

SUTTON, FORMER CUE CHAMPION, IS FOUND DEAD

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Body Discovered After Wife's Death.

BY VIRGINIA GARDNER.

One thing was troubling George Butler Sutton, 67 year old former billiard champion, on the eve of his "comeback," for which he had trained for years. His wife, Margaret, was seriously ill.

Yesterday a daughter called to tell him his wife had died. Sutton himself was dead.

"It is just as well. He wouldn't have lived after he knew she was dead. Neither would she have lived, knowing he had died," a son, Harry M. Sutton, 1749 North Meade avenue, said.

Died Before Wife.

As a matter of fact, Sutton himself was the first to die. It was believed that he died Sunday. Grief and worry over his wife's condition probably brought on heart failure, according to Dr. S. T. Bolstead, 2447 Jackson boulevard. He was found in a kneeling position, slumped against a wall in the hall of his home, 2427 West Congress street.

Mrs. Sutton died in the Frances Willard hospital early yesterday morning. Her death also was attributed to heart disease. She had been ill since last November, the son said.

Sutton, a picturesque figure in the billiard world, had striven to regain his health and his game since 1921, when he learned he was a victim of diabetes.

Beats Amateur Champ.

At last his fight apparently was won, and the veteran billiardist, who won the 18.1 balk line championship from Jake Schaefer in 1907, and the 3 from George Slosson in 1908, was scheduled for his long awaited comeback. He was to meet Slosson, now 76 years old, in a match in Boston in two weeks for the national veterans' championship.

He had qualified for that by defeating Percy N. Collins of Chicago, national amateur 18.2 champion, in a two block match which ended April 8. That was one of the most dramatic chapters in the life of the aged billiardist.

It was not until recently that Sutton learned why his repeated efforts to enter tournaments after November, 1921, had failed. Each time his entry had been rejected with the curt notation: "Outclassed; too old." When he discovered it he did not quit.

Shaved Off Goatee.

Instead he shaved off the flowing white mustache and the carefully trimmed goatee he had worn for years. He reduced from 240 pounds to 160 pounds by careful diet, which was undertaken to combat his disease. He increased his gymnastics, and un-

dertook road work in order to improve the ease of his footwork at the billiard table. He practiced for hours at a stretch.

Sutton took part in the first world's 18.2 billiard tournament, which ended in Paris on Feb. 3, 1903. He astounded France, the stronghold of billiards, by demonstrating that Americans also knew the fine art of "nursing" a ball. There he competed with Vignaux, Slosson and Curq. A French court ruled in favor of Vignaux when the question of whether he or Sutton was the champion was debated, but billiard players of the time called it a victory, for the American.

Returning to New York after five years in Europe, during which time his wife accompanied him everywhere, Sutton won the title by beating Slosson in 1906, defending it against Hoppe, Morningstar, and Schaefer. He was beaten by Hoppe in 1908.

He recently said: "My stroke and sight are as good as ever. Don't forget I was the first player to have a grand average of 100 in a title tournament game, making that against Hoppe in 1906. Balkline has not advanced to such an extent that it has outdistanced me."