

## Julia M. (Daisy) Wagner (5 Jan 1880 - 24 Jan 1908)

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**Wagner.** Suddenly on Thursday, January 23, 1908, Daisy M., wife of Howard Wagner and daughter of Mrs. Julia M. Nourse of this city.

*The Evening Star, January 24, 1908, p. 1*

### **Record of Tragedy**

#### **Two Suicides and One Accidental Death in the List**

#### **Another May End Fatally**

#### **Mrs. Daisy Wagner Shoots Herself While on Public Road Found Covered With Snow**

#### **Mrs. Georgianna Harley Employs Illuminating Gas in Agency of Death -- Fall to Pavement**

Two suicides, an accidental and probably fatal case of poisoning and a death precipitated by a fall on the icy pavements constituted today's record of tragedy in the National capital. Both suicides and the sudden death were those of women, while the victim of gas, it is believed unintentionally, left flowing from a jet, was a young ironworker from Pennsylvania. Motive there must have been behind each of the cases of self-murder, but the tangled skeins of judgment-warping events have not yet been unraveled.

Probably the most inexplicable of the two suicides was that of Mrs. Daisy Wagner, wife of Howard G. Wagner, a local dealer in photographers' supplies.

Young, beautiful and apparently farthest removed from that condition of mind which would cause a woman, naturally retiring and modest, to plan death so that her remains might be left to the morbidly curious gaze of whosoever chanced to pass. Mrs. Wagner's body was found soon after dawn this morning at the public entrance to the Zoological Garden, at 18th and Irving streets. The storm king whose rule was undisputed last night, provided one of nature's winding sheets, a blanket of snow, and the body was frozen.



#### **Revolver Agency of Death**

A bullet hole behind one ear and a revolver clutched tightly in Mrs. Wagner's hand indicated the agency of death. An apparently well-authenticated rumor imputed a threat of self-destruction to the young woman's husband in case his wife committed suicide, and friends hurrying to his side immediately after the news of the finding of Mrs. Wagner's body, were just in time to prevent him from leaping through one of the fifth-story windows of an apartment house.

In the other case of suicide Mrs. Georgianna Harley, keeper of a boarding house at 813 9th street, bade her husband an affectionate farewell last evening. This morning she was found in bed in a dying condition, with gas flowing from a tube, one end of which was tightly wedged between her teeth.

Miss Johanna Sullivan, an employe in the government printing office, slipped and fell on the icy pavement at the corner of 1st and H street, and died soon afterward from an attack of heart disease, superinduced by the shock.

Thomas Rowe, who was employed as an iron worker in connection with the construction of the new Anacostia bridge, was found in his room overcome by gas which was escaping from a partly open jet. He is in the Emergency Hospital in a critical condition.

#### *Body Covered With Snow*

Cold in death and covered with snow, the body of Mrs. Daisy M. Wagner, wife of Howard G. Wagner, who conducted a photographic supply establishment at 10th and F streets until recently, was found in the roadway near 18th and Irving streets this morning about 7 o'clock. Clutched in her right hand was a revolver, a bullet wound in the head over the right ear making it apparent that the woman had committed suicide.

"I understand that her husband said he would commit suicide if he learned that his wife had killed herself," a friend of the photographer told the police shortly after the body was found, "and I hope you will find him before he has a chance to kill himself."

Mr. Wagner was located shortly thereafter, and when told of what his wife had done he made an effort to jump from a fifth story window of the Kenesaw apartment house, 16th and Irving streets, where he had gone to call on his friends, Mr. and Mrs. Gratz Charles Helm. Mr. Helm and Mr. Clinedinst caught him, however.

"I wish I were dead," Mr. Wagner moaned.

#### *Coroner Issues Certificate*

The body of Mrs. Wagner was removed to the tenth precinct police station, and later to an undertaking establishment, the police stopping at the residence of Coroner Nevitt long enough to permit that official to make an examination, hear the result of the police investigation and give a certificate showing that death resulted from a self-inflicted wound.

The death of Mrs. Wagner and the effort on the part of her husband to kill himself, were the climax to alleged unpleasant relations between the couple.

