

**The Atlantic—The Coroner's Inquest, and the Verdict of the Jury.**

The following report of the Coroner's Inquest, and verdict of the Jury, we take from the *Erie Commercial Advertiser*. It will be seen that "without determining whether there was carelessness or not on the part of those on duty in the *Atlantic*," the Jury have found "De Grass McNott, the 1st mate of the *Ogdensburg*, guilty of gross carelessness, and a wicked disregard of human life," and that "the deceased came to her death by means of such carelessness."

The case will probably not be allowed to rest here, but will be brought within the cognizance of the Grand Jury, for it will be remembered that at a meeting of the citizens of Erie, it was resolved "that the Prosecuting Attorney be requested to take immediate measures to obtain such evidence as may be derived from the passengers now in this city." It is by the action of that body that the question of culpability upon the part of those concerned will be brought within the scope of the law. We hope that the Grand Jury will give the subject a still more searching examination, and will act up to their convictions without fear or favor.

On Friday, the 20th inst., an inquest was held over the dead body of a little girl brought in by the Propeller *Ogdensburg* from the wreck of the *Atlantic*, at which the following testimony was elicited.

Robt. Richardson, Captain of the Propeller was sworn. Collision took place about 8 o'clock. Child brought aboard the Propeller at that time. Collision occurred about 6 miles West by South of Long Point Light. Steamboat was going up, Propeller down, N. E. & by E.

The night was foggy. My watch was below at that time. Calm night. Lights on the Propeller, two on the cross-tree, and a signal light on the forward side of the Pilot House, six feet above the promenade deck. It was the first Mate's watch, DeGrass M'Nott. I saw a light on steamboat after collision. The Engineer slowed the propeller about 10 minutes before the collision, and backed the wheel 25 or 30 revolutions. Struck the steamboat about her forward gangway. The propeller was knocked astern by the collision, and steamboat went on. Steamboat did not stop her engines. After examining propeller started for the boat. Did not hear boat bell.

West of Long Point, when the propeller got to the boat. Her bow was down; after part was above water. Think we got off about 300.

DeGrass McNott sworn—I am 1st Mate of propeller. It was my watch when the collision took place. Was 3 or 4 miles off when I saw the lights of the boat. *Atlantic* had a red light at the mast head. The lower light was white. Saw them all the time. Was half a mile off when I ordered the engine slowed—then ordered the engine reversed,—and then jumped on the pilot house to ring the bell.—The whistle was not in order. Propeller struck the boat on the larboard side, between the forward gangway and wheel house. I did not think it my business to run South of the boat. Halted to the other boat and asked, "where are you going?" I thought we should strike her when she was two or three rods off. Had we put our helm apart 5 minutes before we would not have struck her; or had the steamboat kept her course, she would not have struck. The man at the wheel of the propeller was Wm. Barnes. I saw the corpse passed aboard from a boat, I think it was the propeller's Life Boat.

Wm. Barnes sworn.—I was at the wheel when the collision took place. 2 or 3 minutes before the collision the Mate ordered the helm hard a starboard. Did so. Could not tell how far off when I first saw the light of the boat. The Mate was sitting on the South side of the wheel house. I thought the boat would keep to the South side of us. When close to us, she steered across our bow. Mate hollered to the Boat, and asked, "where are you coming?" I was about the wheel-house all the time.—There were between 150 and 200 rescued.

Robert Montgomery sworn.—I was a passenger on the *Atlantic*. The collision took place between half past two and three this morning. I could find no lights in the Staterooms and Hall. Think the boat sunk gradually from the time of the collision. Engine kept on until the water put out the fire. There were from 350 to 400 persons on board. Think 200 were lost. Saw a great many jump overboard both before and after the boat stopped. It was a clear night and calm. I retired about 10 o'clock. Saw nobody who commanded on the boat. The first small boat swamped; the next was filled with the crew and left the boat. There was very little fog; the stars shone.

