

James H. White

(- 3 Mar 1892)

White. Remains of J.H. White will be buried from his brother's residence, 1006 14th street southeast, Sunday, March 6 at 3 p.m.

The Evening Star, March 4, 1892

A Double Tragedy

"Reddy" White Wounds His Wife and Then Takes His Own Life

Whisky and jealousy were the same which led to the commission of a double tragedy yesterday afternoon. The chief actor was James White the former keeper of questionable resorts where rum was dispensed to the lowest classes, and the pulling of the trigger of a pistol, with the barrel of the weapon pointed toward his own hand, was his last act on earth. Three shots were fired by the man who was crazed with liquor. One bullet made a hole through his wife's lung, while the last bullet entered his own brain and caused almost instant death. The dead man was known to his associates as "Reddy" White and but few ever knew him by any other name.

Reddy White's Career

He was about forty years old and most of his acquaintances were persons best known in sporting circles, particularly those characterized as 'sluggers,' who engage in sparring contests and fights generally. For several years he was bartender at Rooney's saloon, and while employed there he was arrested on a charge of robbery, for which he served time in prison. Upon his return to this city he secured positions in various saloons and then he opened a place for himself on Pennsylvania avenue near the Capitol, where confidence men and bunco-steerers spent most of their time. On account of the bad character of the people who frequented this place he was forced to sell out and leave and he subsequently opened a place on Pennsylvania avenue between 12th and 13th streets. This place was no better than the first and, acting upon the recommendations of the police, the Commissioners refused him a license and he was finally forced out of the whisky business.

The Scene of the Shooting

From there he went to live at No. 462 N street, where he had fitted up the front room to open business shortly, and it was at this house that the double tragedy was enacted yesterday. Five years ago White married Miss Mary Siben. They had no children, but had adopted a boy who is about six years old. Before the affair happened White, his wife and adopted son and a friend named Thomas McNeal were sitting in a room on the second floor. About 5:15 o'clock the boy asked for a nickel with which to buy some peanuts. The boy went out and spent that amount of money which was given him by McNeal, and before he returned White suggested that McNeal go downstairs and bring up some more liquid refreshments. This McNeal did, and when he ascended the steps he saw his friend White holding a revolver in his hand. He had evidently meant to kill McNeal, as well as the members of his own family, but as they were such good friends he said he would not kill him. Then he requested McNeal to go downstairs and get some glasses, which request he was complying with when the report of a pistol startled him. Mrs. White screamed, and following her outcry came another report.

Mrs. White Shot

McNeal, who was in the front room on the lower floor, hurried toward the stairway, when he met Mrs. White, who ran through the yard to the house of a colored woman named Belle Johnson.

"I'm shot!" she exclaimed.

The colored woman left Mrs. White on a sofa and hurried to the office of Dr. William T. Gill and from there she went to the police station.

Sergeant McTaggart and several policemen hurried to the White residence and inquired for the would be murderer, but as no one had seen him leave the premises the officers concluded that he was still upstairs. The house was surrounded and Sergeant McTaggart, with pistol in hand, started to ascend the steps in search of White.

A Shot and a Fall

Before he had reached the upper landing he heard a pistol shot in the room above him and then there was a heavy fall. Not a sound followed the heavy fall, not even a groan, for the bullet from the weapon had struck a vital spot, as already stated, and had sent the miserable man into another world.

When Sergeant McTaggart entered the room he found White's body stretched upon the floor and beneath his head was the thirty-two caliber pistol that had done the deadly work.

An examination of the body revealed a bullet hole just above the left ear. The bullet had cleared the skull on the opposite side of his head and was found on the floor.

The Wounded Woman

In the meantime, Drs. Gill and English had reached the wounded woman and ascertained that the bullet had pierced her lung. She told the doctors that jealousy prompted her husband's rash act. On account of her condition the doctors advised her not to excite herself any more than she could help by talking, and after dressing the wound, they had her sent to Providence Hospital. While the wound is a serious and dangerous one the doctors do not consider it necessarily fatal and they think she may recover.

After the excitement had subsided the police learned that "Reddy" had been on a drunk for some days and he was on the verge of the delirium tremens. It was learned that only two or three days ago he attempted to kill his wife by shooting at her, but the bullet did not strike her.

This morning the injured woman was resting quietly and was doing as well as could be expected under the circumstances.

The Evening Star, March 5, 1892

"Reddy" White's Funeral

The body of James H. White, alias "Reddy" White, who committed suicide Thursday evening after shooting his wife, as published in yesterday's Star, was removed to the home of his brother, No. 1006 14th street southeast, yesterday. Coroner Patterson gave a certificate of death from suicide and his funeral will take place tomorrow afternoon at 3 o'clock. The interment will be made in Congressional Cemetery.

Mrs. White is getting along nicely. She has almost recovered from the effects of the shock to her nervous system. She was visited yesterday by friends, to whom she gave directions regarding her husband's funeral. She will probably recover.