

## Charles W. Arnold

( - 20 Nov 1883)

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*The Evening Star, November 20, 1883*

### **Killed By His Son-in-Law**

### **A Deplorable Tragedy in East Washington**

### **Mr. Charles Arnold Knocked Down a Cellar and Killed by Adam Johnson**

### **A Painful Family History, With a Tragic Ending**

### **Johnson Alleged to Have Seduced and Deserted Arnold's Daughter**

This morning, about ten o'clock, Mr. Charles Arnold, an old citizen of the District, was killed in front of John Casey's restaurant, No. 1101 8th street southeast, by the effects, as it appears from the statements of witnesses, of a blow inflicted by his son-in-law, Adam Johnson. It appears that about the hour mentioned Mr. Arnold came out of the saloon, and his son-in-law, Adam Johnson, was at that time approaching. They were heard to exchange some remarks, and Johnson was seen to strike Arnold, who is rather an old man.

### *Arnold Tottered and Fell*

down the cellar steps of Casey's restaurant. Johnson at once left the scene, and going to the eighth precinct he gave himself up to Mr. McHenry, the station keeper, to whom he said that he had a difficulty with Arnold and had knocked or shoved him into the cellar. He was allowed to sit down in the office, but in a few minutes a telephone message was received at the station to the effect that Mr. Arnold was dead. Thereupon Johnson was locked up. Mr. Arnold after being knocked down was helped out of the cellar, and word was sent to the navy yard for a physician but no response was made. He

### *Died In About Ten Minutes*

Subsequently Mr. Arnold's body was taken to his residence, 413 South Carolina avenue, and the coroner was sent for.

Mr. Arnold, who was 65 years of age, was a native of Baltimore, but came here when a young man and earned the trade of baker, which he followed some years. Under the old corporation regime he was a member of the old auxiliary guard, and was at one time a constable. Mr. Arnold has several children, all of whom are grown.

### *The Man Who is Charged With The Homicide.*

Adam Johnson, when he first came here about eighteen months ago, said that he was a native of Texas, and that he had a brother in Texas. He was then employed on the fish commission vessel *Lookout*. He is quite a fine-looking man, of about 25 years of age. Some months ago he became acquainted with Miss Ella Arnold, a daughter of the deceased, and under the promise of marriage, it is charged, he seduced her. After this he left the city and was absent some time. When the daughter's misfortune became known, Mr. Arnold instituted inquiries, and followed Johnson from place to place to demand that he rectify the wrong.

### *The Marriage*

Finally, about eight months ago Johnson returned and was married to his victim, but he used then the name of Harold Watson. He then at once left his wife. After the child was born the young wife found that he was employed at the Treasury department, and demanded that he support the child. He resigned, and then obtained work at the bureau of engraving and printing, where he was

still employed. He has since boarded about the navy yard, and for the past two months has lived at No. 900 8th street southeast, and recently he has spent much of his time in ladies' company.

#### *An Inquest Tomorrow*

Dr. Patterson, the coroner, after viewing the body and ordering an autopsy, directed that a jury be summoned for 11 o'clock tomorrow. It is thought that fracture of the skull caused death.

#### *What the marriage Records Show*

The marriage records show (page 150, vol. 17) a license issued to Harold Watson, of Galveston, Texas, and Ella Arnold, November 27th last, and the certificate of marriage same day, at No. 8 11th street southeast, by Rev J.W. Gray, of the First M.P. church. The general impression is that Mr. Arnold's feelings were aroused by the neglect of Johnson to his daughter and his conduct in passing himself for a single man, and that as soon as he saw Johnson he made some remark, which Johnson repelled by the blow.

*The Evening Star, November 21, 1883*

#### **The East Washington Tragedy**

#### **How Charles A. Arnold Was Killed**

#### **The Testimony Taken Before the Coroner's Jury Today --**

#### **The Scuffle Between Arnold and Johnson--**

#### **Arnold's Fatal Fall Through a Cellar Door, etc.**

Yesterday afternoon an autopsy was held on the body of Mr. Charles A. Arnold, the victim of the homicide in East Washington, yesterday morning. Coroner Patterson held an inquest today at the home of the deceased, No. 513 South Carolina avenue southeast. The jury was composed of C.W. Dulin, W.F. Henry, Wm. Miller, Wm. Thompson, John F. Tucker and Elihu R. Martin. The prisoner, Adam Johnson, otherwise Harold Watson, had an interview yesterday afternoon, shortly after the tragedy, with Mrs. Frawner, with whom he boarded at the corner of 8th and I streets southeast, and it is understood that arrangements were made to secure him counsel. The prisoner was kept at the station last night, and when the jury were assembled this morning he was brought to hear the evidence.

