

Ralph Davis

(- 9 Sep 1902)

Davis. Suddenly on September 9, 1902, Ralph T. Davis, eldest son of Carrie H. and George E. Davis.

A precious one from us has gone

A voice we loved is stilled.

A place is vacant in our home

Which never can be filled.

By His Mother

Funeral took place from his late residence, Nicholson Street, Twining City, DC, Thursday, September 11 at 2 p.m.

The Evening Star, September 10, 1902, p. 16

Loses Life in Water

Ralph Davis, Aged Fourteen, Drowned in the Eastern Branch

The first fatal accident of the present gunning season occurred about 3 o'clock yesterday afternoon, when Ralph Davis, the fourteen-year-old son of George Davis of Twining City, was drowned from a skiff while shooting birds in the Eastern branch, at a point near the Pennsylvania avenue bridge. The body was recovered about two hours later and was carried to Bailey's boat house, where it was viewed by the coroner, who, after learning the facts, issued a certificate of accidental death.

About noon yesterday the unfortunate boy, accompanied by Clarence Thorn, a young companion, secured a skiff and rowed over on the flats near the bridge to shoot reed birds. A few minutes after 2 o'clock the boat upset and the boys received a ducking. The boat was soon righted, however, and the young hunters resumed their sport. A little while later the Thorn boy, who was cold from the wetting he received when the boat upset, decided to go ashore, which he did. After Thorn had reached shore he heard a shot, and on turning around he saw his companion struggling in the water. He ran to a boat house nearby conducted by Harry Bailey and informed him of the accident to Davis. Mr. Bailey secured a boat and quickly rowed to the scene, where he found the upturned skiff, but no trace of Davis. He returned to shore and notified Policeman C.F. Osterman, who returned to the flats with Bailey. Together they instituted a thorough search, and after a short time the body was found below the surface of the water entangled in some thick weeds. Considerable difficulty was experienced in releasing the body of the unfortunate lad, and when it was finally brought to the surface weeds were wrapped around the arms and legs.

The body was removed to Mr. Bailey's boat house, where it was later seen by Coroner Nevitt, who, as stated, issued a certificate of death by drowning.

The unfortunate boy was well liked by all who knew him and was very popular in the neighborhood of his home.

A broken patrol box, known officially as No. 12 in the Anacostia district, played its part to the inconvenience of officers and others when it was most needed yesterday following the drowning. When Officer John Stewart, on duty at Twining City, was informed of the accident, he endeavored to communicate with the police station at Anacostia for the purpose of summoning assistance. After trying vainly to put in operation a box that had been out of order for a number of hours, it is said, he was compelled to send a messenger boy on a bicycle to communicate the facts in the case and ask that men in boats be sent to the scene. Later other messengers had to be employed in the same way. While it is

not contended that the boy's life could have been saved had the box been in order, much delay would have been prevented and the authorities informed of the facts much earlier than was the case.

The Evening Star, September 11, 1902, p. 5

Funeral of Ralph Davis

The Boy Was Drowned in Eastern Branch Tuesday Afternoon

The funeral of Ralph Davis, the fourteen-year-old boy who was drowned from a skiff while gunning on the Eastern branch, near Twining City, Tuesday afternoon about 2:30 o'clock, was held this afternoon shortly before 3 o'clock from the home of his parents, Mr. and Mrs. George E. Davis, on Nicholson street, Twining City. The service was conducted by a lady member of Mrs. Luttrell's mission in this city, at which place the deceased lad had attended Sunday School. The pallbearers, who were chosen from the companions of the dead boy, were as follows: Frank Farrell, William Robinson, Charles Robinson, Clarence Thorne, Guy Thorne and Eulie Thurm. The sympathy of residents of the community for the bereaved parents was shown in a number of floral pieces which rested about the casket. The remains of the deceased were interred in the Congressional Cemetery.

The dead boy was well liked by those who knew him. He was but a boy in years, but was remarkably well developed, standing nearly six feet tall. His parents discovered marks on the dead lad's face to indicate that the gun he was using on the river had struck him as it was discharged by reason of recoiling, thus it is believed causing him to fall overboard and become entangled in the river weed. The father of the boy is employed in the Washington Navy Yard.