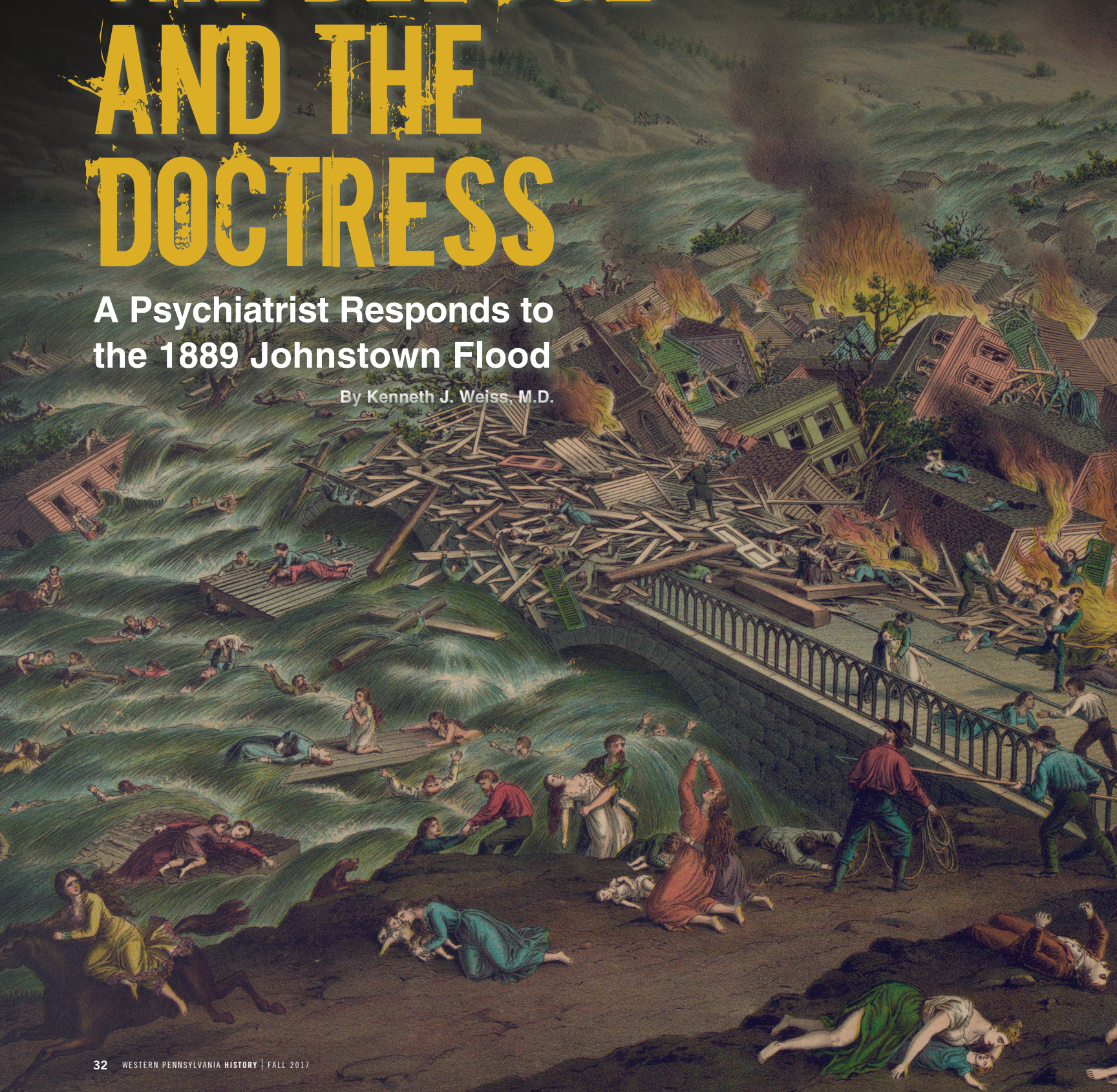


THE DELUGE AND THE DOCTRESS

A Psychiatrist Responds to
the 1889 Johnstown Flood

By Kenneth J. Weiss, M.D.



The Great Conemaugh-Valley Disaster, lithograph by Kurz & Allison, c. 1892.
LoC pga-01912.

Alice Bennett,
M.D., Ph.D. (c. 1876)
Bennett estate, Mary-Alice Raymond,
Wrentham, Mass., 2014.



The 40th annual meeting of the Pennsylvania Medical Society was scheduled at the Bijou Theatre in Pittsburgh to begin on June 4, 1889.¹ Dr. Alice Bennett, president-elect of the Montgomery County contingent and an asylum physician, had made the 300-mile trip from Norristown, near Philadelphia. The meeting, however, was quickly adjourned — it was too difficult to conduct business when a tragedy of enormous medical proportions was unfolding just a short distance away.

Only a few days earlier, the South Fork Dam holding back the Little Conemaugh River at Lake Conemaugh² above Johnstown had given way, plunging towns into destruction and chaos, and killing 2,200 people. Travel to the Medical Society meeting itself had been severely impeded by the destruction of rail lines.

The disaster was accompanied by both psychic trauma and an immense outpouring of resources. The medical and humanitarian responses to it were instantaneous, substantial, and sustained. Yet, there was little discussion, at the time, of the toll on mental health among survivors. While individuals experienced loss and hardship, the people of Johnstown remained psychologically strong. The responses by volunteers and agencies served as integrated mental health providers. This explains why, when Dr. Alice Bennett traveled from Pittsburgh to the disaster scene in search of widespread insanity, there was little to be found. In 1889, before the widespread understanding that trauma-related “insanity” was a medical condition, little psychiatric attention was paid to the effects on survivors. This article examines the psychic trauma on survivors and the resilience of the populace in the face of it.

