

Thelma Smith

Occupant Name: Thelma Smith

Location: Section R, Lot 34

Date of Birth: 1919

Date of Death: 1930

Date of Burial: 1930

Veteran: No

Lot Owner: J. Reinhart

Multiple Occupants: No

Comment:



Steps Into Deep Water; Drowns

Thelma Smith, Age 10, River
Victim, as Mother and Sis-
ter Narrowly Escape.

Funeral Held Monday

Child Was Daughter of Mrs. El-
sie Reinhart Smith, of Browns-
town--Were on Picnic.

Stepping into a deep hole, Thelma Smith, age 10, of Brownstown, was carried away by the swift current and her mother, Mrs. Elsie Reinhart Smith, and her sister, Phyllis, age nine, narrowly escaped drowning while wading in White river Saturday afternoon.

Funeral services for the little girl were held Monday morning at ten o'clock at the Baptist church in Brownstown, the Rev. W. E. Rix, pastor, officiating. Burial was made in Fairview cemetery.

Mrs. Smith, accompanied by her children, Thelma, Phyllis and Benita, age six, prepared a picnic lunch Saturday morning leaving home about ten o'clock. They stopped at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Emmet Burrell until noon when Mrs. Burrell and her small son, Pat, accompanied them for a trip to the river. They ate lunch near Stilwell's ferry and later went to the river to go wading. Thelma, who took a special delight in picnics, had been begging her mother for more than a week to go to the river wading.

After playing in the sand on the bar and wading in the shallow water, Mrs. Smith, holding Thelma and Phyllis by the hand, started to wade across the river. They were in water about knee deep when they stepped off into a deep hole with water over their heads. The current was very swift and carried them swiftly down stream. Thelma was jerked loose from her mother's grasp, but Phyllis in some manner grabbed hold of her mother and held on to her back until Mrs. Smith, who could swim some, struggled to shallow water, coming out on the opposite side of the river. Mrs. Burrell was more than a hundred feet away at the time and was unable to lend any assistance. She thought that she saw Thelma's head above the water once.

Mrs. Smith, when she reached the opposite bank and realizing that her daughter had been carried away down the river, called for help to Virgil Hall and Bruce Brown, who were fishing quite a distance below. As

they could not swim they came to Brownstown to summon help. At this time Victor Hatton, Estel B. Hatton and Audie Neal Harper, the latter two soldiers, who are in Brownstown on a furlough from Ft. Sill, Oklahoma, drove up and immediately started search. Accompanied by two other men, they formed a line and started wading down the river. About a quarter of a mile below they found the body which was caught on a trot line. The body was recovered about four o'clock which was about an hour after they had stepped in the hole.

By the time the body was recovered a large crowd had gathered and many took turns in applying resuscitation methods, which however, proved futile. They did not give up, however, until she was pronounced dead by a physician.