

William F. Adams (- 11 Nov 1905)

Adams. Suddenly on Saturday, Nov. 11, 1905, Willard F. Adams, the beloved and only son of George W. and Almira Adams.

Rest on dear son thy troubles are o'er,
Thy willing hands will toil no more,
A faithful son both true and kind
A truer son you could not find.
By his father and mother

Funeral from his parents residence, 918 H street northeast, November 14 at 2 o'clock p.m.

The Evening Star, November 11, 1905

Tries to Murder Wife

William Adams Next Turns Revolver on Himself With Fatal Effect

Mrs. Adams Conveyed to Casualty Hospital

Tragedy Enacted This Morning in Northeast Washington--

The Police and Coroner Notified.

Because Bessie Adams, twenty-four years old, resisted the efforts of her husband, William Adams, to chastise her this morning, the latter shot her and then committed suicide by shooting himself through the heart. The tragedy was enacted in the home of the Adams family, 1311 H street northeast, about 9:40 o'clock. Mrs. Adams was assisted by Joseph Amoroso, a barber, to Price's drug store, whence she was conveyed to the Casualty Hospital. Dr. Jarboe removed the bullet from near the shoulder blade shortly after the wounded woman reached the hospital, and dressed the wound in her hand. The police found the dead body of Adams on the floor of the hall on the second floor. His arms were folded across his chest, he having fallen near where the weapon rested. His shirt was burning when Lieut. Daley and Policeman Frank P. Smith of the ninth precinct reached the house, in response to a telephone message received from Price's drug store.

"There's been a murder committed at 1311 H street-come quick," was the message received by Lieut. Daley over the telephone.

In less than five minutes the patrol wagon stopped in front of the number stated and the lieutenant and policeman rushed toward the door.

"Don't go in there," shouted a man who stood upon the pavement, "the man will kill you." "He'll have to kill," responded the lieutenant, who did not stop to discuss the question with him.

Body in Pool of Blood

Hurrying to the second floor over the barber shop of Amoroso Bros., the home of the Adams family, the lieutenant and policeman found the man's body lying in a pool of blood. The blaze was extinguished and the lieutenant gave orders that nothing should be touched until the arrival of the coroner. Learning that the two-year-old child of the participants in the tragedy, Alice Adams, was in the house the lieutenant went in search of her, expecting to find that her father had ended her life. He was agreeably surprised when he found the tot standing beside the crib in the front room.

"Papa is dead," is all the child said to the lieutenant. The lieutenant took charge of her and turned her over to a relative. He then had Mrs. Adams conveyed to the hospital.

Unhappy Married Life

Adams was employed by the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company as car cleaner, his father, E.W. Adams of 922 H street northeast, being employed by the same company. Four years ago he married Miss Bessie Whitmire, who had formerly lived at Forestville, Va. Adams was also from Virginia. Their married life had been so unpleasant that the wife recently threatened to leave her husband. Since he suffered an attack of typhoid fever, the wife says, his conduct at times was unbearable. Last Sunday night when she returned home from a visit to relatives in the city, she says, he locked her out of the house, and she repeated her threat to leave him. Since that time he had asked her on several occasions if she intended to leave him and she told him she would if he did not change his conduct toward her.

Last night when the husband reached home about 6 o'clock he asked his wife if she would go to the theater with him but she objected to going because she was sick. She finally yielded to him, however, and went to the Academy with two friends and their child. After the show was over they went to a Chinese restaurant and had something to eat. It was almost midnight when they reached home and retired. This morning their two boarders, Charles Riley and Walter Bloxton, were at home, but there was a delay caused in getting breakfast because the fire was out. Riley went away, but Bloxton remained about the house and got some wood for the fire after Adams had refused to get it for his wife. Mr. Adams went away from the house, returning shortly after 9 o'clock. It is thought that his leaving the house was for the purpose of getting the weapon, as he had no revolver at home.

Locked Themselves In

Upon his return he bolted the front door, leaving Bloxton outside putting wood in the cellar.

"And so you are going to leave me?" he asked his wife in an apparently friendly way. "Not unless you conduct yourself in the future as you have in the past," was the wife's response.