Tragedy Unfolds

There had been floods in the Johnstown area before, but most resulted from the Conemaugh River simply overflowing its banks. This time, when the dam gave way, it was not a minor overflow but a sustained wall of water that swept down the valley. The dam, originally built by the Pennsylvania Railroad, lay about 15 miles upstream from Johnstown and about 450 feet higher. It did more than hold back a river; it had been purchased by the South Fork Fishing and Hunting Club³ (with famous

members such as Andrew Carnegie and Henry Clay Frick) and turned into a recreational lake. The club had deepened the lake but occluded the outflow; to many, it was a question of when, not whether, the dam would collapse. In late May 1889, about six inches of rain fell in the region, filling the lake to the brim.⁴ Warnings that the dam would fail went unheeded and only a few in the valley fled in time. Civil lawsuits would later argue over whether the disaster was an act of God⁵ but most knew it was not that simple; as one historian wrote, “The devastation of Johnstown had its origin

in two sources: human carelessness ... and the visitation of the greatest deluge that has ever been recorded in Pennsylvania.”⁶

Among the many Sisters of Charity who helped aid victims was Sister Aloysius Blakely, who later wrote to her mother with a vivid description of the cataclysm:

Some men running along the hillside shouted to us: – “The dam has burst. If possible get to the brick house, if you wish to save your lives.”... Before we had gone ten steps, the water was nearly to the men’s waists, and we had no sooner entered, than we were obliged to

“South Fork Dam Break.” illustration.
National Park Service, Johnstown Flood National Memorial.

TO MANY, IT WAS A
QUESTION OF WHEN,
NOT WHETHER,
THE DAM WOULD
COLLAPSE.

seek refuge in the second story. Here we threw ourselves on our knees, imploring Almighty God, and His Blessed Father to spare us, if it was His Holy Will, if not to grant us the grace of a happy and holy death. The water was rising rapidly, and we were told to fly to the attic for safety. When we reached it, we saw amid the darkness, which was fast gathering, on all sides of us, but one vast sea of black water; houses with their terror-stricken inmates, being tossed about like mere playthings on the bosom of those merciless waters. Roofs, rafters, every piece of household furniture, or anything else one could imagine, floated quickly passed, with human beings clinging with a death grip, to whatever they could grasp, their wild despairing shrieks and cries for aid were all one could hear above the terrible roar of those mighty waters. Oh! but it is brought back vividly to my gaze. If I would close my eyes, there it is all before me as a terrible reality. May you never see such a scene. Here we remained on our knees, praying, till nearly nine o'clock, trying to prepare for death, as we had almost given up all hope of being saved, expecting every moment to be our last, thinking, every time we saw some one finding there, before our eyes, a watery grave – we

will be the next to go.... About ten, we noticed the sky brightening, and knew the terrible glare was the death blow to the few who had escaped drowning. The two terrible elements, fire and water, were truly working hand in hand to effect our destruction, for we waited prepared for almost anything now.... The night dragged slowly by, every minute was like hours. It was still raining, and the deafening roar of the waters had not abated. We dreaded day, as we knew the terrible sight that would be presented to us. At last, the night was over, and the day dawned, dark and dismal, on scene almost as horrible as the one we had seen the day before. Such a scene of desolation! Houses, if not swept away, almost entirely ruined; heaps of debris everywhere; dead bodies scattered around; and dark figures moving quietly to and fro, trying to extricate them from the rubbish then placed on boards, they carried them to the church. All was silent as the grave, in that vast cemetery.⁷

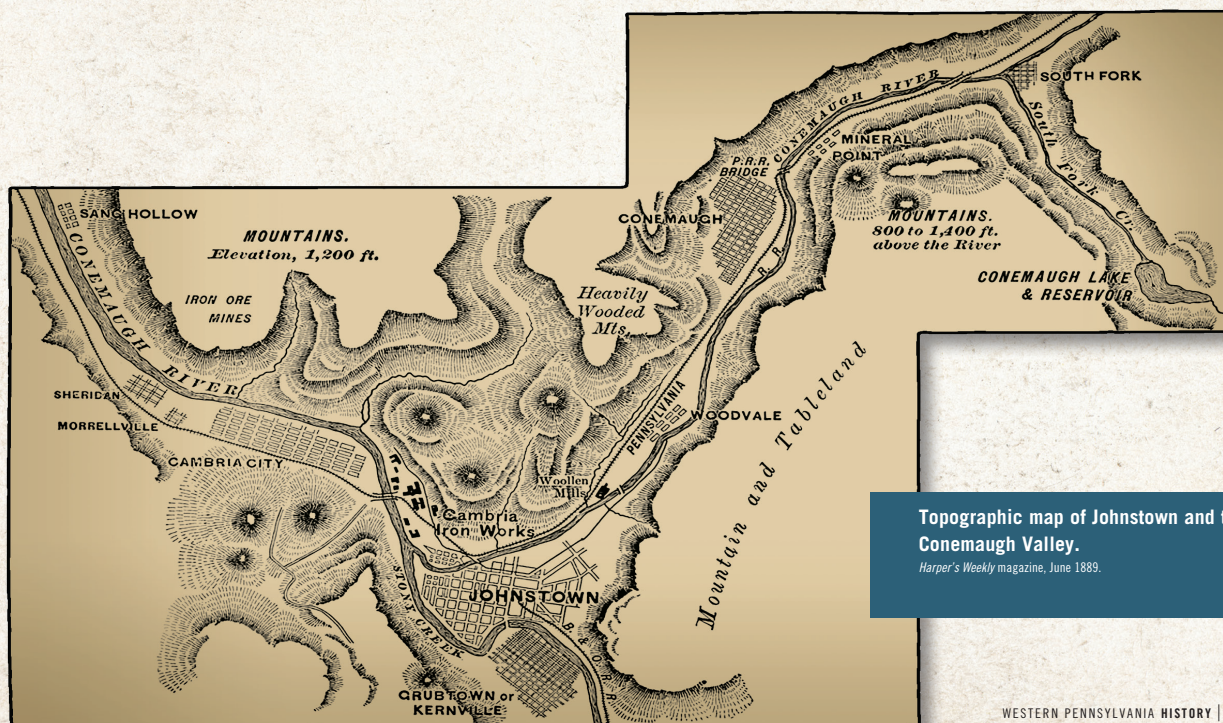
Word of the disaster spread quickly. On June 1, the *New York Times* noted, "An appalling catastrophe is reported from Johnstown, Cambria County, the meagre details of which indicate that that city of 25,000 inhabitants has been practically wiped

