

## this day in 1908 in The Record

Hazel Drew  
case

**Saturday, July 11, 1908.**

When a Cohoes man dies of apparently natural causes after trying to kill himself in a city jail cell this morning, *The Record* calls it suicide anyway.

Frank LaMotte, a laborer who lives at 22 Orchard St., was arrested last night after his wife complained to police about his behavior during an apparent drunken binge. The 31-year-old man is examined by Dr. William Curtin early this morning. After the examination, LaMotte appears to go berserk.

Raging in his cell, LaMotte repeatedly "tried to dash his brains out by knocking his head against the iron bars," our reporter explains. A guard rushes to bring back Dr. Curtin, but by the time they return to the cell, LaMotte is on the floor, a foot caught between the bars.

The doctor determines that LaMotte had died of a heart attack brought on by alcoholism and extreme excitement. Insofar as his rampage inside the cell brought on the heart attack, he could be said to have killed himself after all.

### **BODY IN POND.**

Investigators are trying to

determine the identity of a woman whose badly decomposed body is found in a Sand Lake pond this afternoon, our paper reports.

Gilbert Miller discovers the body while driving a carriage past a pond on Conrad Teal's farm. "Teal's pond is located in a very lonesome and secluded part of the town of Sand Lake," our writer notes, "It is on the road between Sand Lake and Tarborton, and surrounding the small body of water is a piece of woods frequented sometimes by squirrel hunters."

"Mr. Miller saw an object in the water, some distance from the brink, the day before, but was at too great a distance to recognize it as the body of a human being. When he next saw it it had drifted to the shore of the pond."

"The pond is not a very large one, but is of considerable depth and furnishes water to operate a small mill owned by Mr. Teal. Mr. Miller carried news of the tragic discovery to Sand Lake, which is about four miles east from the pond, and word was sent at once to Coroner Strope."

Investigators find a woman's hat and gloves on a

bank about 20 feet from the pond. There are no signs of a struggle at the site, suggesting that the woman may have removed them before entering the pond, possibly to kill herself. An autopsy tomorrow is expected to determine the actual cause of her death.

Teal Pond

located to the

left after turning  
on to Teal Road,

the first right going  
up Taborton Road

## this day in 1908 in The Record

**Sunday, July 12, 1908.** An autopsy has determined that the woman whose body was found in a Sand Lake pond yesterday afternoon was murdered, *The Record* reports.

The badly decomposed body was found on the farm property of Conrad Teal, along with a hat and a pair of gloves on a nearby bank.

The lack of signs of struggle led to some initial speculation that the as-yet unidentified woman had killed herself.

The body is taken to the Larkin Brothers undertaking parlor in Averill Park, where Dr. H.O. Fairweather of Troy and two Sand Lake physicians perform the autopsy.

"The doctors declare that the young woman was not

drowned, but that she died from concussion of the brain," our reporter notes, "the result of a blow with a blunt weapon on the back of the head."

"After being struck down in this cowardly and brutal way the victim of the assault was evidently carried to the pond and thrown in, her hat and gloves being left near by to convey the belief that she had discarded them and committed suicide."

In early 20th century crime reporting, "assault" is often a euphemism for rape, but investigators remain uncertain of whether the victim "had been assaulted before being given her death blow."

They note, however, that "it may be that such an act was

committed and the condition of the remains after being so long in the water would make it impossible to determine the truth."

Given the condition of the body, the woman's clothes may be the best clue to her identity.

These are being taken to Troy, where they may help resolve a missing person case.

5/4/08 page 19 added  
8/19/08

## this day in 1908 in The Record

**Monday, July 13, 1908.** The murder victim whose body was found in a Sand Lake pond last Saturday has been identified as 20 year old Hazel I. Drew of Troy, *The Record* reports.

Drew's family identifies clothes taken from the body this morning, while her father, John Drew of 400 Fourth Street, travels to the Larkin Bros. undertaking parlor in Averill Park to identify the body. Despite the body's advanced decomposition, the elder Drew "did not hesitate in declaring it to be that of his daughter," our reporter writes.

Hazel Drew was last seen alive on July 6, the day she left her job as a domestic servant to Professor E. R. Cary of Whitman Place. While her trunk was sent to her parents' house, Drew visited her aunt, Minnie Taylor, who works as a servant for the Harrison family on Pawling Avenue. Taylor tells investigators that Drew was planning to go to Watervliet later that day. She last saw Drew boarding a streetcar outside the Harrison house.

"How she got to Sand Lake, or whether she was alive when taken there, is part of the

unraveled story of her death," our writer notes, "It is said, however, that she may have had friends or acquaintances in the neighborhood, as her father was at one time employed near Averill Park."

Investigators from the district attorney's office learn later today that Drew's uncle, William Taylor, lives near Conrad Teal's pond in Sand Lake where Drew's body was found. Drew's mother tells the investigators this morning that Hazel frequently visited the area, but our reporter notes that Mrs. Drew didn't mention the fact that her brother lives in the vicinity.

"If it prove that there is an uncle residing in the vicinity the police may learn if the girl called there after she left the Harrison place, going to the Park instead of Watervliet," our writer elaborates, "The aunt says that she saw Hazel take the car for Watervliet, but this does not assure the detectives that she went over the river.

"It is thought possible that she may have changed her mind and decided to visit Sand Lake. Details multiply rapidly regarding the crime, but the authorities are confident that

they will learn something of her journey later than at the period when she was last seen by her aunt."

The authorities are already learning more about Hazel Drew. "Deceased is highly spoken of by those who employed her and by her acquaintances," our paper reports, "They all say she was a quiet and steady young woman and was never known to have any compromising friendships."

Drew worked as a domestic from the age of fourteen. "Several prominent families" have employed her since then. They report that "She did her work properly and as far as she is known her habits were discreet. She dressed neatly and made friends."

