

Pieces of Iowa's Past, published by the Iowa State Capitol Tour Guides weekly during the legislative session, features historical facts about Iowa, the Capitol, and the early workings of state government. All historical publications are reproduced here with the actual spelling, punctuation, and grammar retained.

March 18, 2015

THIS WEEK:

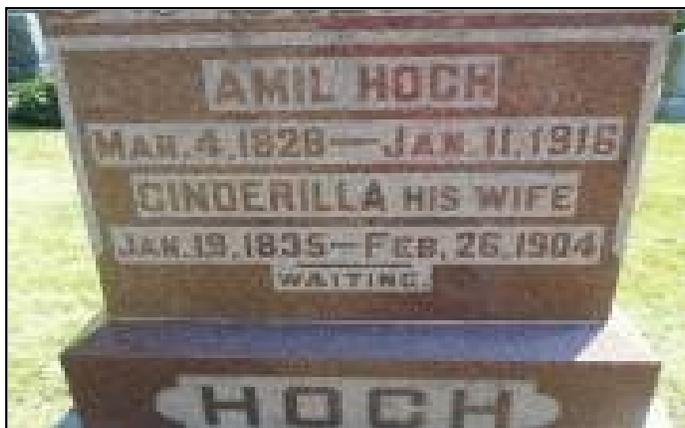
A Sorrowful 'Cinderilla' Story at the Statehouse

BACKGROUND:

The 13th General Assembly convened January 11, 1904, and adjourned April 12, 1904, a 93-day session. One week prior to the opening day of session, January 4, 1904, a disastrous fire damaged the House of Representatives and offices behind the House Chamber. The Supreme Court Chamber and other offices located below the House of Representatives were also damaged.

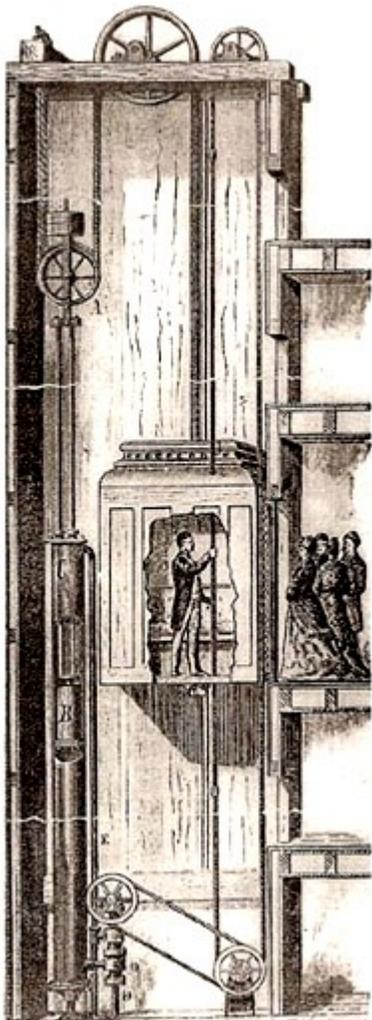
Just a few short weeks later, February 26, 1904, the unfortunate elevator accident took place in the Capitol. After reviewing the brief explanation of the accident, we believe it happened on the third floor. The entry to the elevators on the third floor level is from the back of the elevator cars. From there, the elevator operator would have been less likely to notice the ladies' movements. Research does not tell us if this occurred in the north or south elevator.

A Sorrowful 'Cinderilla' Story at the Statehouse

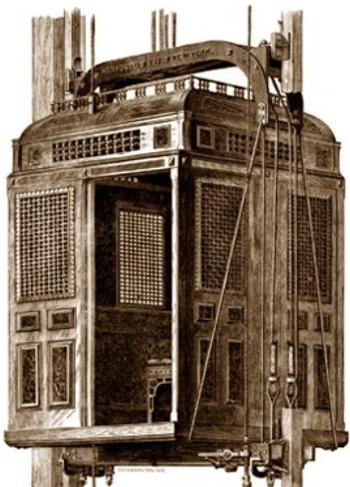


On February 26, 1904, Mrs. C. B. Fountain, of Valley Junction, Iowa, and her mother, Cinderilla (with an "i" instead of an "e" in the third syllable) Hoch, were crushed to death in an elevator accident at the Iowa State Capitol.

**Grave of Amil and Cinderilla Hoch
Woodland Cemetery, Des Moines, Iowa**



Early elevator system as used in the Iowa State Capitol during the first few years of the 20th Century.



THE INDIANAPOLIS JOURNAL

Saturday, February 27, 1904.