out of existence and that hundreds if not thousands of lives have been lost."⁸

With entire towns nearly erased, families swept away, and fires that burned for days, Johnstown came under martial law by decree of Governor Beaver.⁹ Ignoring for a moment the ruined infrastructure and corpses strewn throughout, Cambria County did not have the medical resources or preparedness to handle the needs of the traumatized and homeless survivors. Relief efforts, however, came swiftly and abundantly.¹⁰ While several local physicians perished in the deluge, many of the surviving doctors mounted heroic efforts:

Appalling and overwhelming beyond human conception, the wreckage and debris heaped high and intermingled with thousands of human beings requiring medical and surgical aid, was the conditions that faced the physicians of Johnstown at the time of the memorable flood, but even while the flood was still raging, while the wreckage was being tossed about in fury like a great tidal wave surging from all directions, the actual work of relief had already begun.¹¹

Dr. Wagoner, who delivered a moving address to the Medical Society the next year, described his own psychic trauma:



Topographic map of Johnstown and the Conemaugh Valley.

Harper's Weekly magazine, June 1889.

"A Crazy Soldier Commits Suicide."

The Johnstown Horror by James Herbert Walker, 1889



A CRAZED SOLDIER COMMITS SUICIDE.

I, too, had my dead to find. As I threaded my way through that crowd with faltering steps and sinking heart, I came upon a sight that burned itself into my brain and quite unmanned me. There in a yard, upon a board, lay the pure body of my sister. The peaceful smile upon her lips showed that Death had been merciful to her, and struck her down instantly. But where were her sisters? Where were our father and mother? Oh, God! the bodies of eight other victims dearer to me than life, still lay buried in the filth and slime from Lake Conemaugh.¹²

Though transportation was difficult, medical delegations and supplies, money, and relief workers came from counties near and far. Clara Barton, head of the American Red Cross and experienced in battlefield nursing, took a

special train from Washington, D.C., arriving on June 5 and set up an emergency station that lasted five months. Dr. Bennett found her way to Johnstown a few days later, looking to aid victims of psychic trauma. It is not known whether the two met there; while Barton and dozens of other doctors, nurses and relief workers stayed on to provide medical care, shelter and relief, Dr. Bennett stayed only a few days: while there were many people in a state of shock, what she had predicted—an epidemic of insanity—was not to be found.

As Clara Barton noted in her memoir, most Johnstown citizens were so inured to the dangers of flooding that they took no action:

Numbers of the inhabitants, who had carried the fear of this disaster in their minds for years, had become so alarmed

by the long continued rains, and the floods that were already upon them, took their families and fled to the high grounds on the hillsides. But the great majority of the people, who, though fully aware of the danger, had lived with it so long that they had become careless and indifferent, took no precautions whatever. These were overwhelmed by the tide almost without warning, and before they could seek safety were swept away.¹³

A group of physicians from Pittsburgh, led by Dr. Oldshue, arrived first with equipment and supplies.¹⁴ A medical contingent from Philadelphia, organized by Dr. W.S. Forbes, came quickly too. It appears from Dr. Forbes's notes, published on June 15, that mental injuries among survivors were more

prominent than physical: “Nervous shock was a prominent feature among all the survivors. On hearing of the death of their relatives, several cases were so overcome that functional activity seemed paralyzed, nutrition was suspended, and death ensued.”¹⁵ Many more physicians from Pittsburgh and Philadelphia joined the relief effort, in addition to volunteers from other counties,¹⁶ all of whom later received a formal memorial statement from the Cambria County Medical Society.

The first medical priority was sanitation: disposal of bodies and stemming the spread of disease from infected water.¹⁷ Following the immediate attempts at rescue and the organization of resources, volunteers stepped up with ambulatory care and dispensary services. Within a week, dispatches also began to include descriptions of the survivors’ mental states. *The New York Times* reported:

The mental condition of almost every former resident of Johnstown is one of the gravest character, and the reaction which will set in when the reality or the whole affair is fully comprehended can scarcely fall to produce many cases of permanent or temporary insanity. Most of the faces that one meets, both male and female, are those of the most profound melancholia, associated with an almost absolute disregard of the future. The nervous system shows the strain it has borne by a tremulousness of the hand and of the lip, in man as well as

in woman. This nervous state is further evidenced by a peculiar intonation of words, the persons speaking mechanically, while the voices of many rough-looking men are changed into such tremulous notes of so high a pitch as to make one imagine that a child on the verge of tears is speaking. Crying is so rare that your correspondent saw not a tear on any face in Johnstown, but the women that are left are haggard, with pinched features and heavy, dark lines under the eyes. Indeed, the evidence of systemic disturbance is so marked in almost every individual who was present at the time of the catastrophe that it is possible with the eye alone to separate the residents from those outside.¹⁸

In a book published the following year, *Through the Johnstown Flood*, Dr. David Beale documented the infrastructure of temporary hospitals, dispensaries, equipment, and other volunteers.¹⁹ For a month afterward, overcrowding forced patients to be sent by train cars to Pittsburgh, where, he wrote, “they were distributed among the hospitals of that city. Others were sent to friends in the country and to neighboring towns. Some were conveyed to each of the following cities: Cumberland, Baltimore, Philadelphia and Boston.”

