

THE PH BOY ELECTROCUTED PLAYING BRAKEMAN

Body Bursts Into Flames
as Waving Arm Touches
Live Wire

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Wire

A 12-year-old boy was instantly killed and one of his companions badly burned when a trio of schoolboy truants played brakeman on top of a box car at Thirtieth street and Montgomery avenue, at 9.45 o'clock yesterday morning. The dead boy, Morris Brownstein, of 2521 North Thirty-fourth street, was electrocuted when one of his arms, which he was vigorously waving in imitation of a signaling trainman, struck a wire underneath the bridge on Montgomery avenue. One of his playmates, Louis Stopsy, also 12 years old, of 3206 West York street, pulled his chum's body from the wire to the top of the car, receiving a terrific shock, and igniting his shirt and hair.

With the flames rapidly spreading over his body, Louis jumped from the box car with his brother, Sam, 14 years old, and rushed panic-stricken up Montgomery avenue. At 3123 Montgomery avenue, where M. Lebarskey and R. Rosen were seated on the porch, Louis dashed up the steps, shrieking in wild-eyed terror: "I had an electric shock, and there is a boy killed on the railroad." The two men wrapped a towel about the boy's body, smothering the flames, and advised him to hurry to the nearest drugstore, but the two youngsters, frightened by their terrible experience, disappeared in the direction of Fairmount Park instead.

The Brownstein boy's body was discovered by Joseph McPhillips, a trainman, of 1426 Bouvier street, with the flames still licking about his clothing. In a pocket was found a note, addressed to a teacher at the McIntyre School, Thirtieth and Gordon streets, which aided the authorities materially in identifying the body. It read: "Miss Ferrell: Please excuse Morris Brownstein from school today, as he has to go on an errand. Mother." The boy's mother, however, declared later that she had not written the note, and that Morris had not been home since 5 o'clock Thursday evening. She had been told, she said, that her son intended walking to Washington with another boy of the neighborhood.