District Attorney Jarvis P. O'Brien's team is "making the most earnest and searching efforts to discover a motive for the crime and to run the murderer down. Both motive and murderer are still hidden, however, and nothing known in the young woman's life, nor any intimation given by her to relatives, helps unravel the mystery surrounding her tragic death."

— Kevin Gilbert



# this day in 1908 in The Record

Tuesday, July 14, 1908.

Hazel Drew is buried today as investigators learn more about her movements on the last day anyone saw her alive, *The Record* reports.

Drew, a 20-year-old domestic servant, is laid to rest three days after her body was found in Teal's Pond in Sand Lake. Investigators believe that she was killed on or around July 6 by a blow to the head, after which her body was dumped in the pond. Her hat and gloves were left neatly nearby, allegedly to create the impression that Drew had drowned by accident or suicide.

After an abrupt change of plans, Drew's family buries her at the Barbersville

Cemetery in Poestenkill near her birthplace, with Rev.

J.H.E. Rickard of Third Street Methodist Church officiating.

The Drews had ordered a grave dug for Hazel in their family plot at Mt. Ida cemetery before deciding on the Poestenkill funeral.

Drew's uncle, William

Taylor of Sand Lake, only learned of the change from reporters who visited him this morning. He lives near Teal's Pond and was briefly a person of interest in the investigation, if only because they theorized that Drew had gone to Sand Lake to visit him.

He tells our reporter today that he hasn't seen Hazel since a three-week visit last winter, though she told him

then that she planned to return.

Since last evening's edition went to press, the investigation has focused on two men who claim to have seen Drew on the road to her uncle's house on the evening of June 6.

William Gundrum and

Frank Smith say they saw her on "the hollow, a depression in the main road just west of the highway leading to the Taylor farm," our reporter explains.

Previously, the last person known to have seen Drew alive was her aunt, Minnie Taylor.

She told investigators that Drew visited her on the morning of July 6, the day Drew left the employ of Prof. E.R. Cary.

According to Taylor, Drew planned to go to Watervliet, and boarded a streetcar for that destination on Pawling Avenue.

District Attorney Jarvis P. O'Brien's team doesn't consider either Gundrum or Smith a suspect in Drew's death. Because the two men corroborated each other in separate interviews, and Gundrum was unaware that investigators had already spoken with Smith, "this dispelled all thought of his being implicated," Gundrum is a 35-year-old farmer and charcoal burner, while the 17-year-old Smith "is said to be rather weak mentally."

A report of a previous attack near Teal's Pond raises the possibility that a serial attacker

killed Drew.

Bertha Neustiel, who lives near Crape's Hotel on the road to East Poestenkill, was allegedly attacked by two men, but fought them off. Neustiel did not report the attack to police before today "on account of her desire to avoid publicity."

The investigators intend to drain Teal's Pond tomorrow. "It is thought that the bed of the little body of water may disclose some fact that will assist in the mystery," our writer notes, "His revelations may help, but the officers are only acting so that every effort may be exercised which might offer some clue to the murder, if murder it proves to be."

—Kevin Gilbert

## this day in 1908 in The Record

**Wednesday, July 15, 1908.**

Investigators drain Teal's Pond in Sand Lake today, hoping to find clues to the fate of Hazel Drew, whose body was found in the pond last Saturday, *The Record* reports.

Drew, a 20 year old Troy resident, was last seen alive on July 6, the day she left the employ of Prof. E.R. Cary.

She is believed to have been killed by a blow to the head before being dumped in the pond.

Her killer or killers then apparently arranged some of her clothes nearby to make it appear that Drew drowned herself.

Approaching Teal's Pond, "the mountain road is blocked with every kind of a conveyance known - automobiles of all grades line the highway which is narrow, and farm wagons and high priced city vehicles, runabouts and surreys make up the picture," our reporter writes, "Women and men from the city visiting in the vicinity and residents throng the north shore of the pond, which is only a step from the road."

The curious crowd at the pond is disappointed when "Nothing belonging to the girl

or which could be connected with the crime was found."

The investigators from the district attorney's office were hoping to find Drew's suitcase, which she carried on board a Pawling Avenue streetcar on the afternoon of July 6.

What became of the suitcase is significant because the last two people who claim to have seen Drew alive later that day say that she wasn't carrying a suitcase when they saw her on a Sand Lake road.

Where she left the suitcase could prove a crucial clue to her apparent change of destination from Watervliet to Sand Lake.

One of the people who saw Drew in Sand Lake is 17 year old Frank Smith.

Suspicion focuses anew on him when investigators learn that he had run into the village center and tried to enter a pharmacy on the night of July 6.

While subsequent inquiries reveal that Smith was running an errand for a guest at Crape's Hotel, District Attorney Jarvis P. O'Brien still clearly considers the "weak minded" youth a person of interest.

"So far, Smith comes in closest touch of any one we have spoken to with Hazel just before her death," O'Brien tells our reporter, "I do not say he has knowledge of the way she met death, but I do say his conduct has been, to say the least, very peculiar."

"From what we learn the girl was evidently on his mind."

"He told his mother he met her, and he told Frank Richmond [a Sand Lake resident] he met her, and that was before her body was found."

"It now transpires that he helped take her body from the pond, yet he never said a word about it being Hazel's."

"He did not tell us when we were out there Saturday that he thought the body was Hazel's, and never said anything to that effect until the following Monday."

"All will be probed deeply. I am not accusing Smith and it may be he does not know more than he tells, but ... he is a deep one in some respects and guards his answers with what may be called cunning."

— Kevin Gilbert

## this day in 1908 in The Record

Thursday, July 16, 1908.

Sheriff J. Irving Baucus has offered a \$1,000 reward for information leading to the arrest of Hazel Drew's murderer, *The Record* reports, but as more clues emerge the case grows only more mysterious.

Drew's body was found in Teal's Pond in Sand Lake last Saturday, July 11. An autopsy revealed that Drew was killed by a blow to the head before her body was dumped into the pond in an apparent attempt to make her death look accidental or self-inflicted.

