

The Gloversville Daily Leader.

VOL. XVI. NO. 227.

GLOVERSVILLE N. Y., MONDAY, MAY 25, 1903.

WHOLE NO. 4847

EXPLOSION OF CHEMICALS KILLED JOHN KENNEDY

Mills Bros' Fire Followed by Death of Rival Manufacturer's Son---Believed He Was At- tempting to Get Knowledge of a Secret For- mula---Another Son Missing.

The most unfortunate affair that has happened in Gloversville in a long time was the explosion of a chemical house at Mills Bros' plant on West Fulton street early Saturday morning, as the investigation which has been made has resulted in the responsibility of the affair being placed against a prominent young business man who lost his life as the result of injuries received.

Evidence has been secured which shows positively that two men were in the vicinity of the chemical building when the explosion occurred and that within a short time after the explosion John Kennedy arrived at his father's house. In a sworn statement to the authorities Mr. Kennedy claims that he was standing on the piazza when John walked up to him and said, "Father, I have met with an accident." Physicians were immediately summoned and when they arrived Mr. Kennedy stated that his son had been injured in an explosion at the mill.

Outside of the physicians and Mr. Kennedy's family, no one saw him in the Kennedy residence, as far as is known, after the accident. Early in the morning, however, an employee of Mills Bros., made a statement that he saw Michael Kennedy walk across the fields towards a point about 100 feet distant from the ruined chemical house, pick up two packages, one weighing about 25 pounds, which he had to carry under his arm and one which was small enough to put in his pocket. The employee noticed that Mr. Kennedy did not make a search but walked directly to the spot where the packages were lying and immediately returned to the house. The packages kept in the building tallied with the description given by the employee.

When a member of the firm arrived at the factory about 6 a. m., he was informed of the actions of Mr. Kennedy and on walking to the spot where he was seen to pick up the packages a gruesome discovery was made in the way of finding the skin and fingernails of a man's fingers, also a portion of a lower leg of a man's trousers badly burned. This made it positive that someone had been in the vicinity of the building when the explosion occurred and Chief Sperber was notified. He went to the mill at once and the investigation was continued. Following the field towards Grove street they continually found pieces of burned clothing and flesh and on encountering a board fence they made another discovery which proved very important later. On the top board were imprints of bloody fingers and a stain which appeared to have been made by a bleeding palm of a hand. The top board of the fence was removed yesterday and taken to police headquarters.

After crossing the fence, a ploughed field was encountered and here, plainly distinguishable, were the tracks of two men, and, from the appearance of the footprints, one man was helping his companion up an incline. A stone wall with barbed wire on top was next encountered and on the wire was found a portion of a trousers' leg. All along the field were found pieces of clothing. After the men crossed the stone wall their tracks could not be followed, but they either led to West Fulton or Grove street or some building near Grove and West Fulton streets.

After getting as much tangible evidence as possible it was decided to keep a careful watch and later Dr. Davis was seen to call at the home of Michael Kennedy and John Kennedy was not noticed about the mill. Saturday night Officer George Smith and another man were detailed to watch the Kennedy residence, as the authorities and others were still uncertain as to the identity of the burned man, although they were suspicious. Late in the evening Officer Smith saw Dr. Davis again drive to the house and then Dr. Hagedorn arrived.

About 10 minutes of 1 o'clock yesterday morning John Kennedy died and a short time later Undertaker Keiner drove to the residence and took the body away. At the time of his death his wife and oldest son, his parents and sisters were with him.

To the watching officer, however, the identity of the dead man was unknown, and as soon as the undertaker started to drive away the officer, who had a horse, followed. When the undertaker arrived at the home of Mr. Kennedy on White street, it was understood who was dead and later the news was confirmed. Until that time the authorities were not sure but that someone else might have been hurt and all interested were unwilling to believe that the unfortunate man was the victim of the explosion.

Dr. Davis was first called to attend Mr. Kennedy about 3 o'clock Saturday morning, being summoned personally by Michael Kennedy. When he arrived at the house he found the younger man suffering from bad burns about his face and head, hands and arms, legs and feet. His body between the hips and shoulders was not affected by the fire.

