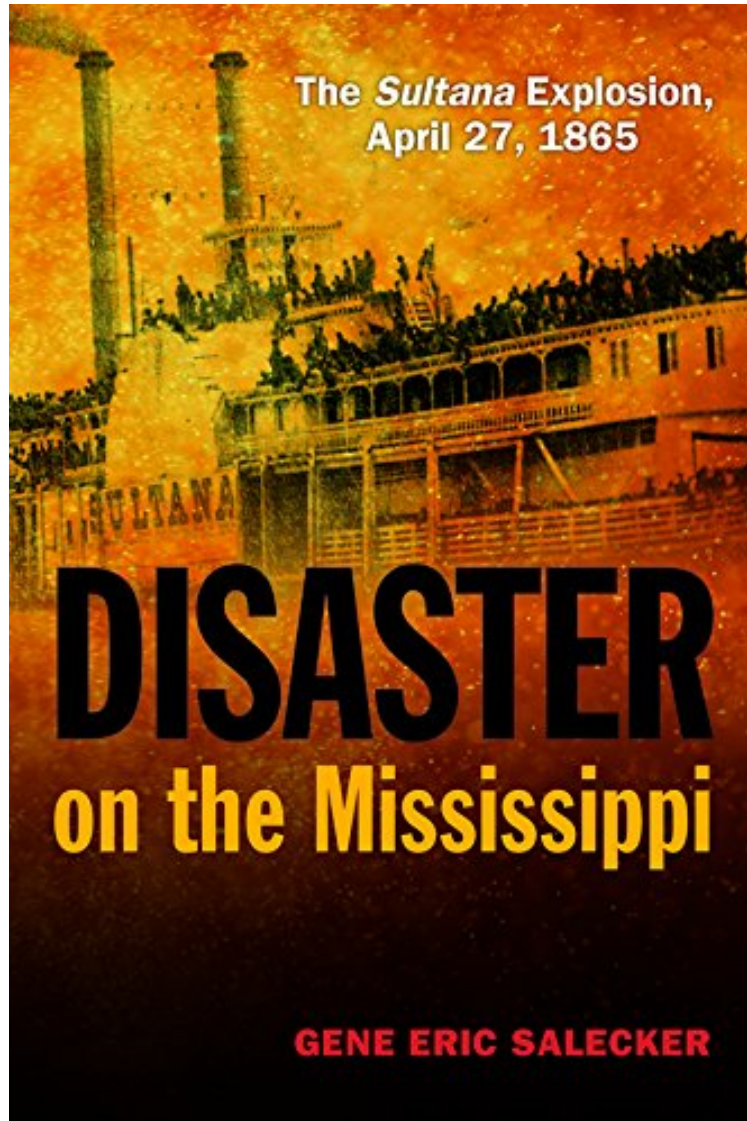


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Disaster on the Mississippi: The Sultana Explosion, April 27, 1865

Gene Eric Salecker

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Gene Eric Salecker : Disaster on the Mississippi: The Sultana Explosion, April 27, 1865 before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Disaster on the Mississippi: The Sultana Explosion, April 27, 1865:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. so the story reads easily. Beyond thatBy Bob CraftThis is an extraordinary book about one of many little known events during the American Civil War. First it is well written, so the story reads easily. Beyond that, the event it portrays is emotionally powerful. Well over a thousand Union soldiers who are being returned home at government expense from Confederate prison camps are transported on a grossly

overladen riverboat whose boiler needs significant repair. North of Memphis, TN the boiler explodes in the middle of the night killing many outright and pitching others into the spring-melt flooded Mississippi River to drown. As usual, the cause of the disaster stems more from human greed than from the physical weaknesses of the boat or boiler. Further, the disaster need never have happened. The scandal, had it been pursued, would have led to President Lincoln himself who had appointed the Union quartermaster officer responsible for the shipping of the former prisoners and, when he had been removed as quartermaster for fraud, had reappointed him to district quartermaster. For perspective, more men and women died as a result of the Sultana's sinking than from the sinking of the Titanic. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Excellent description of that tragic event By Fred J. I had previously read Chester D Berry's "Loss of the Sultana and Reminiscences of Survivors", one of the main references used by Mr Salecker in writing this book. Salecker fleshes out the rest of the story, adding information about the Sultana's history, the technical details of its construction and more modern insight into the cause of the catastrophic boiler explosion. I recommend this book to anyone wishing to understand the events on the Mississippi that day, April 25, 1865. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Disaster on the Mississippi: The Sultana Explosion, April 27, 1865 By Dee Ann Fricker I have read other books about the Sultana and her great tragedy, but Gene Eric Salecker's version is extremely well researched and written. One of my husband's ancestors is mentioned in this version on page 14. Fortunately our ancestor was not killed at age 22, but lived to the ripe old age of 86. This is an incredible book and lets the reader know of the terrible pain and suffering even the Sultana's survivors went through This should have been taught in American History in school instead of being swept under the rug like so many important occurrences are. This book is a classic!

At two o'clock in the morning on 27 April 1865, seven miles north of Memphis on the Mississippi, the sidewheel steamboat Sultana's boilers suddenly exploded. Legally registered to carry 376 people, the boat was packed with 2,100 recently released Union prisoners-of-war. Over 1,700 people died, making it the worst marine disaster in U.S. history. This book looks at the disaster through the eyes of the victims themselves. It offers a concise, minute-by-minute account on the cause of the explosion and its effect on different parts of the boat. To focus on the personal stories of the victims, both civilian and soldier, Gene Eric Salecker patiently collected material from hundreds of letters, period newspaper stories, and other sources. Readers are first introduced to victims while they are languishing in Confederate prisons and follow their release to an exchange camp outside of Vicksburg to their eventual crowding onto the Sultana. His knowledgeable narrative is interwoven with individual reminiscences, including those of the heroic rescuers. He offers unprecedented details about the captain's handling of the steamboat and corrects some long-held myths about the placement of the soldiers on the Sultana and newspaper coverage of the disaster. A large portion of the book covers rescue attempts, both successful and failed, and the aftermath of the disaster as it affected those involved. With its emphasis on the human-interest aspect of the Sultana, this book brings to the literature a critical point of view and much new information.

About the Author Gene Eric Salecker is a retired university police officer and middle school social studies teacher, currently working as an author, substitute teacher, and consultant for the Sultana Disaster Museum in Marion, Arkansas. He is married and lives in the Chicago area with his wife and pets.