A Psychiatrist Arrives

By the time of the flood, Dr. Bennett had been the first woman to be in charge of a psychiatric hospital — for nine years in fact. Born in 1851, she grew up in Wrentham, Massachusetts, graduating in 1876 from the Woman’s Medical College of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. Afterwards she dispensed care to poor residents of Philadelphia while studying anatomy at the University of Pennsylvania and teaching anatomy at Woman’s Medical. In 1880, she became the first woman to receive the degree of Doctor of Philosophy from the University of Pennsylvania, with her sights likely set on a quiet career in medical anatomy.²¹

Her career took an unexpected turn when a committee, looking to employ female

Clara Barton.
LoC USZ62-108565.



**THE FIRST MEDICAL PRIORITY
WAS SANITATION: DISPOSAL OF
BODIES AND STEMMING THE
SPREAD OF DISEASE FROM
INFECTED WATER.**

HARPER'S WEEKLY.

A JOURNAL OF CIVILIZATION.

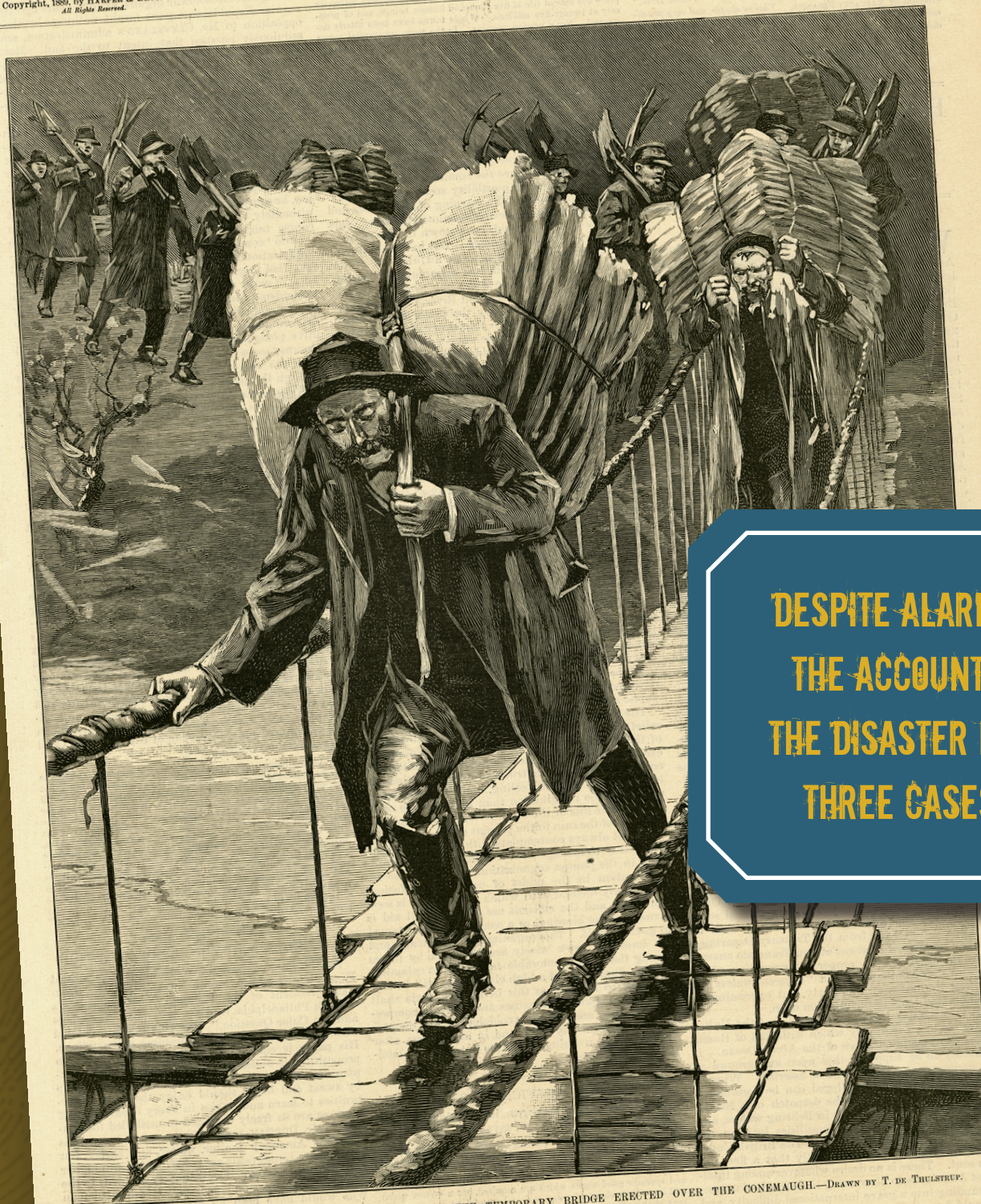
Vol. XXXIII.—No. 1693.
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NEW YORK, SATURDAY, JUNE 15, 1889.

