

DEATH CLAIMS FRANK C. IVES.

The Champion Billiard Player Dies of Consumption in Mexico While in Search of Health.

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich., Aug. 31.—A telegram received by Dr. J. D. Peters, father-in-law of Frank Ives, the champion billiard player, announces the latter's death, which occurred at Progreso, Mexico. Consumption was the cause of death. Ives's remains will be brought to Plainwell, Mich.

Frank C. Ives was familiarly known as the "Napoleon of Billiards." He was so called because of the extraordinary dash and brilliancy of his play, rather than for the decisiveness of his victories. For some years he was the champion of the billiard world, having defeated his greatest rival, Schaefer, after a long struggle for the supremacy.

Ives was born at Plainwell, Mich., Oct. 5, 1866. It is said that from his early boyhood he was remarkable for his skill at playing pool and billiards, and by the time he was fifteen he was sought for eagerly by sporting men who wanted him to act as an "attraction" for their resorts. Despite this early development of billiard skill, young Ives's first predilection was for baseball, and he played with the team of Petoskey, Mich., as catcher. It was while he was thus engaged that he met his first famous rival in a game of billiards.

Catton, the Chicago billiardist, had come out to Petoskey to pick up money from men who thought they could play the game, and by chance ran across young Ives. In two days, Ives had won all of Catton's money, and he had to telegraph to friends in Chicago to send him funds to get home. This story so interested Schaefer that he saw Ives and engaged him to play billiards the following Winter at his billiard room in Chicago.

His first serious match play was in a handicap with Schaefer and Slosson, in which Ives was to make 600, to 800 for the others. Schaefer won the match, with Ives second, and Slosson third. His next conspicuous performance was in a match with Eugene Carter, at Milwaukee, in which he equaled the world's record, then held by Vignaux, which was an average for the game of 75 points.

These achievements placed Ives among the foremost players of the world, and Schaefer offered to back him against Slosson. Slosson refused the challenge, saying that to accept it would cost him his prestige, as Ives was not in his class. Later when he was forced to meet Ives, the latter defeated him easily.

Ives defeated Schaefer in their first match. Slosson had challenged the winner, and found that he had to meet Ives. He was defeated worse than Schaefer had been. From this time Ives was practically the champion of the world, being able, when in good form, to defeat any opponent that dared to face him.

The versatility of his play was finely shown when he attempted to wrest from Roberts, the English player, the championship in what is known as "English" billiards. In this game the table has six pockets, and there is a possibility of making as many as ten points with a single stroke. Roberts was easily the best player in the world at this peculiar form of the game. Ives had an English table set up in Chicago and set himself to practicing the game assiduously. When he had perfected his play, he went over to England to play with Roberts. He had discovered a new way to play the English game. The game was 5,000 points, 1,000 a night. The first two nights the Englishman made his 2,000, while Ives had made only a few hundred. The third night Ives put the two object balls into a pocket with a "jam," and quietly clicked off 3,000 points, and won handily.

In the famous match with Schaefer in Chicago, Schaefer ran up 4,000 points to Ives's 3,945. This was in 1893. A month later Ives again met him, and suffered a still worse defeat. Schaefer winning by the absurdly overwhelming score of 600 to 50. In 1896, Ives played in a tournament in Boston and won first prize. In a tournament with Schaefer, Slosson, Daly, and Sutton, he came out well, although Slosson won first place. In the tournament in Chicago, in January, 1898, Ives defeated Schaefer, and again became the champion of the world. He returned the emblem to the donors, and virtually retired from the field of billiards.

His health had been declining for some time, and his physicians ordered him to the South for a change of climate, in the hope that a stay in the tropics would aid him in recovering from consumption. He went to Mexico. When he left this city he said to his friends that he never expected to return.

A telegram announcing the death of Frank C. Ives was received at the billiard rooms of the "Young Napoleon" late yesterday afternoon. The telegram was from Starr, Mr. Ives's valet, and was addressed to William Burke, the manager of Ives's room.

At the time the telegram was received there were many of the customers of the place playing. Others were sitting about discussing the newspaper reports of the young billiardist's death.

After reading the telegram, Mr. Burke came out into the centre of the big hall and read it aloud to those present. There were expressions of sorrow on all sides at the death of the popular champion.

Mr. Burke said last night that he had no idea as to what disposition would be made of the room and business which Ives had built up. It will probably be continued, however.