

John T. Phipps (- 4 Sep 1909)

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Ebb Tide Uncovers Dead Man

John Phipps' Body Upright in River

Feet Imbedded in Mud When Found by His Employer--Accident Is Belief

Low tide in Eastern branch this morning uncovered the head of John Phipps, its white hair plastered over brow and ears by the receding waters. The corpse was standing upright, feet imbedded in the mud of the river's bottom.

Phipps, who was sixty years of age, lost his life in the Eastern branch opposite the foot of 1st street southeast last night. John Thayer, captain of the dredging machine, Black Nat, made the discovery.

Phipps had been employed on the Black Nat. His body was only a short distance from the craft.

There was no mark of violence, nor was there anything to indicate that the man had been robbed.

His money was intact. Two bottles of gin were in the pockets of his clothing.

Phipps, it is supposed, returned to the Black Nat last night, under the influence of liquor and accidentally fell overboard.

What the police regarded as a suspicious circumstance was the finding of the small boat belonging to the dredging machine on the shore, while the body was on the opposite side of the channel.

It was learned from John Jackson, also employed on the Black Nat, that Phipps went ashore early last evening and was with him in a saloon as late as 7:30 o'clock. They separated at 4 1/2 and N streets.

When Jackson and Phipps came ashore they left a dog on the machine. Their small boat was left on the shore about the foot of 1st street. It was there this morning, the dog in it, and there was no small boat near the dredging machine.

How Phipps reached the boat the police were unable to learn this morning. Jackson did not take him there, but returned to his boarding house, 1st and P streets where he was all night, leaving the house to go to work this morning.

Capt. Thayer found the small boat made fast on the shore this morning. He rowed it out to the dredge.

The gleaming white hair of the dead man attracted his attention. When he had determined that the object in the water was the body of a man he notified the police. Later in the morning the body was removed to the morgue.

Phipps probably hired a boy to row him to the dredge, it is believed by the police. The dog returned in the boat with the boy, they conjecture.

Acting Coroner Glazebrook will make an investigation before giving a certificate of death. Probably he will conclude that Phipps' death was the result of accident.