MAGGIE HOEL FOUND DEAD

Arkansas River Find Solves Famous Mystery

MURDER IS SUSPECTED

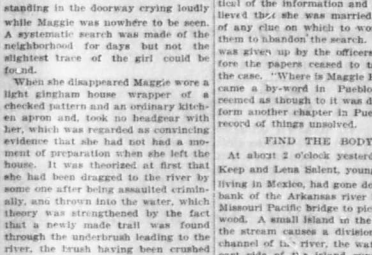
Autopsy May Throw Additional Light on the Crime.

Where is Maggie Hoel? Dead or alive? The question was solved yesterday. Maggie is dead.

Her body was found in the Arkansas river 500 yards below the Missouri Pacific railroad bridge, southeast of the city, nearly five miles as the river runs, from the place whence she disappeared. Badly decomposed as the body was, there is no question as to its identity. The clothing, a ring, the general appearance of the body and the positive identification of the girl by Charles Beatty, her brother-in-law, remove the slightest doubt. The officers are convinced that Maggie was either murdered or that she committed suicide.

The question "Where is Maggie Hoel?" was first asked by the Chieftain on the morning of December 24 last. It was asked every morning for two weeks after but not a single trace of the girl was found. It was feared from the first that she had met with foul play but the officers laughed at the idea. With but one or two exceptions the men who paid attention to the case said that the girl had undoubtedly run away with her lover to be married. Now they all maintain that they believed from the first that she was in the river but only one attempt was made at the time to find her body.

Maggie lived with her sister and brother-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Beatty, three miles west of the city, the house being located in a lonely spot about a quarter of a mile above the west Eighth street county bridge, between the river and the north side reservoirs. At about 1 o'clock on the afternoon of Sunday, December 23, Mrs. Beatty went to make a neighborhood call, leaving her sister alone in the house to take charge of the baby.



MAGGIE HOEL.

(From a photo furnished the police at the time of her disappearance.

Mr. Beatty was also away. At 3 o'clock Mrs. Beatty returned to find the baby standing in the doorway crying loudly while Maggie was nowhere to be seen. A systematic search was made of the neighborhood for days but not the slightest trace of the girl could be found.

When she disappeared Maggie wore a light gingham house wrapper of a checked pattern and an ordinary kitchen apron and, took no headgear with her, which was regarded as convincing evidence that she had not had a moment of preparation when she left the house. It was theorized at first that she had been dragged to the river by some one after being assaulted criminally, and thrown into the water, which theory was strengthened by the fact that a newly made trail was found through the undertrush leading to the river, the brush having been crushed down as though some heavy body had been dragged through it, while several tracks, apparently made by a large shoe were found in one place and tracks of a smaller shoe in another.

The officers laughed all these theories to scorn however and after an investigation lasting about three days gave it out that in their opinion the girl had gone away with a lover. Deputy Sheriff W. L. Shurtz was one of the few who did not accept this theory and some days after the disappearance he and Silas Hartz dragged the river for over a mile with a rope and rake. Ice forming on the water soon after the girl vanished made any attempt of a further search impossible.

It was claimed by several persons living near the Beatty home that on the morning of Maggie's disappearance they had seen a hack drawn by two white horses in the vicinity of the county bridge and the marks of rubber tired wheels were really found. A woman in black, who attracted attention by reason of her mysterious actions, was also seen near the Beatty house on Sunday morning and Mrs. Beatty sent Maggie to find out what she wanted. It seems that the woman repulsed the girl rather sharply. The officers thought that the woman and the hack had something to do with the case but they were never able to locate either the hack or the mysterious woman.

For a time the relatives thought that a man in Lockwood, Mo., who was an uncle of Maggie's and who had at one time been her guardian, might have abducted her and for several days they corresponded with friends in Lockwood by wire, finally learning that the man was still there and had not been away for some time.