At that time the injured man's trousers, which he still wore, were burned off at the knees. He was conscious at the time and his mind remained in a clear state until about 3 o'clock Saturday afternoon, when he relapsed into semi-unconsciousness and remained in that condition until he died. He made no statement in the presence of the physicians and no ante-mortem statement was secured. Over a third of the unfortunate man's body was burned by the flames and there was every indication that he had inhaled fire, so that his recovery was impossible. His hair and eyebrows were burned off, feet and limbs badly affected and forearms and hands severely burned. When the physician dressed the wounds the absence of the finger nails on the left hand was not noticed and yesterday afternoon an examination of the body was made to ascertain whether the pieces of flesh and finger nails in the possession of the police tallied with the fingers of the dead man. The examination showed that the finger nails from the thumb and first three fingers of the left hand were missing, as well as flesh from the ones which were found near the chemical house.

It was supposed at first that any person who was as badly injured as the deceased, could not have walked from the chemical house and covered the territory which was indicated by the tracks, but the attending physician stated that the unfortunate victim of the fire could have walked such a distance without help.

A further investigation of the contents of the chemical house showed a five gallon tin can, a screw driver and some other articles which did not belong to Mills Bros., and the ownership of which will be clearly established before the investigation is concluded. In the building were some barrels of camphene, some packages containing material used in dressing leather, and other things pertaining to the business. There was every indication that the explosion was caused by a match being dropped either while the camphene was being poured from the barrel into the can, or while the latter was open, as the top of the latter was blown off and the sides bent. Whoever was in the building when the camphene was set afire was fearfully burned. When the explosion occurred Mrs. Floyd Cole, who resides in the vicinity, looked out of her dwelling and saw an object enveloped in flames come out of the door of the building and roll over and over on the grass until it disappeared behind a knoll. She told her story to the authorities and the latter found that the spot where she stated that the man disappeared was exactly the same place where they found the portions of skin

and fingernails of some man, as well as part of a burned trousers' leg. There is no doubt that Mrs. Cole saw the injured man with his clothing ablaze and the object rolling over was the unfortunate victim making an effort to extinguish the fire. It is presumed that the man was brushing the fire from his coat sleeve and arm and in so doing brushed off part of the palm of his left hand and with the skin went the fingernails.

Another interesting point in connection with the matter is that the place where the man disappeared from the view of Mrs. Cole was the same place where the employee stated that he saw the dead man's father go early in the morning and pick up the packages.

The presumption is that the injured man was trying to obtain a secret process for dressing shoe leather, known only to Mills Bros., and believed that it would be possible to make experiments which would enable him to produce the same kind of leather. However, even if the attempt had been successful members of the firm state that the process would have remained a secret, as the formula could not have been obtained from the material in the structure. It is presumed that a match was lighted to examine the packages and obtain the ones desired and after getting them the match was thrown down and ignited the camphene, causing the explosion. This theory seems plausible in view of the statement that two packages were picked up in the field. The man who was inside the building when the explosion occurred probably had the packages in his hands when the explosion occurred and believing that he had the secret of the process hung on to them desperately despite the fact that he was being burned to death.

The authorities were very desirous yesterday of getting information from the family which would tend to clear the unsettled points and visited the home of Michael Kennedy to get testimony. Mr. Kennedy's statement was to the effect that while he was standing in the yard in front of his house watching the fire, his son John came up to him, said that he had met with an accident and wanted him to come into the house. Mr. Kennedy further stated that he went into the house with his son, put him to bed and then drove after a doctor. He claimed that he did not ask him how the accident happened or how he was hurt. With regard to the statement that he was seen to pick up two packages in the field on the morning of the explosion Mr. Kennedy did not deny the statements, but said that he could not remember such a happening. According to the physicians Mr. Kennedy stated that his son was injured at the mill.

Another statement was made to the coroner by a relative of the dead man who said that Mr. Kennedy was going to "the building to see the name on a barrel and had an electric flash light." A statement was also secured this morning in which the authorities were told that Daniel Kennedy was seen Friday afternoon making an examination of the territory in the vicinity of the building which was supposed to have contained the chemicals.