John J. Turner and W.B. Wilson, employes of the Zoo, were on their way to work this morning when their attention was attracted to an object in the roadway near the entrance to the park. There was so much snow over the object, however, that it was not until they approached very near that they realized it was the body of a woman. One of them stood guard while the other went to the Kenesaw and asked the elevator boy, Sinclair Thomas, to telephone to the police. Where the body was found was only about two squares from the apartment house, but Mr. and Mrs. Helm, who had been among the friends last to see Mrs. Wagner, were ignorant of what the young woman had done. The police took charge of the body and hurried it to the station. Inspector Boardman heard of the affair and sent Detective Evans to make an investigation, but before he reached the station Detective Greene of the tenth precinct had identified the remains.

#### *Farewell to Child*

Mrs. Wagner, whose maiden name was Nourse, was about twenty-five years of age, and was regarded by her friends as a beautiful woman. She was bright and cheery, and even yesterday after she concluded to take her life, she engaged in a conversation with friends and apparently was cheerful. Her mother resides at 1320 U street northwest, and as late as 2:30 o'clock yesterday afternoon she was there to see her mother and to say farewell to her three-year-old daughter Margaret.

"While she was at the house yesterday," the police were told, "she hugged and kissed the child a number of times, and it seemed a struggle on her part to be able to leave the little one."

Mrs. Wagner said nothing about suicide, however, but made arrangements for the child to join her and her husband at the Chapin apartment house this morning. Mrs. Wagner having engaged a suite of rooms yesterday and moved his belongings there. Husband and wife were at the Chapin yesterday, but they did not meet. Mrs. Wagner was there about 4 o'clock in the afternoon, with a suitcase containing wearing apparel and toilet articles.

"I'll be back later," she told an employe.

#### *Fails to Keep Appointment*

Mr. Wagner reached the Chapin after 6 o'clock, and went to his new apartment. He had an engagement to meet his wife there at 7 o'clock, it was stated today, but she failed to keep the appointment. Mr. Wagner last night showed signs of uneasiness, and after 10 o'clock he went away in search of his wife. When he appeared at the Chapin early in the evening he had a box of candy for Mrs. Wagner. The box was left on a table in the apartment, and upon the wrapping was written: "waited until 6:45; will be back at 7:15."

At the time Mr. Wagner left his two big trunks had not been opened, but the suitcase belonging to Mrs. Wagner was left open. It was thought she took the revolver from the suitcase, but it was afterward found that she had procured it at the apartment of Mr. and Mrs. Helm. Early in the afternoon she called at the Kenesaw to see Mrs. Helm, but the latter was not at home. When she called after 5 o'clock, however, she found Mrs. Helm at home, and Mrs. Clinedinst, another friend, was with her.

#### *Declines Dinner Invitation*

Both Mrs. Helm and Mrs. Clinedinst knew of the troubles of Mrs. Wagner. Mr. and Mrs. Wagner had remained at the Helm apartment Wednesday night. They noticed, however, that Mrs. Wagner was greatly troubled and they invited her out to dinner.

"I can't go with you tonight," Mrs. Wagner replied, adding that she would have to go and look after her apartments.

Mrs. Helm did not suspect that her friend had taken a revolver from the former's apartment. It was about 5:45 o'clock when Mrs. Wagner said goodbye to Mrs. Helm and Mrs. Clinedinst, and left the Kenesaw.

It was stated that Mr. Wagner went in search of his wife last night when he left the Chapin apartment house, telephoning to several friends before he left. He spent the entire night searching for her.

Mrs. Wagner had a host of good friends, and her domestic relations were the happiest, it is stated, until a short while ago. Friends of Wagner say he was fond of the races and other sports, and that he went to New Orleans this winter to see the horses run. Upon his return from New Orleans, it is said, he made a trip to New York, returning only recently.

The absence of Wagner, it is believed, caused his wife a great amount of annoyance. Two nights ago, however, she seemed to be in a forgiving frame of mind, and it was thought she and her husband would live happily together.

It is believed that Mrs. Wagner went directly to the spot where she killed herself when she left her friends at the Kenesaw about 5:45 o'clock, and that she was dead before 6 o'clock.

