your post boys." I was
"then thrown from the upper to the lower deck and
"escaped to the shore. From the rapidity with which
"the flames enveloped the boat and having seen the
"place which the boxes occupied burn and fall to
"the lower deck on combustible matter (wood, hay
"and coal) my opinion is the money was totally de-
stroyed.

Yours very respectfully

W. B. Mendenhall

Paymaster U. S. A.

This report is true to the best of my knowledge.

In addition I would state - that it is my opinion that
the boat was set on fire, and for this reason - That
as we neared Cairo I heard some body on the shore
remark "This is the Paymasters boat". I thought it

strange that any body there should know this fact
the time of night at which the fire occurred and
also the position in the river where the boat took
fire which was away from all settlements.

These are my only reasons that it was the work
of an incendiary; and my suspicions of the in-
cendiary would be only; that he was some friend
in the interest of the Rebel Govt. at the time of
the fire I was sitting near the Clerks office talk-
ing with one of the Paymasters (Major White) I
think) when the Stewardess ran through the cabin
from aft, crying fire!

We jumped up and ran out of the Saloon to the
larboard railing and looked over, we could see
the reflection of the fire which seemed to be from
the ladies cabin aft. I then ran back to the
saloon to my state room (which is near the ladies
cabin) for the purpose of awakening my Clerk
and to get some of my vouchers which I had
out of my safe that day examining.

My Clerk was in a very heavy sleep and I had to
drag him out of the state-room and push him into
the hall, by the time I got him out into the hall
the smoke was pouring in over the transom of
my state room from the guards and I could hear
the crackling of the flames beneath.

My Clerk had no time to dress and I seized my
vouchers and we both ran forward. I got out of
the saloon and as far forward as the head of the

stairs when the boat struck the shore. It was at
this time I was knocked overboard on the lower

my state room -
the crackling of the flames beneath.
My Clerk had no time to dress and I seized my
vouchers and we both ran forward. I got out of
the saloon and as far forward as the head of the
stairs when the boat struck the shore. It was at
this time I was knocked overboard on the lower
deck and escaped by the plank which was just
then falling in. - I found some of my papers
next morning in the water. I did not see any of
the money boxes moved; when I last passed them
going out Major Brinton and the guard was still
there - I had no public funds in my pos-
session - From my own personal knowledge
I do not know whether the boxes were moved
or not. I did not see any boxes afterwards
taken ashore or thrown overboard. I saw after-
wards some trunks and carpet bags on shore
belonging to some of the passengers.

Major Pumphrey one of the Paymasters
who was on the "Ruth" at the time she was
burned died last night.

(Signed)

W. B. Mendenhall

Paymaster U. S. A.

No other witnesses being present or available,
the Board adjourned subject to the call of the
President.

Saint Louis Sept 4th 1863.

The Board met pursuant to the call of the
President - Present all members of the Board

Philip Krueger: Capt. Co. "I" 9th Wis. Vols.

being duly sworn deposes as follows: I was Lieut
commanding the Guard on board the "Ruth"

at the time she was burned. The guard consisted of 2 Sergeants, 2 Corporals and 26 privates all of Co. "F" 9th Wis. Vol.

We reported on board the steamer at the levee at St. Louis about 4 o'clock P.M. When I arrived with the guard at the levee, the money was in the wagon on the levee in charge of Major Brinton. The guard carried the money on board of the boat and placed it in the Social Hall in the forward part of the cabin. There were seven boxes, I do not know how many of them contained money.

The Paymaster told me the money was in those boxes. They were long boxes, something like musket boxes - 2 of them were wider and not so large as the others and were laid in two piles close together, there were sticks of wood laid on the floor the 2 short boxes laid on the wood and the longer boxes on the top of them - Each relief consisted of 3 men, 2 were posted over the money and one stood guard over the rations on the lower deck. The guard was relieved every two hours and were posted as soon as the money was placed on the boat, and at no time was the money without a guard up to the time of the burning of the boat - The boat left St. Louis about 7 o'clock in the evening and ran until about 12 o'clock in the night and she stopped on account of the low water, I do

not know the name of the place at which we stopped - I did not go to land.

no time was the money ~~worn~~^{worn} -
the time of the burning of the boat - The boat
left St. Louis about 7 o'clock in the evening and
ran until about 12 o'clock in the night and
she stopped on account of the low water, I do

not know the name of the place at which we
stopped - I did not go to bed that night - I
was up the whole night and was sitting near
the money all night awake.

