

THE HARTFORD CIRCUS FIRE



Mary Abatte, thirty-four, victim of the circus fire. Photo courtesy of Jean Walker

Mrs. Mary D. (Sicuranza) Abatte, age thirty-four, and her son Donald R. Abatte, five, of Ashford Street, Hartford, were both found seriously injured at the circus grounds after the fire and taken to Municipal Hospital for treatment. Despite the efforts of the staff, Donald passed away during the early morning hours of Friday, July 7, and his mother died that night at the hospital. Mary left behind her husband, a daughter and another son.

Mrs. Gertrude (Wylie) Adams of May Street, Hartford, widow of Howard Eldridge Adams, was born on January 19, 1882, in Mulgrave, Canada, and was found dead with grandson Roy Bell Jr. at the circus grounds after the fire. A gold

wedding ring was found on body 1549 at the State Armory morgue, which was identified as Mrs. Adams by her son-in-law.

Miss Elaine Barbara Akerlind, age fifteen, of Colonial Street, Hartford, was found dead at the circus grounds after the fire and was identified as body 2104 at the State Armory morgue by her brothers-in-law, who were able to recognize a ring with a missing stone that Elaine was wearing, given to her by her sister. Miss Akerlind was intending to resume her studies as a junior at Bulkeley High School in September. She also had recently been accepted in the nurse's aid program at Hartford Hospital and was waiting for assignment. She frequently took care of children to earn money for the household after the death of her father, John Akerlind, in October 1942 and was looking forward to finding paid secretarial work when she turned sixteen in the fall.



Elaine Akerlind, fifteen, victim of the circus fire. Photo courtesy of Connecticut State Library, Hartford Circus Fire Claimant Files, RG003.