- Pemberton Mill Tragedy Timeline -

1845

A group of Boston investors form the Essex Company with the goal to build a new mill city.

1847

Lawrence incorporated as Town.

1853

Pemberton Mill building was built for $800,000, by industrialists J. Pickering Putnam and John Amory Lowell.
The Building was designed by architect Charles Bigelow.

1853

Lawrence was officially incorporated as a city by the Massachusetts Legislature.

1857

National Financial Crash
Pemberton Corporation goes bankrupt.

1858

Pemberton investors sell the building in 1858 to George Howe and David Nevins for only 325,000. The new owners install more heavy machinery to increase the mills output and earn more money

1860

On a rainy winter day in 1860, 21-year-old textile worker Rosanna Kenney reported feeling a deep vibration within the five-story, 284-foot-long brick Pemberton Mill Building.

Jan. 10, 1860

During the work day, workers move heavy machines in a reorganization of the fourth level causing the building's floor to shake underfoot even more than the building already did.

Around 5 pm

The Pemberton Mill collapses, killing dozens of people instantly and trapping hundreds more under tons of rubble.

Around 11 pm

A second disaster strikes. Two rescuers were climbing the rubble around 11 p.m. when a lantern broke and spilled its flaming oil over nearby debris.

Information Courtesy of the LHC