An important clue emerged after last evening's paper went to press, when County Detective Duncan C. Kaye found Drew's suitcase at Troy's Union Station.

Drew's cousin, Minnie Taylor, reported that Drew was carrying the suitcase when she boarded a Pawling Avenue streetcar for Watervliet on the afternoon of July 6. On July 7 Frank Smith and Rudolph Gunderman reportedly saw her walking along a Sand Lake road without the suitcase. Detective Kaye has learned that Drew was in downtown Troy on the afternoon of the 7th and left her suitcase with parcel clerk

Adelbert Atwood.

Following that news, witnesses have come forward to claim that they saw Drew downtown that afternoon. Thomas Carey, who claims to know Drew by sight, tells investigators that he saw her carrying her suitcase on Congress Street between Fourth and Fifth streets near noon that day.

A search of the suitcase reveals that a shirt waist known to belong to Drew is missing. Detectives suspect that Drew must have left it wherever she stayed on the night of July 6, but where exactly she stayed is still unknown.

Despite Minnie Taylor's claim that Drew was headed for Watervliet, investigators now suspect that Drew went to Albany instead, possibly in Taylor's company. District Attorney Jarvis P. O'Brien is in Albany today personally leading the investigation of that lead.

At the Drew home in South Troy, Hazel's mother shows reporters a postcard addressed to Hazel that had arrived last Monday at the home of Hazel's former employer, Professor E. R. Cary. Sent from New Carlisle, Ohio, it's signed "Carrie Weaver," informing

Hazel that Weaver had been "out riding" and "having a lovely time."

Investigators hope that establishing contact with Carrie Weaver, whom they assume to be a close friend of Drew, will give them more hints as to Drew's possible whereabouts on the night of the 6th and her likely destination when last seen in Sand Lake on the 7th.

Summarizing developments, assistant D.A. Chester Wager tells reporters, "We know but little more than has been published."

"There are a few things it would not be judicious to tell at this time. They may materialize into importance and the [premature?] publication of them would serve only to embarrass the earnest work we are doing."

"This office has been rendering all aid in its power to discover the perpetrator of the murder and we are working along the lines of latest light. I candidly admit, however, that the light is not strong and the secret of the poor girl's death is still hidden. But it often happens in a case like this that a very simple thing will turn the search in the right direction."

— Kevin Gilbert

p5415

## this day in 1908 in The Record

**Friday, July 17, 1908.** How did Hazel Drew die? In the absence of any plausible murder suspect, investigators are turning to alternate theories of how the Troy woman met her end.

Drew's decomposed body was pulled from Teal's Pond in Sand Lake last Saturday. An autopsy determined that she died from a blow to the head, leading detectives to speculate that her body was dumped into the pond to make it look like she killed herself or drowned by accident.

The nearest thing there is to a suspect, as far as the public knows, is Frank Smith, one of two men who were apparently the last to see Drew alive. They saw her in Sand Lake on the evening of July 7, and the 19 year old Smith apparently knew her on sight. Why, then, didn't he recognize Drew's body when he helped pull her from the pond on July 11?

"I say it is very peculiar that Smith acted in this way," says district attorney Jarvis P. O'Brien. Despite his suspicions, O'Brien has no plan to issue an arrest warrant at this time. His first priority is to hold a coroner's inquest sometime next week - later than he

should have, according to critics.

Lacking a real case against Smith, some investigators are beginning to wonder if Drew was murdered at all.

"I do not think it impossible and, perhaps, improbable that Hazel Drew committed suicide," an anonymous official tells our reporter.

"This theory of mine is substantiated by the fact that the girl was out of employment, out of money, and had few friends. Walking along the dusty road on that hot evening, one of the warmest of the summer, she may have become despondent and drowned herself upon reaching the pond near her uncle's home."

Drew received her last paycheck for \$4.50 from Professor E. R. Cary on July 4. Based on information from her aunt Minnie Taylor, investigators believe that she had spent most of it by the time she reached Sand Lake on July 7. She had one nickel on her person when her body was found.

The doctors who performed Drew's autopsy insist that she could not have sustained the head injury they found by drowning or by hitting her head on a stone. The investiga-

tor, however, suggests that the body's advanced state of decomposition made it impossible to say definitely whether Drew died by violence or accident.

Drew may have been despondent over the departure of Carrie Weaver, one of her supposedly few friends, for a vacation in Ohio on July 6. They spent the Memorial Day weekend in New York City together, according to Mrs. A. M. Green, who employs Weaver as a domestic.

Mrs. Green notes that "the girls were not known to have young men callers, but spent much of their time in each other's company." Drew's brother Joseph adds that Hazel "had no sweetheart that I know of and preferred rather the company of girls."

Another theory under consideration is that Drew was run down by an automobile. According to this scenario, a "reckless chauffeur" then dumped Drew's body in the pond "rather than face the consequences," and arranged her hat and gloves to hint at suicide.

— Kevin Gilbert

## this day in 1908 in The Record

**Saturday, July 18, 1908.** One week after Hazel Drew's body was pulled from a Sand Lake pond, investigators are still trying to piece together what they believe were the last two days of her life, *The Record* reports.

An autopsy determined that the 20 year old Drew, a recently unemployed domestic servant, had been killed by a blow to the back of her head before she was dumped in Teal's Pond.

While her body was badly decomposed by July 11, detectives remain uncertain of exactly when she was killed.

The key to the mystery seems to be whether Drew had any male companion at the time of her death.

Reports as of yesterday suggested that she largely shunned the company of men, but her father, John Drew, disclosed that she had been engaged to an unidentified man two years ago.

After the man left her for another woman, Drew acknowledges, "Hazel had had very little to do with men."

A Snyder's Lake man may have seen Drew in male company on the afternoon of July 7. Peter Cipperly recalls seeing a man and woman on a trolley

leaving Albia at 3 p.m.

He was most impressed by the man's peculiar features: a long, thin face, a long nose and a distinctive receding forehead.