The authorities are very anxious to learn the whereabouts of Daniel Kennedy and would like to secure his testimony, as they believe it would throw much light on the matter. His relatives deny in positive statements that they know anything about him. The last that was seen of him in the city was Friday afternoon and since that time he has completely disappeared. An effort was made to find him yesterday without success and last night a subpoena was issued directing him to appear before the coroner. Officers Ginnwood, Sperber and Smith were sent to the home of Michael Kennedy on West Fulton street to search the residence and they made a thorough examination of all the rooms without obtaining any trace of the missing man. Mr. and Mrs. Kennedy made no objection to having the dwelling searched. Later in the evening Officers Ginnwood, Sperber, Smith and Gorman were sent to the home of W. H. Sullivan on West Fulton street, as it was thought Mr. Kennedy might be there. The officers found the house locked and it was guarded until this morning. Mr. Kennedy did not appear, however.

Last night Mrs. Daniel Kennedy appeared before the coroner and stated that she had not seen her husband since Thursday afternoon and was unaware of his location. Other witnesses were also subpoenaed but did not give any definite information concerning the missing man.

Facts which have been gleaned from the investigation show that a screwdriver was also found near the building which was destroyed. The handle was burned away and it could not be identified, but members of the firm stated that they had no such instrument in the vicinity of the chemical building. It is presumed that the screwdriver was

used to enter the building by removing the lock or hinges. The presumption that the object of the visit was to obtain the secret of the leather dressing process is corroborated by the fact that a short time ago an employee of Kennedy & Co. tried to get information from an employee of Mills Bros., and it was known that others were anxious to get the secret.

According to the testimony which has been obtained it is the conclusion of the authorities that two men were implicated in the affair, one of whom is dead and the other missing. The injured man was helped by a companion. The statement concerning the packages being picked up by Michael Kennedy, sworn to by an employee who attempted to intercept Mr. Kennedy, has an exceptionally strong bearing on the case and makes the chain of evidence unusually strong. The dead man, according to his physician, was conscious until 3 o'clock Saturday afternoon and there was every reason, in the opinion of the authorities, to believe that he told his father where the packages were located, and as soon as daylight appeared the latter went after them. The employee who saw Mr. Kennedy gave a very clear statement, describing how the elder Kennedy walked directly to the place where the packages were located. The employee went around in an opposite direction to head off Mr. Kennedy, but when he arrived near West Fulton street Mr. Kennedy was entering his house. The deceased was perfectly rational and knew everything that was going on and it is the opinion of those who are conducting the investigation that he told his father about the packages as soon as he reached the house. The identification of the fingernails as those missing from the dead man's hand and the picking up of the packages in the same spot that the fingernails were found make two very strong bits of evidence, especially in view of the suspicion that the formula was what the men were after.

As to whether Daniel Kennedy was actually connected with the affair is not known positively, but it is presumed that he was in the vicinity and helped his brother away. The latter must have been in terrible pain from the fact that his trousers were burned off above his knees, his hair burned away and his arms and hands affected, but despite all those injuries his physician believes he could have made the journey alone to his father's home. The double tracks in the ploughed field, however, proved conclusively that he had an accomplice.

Efforts to-day to locate Daniel Kennedy have been, unavailing and his whereabouts are still a mystery. Whether he is badly hurt and in hiding or uninjured and far away from the city is something which the authorities would greatly like to know. They believe that he can give testimony which will clear up the affair.

Coroner Palmer, District Attorney Egelston and Chief Sperber have worked diligently to get all the facts in connection with the matter and will do their best to solve it. A time for the inquest has not been set down as yet, but it will probably be held as soon as the present investigation is concluded. Many people were loath to believe that the deceased would be implicated in such an affair, as he was considered an exceptionally fine man by all who were acquainted with him, a splendid man in his home, hard working and ambitious to make the leather business a success. It was a shock to everybody to learn the facts in the case and the blow has been an exceptionally severe one to all concerned.

THE STRIKE AT BRIDGEPORT.

Linemen Go Out To-day in Sympathy with Conductors and Motormen.

BRIDGEPORT, Conn., May 25.—The linemen on the local and suburban lines of the Connecticut Railway & Lighting company, numbering about 25 men in all, went on strike this morning. Their action is practically sympathetic with the local motormen and conductors. Cars were started this morning at 7:30 on all the local lines. They are still manned by sheriffs and no trouble was reported. The company, however, has regained but a small percentage of their patronage. It is stated that cars will be run to-night for the first time after 8 o'clock, and precautions are being taken to prevent trouble.

