

Nicholas Columbus Harper

(- 16 Jan 1918)

Harper. On Wednesday, January 16, 1918, Nicholas Columbus Harper. Funeral services Friday, January 18, at 2 o'clock p.m., in Gawler's chapel, No. 1730 Pennsylvania avenue northwest. Relatives and friends invited.

The Evening Star, January 16, 1918

'Lum' Harper Cuts Throat, Ends Life

Deputy Police Court Clerk Stabs Self With Scissors in Office at Courthouse



N. C. HARPER.

Nicholas Columbus Harper, deputy clerk of the Police Court for more than twenty-five years, ended his life by stabbing his throat with a pair of scissors in his office at the courthouse, 6th and D streets, shortly after 8 o'clock this morning.

Coroner Nevitt issued a certificate of suicide.

Although he had lost no time from work recently, Mr. Harper suffered a nervous breakdown several months ago, and, according to friends at the courthouse, has been melancholy for some time.

Friends were shocked at his death, because they said, he appeared in brighter spirits during the past few days than for months.

Found Lying in Office

Robert I. Miller, an attorney, saw the deputy clerk on his way to the courthouse a few minutes before 8 o'clock. Fifteen minutes later Edward Wright, a court employe, found Harper lying in his office on the second floor, with the scissors nearby. His keys were in the locker, but he had not removed his overcoat and rubbers. Coroner

Nevitt said the deputy clerk apparently severed one of the main arteries in his neck.

Mr. Harper was fifty-four years old and was born in Washington. He lived nearly all of his life on Capitol Hill, but following his marriage, in July, 1916, to Miss Irena Keen, he took an apartment in Wardman Courts.

Known as "Lum" Harper

Mr. Harper's father, William C. Harper, also was a clerk in the Police Court for many years, and served as a magistrate of the court in the absence of the judges. Both parents are dead. In addition to his widow, "Lum" Harper, as he was known at the court, is survived by one brother, Albert, and a sister, Miss Nellie Harper, a clerk in the office of the register of wills. Mr. Harper had another brother, Joseph Harper, who before his death also was a clerk in the Police Court and resigned here to become clerk of the Juvenile Court when it was established in 1906.

Mr. Harper attended Waugh Chapel, 3d and A streets northeast, and was a member of St. John's Lodge, No. 11, F.A.A.M., and Mount Vernon Chapter, No. 3, R.A.M.

Mr. Harper, according to friends, threatened to end his life recently and his fellow employes thought they had succeeded in persuading him against it.

Impulse Believed Sudden

The fact that he was found with his overcoat and rubbers still on led his friends to believe that he acted on a sudden impulse of despondency. Both branches of the court adjourned before 11 o'clock out of respect for his memory. Judge Mallowny, with whom Mr. Harper was long associated in court, was deeply moved by his death.

In the District branch of the court Assistant Corporation Counsel Ringgold Hart and Judge Mallowny both spoke highly of the character and faithful service of Mr. Harper, and in the United States branch Assistant District Attorney Ralph Given eulogized the deceased clerk. Although Judge Hardison had known Mr. Harper only a few months, he said that in that brief association he had learned to appreciate Mr. Harper's services. A number of attorneys in both courts were granted permission to pay their respects with brief remarks.

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Funeral Services for N.C. Harper

Funeral services for N.C. Harper, who committed suicide yesterday in the Police Court building, are to be conducted in Gawler's chapel at 2 o'clock tomorrow afternoon. Members of the clerical force at Police Court will serve as pallbearers. Interment will be in Congressional cemetery, where the parents of the deceased are buried.