

SSID

Fact Sheet

Worst School Violence Incident in History



Bath School Disaster

A dynamite blast rocked the Bath Consolidated School in Bath Township, about 7 miles northeast of Lansing, Michigan on May 18, 1927. The bombings killed 45 people and injured 58, making it **the worst school violence in U.S. history.**

The blast destroyed the south wing of the building and killed **38 children and 8 adults**. Subsequent investigation determined that an embittered school-board member, Andrew Kehoe, who was resentful of the higher taxes that resulted from the school's construction in 1922 and which he blamed for the impending foreclosure on his farm, had planted the dynamite in the basement of the school. There were an additional 500 pounds of dynamite in the rest of the school that failed to detonate.

Soon afterwards, Kehoe took his own life and four bystanders, including the school superintendent Emory Huyck, by detonating dynamite in his truck as he sat parked in front of the school while rescue workers searched through the rubble.

The next morning, Kehoe's wife was found dead at their farm, apparently killed by Kehoe who had rigged explosives that burned down his house and other buildings on the farm before the school blast.



Apparently, Kehoe had spent much of that spring stringing wires and hiding dynamite in the basement of the 300-student school. Kehoe did not arouse any suspicion because he was known as a penny-pincher on the school board, and people assumed he was doing work himself to save the cost of hiring an electrician

On the morning of May 18, the last day of classes for the school year, Kehoe fixed a hinge on a school door as he greeted children arriving for classes. Then he got in his car, pulled back a few yards and waited. At 9:10 a.m., as students sat in class, a clock mechanism set off the school explosion. Thirty-six children and two adults died at the scene. Another 43 children suffered serious wounds, and 100 others were treated for shock, burns and cuts. Kehoe was quoted as saying to children as they got off the bus that morning, "So, this is your last day?"

*Source: <http://www.michmarkers.com/startup.asp?startpage=S0631.htm>