On December 31, just eight days after the disappearance, a man was located by the Chieftain who claimed to have received a letter from Missouri to the effect that Maggie had gone away from Pueblo with a man named J. E. Watson and was happily married to him. This letter was published for what is was worth in the Chieftain at the time and after that, from a newspaper standpoint, the case was regarded as closed. Most people, and in fact every one connected with the paper, accepted, the information as authentic. The Beatty family were skeptical of the information and never believed that she was married but lack of any clue on which to work caused them to abandon the search. The hunt was given up by the officers long before the papers ceased to talk about the case. "Where is Maggie Hoel?" became a by-word in Pueblo and it seemed as though to it was destined to form another chapter in Pueblo's long record of things unsolved.

FIND THE BODY.

At about 2 o'clock yesterday, Tony Keep and Lena Salent, young children living in Mexico, had gone down to the bank of the Arkansas river below the Missouri Pacific bridge to pick up drift wood. A small island of the center of the stream causes a division in the channel of the river, the water on the east side of the island running slow and shallow. Just a few feet from the east bank, there was a log which had stopped in the channel of its own weight and lying against this log the children saw the body. One leg was above the surface and the trunk was also half out of the water, making it easy for the children to see that it was a human being. In great fright they ran away telling every one they met of their find until word of it came to Police Officer Thomas who notified the proper authorities.

Coroner Fugard and a number of officers hurried to the scene and the former took charge of the gruesome object. From the bank of the river the head of the body was not visible but the water had so cleansed the portion above the surface that the color of the dress and the underclothing was plainly visible. Several of the officers, among them Detective McNeil and Deputy Shurtz, who had worked on the case, recalled the descriptions of Maggie Hoel's clothing as furnished them by the relatives, particularly the fact that she wore an underskirt made of bed-ticking and before the body was taken from the water they became emphatic in their opinions that it was the long missing girl.

Despite the long stay in the water the body was in an excellent state of preservation, perhaps due to the fact that the water has been ice cold ever since the girl's disappearance. The face was easily distinguishable. At the morgue a close examination was made and it was found that it was Maggie Hoel beyond all doubt. The opinion of the officers was soon confirmed by Charles Beatty, who was positive in his identification. When she disappeared the girl had worn a plain gold engagement ring on the third finger of the right hand and this ring was found on the corpse. Detective McNeil and Deputy Shurtz drove post haste to the Beatty home, where after breaking the news to Mrs. Beatty, they secured from her a dress and apron exactly like the ones worn by Maggie when she disappeared. This dress corresponded to the one found on the body. Another point of identification was the girl's teeth, the eye teeth being unusually prominent.

Murder is the theory most generally accepted now, not only by the officers, but every one who has worked on the case. The suicidal theory is rejected because there is no evidence to back it. Maggie was a girl of unusually phlegmatic temperament, one of the kind who seldom think of self destruction. On the last day she was seen she was in her usual spirits, which her relatives say were ordinarily happy. They claim she had never been in any trouble of any kind that would suggest suicide to her.

Another thing that makes the suicide theory rather improbable was the fact that the girl was engaged to be married, her fiancee being James Scout, who until recently was employed at Baker's gardens near the Beatty home. About three weeks after the Hoel girl vanished Scout is alleged to have shipped about $30 worth of celery belonging to his employer to Colorado Springs, sold it there and then fled. The officers have been unable to locate him since. Scout gave the girl the ring that was found on the body. He had it made for her in Cripple Creek. It is claimed that no one else had ever paid the girl any attention and that she was adverse to male company. Her relatives say that she seldom went out and very seldom with young men. Scout is not as yet connected with the case.

The Arkansas river runs swift and strong at the spot where it is presumed the girl must have been cast into the water and when she disappeared it was considerably higher than it is now. It would have easily carried a body away.

Coroner Fugard is positive that the body was in the water fully as long as indications point. Its progress down stream was probably retarded by the ice which has been very thick and strong several times since December 23.