Theodore Titus sworn.—I was a passenger on the *Atlantic*. Live at Detroit. Retired about 9 o'clock. Was awake when the collision took place. Got up; was about the 4th person on the upper deck. There we saw the Captain. He said it was deepest water. I went below and got a life preserver. Shipped a table, and then went one hundred yards and watched the boat. While there the propeller came in sight. The Captain swam to the Propeller. I was in the water 2 of an hour. The mate of the *Atlantic* said that the emigrants went over in droves, and nearly all were lost. Captain of the *Atlantic* swam to the Propeller before many got on her. The Clerk was the last person on the wreck. It was a clear morning—stars shining.

Eliott Titus sworn.—I am from Jacksonville, Florida. I was a passenger on the *Atlantic*, and was awake and in conversation with my father when collision took place. When on deck, she seemed to be sinking. There were about 300 or 400 on board. I do not think there were 100 cabin passengers saved, nor 150 emigrants. The night was a little hazy, but it was star-light. Could see a long distance.—The *Atlantic's* engine was not stopped. Propeller struck the boat on the larboard side.

**Verdict of the Coroner's Jury.**

**ERIE COUNTY, ss.**  
An inquisition indented and taken at Erie, in the county of Erie, on the 20th day of August, in the year of our Lord One Thousand Eight hundred and Fifty-two, before me, Simeon Dunn, Esq., Coroner of the county aforesaid, upon the view of the body of an unknown female in appearance, of the age of ten years or thereabouts, then and there lying dead upon the oath of John H. Walker, Charles W. Kelso, Alfred King, W. W. Loomis, John Zimmerly, Wm. A. Brown, John Dunn, Lewis Dunn, Wilson Laird, Wm. H. Middaugh, David Shirk and Jonas Gunnison, good and lawful men of the county aforesaid, who being sworn and charged to enquire on the part of the Commonwealth, when, where, how, and after what manner the said deceased came to her death, do say, upon their oaths, that she was drowned about three o'clock in the morning of the 20th inst., under the following circumstances. According to the evidence the deceased, a female of about ten years of age, the name, family, and home, to the Jurors unknown, was a passenger in the steamboat *Atlantic*, that sailed from Buffalo for Detroit upon the evening of the 10th inst. That about six miles West and South of the Light House at Long Point, a collision took place between the said steamboat and the Propeller *Ogdensburg*, then bound from Detroit to Grand River. That by said collision the *Atlantic* was lost, when the deceased and about two hundred passengers was drowned. The number drowned could not be ascertained, but from testimony of passengers saved, estimated at about two hundred.

The Jurors aforesaid, find that DeGrass McNott, the 1st mate of the Propeller *Ogdensburg*, was then on duty, and was on deck.—That the night was calm and clear. That, from his own evidence, he saw the lights of the *Atlantic*, when she was from three to four miles off, and until the collision; that he saw the two boats approach each other, yet gave no order to the Wheelman, until within three or four rods of the *Atlantic*. That, by his own evidence, if he had directed the Wheelman a short time sooner, the collision would have been avoided—but he did not, because he believed the *Ogdensburg* was in her proper course, and the *Atlantic* was not. Without determining whether there was carelessness or not on the part of those on duty on the *Atlantic*; the Jury would not faithfully discharge their duty, did they not find De Grass McNott, the 1st mate of the *Ogdensburg*, guilty of gross carelessness, and a wicked disregard of human life. The Jurors aforesaid, find that the deceased came to her death by means of such carelessness.

In witness whereof, as well the Coroner, as the aforesaid Jurors, now place their hands and seals, this 20th day of August, 1852, at the city of Erie, Pa.

SIMEON DUNN, Coroner.  
JOHN H. WALKER, Foreman.  
Charles W. Kelso, Wm. H. Middaugh,  
W. A. Brown, A. King,  
David Shirk, J. Zimmerly,  
W. W. Loomis, Wilson Laird,  
John Dunn, Lewis Dunn,  
Jonas Gunnison.