

CROWDED FERRYBOAT SUNK IN COLLISION

Staten Island Boat Northfield Hit by the Mauch Chunk.

TERRIBLE PANIC ON BOARD

Fleet of Tugs Follows and Aids the Doomed Vessel.

NO LOSS OF LIFE REPORTED

It Is Thought, However, that Several
Persons Must Have Been Drowned—
Some Passengers Injured, but None
Dangerously—Charges of Cow-
ardice Against Men.

The ferryboat Northfield, which has done thirty-eight years' service for the Staten Island Rapid Transit Railroad Company, sank off Pier 10 East River shortly after 6 o'clock last night, after having been in collision. Of the 1,200 passengers who were on board, the police at 1 o'clock this morning said that not one had been lost. No inquiries for missing persons had been made of the police up to that hour.

There were numerous unverified rumors that a number of people had been drowned, and in some instances circumstantial evidence to this effect was given, but the police clung to their report. Until divers can go into the hold of the Northfield the real situation will not be known.

Several persons were more or less seriously injured, but only two were taken to the hospital. They are Lizzie Ivers of Staten Island, injured about the face, taken to the Hudson Street Hospital and thence to the New York Eye and Ear Hospital, and Annie Shannon of Staten Island, suffering from immersion; taken to Gouverneur Hospital.

The Northfield had just left her slip at the foot of Whitehall Street bound for St. George, S. I., when the Mauch Chunk, a ferryboat of the Central Railroad of New Jersey, operating in connection with the Baltimore and Ohio service, came in toward her own slip. The two boats were in collision, and with a gapping hole in her starboard quarter, the Northfield drifted helplessly up the East River for nearly half a mile. Within ten minutes of the time the accident happened the Northfield was under water. The steel bow of the more modern Mauch Chunk, which is a propeller boat, while the Northfield is a side wheeler, had done disastrous work.

As a result of this accident Capt. Abraham Johnson of the Northfield was arrested, while Capt. Charles Griffin of the Mauch Chunk will be produced in court this morning by the Jersey Central officials.

The Mauch Chunk had only a few passengers on board, and when these were landed she returned to Jersey City.

RUSH TO THE WATER FRONT.

Immediately following the sound of the crashing together of the two boats came the screams of the hysterical passengers, the tooting of the whistles of the Northfield calling for help, and the screeching calls of the tugboats in the river in answer to the appeal. These sounds attracted persons on shore, and there was a general rush to the water front. People came running from all directions, and soon the shore line for half a mile was black with the crowds. These people on shore yelled at the top of their voices.

The cries of the people on the sinking ferryboat and the excitement along shore, as well as on the fleet of tugs which were chasing after her, created a scene which was only equaled in recent years along the water front by the fire at the Hoboken piers of the North German Lloyd Steamship Company, about a year ago. With all this excitement and panic, the police claim that only four persons were injured, and these not seriously, and the only loss of life occurred among some eighteen horses which were attached to trucks on the boat.

The Northfield was due to make the regular 6 o'clock trip to Staten Island, and she was ready to leave her slip on time. As is usual, this trip is one of the heaviest of the day's runs. At this hour the many people who live on Staten Island and work in the city generally make a rush for the boats. The usual jam occurred last evening. Every nook and corner of the big double-decked ferryboat was filled with people. The roadway for trucks had its full complement of teams. The gates were closed, the last bell rung, and the ferryboat, with a toot-toot of her whistle, pulled out into the stream.

It was flood tide, and Capt. Johnson of the Northfield had to point the nose of his craft toward the Brooklyn shore in order to get room enough to swing around and pass out between the Battery and Governors Island. When the boat was less than 200

feet from the ferry slip the Mauch Chunk heve in sight, bound in from Jersey City, and having few passengers on board. Just how it occurred has yet to be explained, but the bow of the large railroad ferryboat struck the Northfield on the starboard side, a little aft of the paddlebox.

THE NORTHFIELD UNMANAGEABLE.

There was a crash of timbers, and a screaming of men, women, and children. The rail of the Northfield was born away for some distance. The Mauch Chunk also lost considerable of her woodwork. At once the Northfield became unmanageable. The water rushed into her hold, and soon put out the fires under her boilers. She then began to drift helplessly with the tide, which was rapidly flowing up the East River.

After the first shock of the accident the passengers quited down for a moment when assured by the deckhands that there was no danger. This temporary cessation from panic probably did more to prevent loss of life than anything else. As the ferryboat drifted around the end of Manhattan Island and started on her course up the river the passengers were assured that the only trouble was that the engines had been disabled. Not one realized that the ferryboat was sinking.