The boxes were not on that night opened or
removed, or in any way disturbed by any
person. The boat started again about 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ o'clock
in the morning and arrived at Cairo about
9 $\frac{1}{2}$ o'clock P.M. the 4th August, and lay at
Cairo until about 11 o'clock in the evening.
I was on the boat during the whole time we
lay at Cairo and the boxes were not removed
or in any way disturbed while we lay there -
when we left Cairo they were in the same con-
dition as before. - About an hour after we
left Cairo I went to the water closets and on
my return to the cabin the whole of the
guard was under arms I supposed that the
Guerrillas were about. I then heard the Sergeant
of the Guard cry "that the boat was on fire".
I then looked to find out where the fire was,
and saw it was aft of the wheel on the lar-
board side of the boat. I then went back to near
the fire to see if it could be extinguished; finding
the fire could not be put out, I started back
toward the boxes and met Maj. Brinton who
told me to try and save the money - The boat
was then running toward the shore, seeing
which, the Sgt. and I took one of the long
boxes and carried it out of the cabin and

threw it over on to the lower deck, (from the place we threw it and think it could not have fell into the river) it must have fell on to the lower deck; I did not see the box any more after we threw it over, just as we were throwing the box over, the boat struck the shore - I then returned to the place where the boxes were piled and found the 2 men on duty over the money; seeing that it was too late to save the money I told them to save themselves and we then left.

We jumped from the upper to the lower deck, and as I was passing on the plank toward the shore the boat receded from the bank, the plank fell into the river and I with it; I then swam ashore. The boat then floated off down the river burning rapidly, & watched her until she floated out of sight - I am confident the box of money we threw over, did not fall into the river, it was so heavy I do not think it could have floated but would have sank - At the time I was in charge of the guard I was Lieutenant Commanding Co. "I" - I have no knowledge of the contents of the money boxes and know nothing further in regard to the matter than stated -

(Signed)

Philip Krueger

Capt. Co. "I." 9th Wis. Vol.

The Board adjourned until the further call

(signed)

Philip Krueger
Capt. Co. "I." 9th Wis Vol.

The Board adjourned until the further call
of the President -

Saint Louis Mo. Sept. 7th 1863

The Board met pursuant to the call of the
President, Present all members of the Board.

Major N. S. Brinkton Paymaster U. S. A
being re-called and examined deposes as
follows: On or about Saturday, ^{the} 29th day of
August I returned to the wrecks of the steamer
'Ruth' superintending the exploration of the
wreck by a sub-marine diver. During five
days, the Diver made descents to the wreck, he
discovered and brought up burnt pieces of a
large number of Treasury notes. The pieces
discovered and brought up by him, varied
in size from $\frac{1}{2}$ inch square, to half or more
than half a bill. These remnants were all
found in the hull of the boat forward of the
furnaces. I know nothing of course as to the
condition of things in the hull of the boat,
except from the statements of the Sub-Ma-
rine Diver, and from the pieces of money
which he brought up from the wreck. Four
of the Iron safes belonging to the Paymasters
were brought up by the Diver, among them
my own. I opened it and found nothing
inside but ashes and glass (melted inkstands)

During the time the explorations were made Major Jameson of the Pay Dept. was present most of the time and Mr. Charles J. Root agent of the Treasury Department arrived the day before I left. Major Jameson is still in charge of the neck. He and Mr. Root will be present at any further explorations. Mr. Root was the agent of the Treasury Dept. and Superintended the shipping of the money boxes from Washington. He had with him a memorandum containing a list of the number and denomination of the Bills in the Boxes. Among the fragments were found bills of the denomination of ones, twos, fives, tens & twenty.

(signed) A. G. Brumley
Paymaster U.S.A.

No other witnesses appearing, the Board adjourned until the further call of the President.

A true copy from the Record of the Court.

James S. Dwight
Capt. 4th N. M. Cavalry,
Recorder.