

[McPherson, William]

SECOND EDITION

100 KILLED

Latest Particulars of the New York Explosion

TERRIBLE EXPERIENCES

Last Seen of William McPherson, the Buffalo Printer

SEVENTEEN RECOVERED

[excerpts]

NEW YORK, Aug. 24.—In the twinkling of an eye, without warning, without hope or chance of escape, at least fifty persons were swept to their deaths in a rotten old building in Park place Saturday afternoon.

A structure so ancient and frail that the fire department had marked it as unsafe and insurance companies would hardly issue policies upon it, collapsed together like a piece of burnt paper and crushed down upon the people who filled it.

Following the crash came an outburst of flame, and in ten minutes all that was left of the building was a solid wall of fire.

On the little mound raised up by the wreckage the firemen squatted, shielding themselves as best they could from the terrific heat, throwing three heavy streams of water into the heart of the flames.

It was one of the swiftest and fiercest fires known in New York for many a day. The firemen with great difficulty held them in check and kept them from liking up three or four of the surrounding buildings. Strenuous efforts were made by the firemen to check the flames so as to begin the work of recovering the dead and after an hour's hard work they succeeded.

The most terrible loss of life occurred in the Hudson restaurant which occupied the ground floor. It was a very popular little restaurant and was well filled. An eye witness of the disaster says that at the time of the explosions fully fifty persons were seated at the tables.

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But by midnight Saturday there had been taken from the ruins seven crushed, burned and mangled bodies, of which six were identified.

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The destroyed building called the Taylor building was numbered 68, 70, 72 and 74 Park place and was situated between College place and Greenwich street.

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New York, Aug. 24.—Seventy-five Italians were employed all through Saturday night and yesterday removing the debris from the burned buildings on Park place. Firemen kept at their dreary task of searching for bodies...Morgue Keeper Whit is usually a man of nerve, but the touching sights he saw Saturday and yesterday he says he will not soon forget...The cordon of police detailed to guard the fire lines were kept busy through the night and day keeping the people back.

The firemen and laborers worked diligently, but they made poor progress owing to the heavy machinery being in the ruins...

...Just what caused the sad disaster...may never be known.

[McPherson, William]

Just as the fire engine rattled up to the hissing ruins, a black-faced, kinky-haired negro scrambled out from a great pile of smoldering debris and leaned down into the street...His name is George Vann, and he lives at 268 West Thirty-fifth street.

"I was employed as a man-of-all-work in the South Publishing House," he said. "I only went to work there last Wednesday, so I don't know the names of all of the other men. Mr. Conklin was the foreman, and there were two editors and five pressmen and printers. One pressman was named McPherson..."

"We shut down at 12:30 on Saturdays, so I went to the sink to wash my face and hands. Mr. Conklin, the foreman, was in the front, talking with one of the editors; McPherson and Frank were taking the ink rollers out of the press at the rear, and Gus and another man were taking the rollers out of another press further in front.

"Frank shouted out to me to wash the black off my face. I laughed and turned my head to say something to him. I didn't know what was the matter, but I felt the floor sinking. There was a big crash that sounded like awful thunder. I kept falling an falling, and it seemed to me that I would never get to the bottom. At last I found myself lying on a pile of bricks..."

"All of a sudden I saw a bright light. Then I could see better and I knew that the building was on fire. The blaze was coming closer and closer to me..." I saw a small hole over my head...so I caught hold of a beam above me, pulled myself up and climbed out through the hole...and finally reached the street."

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A BUFFALONIAN KILLED.

He Was a Pressman in the New York Building which Collapsed on Saturday.

There is deep sorrow in the little home at 6 West avenue today where reside the aged parents of William McPherson, who is thought to have been killed in the collapse of the Park Place building in New York on Saturday afternoon. Both are over 70 years old and Mrs. McPherson has just recovered from a long illness.

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He was employed by the Santelle Printing Company, publishers of *The South*, a monthly magazine, and was in the building when it fell.

Up to three years ago McPherson lived in Buffalo. Then he went to San Francisco, returning to New York.

Telegrams from New York announce William McPherson among the missing, but his body has not yet been taken from the ruins if he was killed. He was 34 years old.

*Evening News*, Buffalo NY, Mon. 24 Aug 1891

[McPherson, William]

One of Many Victims.

The remains of William McPherson, Jr., who was killed in the Park Place disaster yesterday in New-York, were brought to Buffalo yesterday by his brother-in-law, A. G. Pattengell. Mr. Pattengell identified the body by a filled tooth, a penknife, a pocket rule, and a plate with three teeth. The rule had the word "Mac" scratched on it. The funeral will be held from the family home, No. 75 West Avenue, at 2:30 p.m. to-day.

*Morning Express*, Buffalo NY, Sat. 29 Aug 1891

#### WILLIAM MCPERSON'S FUNERAL

The funeral of the late William McPherson, Jr., took place from his late home at No. 75 West Avenue, yesterday afternoon at 2:30 o'clock. Only relatives and near friends were present. The Rev. Mr. Payne of Grace Universalist Church officiated at the simple but impressive service. The pallbearers were selected from Mr. McPherson's associates at the *Commercial* office. Interment took place at Forest Lawn cemetery.

*Morning Express*, Buffalo NY, Sun. 30 Aug 1891

Transcribed on 29 Aug 2018 by Karen E. Dau of Rochester, NY