Shortly after Drew's body was found, investigators expressed interest in someone with features matching the man Cipperly saw.

Cipperly says he could identify the man in a line-up, but he's less certain that the woman accompanying the man was Hazel Drew.

"While he said he thought there was a resemblance in the face to the murdered girl, he would not be positive," our reporter notes.

District Attorney Jarvis P. O'Brien explains Cipperly's difficulty by noting that investigators are working with four year old photographs that don't reflect Drew's more recent hairstyle and fashions.

Meanwhile, witnesses have reported seeing Drew at Union Station late in the morning of July 6 and on the Taborton road in Sand Lake on the night of July 7.

Mr. and Mrs. Henry Rollman of Bear's Head may be the last people to see Drew alive. They recall seeing a well-dressed girl with a plumed hat who

"should not be alone on the road at that hour." While the Rollmans worried about an unchaperoned young woman in a territory filled with campers, they left her picking raspberries by the roadside, apparently without speaking to her.

In addition, O'Brien's office has received numerous unsolicited letters, some of them anonymous, offering tips in the case.

"Some give names of those whom it is said may know something about the case," our reporter explains, but none suggest "that Hazel had a real love affair."

Carrie Weaver, a close friend of Drew's who left Troy for an Ohio vacation on July 6, has written that "I am at sea as to the cause of her disappearance," informing Trojans that "as far as I know Hazel did not associate with any men, and I think if she had I would have known it."

As our evening edition goes to press, a reporter concludes with dubious confidence that "the detectives seem to be closing in on a trail long lost" in their hunt for Drew's killer.

-- Kevin Gilbert

7/18



## this day in 1908 in The Record

**Sunday, July 19, 1908.** If investigators haven't gotten all the information they could from the banks of the pond where Hazel Drew's body was found last week, they probably won't find anything more after today, *The Record* reports.

Drew, a former domestic servant, was most likely killed on the night of July 7 or shortly afterward. Her body was pulled from Teal's Pond in Sand Lake on July 11. Today, Teal's Pond is a tourist attraction.

"With the mystery unsolved and the interest in the case increasing, there was a crowd at Sand Lake to look over the ground and see the pond where Hazel Drew's body was found," our reporter writes.

"All day long there was a constant stream of visitors and sightseers climbing the mountain and the road, which is narrow in places, was well nigh impassable. Hundreds walked the distance of three or four miles from Averill Park to the little mill pond and heard repeated over and over again the story of the girl's death.

"The spot was well trodden on which her hat lay when found and every inch of the shore of the little lake was

trampled down by footsteps of those who manifested a curiosity to take in all that the scene offered."

Meanwhile, investigators have spent the weekend rifling through garbage. They're poring through the rubbish pile at the home of Prof. E. R. Cary, where Drew was a live-in maid until quitting on July 6.

"It was thought that Hazel may have thrown away some letters or postals [i.e. postcards] before she left the employ of the Carys, and the result was not fruitless," our writer notes, "Refuse that had been thrown away and was ready to be burned was carefully sifted and separated.

"There was disclosed a few more of Hazel's friends. Scraps of letters were found and a postal card that had been torn in two were obtained. These were collected, pasted together, and from them several names of her former friends brought to light."

District Attorney Jarvis P. O'Brien that learning more about Drew's acquaintances will explain her movements on July 6 and July 7.

He knows that Drew intended to go to Watervliet on the 6th, but was back in Troy on

the 7th to leave her suitcase at Union Station.

She was last seen alive on the evening of the 7th, picking raspberries near the Taborton road.

It was previously thought that Drew was headed for an uncle's house near Teal's Pond, but the uncle, William Taylor, says he wasn't expecting a visit.

Our own pages may contain a clue to Drew's itinerary.

Special Officer John F. Murnane, attached to the district attorney's office, found the following classified ad in *The Record's* July 6 issue: "Wanted - Girl for general housework to go to Sandlake for summer; references required. Box 21, Record."

"This advertisement may account, it is thought, for Hazel's taking a trip to Averill Park, which is in the town of Sandlake, on Tuesday, July 7," our report concludes.

It can't account for why she was seen wandering at night through a popular area for campers, which neighbors didn't consider safe for a young woman traveling alone.

-- Kevin Gilbert

## this day in 1908 in The Record

**Monday, July 20, 1908.** On the evening of July 7 Mr. and Mrs. William HOFFEY saw a horse and wagon parked near Teal's Pond in Sand Lake.

There was a man in the wagon and a man by the pond. Were they the murderers of Hazel DREW?

The HOFFEYS' story, coming to light more than a week after DREW's body was pulled from Teal's Pond, "is considered of great importance by the district attorney's office," *The Record* reports, "every effort is now being put forth to ascertain the identity of the two men."

DREW, a 20 year old Troy woman, is believed to have died on the night of July 7.

An autopsy indicated that she died from a blunt-object blow to the back of her head.

That finding compelled investigators to treat the DREW story as a murder case, but as several trails of clues have led nowhere, they've found themselves questioning the autopsy.

"It would have been accepted by us as a suicide had not the doctors agreed that death had taken place before the body entered the water," district attorney JARVIS P. O'BRIEN

tells our reporter this morning. The autopsy, he adds, is the only real justification for the current murder investigation.

Autopsies have been wrong sometimes, O'Brien concedes, but he's unwilling to doubt the doctors in the DREW case. "I cannot accept suicide, because of the doctors' statement," he insists.

Later today, O'Brien learns of the HOFFEYS' story.

They're farmers who live three miles from Teal's Pond and were riding home from Troy around 7:30 p.m. on July 7.

In a roundabout way, they recount their trip, including an encounter with Frank SMITH and Rudolph GUNDERMAN, who reported seeing DREW in the area around the same time.

"After we passed SMITH and GUNDERMAN we drove down into the hollow and then passed through the hollow," WILLIAM HOFFEY says, "As we came to the hill leading up past Teal's pond I gave the reins to my wife and got out and walked.