TEN CENTS A COPY.
INCLUDING SUPPLEMENT.

Harper's Weekly featured relief efforts on its cover, June 15, 1889.

HHC Detre L&A, Bissell Family collection.



DESPITE ALARMIST HEADLINES,
THE ACCOUNTS REVEAL THAT
THE DISASTER HAD LED TO ONLY
THREE CASES OF INSANITY.

AFTER THE JOHNSTOWN FLOOD—RELIEF PARTY CROSSING THE TEMPORARY BRIDGE ERECTED OVER THE CONEMAUGH.—DRAWN BY T. DE THULSTRUP.

physicians in “insane” asylums, offered her a position at a new facility in Norristown. Dr. Bennett came from the State Hospital for the Insane for the South-Eastern District of Pennsylvania (now Norristown State Hospital). Her domain was a female facility; a connected male hospital was overseen by Dr. Robert Chase. Thus, her steep learning curve in psychiatry began in 1880.

Her chief innovation was abolishing restraints such as straitjackets or chains and introducing occupational therapy such as music, painting, and handicrafts. Other hospitals for the mentally ill adopted her practices, giving her recognition in the field, so that in 1889, she found herself a delegate to the Medical Society meeting in Pittsburgh. On June 7, Dr. Bennett became a self-motivated psychiatric responder.

Neither her records, nor Clara Barton’s,

reveal much about their experiences in Johnstown; the record is mostly preserved via period news stories.²² Despite alarmist headlines, the accounts reveal that the disaster had led to only three cases of insanity. Dr. Bennett was going to treat one woman, Mary Sager, at the hospital in Norristown. One account begins ominously:

The latest startling feature of the flood is that insanity has broken out among the people of this place. Three cases were developed to-day and an expert on insanity says it is the beginning of an outbreak of a disease that will destroy the minds of scores of people. The three cases are now under treatment, but the victims stand a poor chance of being cured.²³

Mrs. Sager had been found wandering the streets of Johnstown after midnight on June 7. A guard tried to stop her but found

her incoherent so he arrested her. At first, he thought she was inebriated, but, questioning her, he believed she was insane. At the guard house she was distraught and “cried out piteously for the return of her husband and two children.” The guard, unable to bear her moans, took her to the Bedford Street Hospital (a temporary facility from June 1 until July 3, 1889), where she cried herself to sleep. Newspapers quickly reported that her home had been swept away and her husband and children had drowned. In the days afterward, Mrs. Sager remained inconsolable, showing signs of acute stress: “In her ravings she would call her children to her and beseech her husband to save their lives.”

Mrs. Sager required medications to calm her before she could make the long train trip that would first take her to Pittsburgh, and then east to Norristown. Meanwhile, it was



IDENTIFYING THE DEAD.

“Identifying the Dead.”

The Johnstown Horror by James Herbert Walker, 1889.

"The Ruined Roman Catholic Church."
in *Harper's Weekly*, June 15, 1889.
HHC Detre L&A, Bissell Family collection.



THE RUINED ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH AT JOHNSTOWN.—DRAWN BY W. F. SYDES.

"Distribution of
Food by the Relief
Committee."

The Johnstown Horror by James
Herbert Walker, 1889.



DISTRIBUTION OF FOOD BY THE RELIEF COMMITTEE.

discovered that her husband and one of their children had survived and were being cared for at a farmhouse. Dr. Bennett sprang into action, trying to retrieve the woman from her incapacitated state to tell her the stunning update.

When Dr. Bennett heard the news of the survival of the woman's husband and child she tried to rouse her, but did not succeed in doing so. She shouted in the woman's ear that the ones who were dead to her were alive, but she might as well have shouted into the yawning abyss of South Fork Lake. The woman only looked at her in a blank, dazed way, which showed that she had no reasoning faculties. Dr. Bennett took her to Norristown, where she will be placed under skilled treatment.²⁴

While waiting for her train out of Johnstown, Dr. Bennett remarked to a reporter:

The three cases of insanity that have been called to our attention here are only the beginning of probably a score of them that will turn up within the next week. A disaster of this kind is something unusual, and will leave behind it a number of victims that would be better off if they had been drowned. There will be dozens of minds that will be destroyed by the shock. People are just beginning to realize the enormity of the accident and the reaction has set in. A thing of this kind must certainly be followed by an after-clap that destroys the minds of those who have passed through sensational and harrowing scenes. Particularly is this the case with people who are of a highly nervous temperament. They brood over their troubles, and the result of it is that their minds give way. Whether they are curable or not I could not say.²⁵

Newspapers gave details of a second, similar case in which the woman definitely witnessed the demise of her children:

Another case is that of Mrs. John Pfel. This is the woman who lost her seven children, one by one, by putting them out of a garret window and floating

them off on boards. The flood carried them away and they were drowned. The woman expected to see the house swept away, which afterwards happened. She was carried down the stream and was rescued with difficulty. The woman was found to be out of her mind and has been placed in the general hospital for treatment.²⁶

Assuming Mary Sager had been admitted to the Norristown facility, I attempted to locate a record of her hospitalization. Although Pennsylvania law did not permit me to access patient records, no one by that or similar name was admitted to the facility in June 1889. The reason was found instead in the Pennsylvania State Archives (not a “covered entity” under privacy laws), which documented that Ms. Sager never made it east; she had been admitted to Dixmont State Hospital on June 26, 1889.²⁷ Dixmont, northwest of downtown Pittsburgh, was at the time formally called the Department of the Insane in the Western Pennsylvania Hospital of Pittsburgh.