The bullet passed entirely through the head, crushing the skull at the points of entrance and exit.

Mrs. Wagner was a niece of the late Col. William G. Moore. Her father died several years ago. It was stated this afternoon that arrangements for the funeral had not been made.

*The Evening Star, January 25, 1908, p. 4*

### **Death of Mrs. Wagner**

#### **Plans for Funeral Delayed, Husband in Baltimore**

The funeral of Mrs. Howard G. Wagner, who committed suicide last Thursday night or yesterday morning at 18th and Irving streets, immediately in front of the Zoo entrance by shooting herself in the head, will, in all probability, take place Monday afternoon. Other than setting the day the family has made no arrangements, and nothing definite will be known regarding the funeral until this evening.

The body is at Speare's undertaking establishment, where it was removed from the tenth precinct station house yesterday. It is stated that the death of Mrs. Wagner proved so severe a shock that it has been necessary for friends to devote practically their entire time to the mother, the husband and little daughter, the two former being in such mental condition that the making of definite arrangements had to be postponed. The husband is constantly being watched by his brother and friends.

That the husband knew Mrs. Wagner contemplated suicide is said to be borne out by remarks he is alleged to have made when he summoned a number of friends last Thursday night and made search for his wife, which lasted until the early hours of yesterday morning. When Mr. Wagner became thoroughly convinced that something had happened to Mrs. Wagner Thursday evening he notified John W. Holliday, and employe of the Post Office Department, and the two men organized a searching party, the remaining members being Policeman Weber of the 10th precinct, A.E.T. Henson and J.G. Moore. The party searched until after 2 o'clock in the morning. Later they communicated with the police station and hospitals, and were about to renew the search when associates of the husband learned of the discovery of the body yesterday morning by a Zoo Park employe.

#### *In State of Collapse*

After being told of the finding of the body and prevented from jumping from a window in the Kenesaw apartment house, Wagner is said to have lapsed into a condition akin to coma. He later procured a bottle of strychnine, it is declared, which he attempted to place to his lips a number of times. His condition became such last night that his brother was summoned from Baltimore, and the latter, with several other men, is now with Wagner. He threatens to take his life, and a vigilant watch is regarded as absolutely necessary.

Mrs. Julia M. Nourse, mother of the deceased, who resides in the Ilkley apartment house, 1320 U street, is under the care of her son and daughter, Robert Nourse and Miss Ida Nourse. The small daughter of the Wagners is there. The child was placed in the care of her grandmother pending the moving of Wagner and his wife into the Chapin apartment house.

Owing to Wagner's condition it was decided by his brother and friends that for the time being it would be best to remove him from scenes which would remind him of his wife or her death, and he was taken to Baltimore.

*The Evening Star, January 26, 1908, pt. 2, p. 8*

### **Plans for Funeral**

#### **Body of Mrs. Howard G. Wagner to Be Buried Tomorrow**

The funeral of Mrs. Howard G. Wagner, who committed suicide last Thursday evening or Friday morning, will occur tomorrow afternoon from Spear's undertaking establishment, F street. The interment is to be private in the family lot in Congressional cemetery. The announcement of the pallbearers, and the officiating clergyman will be made later.

The husband of the deceased, now in Baltimore, is under the care of a physician, and is being constantly watched for fear he may do himself bodily harm. It was stated last night that he is very ill and fears were expressed that he may not be able to attend the funeral.

*The Evening Star, January 27, 1908, p. 9*

**Funeral of Mrs. Daisy Wagner**

Funeral services over the remains of Mrs. Daisy Wagner, wife of Henry G. Wagner, whose death Thursday night was noted in The Star, were held at 10 o'clock this morning at the undertaking establishment of W.R. Speare, F near 10th street northwest. The services were conducted by Rev. Dr. Kelly, pastor of the Fourth Presbyterian Church. Interment was made in Congressional cemetery.

The pallbearers were Messrs. Frederick S. Wyan, Robert M. Milans, Frederick Hansman, Bruce Faltenstock, Mr. Holliday and Mr. Logan.