

Sarah Cecelia Cross

(- 25 Jan 1922)

Cross. Suddenly, Wednesday, January 25, 1922 at 12 noon at her residence, 1359 E street southeast, Sarah Cecelia, beloved wife of John H. Cross and mother of James H. Cross. Funeral Saturday, 2:30 p.m. from the chapel of Frank Geier's Sons Co., 1113 7th street northwest. Interment at Congressional Cemetery. Funeral private.

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Woman Dies In Flames As Dress Catches Fire

Mrs. Sarah C. Cross Burned As Gas Heater Ignites Garments Efforts To Save Fail

Mrs. Sarah Cecelia Cross, sixty-one years old, wife of John H. Cross, 1359 E street southeast, was burned to death in a bedroom on the second floor of the family residence about noon today. Her dress ignited from a gas heater in her room and she was fatally burned before her daughter-in-law, Mrs. Ethel Cross, reached her.

Mrs. Cross and Robert Cross, her two-and-one-half-year-old grandson, were in the room, the daughter-in-law being on the lower floor attending to household duties. The latter heard screams for help and rushed to the upper floor. She made an effort to smother the fire with blankets, but was unable to save her mother-in-law's life.

Neighbors responded to calls for help and an alarm sent in from box 524 summoned several companies of firemen. A record run was made by a surgeon from Emergency Hospital, but he reached the house too late to save Mrs. Cross, death having occurred before his arrival.

Mrs. Cross was a native of Philadelphia. She had been a resident of Southeast Washington since her marriage about thirty years ago, and attended the Church of the Holy Comforter. Funeral arrangements have not been completed. John H. Cross, a machinist, is her only son.

The Evening Star, January 26, 1922, p. 1

Gas Heater Users Warned To Safety

Woman's Death Brings Advice to Buy Those With Flame Protected

Fire Chief George Watson today advised the people of Washington to buy gas heaters in which the flame is so protected that it will not easily come in contact with wearing apparel. He was prompted to make the appeal by the death of Mrs. Sarah C. Cross, sixty-one, of 1359 E street southeast, who was fatally burned yesterday when her dress caught fire from a gas heater.

The fire chief also took occasion to warn users of gas heaters of the danger of rubber tubing. Metal-covered tubing is not only safer, but more enduring, he said.

Commissioner Oyster, who supervises the police and fire departments, expressed the opinion that casualties from gas heaters would be greatly reduced by an educational campaign to instruct the public in the danger of getting too close to such heaters.

The Commissioner said he would confer with Chief Watson to determine how the fire department might cooperate in preventing tragedies such as befell Mrs. Cross. Chief Watson said he believed all gas heaters should be made in such a manner that it would be difficult for a person's clothing to come in contact with the flames.

Records of the fire department show that during 1921 many fires were caused by small oil stoves having been placed too close to beds, curtains and partitions. This is a source of fire which could be prevented by greater care on the part of the public, department officials believe.