

Joseph H. Williams

(- 26 Dec 1896)

Williams. Suddenly on Saturday, December 26, 1896 about 10 p.m., Joseph H. Williams, beloved son of the late John B. and Emeline J. Williams.

Oh how hard to part from one so dear.

Funeral strictly private, Tuesday 2.p.m. from late residence, 721 F street southwest.

The Evening Star, December 28, 1896

Committed Suicide

Joseph Williams Shoots Himself in a Fit of Despondency

Joseph Williams, a special watchman, who lived at 721 F street southwest, committed suicide Saturday evening by shooting himself through the head. Apart from the fact that Williams had been suffering from melancholy from some time past, no reason could be assigned for his act. He left no note behind, nor had he ever said anything to lead his friends to believe that he contemplated suicide.

Williams lived with his sister on F street and had recently made application for appointment on the police force. He took the examination and was expecting soon to be placed on the regular force. He was employed by a number of merchants of 7th street as a night watchman, and was well known in the neighborhood. Saturday evening his sister left the house for a time, and when she returned she found Williams lying stretched out on the floor of the kitchen with a gaping wound in his head. Just as she entered the house she heard the report of the pistol, and she hurried at once into the kitchen. She saw at a glance what had happened. The young man was still alive. Dr. Hammett and Dr. Cole were summoned, but they found that the bullet had pierced the man's brain and that there was no hope of saving his life. He died about 10 o'clock, after lingering unconscious for an hour.

Coroner Hammett was one of those who employed Williams as a watchman, and saw him early Saturday evening. The coroner investigated the case yesterday and gave a certificate to the effect that the deceased came to his death from self-inflicted wounds. The fact that he was shot in a vital spot, and by his own pistol, and the further fact that he was known to have been despondent for some time past, preclude the probability of an accidental shooting.