The theory that violence was done the girl is borne out by the fact that the right arm of the body is broken just at the elbow and Coroner Fugard says it is his opinion that it could not have been done while the body was floating down stream. Only a severe blow or fall could have broken the bones.

It may be that the girl was assaulted in the house by a tramp; that in accomplishing his purpose he used great violence; then dragged her through the brush to the river and cast the body, now probably unconscious, if not dead, into the water.

THEORIES ADVANCED.

Some of the officers assert that in their opinion the girl took her life through shame though as yet there is no evidence to justify this belief. The autopsy to be held today is for the purpose of determining the condition of the girl with respect to maternity and it may also prove whether she was assaulted just before she was killed. If the former the officers will endeavor to locate the man responsible for her condition. If the latter the likelihood of her assailant ever being captured is slight as there is not the least clue for the police to work upon.

James Scout, the girl's intended husband, is a young man who had been employed at Baker's gardens for about nine months, and he was highly regarded by his employer. It is said that he came of good family and was well educated. Drink and gambling is said to have caused his downfall which came so soon after his sweetheart's disappearance. A warrant in the hands of the officers charges him with grand larceny for the alleged stealing of the celery from Mr. Baker. Scout is said to have thought a great deal of his fiancee and seemed to be greatly affected by her mysterious fate.

Maggie Hoel was nearing her eighteenth birthday when she disappeared. She came to Pueblo about a year ago from Lockwood, Mo., to make her home with her sister, her mother and father both being dead. She was rather an attractive looking girl, blonde, above medium heighth and well developed for her age. Besides Mrs. Beatty her only other relatives are two brothers now living in Utah.

Charles Beatty, brother-in-law of the dead girl, is in charge of one of Baker's gardens and is an old resident of Pueblo. He was very fond of the girl and was deeply affected at her terrible fate. Mrs. Beatty was nearly prostrated when told of the finding of the body by the officers.

The coroner will hold an inquest today after the autopsy which will be held at 10 o'clock. The funeral will be held today at 11 a. m. from the undertaking rooms, corner Union avenue and D street.



DOWAGER EMPRESS FREDERICK OF GERMANY, WHOSE DEATH HAS LONG BEEN EXPECTED.

BASEBALL MAGNATES.

New York, February 25.—The National Baseball magnates began their annual spring meeting in the Fifth Avenue hotel tonight and will probably be in session for a week. A definite plan for action against the American league in case of war, the hearing of the demands of the Players' association, and the consideration and adoption of a playing schedule for the season are some of the things to come up.

The Players' association today submitted demands more comprehensive than those made last fall.

The magnates refused to discuss the American league, except to predict the failure of Ban Johnson's plans. The meeting adjourned at 10:30 p. m. President Young said only routine business had been discussed. A committee consisting of Messrs. Brush, Hart and Soden will be appointed to meet President Zimmer of the Players' association, and hear his demands. The time of this meeting and whether it is to be secret will be decided later.

MANY CASES OF PLAGUE.

Cape Town, February 25.—Thus far 31 cases of bubonic plague have been reported in Cape Town, including six Europeans. There have been six deaths from the disease, one European being among the number. It is expected that several cases still under treatment will prove fatal.

NEW YORK'S POLICE CHIEF.

New York, February 25.—Commissioner of Police Murphy took hold of his duties today and, after making an address to all commanding officers down to and including captains, he issued a proclamation delegating to former Chief Devery the command of the forces and all the powers as formerly enjoyed, with the exception of those touching the appointment or transfers of men.

HAMILTON'S SENTENCE.

Minneapolis, Minn., February 25.—Frank H. Hamilton, convicted of manslaughter in the first degree, was today sentenced to serve two years in the penitentiary at Stillwater.

TEN PEOPLE BURNED.

London, February 25.—A fire in a residence situated in the poor quarters of Birmingham today resulted in six men and women being burned to death and four dangerously burned.

A THEATER HORROR.

Catania, Sicily, February 25.—The Castagnola theater was destroyed by fire last night. Two persons were killed and many were injured.