

Leroy Herbert

(Apr 1903 – 13 Oct 1905)

The Washington Post, October 13, 1905

Little Boy Badly Burned

Child Ignited Clothes While Playing With Matches

While playing with matches at his home 1306 H street northeast yesterday afternoon Leroy Herbert, three years of age, set fire to his clothing and was severely burned about his hands, face and body. The boy's mother was in another part of the house at the time and hearing the boy's screams for help and rushed to him and put out the flames. The boy was taken to the Casualty Hospital and later transferred to the Children's Hospital where his condition is considered pendulous.

The Washington Post, October 16, 1905

Dying Boy's Long Trip

Sent from Hospital to Hospital in Patrol Wagon

Was Carried Forty Blocks

Frightfully Burned Little Leroy Herbert Was Treated at Casualty,

Then Wrapped in a Blanket and Sent to Children's Hospital --

Surgeon in Charge Says He Knew Condition Was Critical

"It is the rule of our institution not to care for children patients, beyond the regular emergency treatment," said Dr. Baldwin, head physician at the Casualty Hospital yesterday, in speaking of the case of Leroy Herbert, the three-year-old son of Mr. & Mrs. Charles W. Herbert, of 1366 H street northeast, who was taken to the hospital to be treated for severe burns about the face and body Thursday afternoon; and who was later removed to the Children's Hospital, where he died the following day.

Between the time the child was burned at 1366 H street northeast and the time he died at Children's Hospital, Thirteenth and W streets northwest, he had been borne in a patrol wagon, first to the Casualty Hospital, 706 Massachusetts avenue northeast and thence to Children's Hospital, a total distance of more than forty blocks, or about four miles. The temperature that afternoon was about 53 degrees.

May Have Hastened Death

The moving of the child from the hospital, in view of the seriousness of the injury and the coldness of the weather, has caused the parents, relatives, and friends of the little boy, to be much agitated. They contend that the boy should either have been allowed to remain at Casualty Hospital, where he was first taken, or that he should have been taken to the Children's Hospital in the first place and not subject to the cold air and the jolting and inconvenience of moving, which is claimed to have hastened his death.

While his mother was busy in a room on the first floor, Leroy was left in room on the second floor, and in amusing himself, he lighted some matches, with the result that his clothing became ignited. His screams were heard by Mrs. Herbert, who ran to the room, where she found the little fellow lying on the floor, his clothes a mass of flames. She beat out the blaze, and a patrolman of the Ninth precinct, who was called in, sent for the ambulance of the Casualty Hospital, but received word that it was out. He then sent for the patrol wagon from the Ninth precinct and hurried the boy to the hospital in it.

Knew Condition Was Critical

The child was in critical condition, and there was little hope of his recovery. However, after he had received treatment and soothing bandages had been applied, he was wrapped in a blanket, replaced in the patrol wagon, and driven to the Children's Hospital, where he was placed on a cot and died in hours later. The matter was referred to Dr. Baldwin at Casualty Hospital yesterday, and he said there are no facilities there for treating children's cases, and that it has always been to custom at his hospital, if necessary, to detain children patients because they are not in a condition to go home, to send them to the Children's Hospital, where, he said, there is every facility to care for them. He said he treated the Herbert boy when the latter was admitted to the hospital, and that he was aware at the time that the child had little chance of living, but, as it had always been the rule not to keep "children cases," he ordered the child sent to the Children's Hospital, despite his knowledge of the serious condition.

The Children's Hospital is not equipped with an emergency or accident room, and for that reason injured children are always conveyed to the nearest hospital which is so equipped.

Submitted by Charles J. Herbert, son of Charles W. Hebert, Jr., older brother of Leroy:

Leroy Herbert, born April 1903, died 13 October 1905. Leroy was buried in site 115, range 69 with his grandfather Peter Eagen. Charles W. Herbert III was also buried in the same site on 3 June 1925.