"Well, as I was walking up the hill a few feet ahead of the horse, I noticed ahead of me,

partially pulled out of the road on the pond side, a horse and runabout facing toward Crape's hotel.

"In the runabout was a man, and as our rig neared him, he pulled further to the side of the road to let us pass.

"After we got past we looked in the direction of the pond, because the fellow pulled his horse over on that side and stopped him again, and we naturally thought there must be someone over in there for whom he was waiting.

"Over in the bushes on the shore of the pond, we saw a fellow walking about, brushing the bushes back with his arm and acting as though he was looking for something.

"I couldn't tell how he looked, for it was about half past seven and was getting dusk, but he had on a light colored shirt."

"Why they did not come to the front with their tale before the police cannot conceive," our reporter notes, "except that they did not wish to gain the notoriety resultant from the sensation which their statement is sure to occasion."

-- Kevin Gilbert

898.3

# This day in 1908 in The Record

**Tuesday, July 21, 1908.**  
Another day brings another lead in the Hazel Drew murder investigation, *The Record* reports, as "what is thought to be important to-day may be declared unimportant to-morrow."

Investigators appear no closer to solving the mystery of Drew's fate on the night of July 7.

The 20 year old domestic servant was found dead in Teal's Pond in Sand Lake on July 11.

An autopsy determined that Drew was killed by a blow to her head, while detectives presume that her killer or killers dumped the body into the pond to make it look like **Drew had drowned.** *The Record* says: "A significant clue seemed to

emerge yesterday when Mr. and Mrs. William Hoffee reported that they had seen a wagon and two men at Teal's Pond near the time that Drew was last seen alive on July 7. They did not see Drew herself during their ride.

Why did the Hoffeys take so long to take their story to investigators?

William Hoffee attempts to explain himself today.

In an interview with our paper, the farmer says that he remembered the wagon when he first heard of Drew's death. Once it was reported that Drew had been murdered, Hoffee suspected that the men in the wagon might be the murderers.

But "if they are the ones who did it, and they hear we

told it, they may some time get a chance at me and injure me," he remembers thinking.

Putting it more strongly, he remembers thinking to himself, "If I tell that, one of 'em may see me coming home some night and blow my head off."

Hoffee's fears may have been unjustified. What he saw "may now turn out to be a journey of two men seeking live bait in the shallow water near the edge of the pond," our reporter speculates. "There is a market for live bait at the big lakes in that vicinity where fishermen are many."

During the interview, Hoffee contradicts comments by Drew's uncle, William Taylor, who has told investigators that

he never associates with women.

Hoffee recalls seeing Taylor with a "young like" woman in Averill Park five weeks ago.

While he claims that he's never seen Hazel Drew, Hoffee says "I think I might" be able to identify her as the woman in Taylor's wagon.

Taylor lives near Teal's Pond. Investigators initially suspected that Drew was on her way to visit him, but Taylor told them he wasn't expecting any visits at the time.

Meanwhile, Taylor's sister Minnie, Hazel's aunt and frequent companion, gets another grilling from district attorney Jarvis P. O'Brien in the grand jury chamber of the county courthouse.

She's acquired unwanted celebrity due to her role in the case.

"She was taken in to the [chamber] through the private entrance to avoid the score of newspaper men," our writer explains, "When she left the building it was down the back stairs through the janitor's apartment and out the basement."

"Her exit was designed to escape the aim of the photographers, but it was unsuccessful ... Miss Taylor did the best she could to avoid the cameras, and covered her face, but what is called 'team work' in New York among the snapshot men succeeded here."

— Kevin Gilbert

5/10/08

## this day in 1908 in The Record

**Wednesday, July 22, 1908.**

The Hazel Drew murder investigation now extends into Maine as detectives discover an exchange of letters between the deceased woman and a Waterville family, *The Record* reports.

Drew is believed to have died sometime on the night of July 7. Her body was pulled from Teal's Pond in Sand Lake on July 11. The murder investigation began after an autopsy determined that Drew had not drowned, but had died from a blow to the back of her head.

As the investigation continues, the doctors who performed the autopsy seem to be backing off from their earlier assertion that Drew was murdered. Their reticence emerges today at a conference with district attorney Jarvis P. O'Brien, who wants to know whether Drew's body should be exhumed and re-examined.

The conference starts two hours late as O'Brien's automobile breaks down twice on the way to Sand Lake. Afterwards, O'Brien tells reporters that there's no reason to exhume the body. The doctors have told him that a new examination would add nothing to the original autopsy results.

Asked whether the doctors "still maintain it was murder," O'Brien answers, "They say the life was extinct before the body was thrown or fell into the water."

As our reporter notes, "The doctors would not declare that the girl was murdered. They would not state that she was struck with a club on the head. They said distinctly that there was a wound on the back of the head, sufficient to cause death. How it was inflicted they did not say."

Meanwhile, detectives are picking through more of Drew's belongings provided by her aunt, Minnie Taylor. The most intriguing so far are letters from Mr. and Mrs. Frank Jones of Waterville, ME.

In one letter, Mrs. Jones, a former Troy resident, "asked Hazel to tell her husband ... that he should not forget that he had a wife in Waterville."

More recently, on July 16, Mrs. Jones wrote to Minnie Taylor to assure her that she would destroy all her correspondence with Drew, except for three postcards that "could hurt no one."

A request for further information about the Joneses gets an alarming response: Frank Jones

has been missing and hunted by the Waterville police since last Saturday, July 18.

In a separate development, Detective Duncan C. Kaye is trying to determine the identity of a young man whose photograph was found in Drew's suitcase, which she left at Union Station on the afternoon of July 7. The picture, taken in Troy, shows a person "well proportioned, [with] a round face and light complexion, with sandy hair."

9-19-18

# this day in 1908 in The Record

Record 7/23/08

Thursday, July 23, 1908.

"Orgies in a camp on the mountains back of Teal Pond may play an important part in Hazel Drew's death," *The Record* reports.