WOMEN CRUSHED TO DEATH IN ELEVATOR

Horrible Fatality to Mother and
Daughter in the Statehouse at
Des Moines, Ia.

DES MOINES, Ia., Feb. 26—Mrs. C. B. Fountain and her mother, Mrs. A. Hoch, of Valley Junction, Ia., were crushed to death to-day in an elevator accident at the Statehouse. Mrs. Hoch was the last person to get on the elevator, and the operator started the cage before she had fully got out of reach of the door. Her daughter, noticing her danger, reached out to grab her and was caught between the cage and ceiling and crushed, killing her instantly.

The operator then reversed the power and the mother made a plunge for her daughter and was caught between the floor of the building and the roof of the cage. Before the bodies were released both were dead.

The Call=Chronicle=Examiner

SAN FRANCISCO, February 27, 1904

WOMEN KILLED IN AN ELEVATOR

Accident in State House at
Des Moines Causes Death
Of Mother and Daughter

MISTAKE OF OPERATOR

Cage Is Started Before Victims
Are Inside, and Both
Are Caught and Crushed



The Evening Star.

WASHINGTON, D. C., February 26, 1904

CRUSHED TO DEATH.

Mother and Daughter Meet Shocking
Death in an Elevator

DES MOINES, Iowa, February 26.—Mrs. C. B. Fountain and her mother, Mrs. A. Hogh of Valley Junction, Iowa, were crushed to death today in an elevator at the state house. They were caught between the elevator and an upper floor of the building. Mrs. Fountain lost her life in an attempt to save her mother.



The Iowa General Assembly provided a monetary recompense to the families of the two victims of the elevator accident in the amount of \$7,500.*

** In 2015, this amount would equal approximately \$195,000.*

SENATE FILE No. 313—By APPROPRIATION COMMITTEE.

A BILL

FOR AN ACT APPROPRIATING THE SUM OF SEVENTY-FIVE HUNDRED DOLLARS (\$7,500) TO BE PAID TO CHARLES B. FOUNTAIN, HAROLD FOUNTAIN AND AMIL HOCH IN SETTLEMENT OF ALL CLAIMS AGAINST THE STATE OF IOWA BY REASON OF THE DEATH OF MRS. CHARLES B. FOUNTAIN AND MRS. AMIL HOCH, WHO WERE KILLED BY AN ACCIDENT WHICH OCCURRED IN ONE OF THE ELEVATORS AT THE STATE HOUSE ON THE TWENTY-SIXTH DAY OF FEBRUARY, 1904.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA :

Section 1. There is hereby appropriated out of the money in the State Treasury not otherwise appropriated, the sum of seventy-five hundred dollars (\$7,500) as payment in full of all claims against the State of Iowa arising from the death of Mrs. Charles B. Fountain and Mrs. Amil Hoch, who were killed on the twenty-sixth day of February, 1904, by an accident which occurred in one of the elevators of the State House on that day.

Sec. 2. That the sum of money hereby appropriated shall be paid to the following named persons and in the following named sums:

To Charles B. Fountain, husband of Mrs. Charles B. Fountain, two thousand dollars (\$2,000);

To Amil Hoch, husband of Mrs. Amil Hoch, twenty-five hundred dollars (\$2,500);

To Harold Fountain, son of Mrs. Charles B. Fountain, three thousand dollars (\$3,000).

Sec. 3. The Auditor of State of the State of Iowa is hereby authorized to draw his warrant upon the State treasury in favor of Charles B. Fountain for the sum of two thousand dollars (\$2,000), and to Amil Hoch for the sum of twenty-five hundred dollars (\$2,500), when said Charles B. Fountain and Amil Hoch shall file with the Auditor of State a receipt acknowledging full payment of all claims for damages against the State sustained by them

6 by reason of the death of the said Mrs. Charles B. Fountain and Mrs. Amil Hoch. The Audi-
7 tor of State of the State of Iowa is hereby further authorized to draw his warrant upon the
8 State treasury for the sum of three thousand dollars (\$3,000), payable to the order of the
9 legally appointed guardian of Harold Fountain, when such guardian shall file with the Audi-
10 tor of State his receipt acknowledging full payment of all claims for damages against the
11 State sustained by the said Harold Fountain, arising out of the death of Mrs. Charles B.
12 Fountain.

Sec 4. This act, being deemed of immediate importance, shall take effect and be in
2 force from and after its publication in the Register and Leader and the Des Moines Daily
3 Capital, newspapers published in the city of Des Moines, Iowa.