People on shore and those on tug boats in the East River, however, took in the true situation at once. They saw that the Northfield was doomed, and it was only a question of where she would sink. If she went down out in the stream it was doubtful if many of the passengers would be saved. If she drifted into one of the piers there was a chance for the people. A fleet of tugs at once gave chase to the ferryboat and went as close to her as possible, ready to give assistance and rescue the passengers.

When the Northfield was off Pier 6 the passengers began to fully realize their dangerous position, and then the real panic began. There happened to be two shifts of deckhands on board, making twenty-five in all, and they did their best to quiet the passengers, but their best was of little avail. In fact, the excitement became so great that of the 1,200 passengers hardly one realized that there were life preservers on board and that they should be put in use. Instead of seeking the preservers or thinking of the lifeboats, the people began to run backward and forward on the decks.

DRIVEN FROM THE ENGINE ROOM.

The Northfield began to roll heavily, and the water rose higher and higher in her hold. The engineer and firemen were driven to the deck. The horses became filled with the excitement of the situation and were frantic.

The heavy tide coming in seemed to work in harmony with the tugs hovering about the Northfield. It shifted the boat around and drifted her in toward Pier 10, which was used by the Spanish Line before the recent war with Spain. As the Northfield drifted up to this pier she shifted around, so as to lie with her bow somewhat in the slip between Piers 9 and 10. In less time than it takes to tell it she sank to the bottom. "She just dropped," is the way a tugboat Captain expressed it.

The passengers had crowded on to the upper deck, and some had climbed to the hurricane deck. Then there was a scramble for safety. Some passengers jumped on to the tugs. Others climbed on to lighters which were tied up near enough for them to reach their decks. Others sought safety by leaping into the water. It is of these persons that rumor says many were drowned.

During all this excitement there were numerous rescues of people which could be well called brave acts. Tugboatmen, longshoremen, and policemen jumped into the water wherever they saw a person in danger.

The reserves of the harbor police, the Old Slip, and the Oak Street Stations were called out, and the Steamboat Squad also was called into action. Ambulances from Hudson Street and Gouverneur Hospitals were sent to the scene, and the fireboat New Yorker was also on hand.

From all accounts of eyewitnesses to the rescue of the passengers, there were many scenes of actual brutality on the part of panicstricken male passengers. Women were pushed or dragged aside and small children were knocked over and neglected. In one or two instances women were severely hurt.

As soon as the survivors struck the shore they mingled with the crowd and disappeared or else gave interviews, but declined to give their names or addresses. Many of them were transported at once from the foot of the pier by the tugboat Catasaqua, which took them directly to St. George.

CAPTAIN STUCK TO HIS POST.

Capt. Abraham Johnson of the Northfield remained at his post until all the people were taken out. The floor of the pilot house was covered with water when he left the boat.

Capt. Johnson ordinarily should not have been on the boat. During the day the Northfield had been under the command of Capt. Henry Caddimore. He wanted to get off. Capt. Sam Coler was to have relieved him at 6:30. Capt. Johnson volunteered to make the one trip. It proved to be the fatal one. Capt. Caddimore almost collapsed when he heard that his boat had been sunk.

He is one of the old Captains of the ferry company. He declined to say anything about the accident, but, according to a friend who was with him on the boat and who refused to give his name, the facts as understood by Capt. Johnson are these:

"The Northfield pulled out at just about 6 P. M. on her way to St. George. As it was flood tide, it was necessary for him to first head toward the Brooklyn shore so that he could swing well around and clear the slips before starting for Staten Island. As he pulled out, the ferryboat Mauch Chunk was coming in toward her slip. Capt. Johnson gave two blasts of the whistle, which was the signal that he wanted the Mauch Chunk to stop and give him the right of way. The Mauch Chunk replied with two blasts, which signified that she understood his order. She did not stop, and her moving forward aided by the tide cause the collision."

George Allen of Port Richmond, S. I., a foreman carpenter of the Lehigh Valley Railroad, was on the forward deck of the Mauch Chunk when the collision occurred. He said last night that the Mauch Chunk was a minute or two late, so he went out on the forward deck so as to be ready to get off and then catch the Northfield on her 6 o'clock trip.

"After the collision," he said, "the Mauch Chunk continued on her way to her slip, and when I called to her Captain that the Northfield was sinking he paid no attention to me. I learned afterward that he thought his own boat was in danger of sinking."

Mr. Allen said he could not remember the signals given.

Quartermaster A. Lisk of the Northfield

said: "We blew one long whistle, as we always do when we leave the slip. The other boat answered us, came on, and struck us. That is all I care to say now."

