

[Quaif, Lena May White]
[Quaif, Marie Louise]

MOTHER AND DAUGHTER ARE MOTOR VICTIMS

Meet Instant Death After Collision at Madison

INQUEST IS HELD

Mrs. Fred L. and Miss Marie Louise Quaif Universally Mourned

A terrible accident occurred at the village of Madison on the Cherry Valley Turnpike Friday afternoon of last week which cost the lives of Mrs. Fred L. [Lena May White] Quaif, one of Cooperstown's most beloved women, and her only daughter, Miss Marie Louise Quaif, who was taken in the flower of her young womanhood.

The accident comes as a tragic shock to the entire community and has brought overwhelming sorrow to a wide circle of friends. To the devoted husband, Fred L. Quaif, vice-president and director of the Second National Bank, and to the aged father of Mrs. Quaif, Joel G. White, the heartfelt sympathy of the entire community goes out in this hour of their bereavement.

The mother and daughter left Friday afternoon bound in Miss Quaif's Ford roadster, which she was driving, for Cortland where they were planning a visit with friends. At Madison a three-panel highway is being constructed and two sections have been completed. It was first reported that the rear wheels of the car went off the concrete and Miss Quaif evidently attempted to bring them back on the road metal. In doing so the brakes became set and, although the speedometer showed only thirty miles an hour, the car turned over twice. In doing so Mrs. Quaif was thrown out and sustained a fractured skull from which she died instantly. When Miss Quaif was removed from under the wreckage of the car her life was also extinct. A fracture of the skull was among her injuries.

Dr. O. L. Langworthy of Hamilton, one of the coroners [coroners] of Madison county, was notified and pronounced that death was due to accidental causes. State Troopers from the Hamilton outpost were also present on the scene.

Following a renewal of the investigation into the causes of the fatal accident Coroner Langworthy called an inquest which was held at Hamilton Tuesday afternoon, commencing at 2 o'clock. Following the inquest the coroner reserved decision pending transcription of the minutes. Word was sent immediately to Mr. Quaif in this village and he and Ziba L. Holbrook went to the scene of the accident. Mr. and Mrs. W. W. Hovey of Utica, intimate friends of the family, were also notified and arrived upon the scene shortly before Messrs. Quaif and Holbrook and with them accompanied the bodies, which had been removed to the Richmond Undertaking Parlors in that village to Cooperstown the same night.

A material witness at this inquest was William Johnson, a farmer of Madison, who was driving a car at the scene of the accident when it occurred. Following an inspection of his car by the State Troopers, Johnson went to Coroner Langworthy and made a statement in which he said that he came out of a driveway as the Quaif car was passing, both cars proceeding in the same direction.

He said that he remembered hearing a click, but that it did not disturb the movement of his car and that he thought nothing more of it until his attention was directed to the hub cap of the right front wheel of his car and he discovered that it had been knocked to pieces. The cap was on the side toward the Quaif car as it passed him on the right, he said.

Johnson claimed not to have realized that he had any responsibility in the matter until the matter was called to his attention by the Troopers. He then made his statement to the Coroner and Troopers.

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Following the accident State Troopers from the Oneida Barracks first reported that they were unable to find any other driver connected with the accident and Coroner Langworthy pronounced that death was due to accidental causes. They informed the contractor building the road that he might be held responsible whereupon a more searching investigation ensued with the above result.

On Saturday, Attorney James J. Byard, Jr., of Oneonta, representing the interests of Mr. Quaif, with Frank B. Shipman and Bernard J. Holbrook of Cooperstown, spent the entire day at the scene of the accident.

Mrs. Quaif was the daughter of Joel G. and Louise (Hudson) White and was born in Springfield, November 23, 1869. A life long resident of this community she was one held in the highest esteem and warmest affection for many fine qualities of mind and heart. A charming hostess, a devoted wife and mother, a loyal and patriotic citizen, her place in the community will be impossible to fill and her memory will be cherished by hosts of sorrowing friends. She was an active member of the Universalist church of this village and took a prominent part in many social and civic organizations.

Obituary Reference

Miss Quaif was born in Cooperstown March 16, 1907 and was graduated from the Cooperstown High school with the class of 1926. She attended Russell Sage College at Troy and later took a two-years' secretarial course at the Knox School, graduating in 1929. For some time she has been employed as secretary to Alex. S. Phinney, the local real estate dealer. Her untimely death deprives Cooperstown of one of the village's most popular and talented young women.

Besides the husband and father there are no immediate surviving relatives. The Hon. Walter Woodin of Auburn is a distant relative, as is W. R. Westcott of Rochester.

Two cousins, Mrs. Hazel Haviland of Cortland, and Mrs. George Austin of Old Chatham were expecting to entertain them on the present visit.

The large assemblage of sorrowing friends and the profusion of floral offerings paid silent tribute Monday afternoon to the high esteem in which the deceased were held in this community, when the double funeral rites were said at their late home on Nelson avenue. The concourse overtaxed the capacity of the house and the grounds also were filled with those in attendance.

The Rev. Thomas Chapman, pastor of the Universalist church, of which the deceased were members, officiated and the caskets were borne by intimate friends. That of Mrs. Quaif was carried by George H. White, Charles H. Mason, Frank B. Shipman, W. W. Hovey, George H. Carley and Ziba L. Holbrook; Miss Quaif's by H. Gregory Lippitt, Robert C. Tennant, Lester G. Burse, Bernard A. Holbrook, Denton E. Stillwell and Charles Hovey. Burial was made in the family plot at Lakewood cemetery.

