

[Ritch, Walter]

WALTER RITCH DIED SUDDENLY

Circumstances Leading to Injuries Causing His Death a Mystery

Walter Ritch, who resided with his sister, Miss Mary Ritch, died suddenly at his home in Danbury, early on Wednesday morning, March 21, 1923, from the effects of a fractured skull. The circumstances leading to the injury which caused his death are a mystery to relatives and friends.

On Tuesday evening about 7:30 o'clock, he left his home, presumably to take a walk, but did not tell where he was going. Less than an hour afterward, he returned in a dazed condition, without his hat and spectacles, and his shoes and lower part of his clothing were soaking wet. Blood was flowing from his nose and ears, and he could not tell where he had been or what had happened to him.

A physician was quickly summoned, who, upon examination, found that he was suffering from a fracture of the skull at the base of the brain. After giving all treatment possible the physician went home leaving him to the care of his sister and a neighbor, who had volunteered to assist in watching over him during the night. He appeared to be sleeping until six o'clock Wednesday morning, when on going to the bedside they could not find that his pulse beat. The physician being again summoned, pronounced him dead.

Mr. Ritch's injury was caused either by a blow or a fall. As he was a quiet, inoffensive man, and as far as known, had no enemies, and never carried much money, it does not seem there was any motive for a person to sandbag and attempt robbery. His watch was found on him. It is thought he might have attempted to walk over a trestle on Still River, fell through, and thus received his injury, as a hat and spectacles were found there later.

Mr. Ritch was born sixty-three years ago at North Salem, and was the only son of the late Walter K. and Annie Hillyer Ritch, and a grandson of Rev. Shaler J. Hillyer, years ago pastor of the Universalist Church at North Salem. His father died seven years ago and his mother on the 15th of last December at the advanced age of 98 years. He was a widower, his wife having died some years ago, as did also a married daughter. He is survived by one son, Lewis Ritch, of Brooklyn, and a sister, Miss Mary Ritch, who has lived with him since her mother's death. Deceased was a cousin of Hillyer, Clayton and Stephen Ryder, of Carmel, and a frequent visitor to their homes, often spending holidays and weekends with them. He had held a position for years in the hat factory of F. D. Tweedy & Son.

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