

Vito C. Cross

(- 1 Sep 1913)

Cross. Suddenly on September 1, 1913 at 12:35 a.m., Veto, the beloved son of Fannie and Alonzo Cross, aged 18 years. Funeral from his late residence, 107 M street s.e. Wednesday, September 3 at 3 o'clock p.m. Interment Congressional cemetery.

The Evening Star, September 2, 1913, p. 18

Explosion of Ammonia Kills Veto C. Cross

His Lungs, Weakened by Poisonous Fumes, Are Attacked by Pneumonia

Veto C. Cross, eighteen years old, an engineers' apprentice at the Naval Medical School Hospital, died yesterday of pneumonia, induced by the inhalation of fumes from an ammonia tank which exploded while the young man was at work near it. Funeral services will be held at 3 o'clock tomorrow afternoon at the residence, 107 M street southeast, where young Cross lived with his parents, and interment will be in Congressional cemetery.

The death of the young apprentice brings to naught a heroic attempt at rescue in which Assistant Engineer Albert Bauman defied asphyxiation by dashing into the midst of the strangling fumes of ammonia and dragging the young man to the outer air.

Young Cross was assisting Bauman to mend a belt operating a small refrigerating plant in the basement of the hospital. The repairs had just been completed and the men were starting the machine when, without warning, the ammonia tank burst, liberating about seventy-five pounds of liquefied ammonia. Immediately dense, suffocating fumes filled the room. Bauman, who was near the door rushed upstairs, believing his companion was following him. When he reached the top, however, the young man was not to be seen, but Bauman heard him call twice.

Realizing that the youth had been overcome, Bauman took a deep breath and went back into the fume-filled room. He picked up Cross, who was lying face down in a little of the liquid which remained. His exertion compelled him to inhale some of the fumes before he could drag his companion upstairs and into the open air, and Bauman also collapsed. Both men were taken to the operating room of the hospital, where the pulmotor was used to revive Cross, and it was thought he might recover. The irritation to his lungs was so great, however, that pneumonia developed, to which he succumbed yesterday morning.