#### *The Testimony*

The first witness was Mrs. Laura Casey, residing at 1104 8th street. She testified that at a few minutes of 10 yesterday her attention was attracted by a noise outside the house, and looking out she saw Johnson push Mr. Arnold away, as though to get past him. As Johnson started to go on Arnold put his hand in his pocket, as if to draw a knife or something. Mr. Johnson turned, and taking Arnold by the two arms gave him a push, upon which Arnold fell on the cellar door. As he attempted to get up he tumbled over head foremost into the basement. Both halves of the cellar door were open, and he fell on one. Witness had never seen Mr. Arnold before, and at the time did not know him. Previous to the scuffle she heard some talking in ordinary tone, but heard no threats, nor could she understand what was said.

Margaret Pratt, a colored woman, testified that she lived at 1115 8th street southeast, and saw a man push the old man down the steps and run. Witness was at Casey's house, sitting at the doorsteps. Did not hear anything said by them. The old man fell so hard as to knock the lower door (to the basement) open. They were both together walking when she first saw them, and when they got by the cellar the young man pushed the old man down.

James Spaulding (604 Virginia avenue southeast) testified that he was working at 1102 8th street southeast, and before ten o'clock he was standing on the corner, when Johnson came across the street and Mr. Arnold was coming up 8th street. Just as Johnson got on the curbstone Arnold struck him and

Johnson pushed him away, when Arnold struck at him again. Then Johnson knocked his feet from under Arnold, who fell on the sidewalk. Johnson started to go away, when Arnold followed him up and Johnson gave Arnold a push, and he fell backwards down the steps of Casey's saloon.

The witness, in reply to a question by a juror, said Arnold appeared to be sober.

#### *What a Letter Carrier Saw*

John H. Wehrly, a letter carrier, testified that about 9:55 he was collecting letters from the box at the corner of 8th and M streets, saw Johnson walking down 8th street. Arnold was coming out from the side of the house. Johnson took hold of Arnold and they scuffled. Johnson shoved Arnold away from him, this being in front of McDonald's window. After shoving Arnold toward the house Johnson walked on, when Arnold came up to him again (about five or six feet from the cellar and right in front of Casey's). They came together again and scuffled when Johnson gave Arnold a hard shove and the latter fell down the cellar. Witness was at the distance of half a square from them and heard no words. Witness then went up and met Johnson and asked him whom he had saved, and he replied: "He was trying to strike me," or something of the kind. Johnson walked right on after it had occurred and witness went up and saw Mr. Casey and others lift Arnold out of the cellar. Arnold was sitting in the door and appeared to be dying. In reply to a juror's question the witness said Arnold raised his hand as he approached Johnson.

Frank Cassidy and James Vickers were examined, but nothing new was elicited from them.

Wm. B. Kelly (8th and L streets southeast) testified he was on the west side of the street and he saw Johnson going down the street and met Arnold, who had a basket, and they stopped, Arnold putting down the basket right in front of Casey's. After a little while Arnold caught Johnson by the coat and struck at him; did not know that he struck him. They then scuffled and Johnson tripping Arnold he felt. Arnold got up, put his hand in his pocket and was knocked and shoved by Johnson and went down again. Arnold got up again and was then shoved or knocked down the cellar. Witness was well acquainted with Arnold; could not tell that he was intoxicated.

John Casey, who lives at No. 1104 8th street, in front of which place the scuffle occurred, and Henry P. Armstrong were examined without adding anything to the facts already elicited.

Mrs. Casey was recalled and said she did not think that Mr. Arnold was drunk.

Dr. J.F. Hartigan, testified that death resulted from concussion or shock from the fall.

#### *The Verdict*

The jury returned a verdict that death resulted from shock and compression of the brain caused by being pushed down the area of the premises by Adam W. Johnson during an altercation with the said Johnson.

#### *Johnson Committed to Jail*

The coroner committed Johnson to jail. The funeral of the deceased will take place tomorrow afternoon at 3 o'clock.

*The Evening Star, November 23, 1883*

#### **Funerals**

...The funeral of Charles W. Arnold, who was killed last Tuesday by falling down a cellar during an altercation with his son-in-law, Adam Johnson, took place yesterday afternoon from his late home, on South Carolina avenue. The attendance was very large. The remains were interred at Congressional cemetery. The pallbearers were Messrs. George Soper, William Turner, Robert Lusby, John Gates, Christopher Johnson and William H. Thompson.