Suspected Murder at Hartwick. COOPERSTOWN, N. Y., May 25.—Edward Tronkie, alias Meyers, wanted at Trowbridge, Pa., for the murder of Mrs. Payne, last February, is believed to have spent yesterday at Hartwick, a small village near here. The stranger, who tallied perfectly with the description of Tronkie, disappeared as soon as he discovered that he was viewed with suspicion.

Child Scalded to Death. PASSAIC, N. J., May 25.—While watching his mother doing the family washing this morning, Samuel Scrusch, two years old, fell into a boiler of hot water and was so badly scalded that he died ten minutes later. This is the second accident of the same kind to occur in the Scrusch family in three months.

Late telegraph on pages 2, 3 and 4.

DEATH CHAIR HAD NO TERRORS FOR TRIOLA

Murderer of Mamie Cerelli Faced Electrocution With a Smile at Sing Sing This Morning.

OSSENSING, N. Y., May 25.—Antonio Triola, convicted of the murder of Mamie Cerelli, a young concert hall singer in New York city, was electrocuted in Sing Sing prison this morning.

There was to have been a double electrocution at the prison this morning, but at 5 o'clock yesterday a respite for Arthur Flanagan, convicted of the murder of Hugh McGovern, a keeper in the Seventh District prison in New York city, was received from Governor Odell. The respite was granted on representations made to the governor of newly discovered evidence. Principal Keeper Connaughton conveyed the news of the respite to Flanagan, who was prepared to meet his end. Flanagan immediately became jubilant and seemed to be convinced that he would be granted a new trial. If one is granted, he says he will be able to prove his innocence of the crime charged against him.

Triola entered the death chamber at 6:02 o'clock this morning. He was accompanied by two keepers and by Father Mahoney and Martin of St. Augustine's Roman Catholic church of Ossining. Triola came into the chamber smiling and looked the witnesses to the electrocution over several times before he sat in the chair.

As soon as the work of buckling him to the chair was completed, a shock of 1,700 volts was sent through his body. The contact last 30 seconds. The current was then turned off for ten seconds, when another contact of 30 seconds was made. This was followed by an intermission of ten seconds and another contact of 30 seconds. There were four other shocks of ten seconds duration each, with five seconds intermission.

Eight minutes after Triola had entered the death chamber, Dr. Irvine declared him dead. The autopsy on the body was immediately performed. Triola's mother has claimed the body and it will be shipped to her in New York city. Triola was 21 years of age.

Antonio Triola's victim was Mamie Cerelli, a pretty, black-eyed, Italian actress. He was insanely jealous of her and on March 5, 1901, when he met her and her mother walking home from the theatre, escorted by William Sorrentino, a fellow countryman, he upbraided her for accepting the latter's attention. Sorrentino took her part and a wordy war followed, at the height of which Triola drew a revolver and shot the girl dead. When placed on trial Triola asserted that Sorrentino had

fired at him and that the girl met her death during the duel which followed in which he was defending himself from the attack of his rival. His story was not believed by the jury, which promptly convicted him.

SISTER'S PLEADING GETS RESPITE FOR FLANAGAN.

Gov. Odell Again Going Over Papers in the Case and May Commute Sentence to Life Imprisonment.

ALBANY, N. Y., May 25.—The respite for a week granted to Arthur Flanagan by Governor Odell, was due to a sister's pleading. Flanagan was to have been executed this morning when he was in Sing Sing prison. Both condemned men had made application for a commutation of sentence, Governor Odell went over the papers in the cases and decided not to interfere with the execution of either.

Saturday morning a comely young colored woman came to the executive chamber and asked to see Governor Odell. She was Flanagan's sister. The governor gave her an interview. With tears in her eyes she pleaded with the governor to save her brother's life. He was only nineteen, she said, and had been led into the crime by a fellow convict named Emerson. Emerson planned to break out of the Seventh District prison in New York. He persuaded young Flanagan to aid him. When discovered by Keeper Hugh McGovern, a struggle ensued in which McGovern was killed. Emerson then attempted to escape, but the rope broke, and he fell forty feet to his death. A trustee named Wilson and a convict were the only witnesses to the crime. The weeping girl put the entire blame for the death of McGovern upon Emerson. Governor Odell was moved by her story and promised to do what he could. He took the papers to the executive mansion and worked over the case nearly all day Sunday. At five o'clock Gov. Odell telephoned Warden Johnson at Sing Sing that he had granted Flanagan a week's respite, during which he will decide whether or not he will commute the sentence to life imprisonment.

