

## Robert S. Wharton

( - 3 Sep 1893)

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**Wharton.** Suddenly, on Sunday, September 3, 1893, at 7:30 p.m., Robert Shelton Wharton, in the 83d year of his age. Funeral services at the home of his step-son, Francis W. Test, 223 E street northwest, on Wednesday, September 6, at 4 p.m. Friends are invited.

*The Evening Star, September 4, 1893*

### **Crushed By A Cable Car**

#### **A Well-Known Citizen Meets a Sudden Death**

#### **A Cable Car Kills Robert S. Wharton--**

#### **Fenders on the Cars Useless for Protection and Not Beautiful**

There was another cable car accident yesterday afternoon that resulted in the death of one of Washington's oldest citizens, Mr. Robert S. Wharton. He was struck by a cable train near the corner of 6th street and Pennsylvania avenue about 3:30 o'clock and died at the Emergency Hospital several hours later.

Mr. Wharton, who was a boarder at the Howard House, was returning to his rooms on C street, when he crossed around behind a stationary train and was struck by number 13, which was going east. He was thrown several feet ahead of the grip and before it could be brought to a standstill it had passed over him and crushed him beneath the guards of the car.

The injured man was at once picked up and carried into a neighboring drug store. There were few outward signs of injury, but it was evident he had been severely hurt internally, and when he had been removed to the Emergency Hospital, Dr. Hough saw that there was no hope for him. About four hours after the accident he died, the cause of death being concussion of the brain and injuries to the stomach and lungs.

Officers from the sixth precinct arrested the gripman, Howard Lindsay. The latter fainted when he realized what had happened and was prostrated with grief. He was held to await the action of the coroner's inquest today. He has been in the employ of the company for a long time and bore an excellent reputation.

The dead man was a prominent Mason and a member of New Jerusalem Lodge, F.A.A.M., under the auspices of which organization the funeral will be held when his family have been heard from. Mr. Wharton was in his 83d year, and came to Washington from Nashville, Tenn., in 1839. He was appointed a clerk in the general Post Office by President Jackson. He remained in service many years, saving his money and investing it in real estate here, which eventually made him a wealthy man. It is estimated that he leaves real estate and other property to the value of between \$200,000 and \$300,000.

After the inquest the body was taken to the home of the dead man's stepson, F.W. Test, 223 E street. Mr. Test is one of the surviving injured of the Ford's Theater accident, and is now just fairly recovered from the accident.

An inquest was commenced at the Emergency Hospital shortly after 3 o'clock this afternoon.

*The Evening Star, September 5, 1893*

### **Used Due Care**

#### **The Coroner's Jury Verdict Over Mr. Robert S. Wharton**

Coroner Woodward held an inquest yesterday afternoon at the Emergency Hospital over the body of Mr. Robert S. Wharton, the elderly gentleman who was killed by a cable car Sunday afternoon. The jury consisted of Mr. R. Edwin Joyce, Thos. J. Myers, Jas. W. Barker, Henry Levi, J.H. Eubank, and Michael Hayden.

Howard N. Lindsley, the gripman of the train that killed Mr. Wharton, was present, and was given a chance to testify in his own behalf. A number of eye-witnesses of the scene gave their description of the accident. The stories all agreed in the main features, and described the accident as it was in *The Star* last evening, with the exception that there was no car standing on the other track. According to their testimony, Mr. Wharton came from the Howard House corner, and started to cross the tracks toward the National Hotel. He did not look toward the tracks to see if a train was coming from either direction, but with head bowed he walked leisurely across. The gripman applied his brake as quickly as he saw that the man had attempted to cross in front of his car, ringing his gong all the time. One witness said that Mr. Wharton seemed to be in a sort of dazed condition. He was only ten or fifteen feet ahead of the grip car when he started to cross the tracks, and there was not room or time to stop the train. As it was, he was almost across, and if he could have taken one quick step he could have avoided the accident.

Young Lindsley, the gripman, showed signs of emotion when he took the stand. After the accident he fainted, and yesterday he appeared to be unnerved by what had happened, but he told his story in a clear and convincing manner. It developed that he had been in the employ of the road only about a fortnight, and had had charge of a train for four days before the accident. He had been under instruction with an experienced gripman for six days after having spent several days at the power house and tunnels learning all the details of operation.

On Sunday afternoon, he said, he saw a group of men standing at 6th street, near the tracks, and he rang his gong when about thirty feet away. Just then he noticed an elderly man approach the group, but instead of joining them he continued toward the track. Witness applied the brakes instantly, but the man was only about ten feet in front of the train when he stepped on to the track, and he was walking slowly. He had almost crossed the track when he was struck.

The jury brought in a verdict in accordance with the evidence, entirely exonerating the gripman, who, they said had used all possible diligence and caution to avoid the accident. One juror, Mr. Barker, insisted on bringing in a supplementary verdict of his own, reprimanding the company for employing men who had but little experience.

The funeral of Mr. Wharton will take place tomorrow afternoon at 4 o'clock from the residence of his stepson, Mr. F.W. Test, 223 E street, New Jerusalem Lodge of Masons, of which he was a member, will conduct the services, and Rev. Dr. Wilson of Wesley Chapel will preach the sermon.