TUGS TO THE RESCUE.

Fleet of Little Vessels Rushed to the Doomed Vessel at First Warning.

As the Northfield with her passengers crowding wildly from the lower deck to the upper one, appeared into view of the tugboat fleet lying in the neighborhood of Pier 10, she was blowing the three long blasts of distress and alternating them with the four sharp, short toots of danger. In an instant South Street and every towboat along the water front were alive. Whistles to cast off were sounded and in less than two minutes a fleet of ten towboats was racing toward the ferryboat.

First among those to reach the side of the Northfield was the big ocean-going tug Unity of the Chapman Derrick Wrecking Company. As she drew near the ferryboat had already sunk so that her main deck was awash, and the few remaining passengers still there were rushing madly, crowding one another up the companion way to the hurricane deck above. Many men climbed from the lower to the upper decks by way of the outside, scrambling up posts.

The Unity at first made no effort to make fast to the ferryboat, the idea being to stand by to save passengers. Many flocked aboard the tug, which by this time was joined by a fleet of similar stanch little vessels, all gathering in passengers as fast as they could be gotten over the rails. As the wrecked boat drifted by Pier 6 ten towboats were alongside, and by this time had made fast to tow the wreck into shallow water, as it was seen that all of the passengers could not be taken aboard the tug. Among the tugs holding rescued people were the J. Jewett, the Shohola, the Unity, the Baltimore, the Pusey, the Arrow, the President, the Emperor, the Lehigh Valley, Tug No. 14, and Catasqua.

All this time the boat was making water steadily and sinking deeper and deeper, so that even the most stout-hearted began to fear that, despite the near help, many lives would be lost.

The fires in the Northfield's boilers had been put out by the rush of water and with the steam steadily falling her whistle shrieks of distress became fainter. Other tugs from all parts of the river now appeared, and the fireboat New Yorker hove in sight around the Battery, ready to lend a hand. The extra boats were used, however, as the water was room enough for them to come alongside.

The ferryboat Atlantic of the South Ferry fleet, seeing the distress of her neighbor, headed toward the spot where the towboats were now tugging valiantly to run the wrecked ferryboat out of the water, but stood on her course when she saw her help could not be applied.

Deeper and deeper sank the boat, the hurricane deck steadily nearing the water, while many on this deck who had not been taken aboard the tugs struggled to climb higher. To add to the general confusion, the horses down below now began to whinny, and to those on board with death coming to the animals under their very feet the sounds struck terror. The deckhands worked like Trojans trying to stem the men from the lower to the upper deck, but at this time it was seen that one of the lifeboats on the hurricane deck was being loosened.

LIFEBOAT SWAMPED.

The boat was to be launched by orders from Capt. Johnson, but the instant it struck the water a score or more of the frantic men pushing and fighting each other for what they thought meant their existence, jumped into the boat and swamped it. They were fished out by the tug men.

By this time flood tide had taken the wreck to Pier 10, and the fleet of tug boats had managed to bring it near the shore. The wreck, now so low that the water was rushing into every window and opening that led into the hold, began to sink quickly, and just as she reached within twenty feet of the southern corner of Pier 10, she went down, her bow striking bottom so that but four feet of water were left. The boat remained afloat with the hurricane deck awash.

The sudden lurch of the boat and the quick sinking started the panic afresh, and many jumped to save themselves. One young man, according to several eye witnesses, jumped from the hurricane deck to the water to land on the pier. He had a suit case with him, and this flew out of his hand, striking a longshoreman, while the young man himself jumped short, fell with his chest against a pile of the dock, and sank. He was not seen again, though many watched ready to render aid when he reappeared.

Once the boat was aground the tugs turned all their attention to saving life. They brought up alongside the pier, forming a bridge, so that those who remained cool enough could practically walk from the hurricane deck of the wrecked pier. All around the sunken hulk the water was a lively scene of persons overboard who could not wait to be pulled off and who did not know that the boat had struck bottom.

Manuel Fernandez, a watchman on the pier, had run down to the end of the pier, and as the ferryboat neared the pier he jumped from the end of the pier to the railing of the hurricane deck and grabbed a woman who had just jumped into the water. He pulled her back upon deck and held her until he passed her over to the deckhand of the tug Unity, which had run alongside. At the same time almost, the water being nearly shoulder deep on the hurricane deck, Fernandez was clasped around the neck from behind by a panic-stricken man. Fernandez turned and grabbing the man held him, meanwhile shouting for help from the tug Unity. A singer wanted to throw himself overboard.