Judged to be a chronically insane individual, Mrs. Sager spent the remainder of

her life there, passing away from pulmonary tuberculosis in 1918. The records do not indicate whether or how she related to her family. Research by the Cambria County Historical Society disclosed that four years later, their son Anton passed away at age 10.²⁸ It noted that Mary had been a patient at the Dixmont Insane Asylum since the 1889 disaster.

Digging deeper, the story unfolds that when Mary Sager arrived in Pittsburgh, she got off the train and wandered in mental disarray until being arrested for vagrancy. Dr. Bennett had apparently taken a different train, earlier or later, back to Norristown, leaving Mary to find her own way there. Instead, Mary was sent to jail on June 10, identified as insane, and civilly committed to Dixmont on June 26.²⁹

Aftermath

America did not soon forget the Johnstown-area disaster. Along with a number of books and memoirs, it was even commemorated at amusement-style attractions in Atlantic City

and Coney Island. Meanwhile, the South Fork Fishing and Hunting Club was found not liable for the failure of the dam.³⁰ Some of the members made personal donations to the relief effort, and Andrew Carnegie rebuilt Johnstown’s library in 1891. The Flood Relief Commission collected and distributed over \$3.7 million. But when individuals tried to sue the club owners for negligence or the Pennsylvania Railroad for loss of property, the courts declared the disaster an act of God. In one case, the court ruled that local residents, from their own observation, could have expected the flood, which was therefore not an “extraordinary” event.³¹

Dr. Bennett had predicted that there would be widespread insanity in Johnstown. There is ample evidence from personal accounts and news reports that the survivors, including some physicians, experienced psychic trauma, but it appears that overall her prognostication was not realized, at least not in current-day terms. The Committee on Lunacy of the Pennsylvania Board of Charities





reported a total of 15 persons who had episodes of “insanity” due to the disaster at Johnstown, which is extremely low compared to the scope of the disaster. This could be the result of multiple dynamics: the preoccupation with rebuilding, the salutary effects of available aid from groups like the American Red Cross, the focus on physical health and sanitation, the so-called stoicism of the region, and the lack of attention to specific mental health issues.

As in any disaster, there are protective factors that vary with the type of calamity.³² Chronic post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), often in combination with depression and anxiety, became more identifiable in the years after Johnstown, particularly following World War I. For example, after a 1972 dam collapse in Buffalo Creek, W.V., a study done 14 years afterwards noted the PTSD of survivors.³³ In a much broader review of literature regarding 60,000 disaster victims from 160 samples between 1981 and 2001, the

promptness of the response was determined to be an important protective factor against psychic trauma.³⁴ This quickness to respond and repair (and in the rush, perhaps marginalizing mental issues) was clearly the case in Johnstown.

It is reasonable to conclude that mental issues after the flood were handled by “embedded” human services rendered by volunteers, physicians, and nurses. Indirect evidence comes from the official report by the Committee on Lunacy that there was no known rise in asylum admissions due to the Johnstown disaster.³⁵ The numerous personal accounts by survivors, such as that of Sister Aloysius, indicate the potency of the psychic stressor, yet, the widespread psychic consequences predicted by Dr. Bennett did not arise. Census records from Dixmont show that there was no increase in admissions related to the disaster. The official report stated, “In reviewing this very small total [of hospital

admissions], the conviction is strengthened that the great and overwhelming trials of life are much less liable to overthrow the reason than the continuous worry and attrition of minor evils and unavoidable contact with depressing surroundings.”³⁶

Little has been noted or written about the long-term effects of the trauma on Johnstown-area survivors. However, the available evidence shows that active, ongoing efforts to rebuild and to push past grief, coupled with commemoration, bear out the Committee on Lunacy’s findings of lack of cases of insanity. On the hundredth anniversary, a commemorative book depicted Johnstown and its residents—before and after the flood—as a place and people of vitality, harmony, and resilience.³⁷ While the lack of recognizing what is now called PTSD undoubtedly was a factor, it is perhaps the qualities mentioned in the anniversary book that likewise helped stave off widespread mental illness in the face of cruel tragedy.