Otsego Farmer, Cooperstown NY, Fri. 28 Aug 1931

[Transcriber's note: There were several misplaced lines
which have been correctly replaced without further reference.]

Transcribed on 22 Oct 2009 by Karen E. Dau of Rochester, NY

[Quaif, Lena May White]
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MADISON FARMHAND ADMITS COLLISION WITH QUAIF CAR
At Inquest Tuesday William H. Johnson Says His Car Struck Quaif Machine,
As He Drove From Yard Onto Turnpike — Mother and Daughter Buried Monday

It is apparent from the testimony given before Coroner Langworthy in Hamilton Tuesday that the contributory cause of the death of Mrs. Fred L. Quaif and daughter, Miss Marie Louise Quaif of Cooperstown, in an automobile accident at Madison last Friday afternoon, was the coming into contact of the Ford coupe in which Mrs. Quaif and her daughter were riding, with a car being driven out of a yard by William H. Johnson, 42-year-old farmhand of Madison.

In his testimony, Johnson stated that he had delivered some milk to the home of his employer, William Davis, whose house was located on the south side of the highway, and that he had turned his machine around and was driving out of the yard. He had made about a three-quarter turn when he realized that his car had come in contact with the Quaif roadster which was just passing on the main highway.

Tracing his next movements, he stated he drove across the concrete onto the uncompleted part of the road, parked his machine there and mingled with the crowd until the bodies had been removed and the wrecked machine towed away. He admitted that he did not say anything to anyone at the scene of the accident. The first intonation [intimation] having been obtained from him was at about midnight by State Troopers Dudden and Merrill from the Hamilton outpost. He admitted that the hub cap was knocked off the front right wheel on his machine in the contact with the Quaif roadster. A signed statement of these facts made by him to the state troopers was presented in evidence.

An employe [sic] of the Kirby Garage in Madison named Bachelor testified that he saw the accident from the doorway of the garage and was one of the first to reach the overturned car and render assistance. The Ford he thought turned over three times before coming to a stop. Clarence J. Cameron, whose home is in the south side of the turnpike opposite the scene of the accident, saw William H. Johnson driving out of the driveway onto the highway as the Quaif machine was passing. He saw the collision and heard the crash. Testifying as to the speed of the Quaif machine as it passed his house near the scene of the accident, Lucien Arnst thought the Ford might have been traveling between 40 and 45 miles per hour. Edward R. Luddington, residing on the south side of the highway saw the Quaif machine approaching and heard the crash.

Coroner Langworthy announced at the conclusion of the inquest that he would reserve decision.

The inquest has thus answered the question as to the reason why the car in which the wife and 24-year-old daughter of the Cooperstown banker left the concrete road with the distressingly fatal result. Mrs. Quaif was thrown from the car, struck the pavement, and suffered a fractured skull. The daughter was found under the overturned car. She, too, had suffered a fractured skull. Each died

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instantly. Mother and daughter were en route from Cooperstown to Cortland where they were to spend the weekend.

Mrs. Quaif was Lena May White, the only daughter of Joel G. and the late Louise Hudson Quaif [should read White], and she was born in the town of Springfield, November 28, 1869. In her childhood she moved to Cooperstown with her parents to reside, where she had been a life-long resident, and was held in the highest esteem and warmest affection for her many fine qualities of heart and mind. Her marriage to Fred L. Quaif of Cooperstown occurred February 26, 1896. In her home she was a charming hostess, a devoted wife, daughter and mother, and her position as a loyal and patriotic citizen of the community will never be filled.

Marie Louise Quaif was born in Cooperstown, March 16, 1907, the only daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Fred L. Quaif. She attended and was graduated from Cooperstown High School with the class of 1926, after which she attended Russell Sage College at Troy, later taking a two years' secretarial course at the Knox School for Girls in Cooperstown, graduating in 1929. For some time past she had been employed as secretary in the office of Alexander S. Phinney, Cooperstown real estate dealer. In her untimely death one of the village's most popular and talented young women has been taken in the flower of her youth.

Surviving are the husband, crushed by his double grief, and the father of Mrs. Quaif, Joel G. White, 88 years old. The only other relatives are cousins, these including Mrs. Annie C. Bolton of Cooperstown, Mrs. James Sheridan of Wilmetta, Ill., Mrs. Blanche Roberts of Rotterdam Junction, Mrs. Hazel Haviland of Cortland, and Mrs. George Austin of Old Chatham, the two latter of whom were to have been the hostesses of Mrs. Quaif and Miss Quaif for the weekend visit upon which they were en route when the fatal accident occurred.

The double funeral was held at the Quaif home in Nelson Avenue at four o'clock on Monday afternoon. The home would accommodate only a small proportion of the sorrowing friends who gathered there. The Reverend Thomas Chapman, pastor of the Universalist Church, officiated. The two caskets which were surrounded by a bower of beautiful flowers, were borne from the home by intimate friends and neighbors. That of Mrs. Quaif was carried by George H. White, Charles H. Mason, Frank B. Shipman, W. W. Hovey, George H. Carley and Z. L. Holbrook. Miss Quaif's casket was borne by H. Gregory Lippitt, Robert C. Tennant, Lester G. Bursey, Bernard A. Holbrook, Denton E. Stilwell and Carl Hovey.

Richfield Springs Mercury, Richfield Springs NY, Thu. 27 Aug 1931

Transcribed on 23 Oct 2009 by Karen E. Dau of Rochester, NY