

JUMPED FROM THE BRIDGE

Howard Kretz Took the Leap from the Central Span.

RESCUED APPARENTLY UNHURT

Did It, He Declared, to Test His Theory of the Absolute Power of Mind Over Matter.

To put to the test his theory of the absolute power of mind over matter, Howard Kretz, twenty-two years old, of 147 West One Hundred and Third Street, a student in the Academy of Design, yesterday afternoon jumped from the central span of the Brooklyn Bridge into the East River. He landed feet first, and was rescued by a passing freightboat, apparently uninjured. He was not even bleeding from the nose or ears after the shock. When landed at the foot of Dover Street he thanked the men who had pulled him from the water and jumped ashore, a distance of five feet.

He was taken to the Hudson Street Hospital after being arrested by Policeman Hart of the Oak Street Station. The surgeons say he is unhurt.

Kretz boarded a Greene Avenue open trolley car bound for Brooklyn at about 5:30 o'clock. He was clad in plain clothes and outing shirt, black Fedora hat, and black laced shoes. There was nothing in his appearance to attract the attention of the conductor or passengers on the car. He even took an inside seat.

The car had reached a point about 200 feet east of the centre of the central span of the bridge when Kretz arose, and excusing himself to several women for passing by them on the seat, stepped from the car. Quick as a flash he mounted the railing, and stood for an instant on the iron string piece that tops the railing.

Bridge Policeman James Gaffney was on the roadway a short distance away, as were also two Inspectors of the Brooklyn Rapid Transit Railway. All three men ran toward Kretz, but before they could get near him he coolly took his bearings, steadied himself, and then made the daring leap. There was no wind at the time, and Kretz went down feet first without swerving.

There were shrieks from several women passengers in the trolley cars who had seen the leap, and the next instant Kretz's body had struck the water like an arrow. He emerged a few seconds later, only to sink again, and then bob up a second time, when he struck out boldly for shore.

The freight steamer Vulcan of the Norwalk Line was coming down stream at the time and was within 200 feet of the bridge when Daniel Ryan, a deckhand, saw Kretz's body shoot through the air. He shouted to the Captain, who steered the vessel in the direction of Kretz, who had by this time struck out for the shore. The Captain soon overtook him and threw him a line. Kretz grasped it and was pulled on board.

Kretz held his hand to his abdomen a moment as if in pain, but declared that he felt all right. His trousers, which had been tied about his legs with a piece of string, had been badly torn by the water, but the flesh did not seem to be bruised. The Vulcan put into Pier 23, where a considerable crowd who had witnessed the jump were waiting, expecting to see a body brought ashore.

Kretz did not seem to object to his immediate arrest. He at first refused to say why he had jumped from the bridge, but after questioning he admitted that he had been reading a book on Theosophy and that he wanted to prove that a man by exercising his will power could do any thing that was possible without being injured. An ambulance had been sent for, and when it arrived Surgeon Bally, after examining Kretz, said that he could find no injury. Kretz was taken to the hospital, however, as a prisoner on the charge of attempted suicide. He will be arraigned in the Centre Street Police Court to-day.

The bridge jumper reluctantly gave his address, saying that he lived there with his mother, and begged the policeman not to tell her what he had done. He appeared perfectly sane. He is about 5 feet 8 inches in height, and weighs about 140 pounds.

Mrs. Kretz called at the hospital later and was admitted to her son's bedside, where she passed more than an hour.

Edward Helmer, a friend of the family, who lives in the same house, also called. Kretz's father died only three weeks ago, and from what Mr. Helmer said, it is believed that brooding over his father's death unnerved the son, who really sought to take his life.

Mrs. Kretz said her son had taken a course of two years at Columbia University and is now studying art. She said he had written on the subject of Theosophy, but not for publication. He was in good spirits when he left the house.