

## John Norris

( - 15 Dec 1868)

---

*The Evening Star, December 15, 1868*

### **Supposed Suicide of a Printer Another Victim of Morphine**

This morning, about nine o'clock, one of the servants in the house occupied by Dr. Shedd, at the corner of 8th street and Market Space, found in one of the rooms of the house the dead body of Mr. John Norris lying on the bed, and Lieut. Skippon, of the sixth precinct police, was at once notified, and the Coroner, Dr. W.W. Potter, was informed. On the bureau in the room was found a small vial labelled morphine, and a goblet with a little water in it, from which it is supposed he took the fatal dose. The deceased was a married man, and has a wife residing at No. 463 D street, but has been dissipated recently, and consequently rented a room in the house where he came to his death. He is from thirty to thirty-five years of age, and has been employed as a compositor at the Government Printing Office, but having been drinking recently has not been at work. Yesterday some of his relatives and friends, thinking if he could be induced to leave the city he might stop drinking, procured a ticket to take him to Philadelphia, where he has relatives and friends, and last evening they saw that his baggage was checked and that he got safely on the train, and they supposed that he had gone direct to Philadelphia, until notified this morning that he was found dead, as stated above. It is now thought that instead of taking his seat on the train he got out on the opposite side, and went out at the rear of the depot, and on the way to his room purchased the drug which he took some time during the evening, as when found he had been dead apparently several hours. The coroner is this afternoon holding an inquest.

*The Evening Star, December 16, 1868*

### **The Suicide of John Norris Coroner's Inquest**

Coroner W.W. Potter held an inquest yesterday afternoon in the case of John Norris, who was found dead in his bed yesterday morning, at the house of Dr. W.B. Shedd, corner 8th street and Market Space. Dr. Shedd testified to the deceased having taken a room at his house on Saturday last; that Mr. Thomas R. Willard came to the house on Monday afternoon, and stated that he wished to send deceased to Philadelphia; both started off, but deceased returned to his room during the evening, and yesterday morning was found dead in his bed, with a vial marked morphine on the table nearby. Thomas R. Willard testified that for several years deceased drank to excess; that he formerly resided in Illinois and published a paper there, but came to this city last summer, and procured work in the Government Printing Office; had been on a spree since last Friday week, and on Monday witness went with deceased and started him on the train for Philadelphia. Dr. Edwin Bentley testified to having made a post mortem examination; the right lung was very much diseased from pneumonia, enough to cause the man's death; the lung was bleeding freely; he concluded that the deceased came to his death from poison from morphine. The jury then rendered a verdict that the deceased came to his death from an overdose of narcotic poison, administered by himself with a view of taking his life. The friends of the deceased took charge of his remains, and had them removed to his late residence, No. 405 D, between 3d and 4th streets, and they were buried at Congressional Cemetery, today at 2 p.m.

Deceased was, during a greater portion of the war, a captain in the 144th Pennsylvania heavy artillery, and for a while had command of a battery near Bladensburg.