

Tragedy Strikes Memorial Hall During its 1915 Construction

MAN KILLED AND SEVERAL HURT

Roof Collapsed and Men Fall
Forty-five Feet.

DEAD MAN A CARPENTER

Happened at Pine Plains New
Masonic Temple.

PINE PLAINS, Feb. 13.—One man is dead, two are seriously injured and a half dozen men are painfully injured as the result of the collapse of the roof of the new Masonic Temple building here at 3:15 o'clock Friday afternoon when ten men were hurled to the main floor, forty-five feet below.

The dead man is Adelbert Shook, 40 years old, a carpenter of Pine Plains. He died two hours after the crash and is survived by his mother, father, a widow, and two children.

The injured are Marcus W. Manning, a contractor of Poughkeepsie. He has a broken ankle, painful body bruises and is confined to Schrowang's Hotel in Pine Plains.

Edward J. Schrowang, proprietor of the Stissing hotel here. He has a broken thigh, just below the hip.

George Cahill, a carpenter of Pine Plains, who has a badly injured shoulder.

Harold Sharp, William Murphy, and Nelson Wyant are three of the men who plunged from the roof of the building to the basement of the building and escaped with bruises and minor cuts.

Coroner Charles E. Brown began an investigation of the cause of the accident this morning.

According to the story of Marcus Manning, the contractor in charge of the work and by Coroner Brown, eight or ten men were at work on the roof. It is square and flat. In the center a hole eight feet square was cut and posts from beneath supported the beams. The eight foot hole extended down through the three floors of the building to the first floor. Through it, rafters were hauled from the first floor. There was a quantity of lumber already on the roof when in hauling up another rafter, the rafter swung around/dislodged the posts supporting the roof, let the roof sag toward the eight foot hole and the ten men plunged through the temporary shaft. Schrowang and Manning went straight through without touching the sides. To this fact they owe their lives. Shook, it is supposed, struck several beams on his downward plunge. He landed in a heap on the ground floor. The rest of the men fell through like sand in a funnel. But fortunately the lumber did not all fall through the hole with them.

Pine Plains Register

FEBRUARY 18, 1915

One man is dead, one seriously injured, and three others were badly injured last Friday afternoon, about 2 o'clock, when the roof of the new Memorial Hall suddenly collapsed, hurling six men to the first floor of the building, a distance of 38 feet. The dead man is Adelbert Shook, of Pine Plains, carpenter, 40 years old. Mr. Shook was injured internally, and died three hours after the accident. He is survived by a wife and two children—a boy and a girl—also by his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Reuben Shook. The injured are: Marcus Manning, the contractor, of Poughkeepsie. Right ankle broken and several bruises about the body.

Edward Schrowang, proprietor of the Stissing House. Fracture of the upper part of the left thigh and is confined to his room in the Stissing House. He is quite badly bruised about the body. Mr. Schrowang had gone to the building, as he had done nearly every day, and had not been on the roof more than a few minutes before the crash came.

George Cahill, of Pine Plains, bruised, and rupture of the ligaments of the right shoulder joint.

Robert Goodchild, carpenter foreman, bruises about the back. Others on the job, were Harold Sharp, William Murphy, Walter Kilmer and Nelson Winans.

Adelbert Shook, a Pine Plains carpenter, fell to his death while working on the roof.

This accident contributed to early financial woes for Memorial Hall, from which it never completely recovered.

CARPENTER SUES TO RECOVER \$5,000—
Alleging that he was not insured under the Compensation Law by his employer as required by legislation, Richard Goodchild, one of the several carpenters injured in the collapse of the roof on the Memorial Hall at Pine Plains, has brought suit for \$5,000 against the contractor, Marcus W. Manning. Manning under the firm name of M. W. Manning and Company had the work in charge. The suit is one of the first of its kind in the state and its result will be looked upon with interest by employers and employee in this vicinity. Under the terms of the Compensation Law an injured employee receives two-thirds of his wages during the time he is disabled and an allowance for doctor's services. Goodchild claims that he was not insured under the Compensation Law and his present suit is to collect under the clauses of the Compensation Act. The roof of the Memorial Hall collapsed on February 19th last while seven or eight men were working on top. One man was killed in the plunge to the basement and several were seriously injured. The workmen slid along the roof down the hole, landing on the ground in the basement amid a debris of boards. The case will go over until the January term of Supreme Court—
Pokeepsie Eagle News.

Old timers in town say, that the addition of the third floor, not originally planned on, walls that were eight rather than the required 16 inches thick contributed to the cave-in.

Investigation of the accident absolved the contractor of blame. The walls were strengthened with steel columns that remain today.

The donor had left a maintenance fund but, when the building was under construction, the third floor collapsed and the court authorized the use of this fund to deal with the problem. Sad to

Rumored to be named in honor of a worker that was killed in the construction of the building, Memorial Hall has gone through many phases in its long, colorful history.

The town eventually forgot who the original donor was and why it was named Memorial Hall. This was from a 2004 article in the local paper!