Many persons were still on the hurricane deck, some of them neck deep in water. One woman held a little child over her head and cried piteously for help. Fernandez grabbed the little one and leaped off the deck in his arms and with the hurricane deck to the bow of the Unity.

PLUNGED TO SAVE A CHILD.

As he was about to turn to jump back to the wreck a child tumbled from the hurricane deck into the water. Fernandez jumped, and amid the cheers of the crowd on the dock swam to the side of the pier and handed the little one up to safety. He then went back to the mother, and had once more gained the deck of the wreck when a panic-stricken man jumped on the back of his outstretched hand and broke two fingers and lacerated the watchman's hand so that he had to be taken to the hospital.

The more people were saved by the tugboat men and by longshoremen on the dock, the more panic-stricken those remaining behind became, and finally when two jumped into the water a score of others followed their example.

George Murphy, a deckhand on the Lehigh Valley barge Sisters, had run down to the foot of the pier, where he removed his coat while running, and dived off the end of the pier among a cluster of floundering men and women. He grasped the woman nearest him and steered her to the side of the pier, where she was pulled out by many other hands. When he was back and got another woman, a third time he returned, this time to the assistance of an old woman who stood on the hurricane deck with the water up to her neck, apparently frightened into a state of stupor. Murphy led the woman along the deck to the side of the Catasqua, and with ropes fastened about her waist the woman was pulled aboard.

Henry Burke, a noted East River life saver, who has a medal awarded him by Congress for saving life, was one of the first at the foot of the pier. He ran over the edge and clinging to a stringer, reached out for those in the water. He drew fourteen persons out of the river, ten of them being men.

Policeman John Hauser of the Old Slip Station had just turned to patrol his post along South Street when he heard the distress whistles of the Northfield. He ran to the water front, and, seeing the predicament of the ferryboat, ran back to his station. He burst into the station house almost breathless.

"Sergeant, there is a ferryboat sinking in the East River, and there may be a bad loss of life. Better order every ambulance out in the district and send the reserves."

The reserves were turned loose at once and ambulances from the Hudson Street Hospital were called for. When Hauser ran back to the river, the ferryboat was nearly to the pier, he threw off his coat, helmet, and shoes, and ran out to the extreme end to help. His time came when Burke climbed down on the stringer. Hauser scaled down beside him and helped him to hand up men and women who were on the point of giving out. He also pulled four men by stretching out his hands to them.

SAVED MANY LIVES.

John Cannon, a former employee of the Staten Island Rapid Transit Company, saved many lives. He was sitting on the after deck of the Northfield, and his attention was attracted by the blowing of the whistles. He looked up and saw the Mauch Chunk bearing down on the Northfield. He rushed toward the point of danger, the women's cabin. The cabin was crowded, every seat being occupied. He shouted to the wo-

men to run. Without knowing what threatened, they obeyed his call, and this saved them from being crushed to death as the boat crashed together.

Policeman Michael Walsh of the Old Slip Station, and Keely of the tug Unity made two brave rescues. Anna Shanahan, forty-eight years old, of Carey Avenue, Brooklyn, had jumped overboard from the Northfield, as did Hans Kutcher of Staten Island. The policeman saw the two struggling in the water. He threw his uniform coat about his shoulders, jumped in himself and started for the woman. Keely saw the man and woman struggling at about the same time, and he went overboard from the tug on the same errand.

The policeman reached the woman first and caught her as she was about to sink. He passed labor on to Keely, who took her ashore and then returned to aid Walsh in rescuing Kutcher. The woman was sent to Gouverneur Hospital and Kutcher went home. Policeman Walsh lost his uniform coat as a result of his work, as somebody picked it up and carried it away.

SAVED IN THE NICK OF TIME

Mrs. Ivan Van Albert, wife of a Sandy Hook pilot, residing on Beach Street, Stapleton, had a narrow escape from being drowned. Mrs. Van Albert is a stout woman, and when the collision occurred was standing on the upper deck. She remained there until the water rose above her head and then she floated off. Her screams attracted the attention of two men in a rowboat, and she was picked up as she was sinking for the third time. She was removed to her home in a coach and is now suffering from nervous shock.

Arnold B. Wedemeyer, a lawyer, of Richmond Road, Stapleton, was on the lower deck, and in attempting to board the Catasqua was caught between the tug and the sinking ferryboat and his left foot was badly crushed and he was bruised about the body.

William Smith of Beach Street, Stapleton, stayed on the boat until she began to settle, at which time he jumped into the water. He was drawn down by the suction, but was rescued later.

