

George F. Ports, Jr.

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Boy Boatman Drowns

Hundreds See Swells From Steamer Upset Boat

Eight-year-old George Ports was drowned in the Potomac last evening, while hundreds of persons, passengers on the excursion steamer Queen Anne, looked on powerless to aid.

Swells from the big side-wheeler swamped a rowboat occupied by the lad and a companion, Irving Binnix, eleven years old. Binnix succeeded in reaching the sea wall nearby, but Ports sank.

The boys had no oars for their skiff and they propelled it around the harbor with a board, until the Queen Anne came up the channel. The skiff was only ten feet from the sea wall, across the channel from the wharves, and the boys watched the big boat sweep past without thought of danger.

Soon the swells came. They caught the light skiff and began to rock it and then to toss it in the air. It swept toward the wall, and one of the last of the huge waves dashed it against the stones. As it dropped back with the receding water it sank, carrying down both boys. Binnix afterward said he looked for his playmate, but he latter never rose.

Most of the excursionists watched as if fascinated the death-dealing waves bearing down upon the tiny rowboat, but some of the passengers ran to Capt. Charles Raley, who in turn notified the harbor police.

No time was lost in going to the rescue, but the crews of several boats worked for two hours with the drags before the body was recovered. Coroner Nevitt decided that an inquest was not necessary and permitted the body to be turned over to an undertaker.

Young Ports lived with his grandfather at 488 L street southwest, and his relatives are making arrangements for the funeral. Binnix lives in the same block.