A century later, it's hard to write a better lead than that.

Drew's body was pulled from Teal's Pond in Sand Lake on July 11.

The 20 year old Troy woman was allegedly killed by a blow to her head sometime on the night of July 7.

Investigators suspect that someone dumped Drew's body in the pond to make it appear that she had drowned accidentally or killed herself.

District Attorney Jarvis P. O'Brien hasn't yet found a credible suspect, but detec-

tives have pieced together Drew's family and social relationships to better understand her movements after she left the employ of Professor E. R. Cary on the morning of July 6.

Inside a suitcase that Drew left at Union Station on the afternoon of July 7 was a photograph of a young man, County Detective Duncan C. Kaye has identified the man as F. W. Schiafflin of Albany.

"Mr. Schiafflin stated that he first met Hazel Drew three years ago at the skating rink at Rensselaer Park," our reporter notes, "Hazel seemed to be a jolly, good-natured girl, he said, and he enjoyed her company."

"He took her to her home that night, and she invited

him to call, which he did several times."

"Hazel appeared to be a lady in every respect, and I always treated her as such," Schiafflin tells Detective Kaye.

He hasn't seen her in the last two years, however, and he doesn't remember giving her a photograph.

"The friendship between them had gradually died out, he said, though for no particular reason," our writer explains.

While Schiafflin may prove to be a dead end, today's other lead is at least more sensational. Special Officer William Powers learns about the campground "on the mountains beyond Alps" during another search of the Taborion area

near Teal's Pond.

The camp "can be reached from Teal's Pond by taking the road to Glass Lake and then on, passing Brown's hotel at Crookd Lake, and up the Stephentown Heights," our reporter relates.

Mr. and Mrs. William Clifford live near the camp.

Mrs. Clifford tells Powers that on the night of July 6 or July 7, she was awakened by "the screams of a woman."

"She says she called her husband and said to him, 'You had better get up; they are liable to be killing that young girl over there.'"

"Her husband got up, but the screaming had ceased, and he did not leave the house."

While the Cliffords are

reportedly disgruntled ex-employees of the campground, "the camp has invited notoriety" from other sources.

Two years ago, two Albany girls emerged from the camp "scantly dressed," one "clad solely in a rubber overcoat." Other girls have allegedly been "detained" there, though telephone lines enabled them to call for help.

Investigators will want Mrs. Clifford to recall exactly when she heard the woman's screams.

Hazel Drew is not known to have been in the area on the night of July 6, but was seen nearby on July 7 by the last people known to have seen her alive.

—Kevin Gilbert

8/24/08



## this day in 1908 in The Record

**Friday, July 24, 1908.** Investigators in the Hazel Drew murder case are tracing automobiles that drove through the area near Teal's Pond in Sand Lake around the time she was probably killed, *The Record* reports.

Drew's body was pulled from the pond on July 11. She was last seen alive on the evening of July 7. Several witnesses report seeing her that evening on the Taborton Road near the pond, but detectives remain uncertain of where she actually died.

District Attorney Jarvis P. O'Brien is still working on the theory that Drew may have been carried to Teal's Pond after she was killed. Suspensions rose when witnesses reported seeing a wagon near the pond on the night of July 7, but investigators now believe that the men in the wagon were gathering live bait for sale to local fishermen.

O'Brien's team continues to pursue any lead involving a vehicle passing through the area. At one point last week they speculated that Drew may have been killed accidentally by an auto, the driver of which might have dumped her in the pond to conceal his responsibility.

They're now interested in fig-

uring out exactly when Christopher Crape saw an automobile pass by his hotel on Taborton mountain. Crape had earlier told investigators that he saw a car on the night of July 3. He now says "he never told the exact date that the machine passed his hotel and he did not intend to until the proper time arrived."

Crape's cryptic comment "is now accepted as being further evidence that the authorities have been working on a clue and concealing their efforts in this direction," our reporter writes.

The car Crape saw has been identified as one belonging to Alexander Kramroth, an Albany furniture dealer. O'Brien doesn't appear to consider Kramroth a suspect, since he doubts that anyone would drive a touring car over Taborton. Nor does he seem to consider Crape's account significant, since he notes that someone could drive from the Alps campground, a current focus of investigation, to Teal's Pond without passing Crape's hotel.

Today's *Record* reported increased interest in the Alps camp, which has a local reputation as an area where young women shouldn't go alone, or

as our writer puts it, "where purity and virtue are held but lightly."

Investigators will intensify their efforts at the camp following O'Brien's conference with Sheriff J. Irving Baucus this morning. "While the camp in question may have no direct bearing on the murder of Hazel Drew," our reporter notes, "the place will be investigated and its true character known."

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## this day in 1908 in The Record

Record 7/25/08

**Saturday, July 25, 1908.** The latest person of interest in the Hazel Drew murder investigation is a Pullman car employee who may have sent anonymous postcards to the victim, *The Record* reports.

A young woman's body was pulled from Teal's Pond in Sand Lake two weeks ago. After an autopsy determined that the woman died from a blow to the head rather than from drowning, she was identified as 20-year-old Hazel Drew of Troy, a domestic servant who had quit her most recent position on July 6.

"Since the girl's body was discovered and her belongings inspected the district attorney and his men have been trying to establish the identity of the man who had sent anonymous postals and letters to the girl," our reporter writes.

"While the messages were unsigned one of them gave rise to the positive belief that whoever sent them had been at some period employed as a waiter."

Samuel LeRoy of 1621 Seventh Ave. once worked as a waiter in a Sand Lake hotel. He later worked in the dining room of the Mansion House hotel in

Troy, and currently works on Pullman sleeping cars running between Albany and New York City. Acquaintances of his have reportedly informed investigators that LeRoy had told them that he knew Hazel Drew.

At the very least, District Attorney Jarvis P. O'Brien has to hope that LeRoy can throw light on Drew's movements between the time she left work on the morning of July 6 and the evening of July 7, when she was last seen alive on the Taborton road.