Mrs. Frank Weitzman, residing on Canal Street, Stapleton, was among the last to be taken from the boat. She was on the saloon deck when the collision took place. The boat settled low into the water, and Mrs. Weitzman stood there until she was neck deep in the water and then jumped. She was picked up by a tug and landed at Wall Street.

Miss Elizabeth Ivers of 5 Tyson Street, Sailor's Snug Harbor, was sitting on the starboard side of the boat. When the Mauch Chunk struck the Northfield she was thrown across the cabin, and then rolled back again. A piece of timber struck her on the head, cutting her badly. When the Northfield sunk at Pier 10 she was unable to aid herself, and Capt. Donnelly, a boatman, rescued her from her perilous position by means of a boathook. She went to the Hudson Street Hospital.

STORIES OF THE DISASTER.

Charges of Cowardice Against Men Passengers by Survivors and Eye Witnesses.

Charges of cowardice and brutality were made against many of the men passengers in their treatment of women and the weaker ones of their own sex.

Among the survivors who had tales of brutality to tell were Mrs. Frederic Mullin of Bergen Point, N. J., who was seen after the accident, drying in the Eastern Hotel, at the South Ferry, where she went to await the arrival of her husband, for whom she had telegraphed. Sitting beside Mrs. Mullin were her four-year-old daughter and a baby of eighteen months. She said:

"I was sitting in the women's cabin with my baby on my lap and my little girl beside me and the boat had hardly moved out of her slip when I felt a tremendous shock throughout the ship. I started at once, but every one else seemed to keep quiet, and I thought all was a mistake or that we had only hit the pier on going out, when suddenly, as if with a common impulse, every one seemed to jump at once to their feet. At once there were yells of 'We're sinking,' 'Run, run!' 'The life preservers,' and in an instant the whole cabin was in an uproar. Wild men pushed and jostled and fought and yelled, throwing every one ahead of them to the right and left.

"I was a general child, and for a moment stood paralyzed. Then I too, began to yell, and women screamed, and the noise was hideous, and I could think only that my two little ones were going to be drowned. I stood holding them both in my arms, while big men rushed by me and jostled and pushed me, and I was very near sea exhausted. I jumped to my feet a second time, for the fright gave me more strength, and this time a tall young man who was rushing through the cabin caught sight of me, and taking both children out of my arms carried them on ahead.

"It was a fight every inch up the stairs, many women not as strong as myself, having to stay where they were because the men insisted on rushing up ahead. The young man pressed his way to the front, and I followed closely after until we reached the upper deck. There I stood with me, telling me not to fear, that the boat could not sink without the people being taken off, and comforting me generally. He remained beside me throughout the whole time, holding the little ones, both of whom were crying. When the boat sank finally he still stood beside me, and there he remained till we grounded, when he handed the little ones to a deckhand, on the tugboat Unity, and after helping me out of the water disappeared."

A STATEN ISLANDER'S EXPERIENCE.

William Decker, twenty-four years old, of Tower Hill, S. I., who was on his way home from visiting friends in Massachusetts, was another survivor. Mr. Decker was seen after the accident on Pier 10, where the stood holding a dripping dress suit case and a soaked umbrella.

"I was sitting in the cabin with my back turned toward the outside of the boat, in the exact place where the boat was struck," said Mr. Decker. "I was reading a paper, and the boat had gone I do not know how far out of her slip, when there was a cry of 'Look out!' and instantly every one sitting on the side where I was jumped to his feet. I jumped with them, and the next moment there was a crash and the splintering of wood. Then an instant's silence, followed by screams and yells and the wildest rush I ever hope to see.

"There was a general rush for the companionway and for life preservers. An old lady near me grasped me by the arm and begged me to save her. I took a life preserver from under the seats and was in the act of putting it about her when it was grasped from behind and wrenched from my hands and I still stood beside me, and you might as well have tried to scramble for a needle in a haystack as to try for one of those preservers. It was impossible to take the old lady up to the upper deck just then, and we had simply to wait until the cursing, swearing mob got up first, leaving the women struggling in the rear crying.

"In time, when the crush had ceased because every one that wanted to get up had gotten there, we went to the upper deck. On the way I passed a woman carrying a child in arms, and she was weeping and crying, and I did not think of the upper deck, the crush was so great, less than it had been up the companionway.

"At this point I got sick of being bumped about and having the old woman beside me and began to take a hand in the game myself. There was a thick knot of men where I was standing, and I sailed in and knocked some of them right and left and forced a way to the rail for my companion. The men were too intent on saving their precious lives to notice any of my actions, and I even blows, and I gained the rail with the old lady and restrained her from jumping overboard, for she saw the pier was near and imagined she could jump aboard. Then I saw some one else whom I knew and who needed help and left the old woman, telling her to stay where she was until rescued. I saw her afterward being taken ashore by a longshoreman."

