

James P. Dudley

(7 Oct 1895 - 1 Oct 1905)

Dudley. Suddenly by drowning on Sunday, October 1, 1905, George Bernard Dudley, aged 18 years 6 months and James Percival Dudley, aged 10 years, beloved sons of Joseph and Agnes Dudley. Funeral services will be held at St. Peter's Church, Tuesday, October 3 at 9 a.m. Relatives and friends respectfully invited.

The Evening Star, October 2, 1905, p. 16

Drowning Accident

Two Brothers Lose Lives Near Gas Plant

A drowning accident occurred on the Eastern branch near the gas plant yesterday afternoon, in which there were two victims, Percy Dudley, ten years old, and his brother, George Dudley, who was sixteen years old. The older boy lost his life while trying to rescue his brother, who had accidentally fallen overboard. Both bodies were recovered before 6 o'clock and removed to the home of their parents, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Dudley, 1358 K street southeast. The accident occurred early in the afternoon and at a time when there were many persons about the branch in boats and others on shore. Some of them witnessed the affair, but were unable to reach the boys in time to save their lives. Boy friends of the Dudley's were in other boats on the branch and made an effort to reach them when they saw the danger, but both boys had disappeared beneath the surface of the water by the time they reached the vicinity of the unoccupied boat, and there was nothing they could do except to make an effort to find the bodies. When they found their efforts were fruitless they went ashore and told the police of what had occurred.

How It Occurred

Persons who witnessed the accident said that the younger of the brothers was seen to leave his seat in the boat and start to pass George, who was doing the rowing. The latter was steadying the boat with his oars and the accident would not have happened had not Percy struck his foot and stumbled, falling overboard before he could recover himself.

It is said that George waited for him to come to the surface of the water and then plunged from the side of the boat to his rescue. George was known as a good swimmer, and had it not been for the excited condition of his little brother, who immediately clutched George's neck, both might have been saved. However, the little fellow wrapped his two arms about his brother's neck, while the latter struggled desperately to keep above the water, and at the same time reach the empty boat, a short distance away.

While the two boys were struggling for their lives in the water their friends hurriedly rowed toward them and shouted to some men on the gas house wharf for help. When they arrived within a few yards of the drowning boys the latter disappeared beneath the surface of the water. They went down to their deaths, observers say, clasped in each other's arms.

A rowboat containing two men from the gas house soon reached the scene and they began diving for the bodies, but no trace of them could be found.

Some of the drowned lads' little companions went to the Dudley home and broke the news to the parents, who were overcome with grief.

The Evening Star, October 3, 1905, p. 6

Funeral of Dudley Boys

The funeral services over the remains of Percy and George Dudley, the boys who were drowned in the Eastern branch Sunday, took place this morning at 9 o'clock from St. Peter's Roman Catholic Church. The Rev. Father O'Brien celebrated low requiem mass for the repose of the souls. Later he delivered a short address of consolation to the parents and friends. The interment was in the Congressional cemetery.