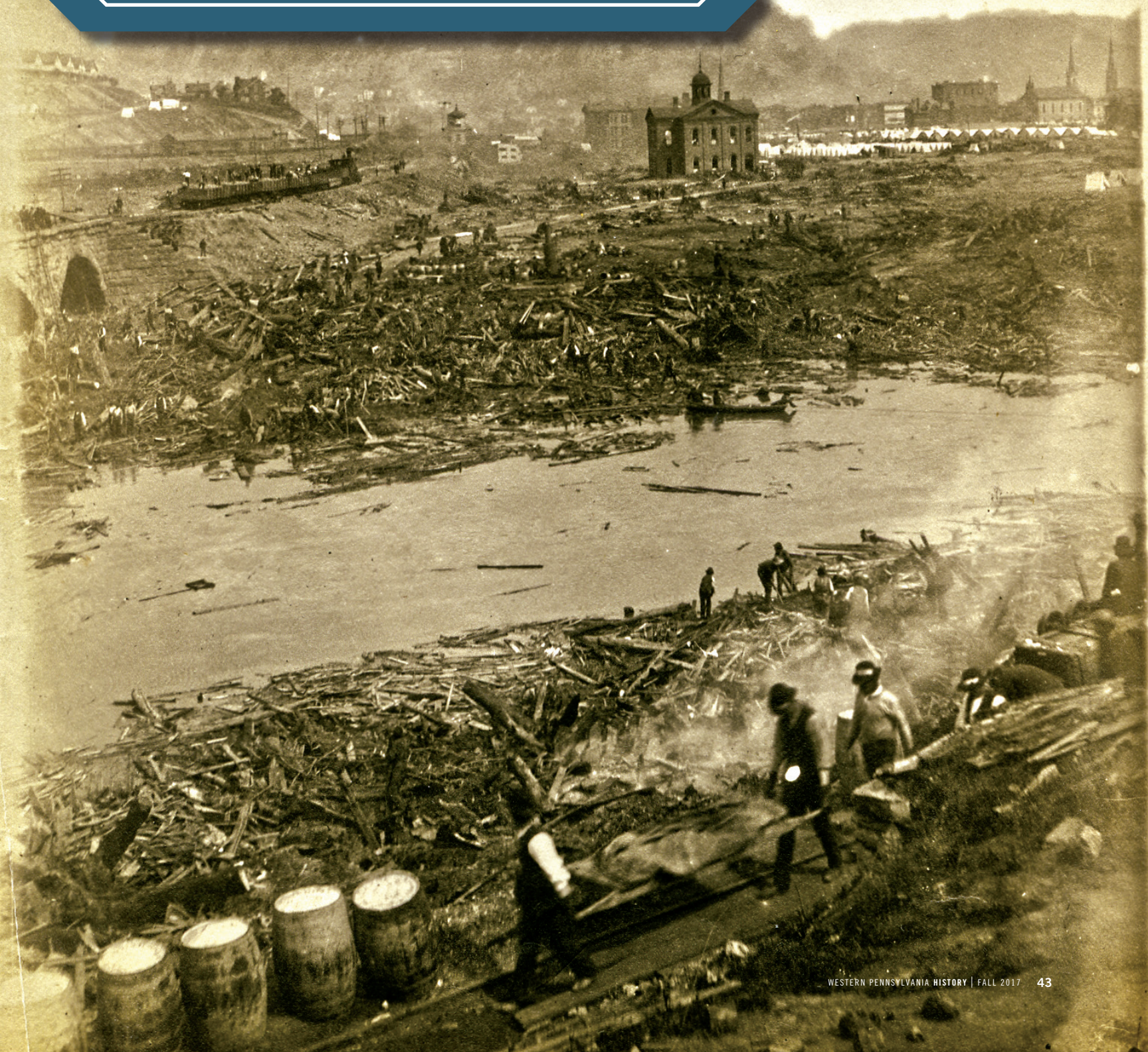
A year after the disaster, when the Medical Society reconvened its 40th session in Pittsburgh, Dr. Bennett delivered the psychiatry lecture.³⁸ She had just become the first female president of a county medical society, for Montgomery County, home to Norristown. Though Johnstown undoubtedly loomed large at the Pittsburgh gathering, and was likely a defining moment to many in attendance, she did not discuss the effects of the 1889 disaster. Whether deemed insignificant, or just not recognized, the psychiatric toll on Johnstown was not to be her topic, despite her first-hand knowledge. Rather, Dr. Bennett focused on the mental effects of kidney disease, replete with 60 case studies. 🌟

Dr. Kenneth J. Weiss, who studies 19th-century psychiatry, received degrees from the University of Pittsburgh, B.S., 1969, and Hahnemann Medical College of Philadelphia, M.D., 1973, and is now the Robert L. Sadoff Clinical Professor of Forensic Psychiatry, Perelman School of Medicine, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.

**CHRONIC POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER
(PTSD) OFTEN IN COMBINATION WITH
DEPRESSION AND ANXIETY, BECAME MORE
IDENTIFIABLE IN THE YEARS AFTER JOHNSTOWN,
PARTICULARLY FOLLOWING WORLD WAR I**

"Bearing Away the Slain."

HHC Detre L&A, Bissell Family collection. MSS 0230.B2.F3.119.



¹ Atkinson W.B., *Minutes of the Medical Society of the State of Pennsylvania*, Pittsburgh, June 1889, in *Transactions of the Medical Society of the State of Pennsylvania, at Its Fortieth Annual Session, Held at Pittsburg, 1889-1890, Volume XXI* (Philadelphia: Medical Society of the State of Pennsylvania, 1890), p. 1.

² Christie, R.D., "The Johnstown Flood," *Western Pennsylvania Historical Magazine*, 1971, p. 198-210. Lake Conemaugh was formerly the South Fork Reservoir, started in 1840. For more information, see the Johnstown Area Heritage Association, online at www.jaha.org.

³ Ivory, K., *Pennsylvania Disasters: True Stories of Tragedy and Survival* (Guilford, Conn.: Globe Pequot Press, 2007).

⁴ Shappee, N.D., The Johnstown Flood and Pittsburgh's Relief. *Western Pennsylvania Historical Magazine*, 1940, p. 79-98.

⁵ McCullough D, *The Johnstown Flood*. (New York, Simon & Schuster, 1968).

⁶ Shappee, N.D., "Spoliation and encroachment in the Conemaugh Valley before the Johnstown flood of 1889," *Western Pennsylvania Historical Magazine*, 1940, p. 25-48, quote p. 26.

⁷ The letters are available online via the Sisters of Charity of Seton Hill Archives, <https://dcarchives.wordpress.com/category/u-s-history/johnstown-flood/>.

Thanks go to Sister Louise Grundish, archivist, for her assistance.

⁸ "Hundreds of Lives Lost," *New York Times*, June 1, 1889, p. 1.

⁹ Ivory, p. 43.

¹⁰ Christie, p. 209.

¹¹ Storey, H.W., *History of Cambria County Pennsylvania* (New York, Lewis Publishing, 1907).

¹² Wagoner, G.W., "How the physicians of Johnstown were relieved after the flood," *Transactions of the Medical Society of the State of Pennsylvania at Its Fortieth Annual Session, Held at Pittsburg, 1889-1890, Volume XXI*. (Philadelphia: Medical Society of the State of Pennsylvania, 1890) p. 60-68.