The husband then asked his wife to a room on the upper floor, saying he had something to show her. It was when this room was reached that he attempted the assault, throwing her down and putting a cloth over her mouth to prevent an outcry being made. Failing in his attempt, he drew the weapon and fired at her. She reached the third floor in her effort to get away from him and he had followed her. The husband evidently thought he had killed his wife and then fired the shot through his own heart. Mrs. Adams ran to the lower floor and succeeded in drawing the bolt and getting to the sidewalk. There she said: "My husband shot me and killed himself."

The boarder referred to assisted her to the drug store. He then returned to the house, but was afraid to enter because he feared Adams was there and might use his weapon upon him. In a few minutes a large crowd of curious persons had gathered about the entrance to the house, and remained there until the body of Adams had been taken to the morgue. The father of Adams reached the house shortly after the tragedy was enacted, but the police would not let him go to the upper floor to view the ghastly sight. He said he had heard statements made about the trouble between his son and Mrs. Adams, but did not know much about their affairs.

Police Investigation

When the police reached the house the condition of the premises was such as to cause them to believe that persons other than the three members of the Adams family were possibly in the house when the shooting occurred. Lieut. Daley, Precinct Detective Johnston, Sergt. Falvey and Policeman Bateman participated in the investigation. Capt. Boardman sent Detective Parham to the house, and he also made an investigation. The detective satisfied himself that only the three members of the family were in the house.

While the condition of Mrs. Adams is serious, she appears strong, and was able to tell of the shooting without much effort. She declared that the only persons in the house at the time were the three members of the family. She said she had been afraid he would do something of this kind,

although only three nights ago he declared he would not harm a hair of her head. Despite his treatment of her she expressed the belief that his mind was affected, and that he was not responsible for his conduct. The shooting is the fifth double tragedy that has occurred in this city during the past few weeks.

Coroner Nevitt investigated the affair this afternoon. He heard the statements of witnesses, and reached the conclusion that an inquest would be unnecessary, because the man who had done the shooting had put himself beyond the power of human law.

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Anxious About Child

Mrs. Adams Shows Concern As To Daughter's Condition

"Is my child all right?" was the first question asked by Mrs. Bessie Adams yesterday after she had recovered from her fright that followed her exciting encounter with her husband, William Adams as stated in yesterday's Star. She seemed greatly relieved when told that little Alice had not been harmed by her father before he took his own life. When told that her husband was dead she seemed further relieved, but was anxious to give him the benefit of the doubt as to his insanity.

"He has not been himself since he recovered from an attack of typhoid fever," she declared, "and I believe he was not in his right mind. I was afraid he would do something of this kind."

Deputy Coroner Glazebrook called upon Mrs. Adams at the Casualty Hospital and discussed the shooting with her. He heard her tell her story of her experience in the house during the few minutes preceding the shooting, and reached the conclusion that Adams was responsible for what had taken place. After he had given a certificate showing the man had taken his own life, the body was turned over to Undertaker Lee and removed to his establishment, where it was embalmed and afterward was removed to the home of the parents of the deceased, 918 H street northeast. Arrangements for the funeral will be completed tomorrow.

Police Investigation Continues

The police continued their investigation of the case yesterday and learned that Adams purchased a revolver yesterday morning from a dealer at the store of Simon Atlas on D street. It was about 8:30 o'clock when Adams appeared at the dealer's place of business and made the purchase. He merely said he wanted to buy a weapon, and as he showed no signs of intoxication or excitement he was accommodated. His having made the purchase about the time stated convinces the police that he had made up his mind to murder his wife and take his own life before he left the house in the morning. The police of the ninth precinct took charge of the house in which he tragedy was enacted, and an officer was left there to guard the property.

The two boarders in the house, Charles Riley and Walter Bloxton, were seen by the police and questioned. They told of the frequent quarrels that had occurred between Adams and his wife, and one of them said that he had pursued her with a razor on one occasion.

Mrs. Adams said at the hospital yesterday afternoon that her husband had assaulted her once before and the boarders in the house tell the same story. One of them said that Mrs. Adams had accused her husband of associating with women other than herself. The wound in Mrs. Adams' hand is painful, but not serious, while that in her body is serious and may yet prove fatal. As stated in yesterday's Star, the bullet entered her left breast just above the heart and passed through the body, lodging under the skin near the shoulder blade.