WHAT TUG CAPTAINS SAW.

Capt. John Moriarty of the tug Arrow of the Rogers Towing Line was with his boat at Pier 6 East River when the Northfield drifted by. He immediately put out for the ferryboat, and what he and his crew saw and did he tells as follows:

"When the Northfield came abreast of us she was rolling heavily, but was not very deep in the water. We saw she was in trouble, and immediately put out for her, coming up under her stern. Her decks were lined with people, and while they were shouting and crying, there seemed to be no general panic at first. There were four men, however, who evidently lost their heads. We could see them run from one side of the boat to the other, and finally they went overboard. I do not think they jumped intentionally, but that they really went through the broken rail without thinking. These four men were picked up by other tugs.

The Northfield finally drifted in toward Pier 10, and when she bumped her nose up

against the pier she seemed to sink all at once. I do not believe it was more than a minute after she turned toward the pier until her decks were awash and the water was up to the roof of the upper deck. How the people all got off is more than I know, but they seemed to do it just the same. We rescued ten men and four women.

I saw a man stagger and fall when the people were trying to get off the boat. This was committed by a big man when he knocked a woman against a glass door. The woman was cut about the face, and it looked to me as if her eye had been gouged out. The woman was trying to get out of one of the two standing by when the man rushed in ahead of her. She protested, and he up with his fist and hit her so hard as to knock her back against a glass door. She was finally rescued."

Capt. Moriarty took their work of himself, and it was a matter of course. The facts are that he and some of his men jumped into the water in order to rescue people, and nearly all of the fourteen taken up by them were in the water.

Capt. Slater of the tug Unity did not have much praise for the men on board the ferryboat.

"There were probably a hundred men," he said, "on the Unity before a single woman was able to get there. The men were the 'scaredest' lot I have ever seen, and some of them when they got on the Unity fell down on the deck practically frightened out of their wits. I called at them to let some of the women get on, but they paid no attention to me. I finally sent two of my men forward to hold them back, and then managed to get some of the women off the Northfield. The men simply acted like hogs."

Capt. Daniel Gully of the tugboat Mutual is one of those who believe a number of lives were lost. He saw the two boats crash together and followed the Northfield up stream. He said:

"Immediately after the collision at least twenty-five of the passengers leaped into the water and I believe that they perished. Others jumped overboard when the boat was drifting up the river, and still more were lost when the Northfield finally sank. I believe that at least 100 people perished."

TOOK LITTLE GIRL'S LIFE BELT.

One of the youngest survivors was a girl only 14 years old who had been dining with her father in this city, as he was going away on an extended trip of business. After dinner the girl's father took her to the ferry house, where she was to take the next boat to her home, in St. George, S. I. The girl's name was Tilly Schwartz. She was seen sitting in the Staten Island ferry house, wet to the hips, waiting for another boat to take her home, and nothing daunted by her experience.

"I was sitting on the upper deck when the crash came, and I knew something was wrong but sat still until I saw people rush up the stairs; some of them with life preservers on, and all fighting to get up first. Then I became frightened and I looked for a life preserver for myself, but when I found one could not put it on. A woman came and told me she would show me how to work it, and put it on her boy, and that is the last I saw of her.

"I could do nothing but stand still and cry, and then the tugboats came, and I knew we would all be saved, for there were very many of them. I saw the horses down below were knee deep in water. The water came higher and higher, and finally when the horses down stairs began to scream I knew they were drowning and thought it would be my turn next. But the boat was saved, and I could not tell. She said she told me not to jump, as the boat could not sink much deeper because the river was not deep enough at that point.

"The water rose over the deck where I stood, and I got wet up to the waist, but the man beside me held me, and then some one threw me a rope from a tugboat. Before I could catch the rope a tugboat came alongside, and some one, I think a deckhand, picked me up and threw me over the rail, and a man on the tugboat caught me and then dropped me."

SOME NARROW ESCAPES.

Mrs. C. M. Wood, with her daughter, Mrs. Delbert Price of Pleasant Plains, S. I., were rescued by the tug Catasqua, which laded sixty-one passengers from the Northfield at St. George. Mrs. Wood says that she and her daughter were the last ones to be rescued from the upper deck of the ferryboat. With them was William Price, the young son of Mrs. Price.

