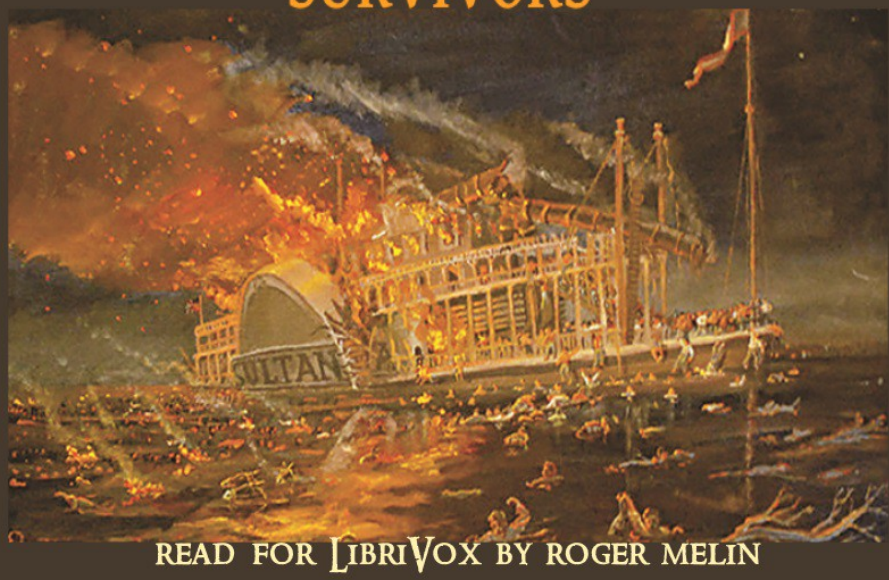


Chester D. Berry

LOSS OF THE SULTANA

and Reminiscences of
SURVIVORS



READ FOR LIBRIVOX BY ROGER MELIN

Loss of the Sultana Chester D. Berry

April, 1865. The country was in turmoil. The U.S. Civil War had come to an end, thousands of Union prisoners of war had recently been released, and President Lincoln had just been assassinated. The steamship 'Sultana' left New Orleans on April 21st, traveled to Vicksburg, Mississippi where it took on 1,965 federal soldiers and 35 officers, all recently released prisoners of war, most of them held at the prison camps of Cahaba (or Cahawba, near Selma, Alabama) and Andersonville (in southwest Georgia), and now finally headed for their homes. The 'Sultana' arrived in Memphis, Tennessee on April 26th and headed north toward Cairo, Illinois carrying over 2,100 passengers, but designed for a capacity of only 376. At approximately 2:00 a.m. of the 27th, mere hours after the assassination of John Wilkes Booth, the 'Sultana' mysteriously exploded while steaming about 7 miles north of Memphis, killing over 1,500 on board (estimates vary). The sole reason this incident received such scant attention at the time, and ever since, is the fact that the country was understandably absorbed in the recent assassinations. Subsequent inquiry into the 'Sultana' disaster would uncover some startling revelations into its cause, some believe leading directly to the topmost levels of the U.S. Government. The loss of the 'Sultana' was the greatest maritime disaster in U.S. history, up until the bombing of Pearl Harbor. This book, composed by Chester Berry, one of the survivors, is unique in that it gives firsthand account from well over 100 of the survivors of the tragedy in their own words. Note - The online e-text (link provided) includes 3 lists for reference that are not included in this audio release: 1 - An official list of prisoners of war on the Sultana, including company served with 2 - Persons known to have been on board the Sultana, but not reported 3 - Name, Company, Regiment, and present (1892) residence of living survivors (Roger Melin)

Read by Roger Melin. Total running time: 12:26:53

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