

## **Benton Russ**

### **( - 3 Jul 1904)**

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**Russ.** Suddenly on Sunday, July 3, 1904, Benton Russ, beloved husband of Anna Russ. Funeral from his late residence, No. 9 9th street southeast Tuesday, July 5 at 3 o'clock. Interment private (New York and Baltimore, Md. papers please copy).

*The Evening Star, July 4, 1904, p. 7*

#### **Suicide By Shooting**

#### **Benton Russ, Jail Official, Takes His Own Life**

#### **Victim of Insomnia**

#### **Had Been Deputy Warden for Forty Years**

#### **A Native of Maine and Seventy Years of Age --**

#### **Was on Sick Leave**

Trouble with insomnia and unable to get much sleep, Benton Russ, deputy warden of the jail, ended his life last night by shooting himself in the head. He was at his home, No. 9 9th street southeast when he committed the deed. He was in his sleeping apartment on the second floor and the other members of the family were in the dining room. While Mr. Russ had been unable to get much sleep and had been made nervous, he had said nothing to his family which would give them an idea that he contemplated taking his life. Having been away from the jail on his month's leave he returned only a few days ago and attended to his duties until Friday night, when he became too sick to stand the strain any longer. Saturday morning and again yesterday he reported sick. He left home shortly after dinner yesterday and rode down the river on the steamer Macalester, hoping the outing would bring him much needed sleep. Several times earlier in the season he had taken this trip and each time he seemed much refreshed upon his return. His trip yesterday, however, did not bring desired results.

After reaching home he partook of supper with his family and remained about the lower floor with them until after 9 o'clock when he went upstairs and entered his bedroom. The door was closed and without writing a farewell message or making such preparations for death as suicides frequently make he sat upon a chair and fired the fatal shot. So sudden did death claim him that his body did not fall from the chair.

Mrs. Russ and the children hurried to the room when they heard the report of the pistol and although they were satisfied that life was extinct a physician was summoned. Dr. Hudson, one of the jail officials, reached the house shortly after the deed was committed and assisted the family in the matter of making preparations for the funeral.

#### *Resided in Washington Fifty Years*

Benton Russ, or Capt. Russ, as he was known in connection with his employment at the jail, was seventy years old. He was a native of Maine, but had lived in this city nearly half a century. For about forty years he held the position of deputy warden of the jail and during all these years had assisted at executions. He was a man who was particularly well liked and had a host of friends. All his life he had been regular in his habits and during the past few years had been the constant companion of a friend with whom he took long walks every night in order to induce sleep. He had witnessed many changes in the prison during the years he was connected with the institution and had been urged for the wardenship several times, but each time the appointment went to some other person.

Arrangements have been made for the funeral to take place tomorrow afternoon from the family home. Services will be held at 3 o'clock and the remains will be interred at Congressional cemetery.

*The Evening Star, July 6, 1904, p. 5*

**Last Tribute of Respect**

**Remains of Deputy Warden Russ Interred in Congressional Cemetery**

Warden Harris and the guards at the District jail paid a last tribute to the late Deputy Warden Benton Russ yesterday afternoon, when funeral services were held at the family home, 9 9th street southeast. A handsome floral remembrance with "Forty years' faithful service" as the inscription was sent by the jail officials, and eight employees of the prison acted as pallbearers. They were Capt. E.S. Ransdell, J.W. Walters, George P. Dunn, Matthew Flannigan, Emanuel Ream, Wilber F. Perry, F.H. Lingebaugh and John B. Ward. The interment was in Congressional cemetery.