Mrs. Wood says that the water had reached the upper deck before the three were able to reach the rail where passengers were being taken off by a tug. The child was thrown to persons on the tug. Before they could climb upon the rail, that end of the ferryboat went under, and they, with others, were forced to run to the other end, and there another tug was rescuing people, and they were saved, but just how cannot tell. She said that she was pinned down by a beam which fell across the shoulders of both herself and her daughter, and the water had risen to their necks before they were hauled aboard the Catasqua. As soon as they were landed Mrs. Price returned to New York, without bringing her wet clothing, to look for her child.

John Pfuhler, a plumber of Castleton Corners, S. I., was returning from New York to the island with a load of materials. With his brother, Henry Pfuhler, he was sitting on his wagon when the collision occurred. He was thrown off the wagon to the lower deck when the water was up to their waists. They were at the stern of the tug when they saw Archibald R. Pittines of Manor Road, West New Brighton, in the water between the tug and the ferryboat. Mr. Pittines is a good swimmer, and was seen swimming toward the tug, and the boat when Mr. Pfuhler threw the end of a piece of hose to him and pulled him aboard. One of Mr. Pittines' legs had been severely crushed between the boats. The three men were landed in New York, and Mr. Pfuhler secured a coach and sent the injured one home. His horse and wagon were lost.

INCIDENTS OTHERS SAW.

PERCY MACARNESS, Auditor of The New York Herald—I was on the Northfield and was talking to Col. Robert Ammon of Grimes Hill, S. I., and Mr. Kirschner of Hamilton Park. We were just out of the slip when we saw the Mauch Chunk right ahead. We were on the forward upper deck. When he saw the other boat coming, Col. Ammon said: "Looks like she is coming into us, doesn't it?" A minute later, it couldn't have been more, the crash came. She struck us on the forward end of the ladies' cabin. Immediately there was a panic, the women rushing and screaming all over the boat. Col. Ammon, Mr. Kirschner, and I did all we could to quiet the crowd and manage to get the tugs to go to the other side of the boat, not knowing then how badly she was injured. The Northfield whistled for help as soon as the accident happened, and was soon surrounded by a fleet of tugs. The people on board rushed up on the upper deck, while the tugboats kept on going, and the water came along by the tide. Among those on board the Northfield that I recognized was Cesare Conti, the Italian banker. He was pretty well deluged with water as a result of his experience.

MISS ELIZABETH DONEGAN of Port Richmond, S. I.—My God! It was so awful that I can remember nothing. I felt the collision and then I was hit by a piece of flying timber and knew that I was hurt some, but did not feel it at the time. The excitement was too much. I want to say that the men on the boat were not cowards, no matter what others may say. It was not a question of men first and women and children next or every one for himself. The men could all see that they had to the women and aided them in getting to the upper deck.

WILLIAM HANNER, driver for the Staten Island Brewing Company—There were about eighteen horses on the boat when she was struck. As soon as she began to settle we could all see that she had long to float. I had a team of gray valued at \$1,000. Mine was the first team on the boat, and I thought if I could unharness my horses I could get them to jump overboard and swim to the shore. I worked to cut the traces and to free the animals, but it was impossible the water came in so too quick. As the water rose the horses seemed to like it. They moved their feet in it, cooling themselves. But it rose steadily and the animals became restive, and then tried to wrench clear of their fetters. The men could not keep them from struggling, and know that I could not help them, so I ran to the upper deck, and that is the last I saw of my team.

STATEN ISLAND'S PANIC.

Passengers Rescued from the Northfield Received with Open Arms—Magnified Reports Spread Alarm.

Less than fifteen minutes after the Northfield sank the news spread over Staten Island. At first it was only a rumor, and because in the last few years there had often been reports of a similar nature little attention was paid to it. But little by little it became generally known that this time it was true.

By 6:30 o'clock half of the people believed there had been a fearful accident, that

several hundred lives were lost, and the greatest excitement prevailed. Women, hysterical and anxious, gathered in the stores that had telephones and these were kept in constant communication with others in the lower end of Manhattan. As rumor after rumor swept over the lower end of the city it was reported by telephone to Staten Island, and as it spread was magnified.

At one store in Port Richmond the man at the receiver reported a gruesome story as told him by a heartless joker, or worse, from this borough. It was that scores of bodies were being pulled out of the water and laid upon piers. Several women fainted and others became frantic.

About the ferryhouse at St. George an enormous crowd gathered to learn the worst. As the next boat swung in and unloaded her passengers they were mobbed with anxious ones begging for information. There was little enough known. Those who took the next boat down knew little except that the Northfield had gone down. As the subsequent boats arrived they brought more details, but more anxiety, for men and women who should have been on them staid in Manhattan to hear the news, and their non-arrival at the usual time added to the distress. White-faced women watched the crowds file past on their way to their trains and gave way to hopelessness when the looked for ones did not come.

