

William P. Luddington

(- 12 Mar 1905)

The Evening Star, March 9, 1905, p. 16

Three Cases of Smallpox

Patients in District Hospital Under Treatment

Luddington is said to be a civil engineer from St. Louis, Mo., and his condition is regarded as serious. He came to Washington about two weeks ago and stopped at a local hotel. He was taken with a chill last Thursday and was removed to the George Washington University Hospital, where he has been under close observation and isolated from the other patients, under care of two nurses. When smallpox developed the health authorities made a careful examination of the patient and removed him last night to the smallpox hospital, the two nurses being placed under quarantine on the top floor of the nurse's home.

The Evening Star, Monday, March 13, 1905, p. 3

Last Rites Performed

Funeral of William Luddington Takes Place From Smallpox Hospital

The funeral of William P. Luddington, formerly of St. Louis, who died early yesterday morning of smallpox in the smallpox hospital, took place shortly after noon today. The interment was made in Congressional cemetery and the funeral was in charge of the District health authorities.

Luddington was a civil engineer of St. Louis, and while on a business trip to New York city he determined to come to Washington to witness the inauguration ceremonies. He notified his wife to that effect, and she took the opportunity to visit her mother in Muncie, Ind. While there she became ill.

Luddington was taken to the smallpox hospital from the Columbian University Hospital last Wednesday, and his condition was said to be serious from the time of his removal. He had received word that Mrs. Luddington was ill in Muncie, and he refused to allow the authorities to notify her of his condition. Last Friday, however, the physicians were convinced that his chances for recovery were very slight and they wired Mrs. Luddington, who left her sick bed and came on to Washington. She stated that she had formerly been a trained nurse and insisted on going into the smallpox hospital and nursing her husband until the end, which was finally permitted by the health authorities.

The Washington Times, March 12, 1905

Loving Wife Loses Race With Death

Comes to Nurse Spouse at Pest Hospital

He Expires Shortly After

William Luddington, of St. Louis, the Victim—

Woman Sped Here From Muncie

After leaving a sick bed to come here and nurse her husband who had been stricken with smallpox, making the race against death from Indiana, Mrs. William Luddington got into Washington last night too late--her husband dying a few hours after she had reached his cot in the pest hospital.

Luddington who was a well-known engineer of St. Louis, came East on business and while in New York determined to come to Washington for the inauguration. He arrived Friday and was stricken Sunday. The doctors without his knowledge telegraphed for his wife, who was at Muncie, Ind.

A Civil Engineer

The cause of the dead man is fraught with more than ordinary interest. In his home city, St. Louis, Mo., he ranks as one of the leading civil engineers, and it was a combination of business and pleasure which in the first place brought him to the East.

After leaving home he determined to witness the inauguration of President Roosevelt, and came to Washington, arriving here on February 23. His wife was notified and she chose the opportunity to visit her mother in Muncie, Ind. On March 2, Mr. Luddington was in the midst of a Turkish bath when he was seized with a series of severe chills.

Becoming very ill, he was removed directly from the bath house to the George Washington University Hospital. From the first his case was regarded as suspicious, and both he and his nurses were placed in the isolated ward. More and more pronounced became the symptoms of smallpox, and three days later the patient was transferred to the past house.

In the meantime Mr. Luddington had received word that his wife was ill in Muncie, and despite the serious turn to his malady he refused to allow her to be alarmed by news of his condition. On Friday, however, the physicians were convinced that Luddington had not one chance in a thousand to recover, and without his knowledge telegrams were sent to his wife and his mother.

The Evening Star, March 22, 1905

Watched Over Victim; Nurse Has Smallpox

Miss Edna Hensor Cared for William P. Luddington, Who Died, and Caught His Trouble
Devotion to duty, which led her to the bedside of a man suffering from smallpox, has resulted seriously for Miss Edna Henson, a nurse at the George Washington University Hospital. Late yesterday afternoon she developed symptoms of the disease and was taken to the smallpox hospital.

Miss Henson and Miss Mary Carey, both nurses in the hospital, were detailed to care for William P. Luddington, the prominent civil engineer from St. Louis, who was stricken with smallpox while here for the inauguration. At first the nature of Luddington's ailment was not known, but smallpox was suspected and the two nurses were isolated with him.

Luddington subsequently developed a full-fledged case of smallpox, and was taken to the smallpox hospital, where he died. Since then the two nurses and Luddington's wife, who also risked her life to go to his bedside, have been confined to the detention camp.

Dr. Fowler, who has charge of the smallpox patients, and who discovered symptoms of the malady in Miss Henson, said today that he anticipated she would have only a slight attack.

Mrs. Luddington and Miss Carey are nearing the end of their period of quarantine without developing any premonitory signs of the infection.

The Washington Times, March 23, 1905

Smallpox Break Out In Hospital

Two, Probably Three, Nurses Down With Malady

Ninety patients and the entire corps of nurses and doctors at the George Washington Hospital, in H street northwest, between Thirteenth and Fourteenth streets, are under quarantine. Five nurses from the hospital are at the detention camp, near Eighteenth and D streets southeast, and two others are in the smallpox hospital.

Smallpox broke out yesterday afternoon in the ranks of the nurses, and a veritable epidemic of the dread disease is feared within the four walls of the George Washington University Hospital. Everyone in the institution, doctors, nurses, attendants, patients, and servants, is being vaccinated.

