

## **William T. Sorrell**

### **( - 17 Jan 1910)**

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**Sorrell.** On Monday morning, January 17, 1910, William T. Sorrell, son of Isabelle and the late John W. Sorrell. Funeral will be held from 495 L street southwest at 2 o'clock Wednesday, January 19.

*The Evening Star, January 17, 1910, p. 22*

#### **Death of William Sorrell**

##### **Inhaled Illuminating Gas While Reading Yesterday Afternoon**

William Sorrell, twenty years old, died at the Emergency Hospital this morning about 8 o'clock, due to the inhalation of gas yesterday while he was in his room at the house of his sister, 426 7th street southwest.

Sorrell was alone in the house yesterday afternoon. His sister returned about 11 o'clock last night, and found him seated near the window, a book he had been reading having fallen to the floor. He was unconscious from having inhaled gas that had escaped from an open fixture in the adjoining room.

When the patient reached the hospital the physicians found his condition was extremely critical. He did not regain consciousness. Coroner Nevitt made an investigation and gave a certificate of accidental death.

*The Evening Star, February 1, 1910, p. 13*

#### **To Probe Charges**

##### **W.T. Sorrell's Grave Opened and Body Removed**

##### **Action Taken By Coroner**

##### **Assertions That Young Man Came to His Death From Malice to be Investigated**

The grave of William T. Sorrell, in Congressional cemetery, who was thought to have died from the accidental inhalation of illuminating gas the 17th of last month, was opened today and the body disinterred, at the direction of Coroner Nevitt, in order that an autopsy might be made, for the purpose of more accurately determining the cause of death, charges having been made that it was due to violence from an oath-bound band of thieves.

The grave was opened after some difficulty, due to the caving in of the earth. The coffin was opened, but the superintendent of the cemetery objected and it was closed again immediately. The body appeared to be in a good state of preservation. A cut was plainly visible on the right side of the face.

Mrs. Sorrell, mother of the deceased; Mrs. Francis White, his sister, and Raymond White, his brother-in-law, joined in a request for the investigation.

Coroner Nevitt this morning received a telephone message from a friend of Mrs. Sorrell, saying the latter wanted nothing further done in the matter of arranging for the disinterment of the body, but the coroner said there was nothing for him to do other than finish the investigation, and the grave was accordingly opened.

When seen by a Star reporter, Mrs. Sorrell said she would not further discuss the matter.

"There has already been too much said about the sad affair," the mother said, "and I've been annoyed almost to death. I do not intend to say any more about it. The matter is in the hands of the coroner and it is for him to decide."

### *Sorrell Found Unconscious*

At the time young Sorrell was found in an unconscious condition in his room at 426 7th street southwest it was thought he was suffering from gas poisoning. He was removed to the Emergency Hospital where he died shortly afterward.

In conversation with Coroner Nevitt yesterday afternoon, Mrs. Sorrell said she knew of an assault alleged to have been made upon her son, but she did not think to mention it when she went to the hospital to see him. She is anxious that the responsibility for her son's death be placed on the proper persons, she said, should the autopsy show that his death was due to violence.

Relatives of young Sorrell, who was twenty years old, are of the opinion that the leaky pipe in his room did not emit gas enough to affect him. He had slept in that room night after night, they say, and had shown no signs of having been affected by the gas.

Friends of Sorrell said he participated in two rows and was assaulted. It was related that Sorrell and others were in a saloon the night before he was found unconscious. It was further asserted that Sorrell was considerably under the influence of liquor when he went home, although it was not claimed that he had to be assisted home.

It was asserted by some young men questioned by the police that the trouble between Sorrell and one of his associates resulted from a dispute about a game of pool.