

Melissa Adams (- 17 Jun 1864)

Evening Star, Friday, June 17, 1864 (2nd edition, 2:30 p.m.)

Frightful Explosion at the Arsenal

A large number of the female employees killed or frightfully wounded. 18 dead bodies taken out of the ruins already.

At 10 minutes of 12 today a terrible catastrophe occurred at the Arsenal which has cast a gloom over the whole community, and rendered sad many a heart that was buoyant a few minutes previous.

While 108 girls were at work in the main laboratory making cartridges for small arms, a quantity of fire works, which had been placed on the outside of the building became ignited, and a piece of fuse flying into one of the rooms in which were seated about 29 young women set the cartridges on fire and caused an instantaneous explosion.

The Evening Star, June 20, 1864

The Funeral of the Victims of the Arsenal

The funeral of the unfortunate victims of the explosion at the Arsenal on Friday last took place from that place yesterday afternoon ... The remains ... were enclosed in handsome coffins, silver mounted, with three handles on each side, and a plate on the breast, bearing the name of the inmate, when known. The coffins were lined with muslin, and were made in the Arsenal carpenter shop ... The coffins were tastefully decked with bouquets and wreaths composed of white lilies and roses and other appropriate flowers. These flowers were the feeling tribute of the fellow employees (female) of the deceased at the arsenal.

Following the hearses:

President Lincoln and Secretary Stanton, and the son of the latter, in a carriage as chief mourners.

The Evening Star, Monday, June 20, 1864

Incidents

Melissa Adams, killed, is the daughter of Edward C. Adams, huckster, Center Market. Mr. Adams and family have the general sympathy of the community from the fact that this is the third child he has lost by violent deaths within a year or two, and singularly too, as if in support of a popular superstition in each case the disaster occurred on a Friday. The first was that of a boy who accidentally shot himself on a gunning excursion; the next was that of another boy run over by a coach and killed; and the third was that of the daughter Melissa, who perished in the flames yesterday.