

The Balloon Voyage

S.A. King, the aeronaut, made his promised ascension from this city last evening in company with seven persons. The hour for departure was stated at tree o'clock, and long before that hour the multitude began to assemble. There was at that time more than twenty thousand people, including men, women and children, gathered in the streets and buildings and upon the house tops near the Court House.

The balloon was laid upon the flagging in front of the Court House at seven in the morning and a twelve inch pipe from a gas main put into it. It speedily began to expand and soon after noon the gas bag appeared to be full. Everyone was in expectation of a prompt departure by daylight, but in this all were disappointed. The ascension was delayed until after five o'clock, when with cloudy weather, it was nearly dark. The expectant multitude suffered greatly from fatigue, but bore the infliction with a degree of patience that did credit. A large police fore kept the crowd back from the balloon till after four o'clock, when the lines were broken and the crowd pressed up to the place where the balloonists were waiting – just for what nobody appears to know. The people did no harm, however, to the balloon, and we fail to see how their presence in any manner delayed the departure.

Soon after five o'clock and after many had left for home in view of an approaching storm, the balloon was towed to the intersection of Buffalo and Fitzhugh Streets and cut loose. It rose quickly to the clouds and flew away to the eastward. In a few minutes it was out of sight.

The weary and exhausted crowd gradually dispersed and many who lived at a distance must have found it rather uncomfortable in the storm of sleet and rain that followed. The question asked by everybody is why do those balloonists always postpone ascensions till nearly dark? It is a question that we are unable to answer from any information in our possession.

The passengers in the basket attached to the balloon with King, the aeronaut, were S.C. Worden, E. Burke Collins, Charles D. Keep, Paul Davis, W. B. DeGarmo, of this city, and Luther Holden of Boston. There were no attaches of the Rochester Press in the party. The most of the passengers paid fare at prices varying from \$25 to \$50 per passage.

The balloon passed swiftly to the eastward, and was soon over Palmyra half an hour after leaving Rochester. Dispatches from Newark and Lyons reported it over those places. It then bore southeasterly from the telegraph line and was not heard from again till late in the evening, after a descent had been made. The party landed three and a half miles south of Cazenovia, Madison county, which is about one hundred miles from Rochester by rail. The landing was made about eight o'clock.

Messrs. Worden, Keep and Davis returned to the city this morning. Mr. Worden states that the passage was a very cold one, yet in many respects it was pleasant. The balloon kept above the clouds for some distance, till over Wayne county, when a descent was made so that conversation was held with persons on the ground. It subsequently rose again and passed away to the south of Syracuse. A heavy snow storm was met and a large quantity lodged upon the top of the bag. This caused the balloon to sink rapidly, and the car struck the ground suddenly in a pasture where there were some horses. The animals scampered away with fright. The anchor was thrown out but failed to take hold. After bounding across the field, ballast was thrown out and the balloon placed over a place of woods and came down in a field where there were stumps and dead trees. After tumbling about there for some time the gas bag was blown by high winds against a dry tree and torn into shreds. The gas instantly escaped and the voyage ended. Keep and Davis got out of the basket when it struck in the last field and endeavored to tie the balloon to a stump but failed. The danger in bounding among the stumps was not great – Mr. Collins was somewhat bruised in the operation.

The party repaired to a farm house near by, got some refreshments and walked three miles or more to Cazenovia. There Worden, Keep and Davis procured a team, which took them to Canestota, and they came home by the central road this morning. The balloon remained in the field. It will be taken up to-day and removed to Syracuse.



Hyperion Ascension October 19, 1869