O'Brien summons LeRoy to his office for "rigid" questioning today. Asked to account for his whereabouts on July 6 and 7, LeRoy explains that he worked the Albany-New York run from noon to 3:45 on the 6th, stayed overnight at a boarding house, and returned to Albany at 5:50 a.m. on the 7th.

LeRoy and his wife were invited to attend a card party on the night of July 7, but spent that night at home when the hostess rescheduled the event for the following night. He spent the crucial night "lying on the couch."

In a separate interview, LeRoy's wife corroborates her husband's work schedule and

his story of the thwarted card party. Afterward, LeRoy meets the press.

In our reporter's opinion, LeRoy "established an alibi that could not be shaken or disputed. He told a story that was accepted as being straightforward and honest ... [proving] beyond any doubt that he had no connection with the case whatever."

As for whether he sent the postcard that brought investigators to his door, LeRoy "told the district attorney that he did not know the girl."

O'Brien hasn't shared his opinion of LeRoy with the press, but our reporter clearly believes that the Drew investigation has reached another dead end.

7-14-08

## this day in 1908 in The Record

Record 7/27/08

**Monday, July 27, 1908.** A coroner's inquest beginning today may determine whether the county continues its investigation into the alleged murder of Hazel Drew, *The Record* reports.

Some critics have suggested that the inquest should have taken place weeks ago, well before District Attorney Jarvis P. O'Brien began a sweeping investigation that has led nowhere so far. Drew's body was pulled from Teal's Pond in Sand Lake on July 11. An autopsy on July 12 determined that she died from a blow to the back of her head, not from drowning.

More than two weeks later, the inquest opens at Wager's Hotel in Averill Park.

"The room where the investigation was begun is one not lacking in promises," our reporter comments, "It is one where promises have been made by campaign orators, big and little. It is one where the summer boarders in Averill Park have danced until dawn and wished that daybreak might be deferred.

"To-day it was a death that threw its shadow over the building that more often has vibrated with laughter and

song....Long before Coroner Stroup ascended the platform the room was wedged with a human throng, not witnesses - just those who wanted to hear more of the girl's death story. It was one of the most important investigations ever held in Rensselaer County."

Most eyes are on two persons of interest in the investigation. William Taylor, Drew's uncle, lives near Teal's Pond but did not see her in the area on July 6 or 7.

Frank Smith is one of the last people to see Drew alive on the evening of the 7th. His age, not to mention his innocence, remains subject to dispute.

Before the hearing, Taylor "appeared to see no one; with his feet crossed he sat alone looking at the floor." Smith, "though but seventeen years of age, has a growth of hair on his upper lip, and to add to the contrast of his age as compared with that of other seventeen-year-old boys he was smoking a cigar."

The first witnesses are the campers who first discovered Drew's body in the pond. Lorenzo Gruber and George White first notified Gilbert Miller, who was wrongly credited with finding the body in

early reports.

Teal's Pond belongs to Conrad Teal, who "lives near enough to the water to hear shooting or any noise that might be made there."

He testifies that he heard noises there on July 4, but not on the day when Drew is believed to have died.

Frank Smith testifies for half an hour under "rigid examination" by District Attorney Jarvis P. O'Brien.

"His answers were direct and he never hesitated in responding," our reporter notes.

The others who saw Drew on July 7 also testify, including farmer William Hoffee, who claims to have seen two men and a wagon parked near the pond that evening.

O'Brien asks if one of the people Hoffee saw might have been a woman.

"If it was a woman she had pants on," Hoffee answers.

"You could tell if it was a woman, could you not?" O'Brien continues.

"I would have to be very drunk not to," Hoffee confirms.

Testimony at the inquest will resume on July 30.

— Kevin Gilbert

7.5.15

July 28, 1968  
is missing

life@home A TIMES UNION PUBLICATION

p16 q18

The 20-year-old Drew, a Troy woman, was found dead in Teal's Pond, Sand Lake, on July 11. An autopsy's determination that she died from a blow to the head, rather than from drowning, sparked the present investigation.

O'Brien dispatches two special officers back to Taborton mountain, near Teal's Pond, to interview the family of Michael Sowalsky. "The boy is said to possess a temper not gentle, and it was also declared that he knew Hazel Drew," our reporter notes.

As it turns out, "he did not know Hazel, had never seen her, and the night that she was last seen on the road he was at home in bed, ill," according to Sowalsky's parents.

In other words, "the expected happened," and "another name is drawn into the tragedy that has no connection with the case direct or indirect," our writer scoffs.

Even more frustrating to investigators and reporters is a rumor that "Mrs. Drew, Hazel's mother, had attributed her daughter's death to a hypnotic spell which had been cast over her."

O'Brien openly laughs at this story, which Mrs. Drew denies.

"While the Drews are not people of wealth their surroundings are dignified," our reporter clarifies, "and the mother of the girl is careful in all her statements."

Record 7/29/08

Kevin Gilbert

**HAZEL DREW INVESTIGATION.** During a pause in the coroner's inquest into the death of Hazel Drew, district attorney Jarvis P. O'Brien continues to pursue potential murder suspects, our paper reports.

## this day in 1908 in The Record

**Thursday, July 30, 1908.** The coroner's inquest into the death of Hazel Drew moves from Averill Park to Troy today, giving a new set of curiosity seekers a chance to look at some of the main characters in the story, *The Record* reports.

The inquest began last Monday, July 27, in the dance hall at Wager's Hotel. Hazel Drew's body was pulled from Teal's Pond in Sand Lake on July 11. An autopsy the following day determined that she died from a blow to the back of her head.

Over the two days between hearings, investigators led by district attorney Jarvis P. O'Brien hunted for new leads, but found nothing to bring them any closer to determining who might have killed Drew on the night of July 7. She was last seen alive on the Taborton road near Teal's Pond earlier that evening.

This morning's hearing convenes at the county court house. "There was a number of spectators," our reporter observes, "more interested in catching a glimpse at the prominent witnesses than they were to listening to the testimony adduced."

