

Drowning of 2 Negro Boys Due to Lack of Swimming Pools

Died Last Weekend in Harlem River Trying to Find Relief from Heat; Only One Swimming Pool for All of Harlem

By Angelo Herndon

Two deaths, due to the lack of adequate swimming pools, were recorded in Harlem last week-end.

A six-year-old, unidentified Negro boy's body was fished out of the Harlem River Saturday at 127th St. and First Ave. by a police launch. The unidentified youngster was drowned when he was caught suddenly by a swiftly moving current.

The second drowning, is a tragic ending to a long story of poverty and suffering. Ollie Felton, 13-year-old Negro boy of 268 W. 141st St., was sent on an errand last Sunday by his grandmother, Mrs. Cora Brown.

Three weeks ago, his mother was sent to a state psychopathic hospital for treatment after she was forced to quit housekeeping and leave her three children, Ollie, Celestine, and Mildred with their grandmother.

For payment of back rent owed by Mrs. Felton, the landlord took every piece of furniture, food, clothing she possessed and ordered her to get out of the house. This was more than a month ago. Shortly after, the dispirited and homeless mother was sent to Bellevue for "observation." From there she was ordered committed to the state psychopathic hospital.

Ollie decided to take a swim in the Harlem River at 155th St.

"If I had had the money," Mrs. Brown said, "I would have given it to him to swim in a city pool instead going in that dirty river."

There is only one city-owned swimming pool in Upper Harlem, located at 145th St. off Edgecombe Ave.

What's more, the parents of children who live on relief can ill afford to pay for their swimming when they do not have enough money to buy food.

Celestine, 8, Mildred, 10, Mrs. Brown and other relatives of the drowned boy, sat grimly in a corner of their ramshackle apartment. It seemed that the two little girls would cry their hearts out over the

death of their brother whom they both had looked upon as their future breadwinner.

Ollie's death was but a grim reminder to the entire family of its tragic and impoverished condition. He was out of his misery, said Mrs. Brown, and "God only knows what will happen to the rest of us. I'm just trusting that the relief people will put the two little girls on my relief budget."

There are not enough parks for the kids to escape the heat. Asked why there isn't adequate policing of the river to keep the kids away, police at the East 126th St. Station where the death of the unidentified Negro boy is recorded, said that parents should show more responsibility for their children.

The police attendant at the 135th St. Station, upon learning that the Daily Worker was interested in the death of Ollie Felton, said "Oh, yes, we fished his body up alright. His family is penniless and starving, why don't your paper start a charity fund drive for them?"

Detroit Inter-City Truck Strike Ends

DETROIT, Aug. 2 (UP).—An inter-city trucking strike which for two weeks tied up industrial transfer hauling ended today, when the last 900 strikers went back to work under an agreement which gave them wage increases ranging from 2½ to 15 cents an hour.

Union demands for paid vacations and a 54-hour week were not obtained in the new contract. Wage increases amounted to about two-thirds of the increase originally demanded.