Traced to Luddington

All the cases are traced back to William P. Luddington, the St. Louis civil engineer, who developed smallpox while here to attend the inauguration, and who was admitted to the hospital and given treatment before the nature of his malady was discovered.

Luddington was taken ill in a Turkish bath on March 2, and carried directly to the hospital. On March 5, his ailment was diagnosed as measles and not until then was he placed in an isolated ward. Three more days passed, during which time Miss Edna Henson and Miss Mary Cary, two nurses, were confined to the same section of the hospital to attend Luddington. On March 8, Health Official officials were called in and without hesitancy pronounced Luddington's malady smallpox, and he was taken to the smallpox hospital. There he grew steadily worse until death ensued on March 12, only a few hours after his wife reached his bedside.

The Nurses Vaccinated

In the meantime, Miss Henson and Miss Cary were vaccinated and isolated on the top floor of the George Washington University Hospital. Miss Henson's vaccination did not "take," and, as stated in yesterday's Times, she was stricken with smallpox on Saturday and was removed to the smallpox hospital on Tuesday. Her case is pronounced a mild one and it is thought she will recover.

Miss Rebecca Blue, a special nurse, caring for a patient on the third floor, was taken sick Tuesday night. Three hours later the unmistakable eruptions of smallpox made their appearance and increased with each passing moment. Yesterday afternoon she was taken to the smallpox hospital. The patient nursed by Miss Blue has been constantly exposed to the danger of infection, and particularly so because weakened by other disease. Other nurses, doctors, and attendants have also been closely associated with Miss Blue, and subject to infection.

Miss Thompson Ill

Later yesterday Miss Thompson, another special nurse on the first floor was taken sick and as a precautionary measure she was sent to the detention camp. It was stated this morning that her ailment was almost certainly smallpox. The man patient who was under Miss Thompson's care and the patient's wife, have been quarantined on the first floor of the hospital.

When the Health Office was informed of the gravity of the situation at the George Washington University Hospital, Dr. Woodward and his assistant, Dr. Fowler, made a personal examination of all wards, and afterward drew up an agreement, which was signed by W.F.R. Phillips, the superintendent of the hospital. By the terms of this no new patients will be taken into the hospital and no one admitted to the institution for any purpose without the consent of the superintendent or of the Health Office. Patients not under strict quarantine may leave when the Health Officer has been notified so that they may be kept under observation. Entrance to the new portion of the hospital has been barred and the officer of the institution has been moved from the first to the second floor.

The Evening Star, March 24, 1905

Smallpox Alarms Hospital Nurses

Two More Join Those Under Surveillance

Six in Detention Camp

Three Have Been Sent to the Smallpox Hospital

Mrs. Luddington to Be Released

Although seven nurses had already been removed to the quarantine station and three of them subsequently taken to the smallpox hospital, other nurses and attendants at the George Washington

University Hospital seemingly accepted the situation with fortitude until yesterday. Then, as one of the doctors expressed it, there was a veritable stampede.

It was all because of the discovery that two more nurses may have been exposed to infection from Mr. Luddington, who was in the hospital for three days before the virulent nature of his malady was discovered, or from one of the three nurses who are now under treatment in the smallpox hospital.

First Evidence of Panic

The resident staff at the hospital were positive in their statements last night that these two nurses, Miss Elizabeth Hazzard and Miss Mary Chase, were in no real danger. Their removal was characterized as the first evidence of panic since the epidemic began.

Yesterday afternoon, Miss Birdie B. Thompson, another nurse in quarantine developed marked symptoms of smallpox. She was promptly placed under treatment in the hospital, her case marking the third resulting from exposure to infection while in the line of duty.

As yet, there has been no class of nurses graduated from the George Washington University Hospital. The young women affected are all pupil nurses in the various classes. Nine have been taken to the detention camp and three from there to the smallpox hospital.

In Smallpox Hospital

In the hospital are Miss Rebecca Blue and Miss Edna Henson, of the class of 1906, and Miss Birdie B. Thompson, of the class of 1908. Those in the quarantine station, most of them having two full weeks yet to be spent under observation before all danger is past, are Misses Mary Cary, Mattie Henry, and Nanette Williams, of the class of 1906, and Misses Elizabeth Hazzard, Mary Chase, and Mary Grogan, of the class of 1908.

Mrs. Luddington, widow of William P. Luddington, whose case caused so much trouble and whose death occurred two weeks ago, will be released from quarantine next Tuesday.

No further cases were reported this morning among the nurses at the detention camp nor among the nurses and patients who are under observation on the first floor of the hospital.

Precautions Taken

The hospital authorities, realizing that the welfare of their institution depends upon prompt eradication of the disease have taken every possible precaution. The nurses and patients isolated on the first floor of the hospital are the only persons who might have come in contact in any way with any of the smallpox sufferers.

Dr. Phillips, superintendent of the hospital, stated last night that he was confident there would be no further trouble. Until the epidemic of fear and of small pox broke out there were twenty-nine pupil nurses in the classes at the George Washington University Hospital. The temporary loss of the services of one-third of the available assistants is one of the most serious phases of the situation in the hospital.

At the Health Office this morning it was reported that no new cases of smallpox had developed anywhere in the city. The quarantine imposed upon the workhouse following the discovery of a case of smallpox in one of the negro inmates two weeks ago was removed yesterday.