

Hedwig Saalbach

(- 24 Jun 1906)

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Another Body Found

Remains of Mrs. Saalbach Taken From the River

A colored man named William Bryan living at 1155 17th street, this morning about 5:30 o'clock discovered the body of Mrs. Edward R. Saalbach, floating in the river near Analostan Island. Mrs. Saalbach was drowned last Sunday by the overturning of a canoe.

Bryan secured the body and towed it to the wharf of Littlefield & Alvord and the police were notified. Policeman Stange was on duty at the harbor office when the message was received. He immediately proceeded to the wharf mentioned for the body in his naphtha launch Louisa, taking a bateau along. He was accompanied by William Gross and Henry Ashford, who are employed at the office of the harbor precinct.

Upon reaching the place where the body had been made fast, Policeman Stange and his assistants realized that a difficult task confronted them, because the remains were in an advanced state of decomposition. They succeeded in lifting the body into the bateau, however, and then removed it to the morgue. An examination of the remains showed that there was along piece of wire, such as is used by feed dealers for baling hay, entangled in the skirt. The wire, the superintendent of the morgue thinks, probably aided in keeping the body upon the bottom of the river for a while.

Held by a Wire

It is the custom of men on boats to throw all kinds of refuse into the river. The wire may have been entangled or fastened to a branch of a tree or upon a stone on the bottom of the river and left in such a position that the skirts were caught by it and the body held fast until the current pushed it away from the object to which it was fastened.

The condition of the body was such as to indicate that it had been in the river for several days, so inquiring friends who called at the morgue were not permitted to view it. After the accident occurred near Dixie Landing Sunday afternoon, and the police were notified, they did all they could to recover the bodies, dragging the river and watching along the shores. It was feared that nothing could be accomplished by dragging, so the police were surprised when the body of Mr. Saalbach was recovered in that manner.

When Acting Coroner Glazebrook was informed of the finding of the remains he gave a certificate of accidental death, a similar certificate having been issued in the case of Mr. Saalbach. Undertaker J. William Lee, who had already prepared the body of the husband, took charge of the remains of the wife. Dr. Glazebrook thought that the condition of the body indicated that it had floated yesterday and been exposed to the sun. It is stated that the bodies may be cremated.

Search for Purcell's Remains

Searchers and watchers were along the river all day yesterday endeavoring to recover the body of Robt. Purcell, the Central High School graduate who lost his life near High Island, Sunday while experimenting with Dr. "Dick" Dear. Mr. Mallon Purcell, father of the boy, called at police headquarters yesterday afternoon and conferred with Capt. Boardman as to the wisest course to pursue in the effort to locate the remains. Capt. Boardman, who is familiar with the conditions about High Island, told Mr. Purcell that to drag the river in the vicinity of where the drowning occurred would be an impossibility.

"I'm afraid," the captain said, "that you will have to wait until the water is lower or until the body rises to the surface."

Mrs. Purcell, the mother, is said to be breaking down under the strain. She is unable to understand why the body of her boy has not been recovered. Friends of the family were out early this morning to renew the search, and they mean to remain about the river until the body is recovered or until they reach the conclusion that the search is hopeless.

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Last Rites Over Dead

Funeral of Mr. and Mrs. Saalbach Tomorrow

The remains of Mr. and Mrs. Edward R. Saalbach, who were drowned in the river near Dixie Landing Sunday afternoon, have been placed in metallic caskets and removed from the morgue to the undertaking establishment of J. William Lee, 332 Pennsylvania avenue. Funeral services will take place in Lee's Chapel at 4 o'clock tomorrow afternoon. Mr. John Metzgeroth, a brother of Mrs. Saalbach, returned to the city from Bluemont, Va., yesterday and made the necessary arrangements. The services are to be conducted by the Rev. Paul A. Menzel, pastor of Concordia Church.

Members of the Washington Canoe Club, of which Mr. Saalbach was also a member, and members of his graduating class in the National Law School are to act as pallbearers. The remains of the husband and wife will be placed in the receiving vault at Congressional cemetery until the return of the aunt of Mr. Saalbach from Europe. Chief Clerk Kemp of the police department has taken charge of the effects of the couple, and relatives will ask for the appointment of an administrator when the aunt returns. Mr. Metzgeroth expressed a desire that what remains after the funeral expenses are paid shall be turned over to the aunt.

Because of the several fatal accidents that have occurred upon the river this season, and the largely increased number of canoes in use, Maj. Sylvester, superintendent of police, regards it as desirable to establish a life patrol between the Highway and Chain bridges. Under the laws the police have but little authority upon the river. It is the opinion of the chief of police that the law or regulations should require occupants of all kinds of boats upon the river to carry lights after dark. This question does not arise from the Sunday drownings, however, but is because of the absence of such lights upon small boats some time ago that lives were lost. It was recommended at that time that such lights be required, but the proper authorities have never taken any action upon the recommendation.