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## JAMES H. SMITH Jr.

November 27, 1903

On a Friday evening, around 6:20 P.M., Officer James H. Smith Jr., was on patrol in the area of 14th and Madison. He saw two men pushing bicycles down the street. They caught his interest because of the suspicious manner in which they were examining the residences. Officer Smith "concluded to keep them under surveillance." Their tour of the neighborhood took them all the way around the block back to the point at which Officer Smith had first seen them.

Officer Smith determined that the "twain were crooks" and stopped them. Placing them under arrest for being "suspicious characters," he ordered them to start heading for the City Hall jail. One of the outlaws stepped backward and drew a revolver. Officer Smith began to draw his own weapon. The outlaw shot at Smith, hitting him twice. The officer returned fire and, missing his assailant, struck the other suspect twice. In all, seven shots were exchanged.

The two outlaws fled and Officer Smith, mortally wounded, staggered to a nearby residence where he collapsed on the steps. Passersby and residents gathered to aid the stricken policeman. Meanwhile, witnesses to the shooting trailed the suspects to the area of 14th and Oak. The wounded suspect fell to the ground and succumbed to his wounds. The "shooter" made good his escape, yet left numerous clues behind him.

Before going on duty that day, Officer Smith spoke with one of his brothers and said he intended to work extra that night because he had "porch climbers and other miscreants" working the area. His brother cautioned him to be careful. Officer Smith vowed to arrest the perpetrators.

Officer James H. Smith Jr., was 33 at the time of his death. He had been appointed to the Department in late 1901, and was survived by his mother, three brothers, and two sisters.