The police on duty kept excellent order, and the company sent men about drowning the waiting ones that none was assured. The tugboat Catasqua brought the first of those rescued to Staten Island. She landed alongside the pier outside the ferryhouse. There were about 100 persons, men and women, on board. Most of them had been in the water. The Captain of the tug thought the best thing to do was to rush them home, and did so, making the trip across the bay in less than twenty minutes.

As the boat pulled alongside the dock the rescued ones were huddled upon the open deck of the tug. Some of them were wrapped in blankets and the coats of the crew. Others, women, were wrapped in the coats of men who had been rescued. They were helped onto the dock by willing hands. The hackmen at St. George whipped their blankets from the boxes and gave them to the women and then offered their backs to carry the women home. In this way most of the women were hurried to their homes. The men took cars. Many of the rescued men loaned their coats to women they had never seen before, and when the scattering came lost track of them.

Such an accident as that of last night has long been dreaded by Staten Islanders, but the source was not expected. The regular passengers have long looked for such an accident to occur from a collision with the Annex boat. That one of the New Jersey Central boats would sink a Staten Island boat was not dreamed of until recently, when the Communipaw boats began to run in close connection.

DIVERS SET TO WORK.

As soon as the Northfield was sunk, the officials of the Staten Island Ferry Company and the underwriters notified the Chapman Derrick and Wrecking Company to look after the wreck. Not fifteen minutes after the boat had grounded the wrecking tug Hustler was alongside the hulk.

Capt. Tom Kivlin, the master wrecker of the company, was in charge, and a diver, Albert Blomberg, went down to search for bodies and make a general report concerning the conditions of the punctured hull.

The chief work of the wrecking company consisted in making the wreck snug so that it would not slip out into the river into deeper water. The divers will start to work again at an early hour this morning to definitely learn whether any bodies are held aboard the sunken craft. They were unable to make a thorough examination last night.

NORTHFIELD AN OLD BOAT.

Complaints Had Been Made Against the Craft by Staten Islanders.

The Mauch Chunk was built in 1893, and has been used since that time in the ferry service of the Central Railroad of New Jersey.

The Northfield is an old paddle wheel wooden hull steam ferryboat, constructed in 1893, in Brooklyn, by Jeremiah Simmonson. Her dimensions are: Length, 202 feet; breadth, 33½ feet; depth of hold, 13 feet. Her tonnage is 600 gross and 388 net. She had a new boiler in 1874.

Six years ago she was hauled out in South Brooklyn, and her hull practically rebuilt. Her upper works were also replaced, and the whole boat realtered. She had new engines and new boilers and a complete electric equipment.

Many complaints have been made by Staten Islanders against the Northfield and her sister boats. There have been two instances of narrow escapes in the harbor in which the Northfield figured. The United States ram Katabdin crossed the bows of the ferryboat, barely escaping injury, and on another occasion a Hackensack tug was cut in two.

A committee appointed by the Staten Island Chamber of Commerce and consisting of G. A. E. Irving, Dr. Samuel A. Robinson, and Capt. Washington Hawes, investigated the ferry accommodations between the Boroughs of Richmond and Manhattan, and reported on April 25, 1899, that the transportation facilities were not much better than thirty years before, when the population was less by nearly one-half.

The report also stated that the service was in the hands of one corporation, and criticised four of the six boats in use and their irregularity in running. Other recommendations were made, the first of which dealt with the character of the boats, and called for new, modern, fast ferryboats, giving an express service between the foot of Whitehall Street and St. George and making the trip between Manhattan and Richmond in fifteen minutes.

The other recommendations dealt with the establishment of ferry service between Manhattan and the east and north shores of Staten Island and the question of the fares for passengers and teams.

The Staten Island Rapid Transit Railroad, which had an interest in the Staten Island ferry, was said to have offered \$2,000,000 on April 20, 1899, to Harold Broome, E. H. Minzer, and Frank Geary, who were generally understood to be acting for the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company.

A TERRIBLE ACCIDENT RECALLED.

The boiler of the Westfield, a sister boat of the Northfield, exploded on July 30, 1871. While the vessel lay in her slip alongside of South Ferry, Seventy-two dead bodies were recovered, and 135 persons were known to have been injured, some of whom died from their injuries.

The theory as to the cause of the explosion put forward after the disaster was that neither the safety valves nor the steam gauge were in perfect order. The Westfield was built in Brooklyn in 1862 and was then furnished with a low-pressure boiler 24 feet in length and 10 feet in diameter, with 12 feet in front.