

# Patrolman Carl Edward Thorwarth | Cincinnati Police Division

Badge: 387

Age: 51

Served: 28½ years

August 4, 1915 to November 24, 1943

## OFFICER

Carl and his twin brother, Jacob R. Norris (sic), were born April 10, 1892 in Cincinnati to George and Barbara (Koebel) Thorwarth. Their father, George, had immigrated to the United States from Germany in 1881 and his mother, Barbara, a year earlier. Jacob died eight days later from convulsions.

By 1900 they were living at 1851 Fairmount Avenue in a two-family frame house. Barbara died from appendicitis on March 29, 1906 when Carl was 13. Carl attended Cincinnati public schools for ten years. About 1899, when he was 17, he began working as a clerk for six years. In 1910, he and his three sisters were living with their father at 1851 Fairmount Avenue and Carl was working as a clerk for Engineering Specialties.

On July 12, 1915, the Civil Service Commission announced that 162 men applied for the position of Cincinnati Police Subpatrolman and Carl finished 14<sup>th</sup>. He and seven others were appointed on August 4, 1915. He was promoted to Patrolman on February 1, 1916, issued Badge 387, and assigned to District 8 in Corryville. By 1917, he was a Mounted Patrolman. He later

transferred to the Motor Patrol.

He was still living at 1851 Fairmount during June 1917 and married Lenora Caroline Meifert on June 12, 1918. They lived at 1851 Fairmount in separate accommodations from his father and two sisters. On April 21, 1920, their first child died at birth. Then, on January 13, 1921, his father died.

During 1922, they had a son, Edward G. Thorwarth. The family of three moved in 1923 to 4218 30<sup>th</sup> Street (later renamed "Eileen Drive"). They would each live there the rest of their lives.

During his career, Patrolman Thorwarth was injured four times requiring leaves of absence, but never for more than seven days. By November 1943 he had served his community over 28 years.

## **OFFENDER**

Walter Ray Norris was born January 25, 1896 in Pancoastburg, Ohio to David and Oly (Timmons) Norris. By the time he was four years old, his mother was either gone or dead and he was living with his unemployed father and four siblings. During June 1917 he was working as a laborer for the Ohio Fuel and Gas Company in Pickaway County.

He was drafted into the United States Army for World War I and assigned to a Military Police Company and Machinegun Company. He served overseas from September 1918 to July 1919 and was honorably discharged in August 1919.

We do not know what community he came back to, but it appears he was living in Cincinnati by 1936 414 E. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street. But by 1940, he was incarcerated in the Louisville, Kentucky Workhouse. At

the beginning of 1943, he was back in Cincinnati working as a laborer at the Baldwin Piano Company on Gilbert Avenue. By the end of the year, he was living with his wife, Martha, at 921 E. McMillan Avenue. We have found no accounting of criminal offenses prior to 1943 in Cincinnati, however in November 1943 his wife signed a warrant against him for Abuse of Family.

## **INCIDENT**

During the evening of November 24, 1943, Patrolmen Thorwarth and Nicholas Smith were assigned to Patrol 6 went to pick Norris up at his home. Though handcuffed, Norris resisted the arrest and Patrolman Thorwarth had to overpower the 5'10" 225-pound man. Patrolman Thorwarth was approximately the same age, size, and weight, but we assume he was assisted by Patrolman Smith.

Patrolman Smith drove the patrol wagon toward Central Station and Patrolman Thorwarth decided to sit in the rear with the prisoner.

As the patrol wagon turned from McMillan onto Kemper Lane, less than a block from his home, Norris yelled to the Patrolman Smith, "There's something wrong with your partner!" Patrolman Smith stopped the patrol wagon, opened the rear, found Patrolman unresponsive on the floor, and rushed him to General Hospital.

## **DEATH**

Patrolman Thorwarth was dead upon arrival at the hospital from coronary thrombosis.

He was survived by his wife of 25 years, Lenora Caroline (Miefert) Thorwarth; son, Edward C. Thorwarth; and sisters,

Elizabeth Thorwarth and Alma Thorwarth. Police Chief Eugene T. Weatherly appointed pallbearers, Patrolman Robert Goke, Nicholas Smith, Oscar Deckert, William Tekulve, William Interreiden, and Samuel Gough. The funeral services were held at the Witt, Kelsch, and Wood Funeral Home at 3026 Madison Road on Monday, November 29, 1943. He was buried in Walnut Hills Cemetery.

## **JUSTICE**

On November 26, 1943, Martha Norris failed to appear in court to prosecute her warrant and the case against Norris was dismissed. We can find no documentation that Norris was ever prosecuted for resisting arrest or any other offense regarding the death of Patrolman Thorwarth.

## **EPILOGUE**

Lenora Thorwarth, at 75 years of age, grew infirmed, and was residing at the Park Nursing Home in Norwood when she died on July 15, 1969. Edward Thorwarth then suddenly died two days later on July 17, 1969 at their home on Eileen. A double funeral was held at Witt, Good, and Kelsch Funeral Home. Both were buried next to Patrolman Thorwarth and his stillborn daughter. Patrolman and Mrs. Thorwarth have no surviving descendants.

Walter Norris was arrested again in March 1945 for forging and cashing a United States family assistance check issued to another family living in the same building on McMillan. He was sentenced to 28 months in prison, but 24 months were suspended. By the end of 1946, he violated his parole and was sentenced to complete the other 24 months at the Lewisburg, Pennsylvania

Federal Penitentiary. His wife divorced him during March 1947. We assume he was released before January 1949 but have not found any record of him again until his death on February 18, 1976 in the Veterans Hospital in Dayton at the age of 80.

During November 2021, the Greater Cincinnati Police Museum's Registrar, Queen City Metro Superintendent Philip L. Lind (Retired), was gleaning data from a Cincinnati Police 1943 Annual Report when he discovered the line of duty death of Patrolman Thorwarth. He forwarded it to the Greater Cincinnati Police Historical Society's Memorial Committee, of which he is a member, and together they researched the incident and determined that it was a line of duty death in accordance with their standards.

If you know of any information, archives, artifacts, or images regarding this officer or incident, please contact the Greater Cincinnati Police Historical Society at [Memorial@Police-Museum.org](mailto:Memorial@Police-Museum.org).

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