¹³ Barton Clara, *The Red Cross in Peace and War* (Washington: American Historical Press, 1910).

¹⁴ Beale, D.J. *Through the Johnstown Flood*. (Philadelphia: Edgewood Publishing Co., 1890), p. 173-177; Wagoner, p. 174-175.

¹⁵ Forbes, W.S., "Medical Notes from Johnstown," *Medical News* June 15, 1889, p. 662.

¹⁶ Storey, p. 530-531.

¹⁷ "The Calamity at Johnstown," *Medical News*, June 8, 1889, p. 631.

¹⁸ "Fearful of Insanity," *New York Times*, June 7, 1889, p. 2. This article was reprinted by other papers

around the country such as the *St. Paul Globe*, which made it a front-page story on June 7.

¹⁹ Beale, 177.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ For more on Dr. Bennett, see her biography at https://cfmedicine.nlm.nih.gov/physicians/biography_32.html

²² "Bereft of Reason," *Pittsburg Dispatch*, June 8, 1889, p. 8.

²³ "Insanity Breaks Out," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, June 8, 1889, p. 1.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Pennsylvania State Archives, "Records of Mary Saeger [sic] at Dixmont State Hospital, 1889-1918," including Certificate of Death, acc. 2013.

²⁸ Death of a Little Boy, *Johnstown Weekly Tribune*, October 13, 1893. Parents were listed as Anton and Mary Seeger [sic].

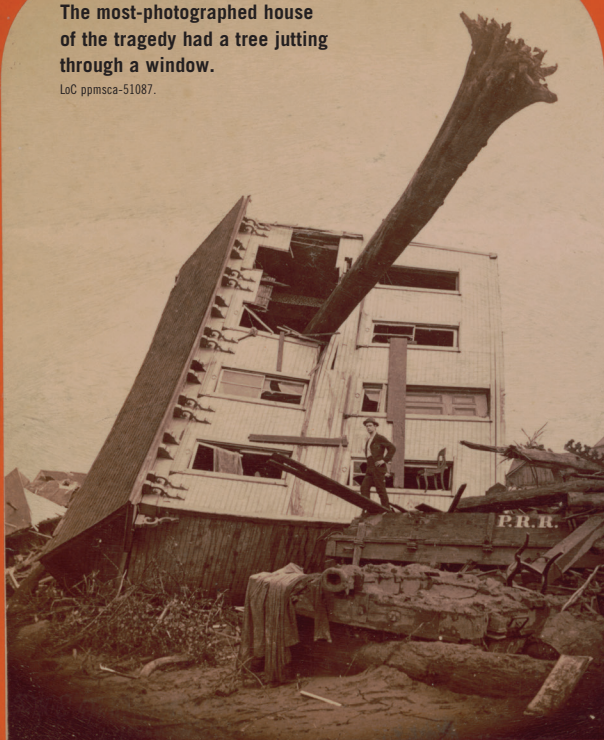
²⁹ Allegheny County Records, Volume 1, Sept. 1, 1886-Nov. 15, 1890, "Series II. Vagrants Received and Discharged, 1886-1925," Allegheny County, Pennsylvania Jail Records; microfilm AIS.1975.08, Archives of an Industrial Society, Pittsburgh, unpaginated.

³⁰ Friedman, L.M., Thompson, J., "Total disaster and

Barker's Stereoscopic Gems of American Scenery.

The most-photographed house of the tragedy had a tree jutting through a window.

LoC ppmsca-51087.



Geo. Barker, Niagara Falls, N. Y.

The Johnstown Calamity
A slightly damaged house.

Copyright 1889, by Geo. Barker



JOHNSTOWN FLOOD, MAY 31st, 1889.

LOSS FROM 10,000 TO 12,000 LIVES.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY

Histed.

PITTSBURGH, PA.



total justice: responses to man-made tragedy," *DePaul Law Review*, 2003, p. 251-287.

³¹ Ibid.

³² McFarlane A.C., Norris F.H., Chapter 1: "Definitions and Concepts in Disaster Research," in F.H. Norris, S. Galea, M.J. Friedman, P.J. Watson (eds.), *Methods for Disaster Research* (New York, Guilford Publications, 2006), p. 3-19

³³ Green, B.L., J.D. Lindy, J.D., M.C. Grace and A.C. Leonard, "Chronic posttraumatic stress disorder and diagnostic comorbidity in a disaster sample," *Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease*, 1992, p. 760-766.

³⁴ Norris F.N., M.J. Friedman, P.J. Watson, C.M. Byrne, E. Diaz, K. Kaniasty, "60,000 disaster victims speak:

Part I. An empirical review of the empirical literature, 1981-2001," *Psychiatry* 2001, p. 207-239; and "Part II. Summary and implications of the disaster mental health research," *Psychiatry* 2002, p. 240-260.

³⁵ Committee on Lunacy, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Seventh Report, September 30 (Harrisburg: Edwin K. Meyers, State Printer 1890) p. 114-115.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Muson, Howard (text), David Finn and Amy Binder (photography), with preface by Lee Iacocca, *The Triumph of the American Spirit: Johnstown, Pennsylvania* (Lanham, Md.: Johnstown Flood

Museum and American Association for State and Local History Library, 1989).

³⁸ *Transactions of the Medical Society of the State of Pennsylvania, at Its Fortieth Annual Session, Held at Pittsburg, 1889-1890, Volume XXI* (Philadelphia: Medical Society of the State of Pennsylvania, 1890). The meeting was held June 10, 1890.