THREE DEAD IN TORNADO.

Others Injured and 13 Houses in Foss, Oklahoma, Destroyed.

GUTHRIE, O. T., May 25.—A tornado struck Foss, a town of 200 inhabitants, yesterday, destroying 13 residences, killing three persons and injuring several others. The dead are F. M. Slagel, his wife and daughter.

Sixteen Drowned by Ferry Sinking.

BERLIN, May 25.—The Neue Lotzter Zeitung to-day reports that a ferry on the river Narev in Poland sank yesterday as the result of overcrowding. Sixteen persons were drowned.

Late telegraph on pages 2, 3 and 4.

MANY KILLED BY TORNADO

Several Western Towns Swept By Terrific Storm---Heavy Loss of Life Reported.

OMAHA, Neb., May 25.—Special dispatches received here this afternoon say that 21 persons were killed in a tornado that desolated Kearney and Adams counties, this state, early this morning. The great damage was done at Pauline, where seven persons were killed and much property destroyed. Three deaths are reported from Norman and eleven others are missing along the path of the storm. A relief train has been sent from Hastings.

KANSAS CITY, Mo., May 25.—The details of the cyclone which waded from Oklahoma, killing William Brown, a drummer, and injuring three, were received here to-day by Mexico & Orient railway officials.

For an hour previous to the breaking of the cyclone, hot and cold air currents alternated with absolute calm, driving everybody into storm cellars, which accounts for the small loss of life. The wind demolished churches, the postoffice, three lumber yards, three livery stables, a new hotel, and six lodging houses, six residences, and nine stores and factories. The front of every store in town was ruined and nearly every house was moved off its foundation. Total darkness prevailed.

LINCOLN, Neb., May 25.—Meagle advises state that the town of Norman was also visited by a tornado, several persons losing their lives.

A number of houses around Fairfield have been destroyed and eight persons are missing. It is believed they were killed.

Communication by wire west and south of here is impossible. The dead at Pauline are: John Mumma, a farmer; Mrs. John Mumma; Gertrude Mumma; Mrs. Hughes; John Palmer; Ray Queeg.

Later information is to the effect that the town of Pauline escaped serious damage, but farm property two miles east was badly wrecked. Many buildings were torn and twisted into splinters.

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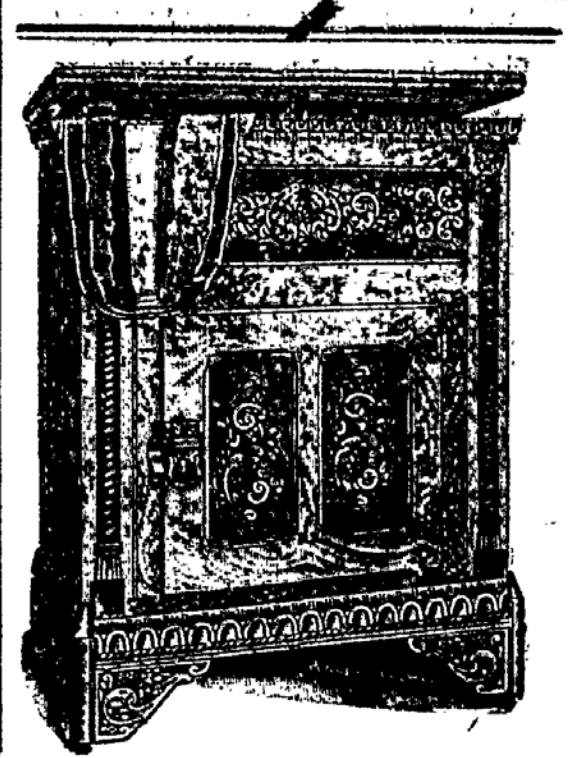
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