

Wilmer H. Mais, Jr.

(- 4 Jul 1928)

Mais, Wilmer H., Jr., Suddenly, Wednesday, July 4, 1928, Wilmer H. Mais, Jr., aged 11 years, beloved son of Mrs. Savilla M. Ellis. Funeral from the home of his grandmother, Mrs. L.W. Reiley, 321 B st. s.e., Monday, July 9, at 11 a.m. Interment Congressional Cemetery.

The Evening Star, July 5, 1928, p. 1

No Trace Is Found Of River Victims

Bodies of Two Young Women and Boy Are Sought in Potomac

Three bodies, one an 11-year-old boy and the others young women, lay unrecovered in the waters of the Potomac River today as a result of holiday drownings. The boy fell from a motorboat and the two young women went canoeing and never returned. How they met their fate is still a mystery.

The boy was Wilmer Mais, son of Mrs. Samuel Ellis, 3126 Sixteenth street. The young women were Miss Margaret Anderson, 26 years old, and Miss Catherine Carr, also 26 years old, both employes of the National Geographic Society.

Young Mais had been on an all-day motorboat cruise with his mother, grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. L.W. Reiley, 321 B street southeast, and 14 other relatives.

Fell While Reaching Down

They had just passed the landing at River View, Md., on the return trip when the boy, while passing along a narrow runway between the cabin and rail, reached down to retrieve some object that he had dropped.

He struck the wall of the cabin as he leaned and fell into the water. The boat at that time was proceeding at approximately 8 miles an hour and was brought to a stop as quickly as possible. Five of the men on the craft had dived overboard and one, James Minet, 319 Upshur street, son of the owner of the boat, reached young Mais just as he disappeared from view. He never arose.

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The drowning of the May boy occurred within 20-seconds from the time he fell overboard, his grandfather said today. Members of the party said the boy never came up but once.

The boy's death is the second tragedy in several years for Mrs. Ellis. Her only other child, a little girl, was scalded to death.

Mrs. Ellis was today in a state of collapse. Following the tragedy yesterday the boat put into Fort Washington, Md., where she was given treatment by Maj. Joshua Henneberger, who then detailed Lieut. Meis, another physician, to accompany the party to this city. A number of men from the post were detailed to search for the body, but today were unsuccessful.

Members of the boy's family recalled today that his last act was to go below on an errand for a crippled cousin. It was while he was returning to join other members of the party that he fell overboard.

The Evening Star, July 7, 1928, p. 8

Body of Drowned Boy Recovered From River

Wilmer Mais, 11, Fell Into Water From Launch at River View

The body of 11-year-old Wilmer Mais of 3126 Sixteenth street, who was drowned Wednesday when he fell from a speeding motor launch into the Potomac River near River View, Md., was recovered this morning by the harbor police.

Young Mais had been on an all-day cruise with relatives. Just as they were passing River View landing the lad reached down to retrieve some object he had dropped. He struck the wall of the cabin and fell into the water. Occupants of the craft tried to rescue him, but the youngster sank beneath the surface before they could get to him.