The first witness called is

Drew's last employer, Professor E.R. Cary. She went to work in his household as a domestic servant last February, and quit on July 6. Cary testifies that Drew left of her own accord, but can't account for her whereabouts over the preceding weekend.

A name new to the public among the witnesses is Jeannette Marcellus. She is the person who saw Drew in downtown's Union Station on the afternoon of July 7. Her information led to the discovery of Drew's suitcase in the Union Station baggage check department. She has little to add to that story today apart from identifying herself.

Some of the most anticipated testimony comes from Hazel's mother, Mrs. John Drew. Her account is telling for how little she knew of her daughter's activities in recent years, during which Hazel "did not make a confidant of other members of the family." She tells the inquest that she last saw Hazel at home on July 2, and had no inkling that Hazel was going to leave her job with Professor Cary.

Coroner M.H. Strobe hoped to hear from Drew's close friend Carrie Weaver today, but her expected arrival in Troy follow-

ing a vacation in Ohio has been delayed until next Saturday. Weaver was Drew's companion on several recent trips, including a Memorial Day jaunt to New York City, and might have more information on Drew's recent affairs.

As things now stand, the inquest is likely to conclude tomorrow without hearing from Weaver, after today's testimony proves "not a revelation of anything not heretofore given out by the witnesses."

9-7-08



## this day in 1908 in The Record *Record 7/31/08*

**Friday, July 31, 1908.** In a possibly crippling blow to the Hazel Drew murder investigation, a coroner's inquest has failed to affirm that Drew died by foul play, *The Record* reports.

Hazel Drew was a 20-year old Troy woman who worked as a domestic servant in several area households. She quit her position in the home of Professor E.R. Cary on Monday, July 6. She was last seen alive on the Taborton road on the evening of July 7. Her dead body was pulled from Teal's Pond in Sand Lake on July 11.

An autopsy performed on July 12 determined that Drew was killed by a blow to the back of her head. That ruling fueled speculation that Drew had been murdered, then dumped into the pond to make her death look like an accident or suicide. District Attorney Jarvis P. O'Brien launched a sweeping investigation in the hope that people who knew Drew could help detectives trace her movements on July 6 and 7.

The investigation was already two weeks old before the coroner's inquest held its first hearing last Monday. O'Brien's office was bombarded with letters offering potential clues or identifying potential suspects, all of

which have led nowhere so far. In our own reporter's opinion, the inquest has shed no new light on the case.

In an opinion published today, Rensselaer County coroner M.H. Strobe states that Drew "came to her death from extravasation of blood in the durameter caused by a blow on the head from some blunt instrument in some manner unknown."

In other words, Hazel Drew died from bleeding in the brain, but no one knows how it happened.

As if anticipating Strobe's verdict, O'Brien has recalled special officers Louis Unser and William Powers from Taborton mountain, where they've been conducting the investigation for nearly three weeks.

"While work has not ceased altogether there will be a cessation of direct searching for further clues in the vicinity where the supposed crime was committed," our reporter explains.

County Detective Duncan C. Kaye tells reporters that "the investigation into the death of the girl has not been abandoned, but would be continued indefinitely."

While some officers have been taken off the case, Kaye adds, "certain circumstances would be

investigated." The \$1,000 reward offered by Sheriff J. Irving Baucus for information leading to the arrest of Drew's presumptive murderer remains in effect.

Despite reassurances, our reporter believes that "possibly the last chapter to the tragedy of Hazel Irene Drew was written this morning" by Coroner Strobe.

"The case will go down into history as an unsolved problem, unless by accident something develops that may throw some light on it."

*p. 15 of 18*

## this day in 1908 in The Record

**Tuesday, August 4, 1908.** District Attorney Jarvis P. O'Brien insists that the Hazel Drew investigation is still alive, *The Record* reports, but the chances of catching a presumed killer are increasingly slim.

Drew was a 20-year-old Troy woman who worked as a domestic servant. She was last seen alive on the evening of July 7, one day after she quit her position with Professor E. R. Cary. Her body was pulled from Teal's Pond in Sand Lake on July 11.

O'Brien launched a murder investigation after an autopsy determined that Drew had died from a blow to the back of her head rather than drowning. The investigation was cut back

drastically after a coroner's inquest last week failed to confirm that Drew had been murdered.

Despite that verdict, O'Brien still wants to know where Drew went and who she might have seen on July 6 and 7. He's been eagerly awaiting the return to Troy of Carrie Weaver, reportedly Drew's closest friend, who was on vacation in Ohio at the time of Drew's disappearance. Weaver arrived in town this weekend.

O'Brien interviewed Weaver yesterday. As he tells our reporter this morning, Weaver reiterated earlier statements from Ohio that "she never knew [Drew] to have an intimate male friendship," and that "Hazel ... did not seek the

company of men."

Weaver informed O'Brien that Drew left a handbag behind in New York City the last time the two women visited the metropolis. Investigators had hoped to track down the handbag as a further clue to Drew's movements on the 6th and 7th, but O'Brien now concedes that "the victim of the tragedy went to the place she met her death without anything except the clothes she wore."

Why Drew was traveling the Taborton road on foot near dark, in an area purportedly unsafe for young women, remains a mystery. An uncle lives in the area, but has told investigators that he wasn't expecting a visit from Drew

and never saw her on July 7.

Carrie Weaver "could not believe that [Drew] took her own life or went to Teal's pond to keep an appointment," O'Brien notes. Investigators remain baffled as to why Drew left a suitcase at Union Station in downtown Troy on the afternoon of the 7th, and why she went to Sand Lake from there.

Weaver's statements conform to "a remarkable consistency of statement from all who knew Hazel," O'Brien says, "to the effect that she had no steady male company, and that her conduct was free from cause for comment."

While O'Brien admits that "there is absolutely no new light upon the case," he insists that "work on the case will be

continued, although the outlook for favorable results is not good."