

Charles Henry Blumer

(- 13 Aug 1904)

Blumer. Suddenly on Saturday, August 13, 1904, Dr. Charles H. Blumer, aged 30 years 4 months 28 days, beloved husband of Ada J. Blumer (nee Holmes) and eldest son of John and Christian Blumer.

The Washington Times, August 14, 1904

Horrible Tragedy Mars The Regatta

Ten Persons Drown Within Sight of Thousands, Helpless to Aid

Four Survivors Swim to Shore

Launch Upsets Ten Yards From River Bank--Boy Sees His Sister Die

Ten persons drowned yesterday afternoon in the course of the regatta held on the upper Potomac near the Aqueduct Bridge.



The boathouses which line the course were crowded and the front was gay with bright costumes and enlivened with the music of the band, while a launch was overturned by the current of a mill race, and nearly all of its fourteen passengers lost their lives.

Most of the spectators of the regatta were unconscious of the catastrophe. At the very moment while four women and six men were screaming for help and fighting for life, the boathouses rang and the shore echoed with shouts for the victor in one of the contests. And while the band, stationed on a schooner opposite the place of the disaster, greeted the contestants in the next race with a brisk melody a few friends and many strangers were tenderly lifting the limp bodies of the victims from the water.

There were no rescues. Four of the passengers escaped by swimming to the shore--only thirty feet from the boat--and lifting themselves up on the bank.

The others were found close together where their ill-fated pleasure craft had capsized, and before the last victor of the regatta had swept his light craft past the judges the bodies of those untoward pleasure-seekers had been carried to desolate homes.

The Washington Times, August 14, 1904

Personal Sketches of the Victims

Charles H. Blumer

Charles H. Blumer, thirty-three years of age, was proprietor of a drug store at North Capitol and R Streets, where he had been in business for the past six years.

He was a native of Washington and one of the young self-made business men of the city. He is a son of Mr. and Mrs. John Blumer, natives of Washington, residing at 901 E Street southeast.

He is survived by a wife and two small children.

Mrs. Blumer was Miss Ada Holmes of Southeast Washington. She is described as a beautiful young woman now in her twenty-fourth year.

Mrs. Blumer Ill

Mrs. Blumer was notified of her husband's death late yesterday evening, but bore the shock bravely. Though in delicate health, she insisted upon closing the store and taking her two children -- one five years of age and the other two -- to the home of her parents, 821 C Street southeast.

As soon as she arrived there she swooned and has regained consciousness only at brief intervals. At a late hour last night she was in a trance. The family physician and nurses at her bedside expected a crisis at any moment.

Mr. Blumer was married June 29, 1897. The elder of his two children is five years of age.

Educated in Public Schools

Charles Henry Blumer was educated in the public schools of Washington. He afterward entered the College of Pharmacy in Georgetown, graduating in 1897. In this year he opened a pharmacy in Northeast Washington. It was a small business then, but it grew rapidly, and his death leaves a valuable stand at the corner of R and North Capitol Streets. Just what disposition will be made of the business is not yet known.

Dr Blumer was a member of several secret fraternal orders, chief among which were the Knight Templars, Royal Arcanum, and Mystic Shriners.

The funeral will be held in Christ Church Southeast, at 3 o'clock Tuesday afternoon. The funeral and interment will be attended with Masonic honors.

The Washington Times, August 15, 1904

Funeral Arrangements For The Ten Victims

The funeral of Dr. Blumer will be held at Christ Church, near the Navy Yard, at the same hour. The Rev. Arthur S. Jones will be present, but the services will be under the direction of Columbia Commandery, while Lafayette Chapter, Royal Arch, and Almas Temple will have representatives, as will also Harmony Lodge, No. 17, which will conduct the ceremony at the grave in Congressional Cemetery.

The Washington Times, August 15, 1904

River Catastrophe Stops Excursion

Shriners' Trip to River View Postponed on Account of Drowning of Four Nobles

Owing to the catastrophe at the annual Potomac Regatta Saturday, which resulted in the drowning of four Nobles of the Mystic Shrine, the Christmas Charity fund excursion of Almas Temple to River View, which had been set for today has postponed.

The four Shriners who were drowned were J. Herbert Coates, William H. Smith, Charles H. Blumer and J. George Smith. All of them belonged to Columbia Commandery, Knights Templar. William H. Smith was first lieutenant in the Arab patrol and was vice chairman of the committee on donations and prizes for the excursion.

Dr. Charles A. Stewart, one of the owners of the capsized launch Recreation, who was among the saved from drowning, is also a member of the same committee.

The Evening Star, August 16, 1904

Regatta Victims Borne to Graves

At 3 o'clock the funerals of Will H. Smith and Dr. Charles H. Blumer were held. Both funerals are under the direction of Columbia Commandery, Knights Templar, of which both were prominent members. The attendance of Masons was large.

The Washington Post, August 17, 1904, p. 2

Masons Bury Victims

Closing Chapter in the Potomac Regatta Disaster

Gloom Over Communities

Columbia Commandery Officiates at Funerals of Dr. Charles H. Blumer and Mr. William H. Smith Who Were Drowned, and of Mr. Harris L. Atchison, Who Died of Bright's Disease

Burial of the dead yesterday formed the closing chapter to the regatta disaster in the Potomac last Saturday. Relatives and friends gathered round the biers, laden with flowers, and after touching funeral ceremonies conveyed the dead to the prepared resting places.

Large numbers of friends in each case were present at the funeral services. At the graves many congregated to pay their last respects and to help dear ones bear the burden more easily. Columbia Commandery, No. 2, Knights Templars, which suffered so severely by the accident, took a prominent part in the funerals. A special conclave, largely attended, was held at the Masonic Temple yesterday at 2 o'clock to attend the funerals of the brothers who had lost their lives in the disaster and that of Harris L. Atchison, who died from Bright's disease Saturday. Notices of the funerals had been generally distributed. Commander J. Harry Cunningham headed the delegation to the Atchison funeral. The generalissimo, D.H. Fenton, conducted the funeral of Sir Knight Charles H. Blumer, and the captain general, John A. Moyer, that of Sir Knight William H. Smith.

Funeral of Dr. Blumer

The funeral of Dr. Blumer, in Christ's Church, Navy Yard, was conducted by Rev. Arthur S. Johns, the rector, assisted by the Knights Templars, Columbia Commandery, Knights Templars, officiated at the Church, and Harmony Lodge, No. 17, F.A.A.M., conducted the ceremony at the grave. There were assigned from the Columbia Commandery to conduct the services D.H. Fenton, J.J. Harrower, H.C. Easterday, Alexander Grant, E..C. Elmore, G.A.. Kneessi, and Charles W. King. The interment was in Congressional Cemetery.

Thirty-six other knights were in attendance. The pallbearers were in attendance. The pallbearers were G.A. Kneessi Charles W. King, from Columbia Commandery; two from Lafayette chapter of Royal Arch, and two from Harmony Lodge. The interment was in Congressional Cemetery.

...

The Washington Post, August 24, 1904, p. 7

Wills Filed

Justice Stafford, sitting in the Probate Court yesterday appointed Attorney Maurice D. Rosenberg administrator of the estate of Charles Henry Blumer, who was drowned at the time the launch Recreation capsized during the Potomac regatta, on August 13. The appointment was pursuant to a petition filed by the widow, Ada Josephine Blumer.