

## James Fritz Heimer

(1870 – 5 Mar 1925)

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**Heimer.** Suddenly, Friday, March 6, 1925, at 6:45 p.m., J. Fritz, beloved husband of Alice Heimer. Funeral from his late residence, 1232 E st. s.e., Monday, March 9, at 2:30 p.m. Relatives and friends invited to attend.

**Heimer.** A special communication of Osiris Lodge, No. 26, F.A.A.M., will be held Monday, March 9, 1925, at 1:30 p.m., for the purpose of attending the funeral of our late brother, James F. Heimer.  
Platt B. Birch, Master

*The Washington Post, March 6, 1925*

### **Candy Store Proprietor Is Shot by Holdup Man**

#### **James F. Heimer in Critical Condition After Refusing to Throw Up Hands At Point of Gun. Would-Be Robber Flees**

James F. Heimer, 50 years old, 1232 E street southeast, was shot in the stomach and critically wounded last evening at 9 o'clock in the Big Four candy store, 608 E street northwest, of which he is the proprietor, by a holdup man who escaped.

His unidentified assailant came into the store and, drawing a revolver, demanded that Heimer hold up his hands. Heimer refused and was shot, whereupon the would-be robber fled.

J.A. Brawner, 814 C street southeast, was in the store at the time. He found refuge crouching behind a counter.

Heimer was taken to Emergency hospital, where he was pronounced in a serious condition. The police notified his wife, Alice Heimer, who hurried to the hospital.

*The Evening Star, March 6, 1925, p. 2*

### **Merchant Is Shot Repelling Bandit**

#### **James F. Heimer May Die, Assailant Escapes After Struggle in Store**

Refusing to comply with a command to "stick 'em up" and grappling with the bandit who gave the command, James F. Heimer, 55, manager of the Big Four Cand Co., 608 E street, last night about 8:15 o'clock was shot in the abdomen and so seriously wounded it is eared he cannot recover.

The bandit is described as being about 30 years old, slender build and smooth face. He wore black trousers, salt-and-pepper coat and dark cap, according to one description furnished the police. Other descriptions also were given.

Heimer was standing near the cash register when the bandit entered. J.A. Brauner, proprietor, residing at 814 C street southeast was seated at his desk.

"Stick 'em up," was the only thing the bandit said, and when Heimer grappled with him for possession of the weapon Brauner searched under his desk for a club he thought was there. The club was missing, however.

#### *Pursuit Is Futile*

Brauner went in pursuit of the bandit as soon as he heard the shot. He followed some distance, but was unable to overtake him. He quickly returned to the store and assisted the wounded man. Gerald Walsh, 29, 11 street, seated in an automobile nearby, took Heimer to Emergency Hospital.

Police were told that the pistol missed fire three times while Heimer and the bandit were struggling through the store toward the front door, and it was just about the time the door was reached that the fourth effort of the armed man to shoot the merchant proved successful.

Drs. Daniel L. Borden and J.B. Dean immediately performed an operation in an effort to save Heimer's life.

Mrs. Alice Heimer, wife of the victim of the shooting, and Edgar Heimer, a son, hurried from the family home at 1232 E street southeast to the hospital. Two other sons are absent from the city.

Detectives were unable to question Heimer because of his weakened condition. They obtained from Brauner and Walsh the description of the bandit. A general alarm has been sent out.

*The Evening Star, March 7, 1925, p. 1*

### **Holdup Man's Shot Fatal To Candy Store Manager**

### **J.F. Heimer Dies in Emergency Hospital -- Blood Transfusion From**

### **Two Sons of No Avail -- Hat of Murderer Has Boston Mark**

James F. Heimer, 55 years old, manager of the Big Four Candy Company, 608 E street northwest, shot by an unidentified white man Thursday night when he refused to comply with the command of the hold-up man, died at Emergency hospital last night.

Mr. Heimer leaves a wife and three sons, Fred, 31 years old, Edgar, 27 and Robert 17.

He was a member of the Naval chapter of the Masonic order, Columbian commandery, Almas Temple, Gavel Club, and was one of the charter members of the Almas Temple Shrine band. Arrangements for the funeral have not been completed.

Police last night expressed the belief that the hat which they now have in their possession and which they say belongs to the robber, and the only tangible clew they have to work on may prove valuable, as it had a trademark showing it was purchased in Boston, Mass.

Heimer, who was standing near the cash register when the robber entered his store Thursday night, was ordered by him to throw up his hands; and when he refused, the intruder tried three times to discharge his revolver, and police believe that it was the failure of the hold-up man's revolver to respond which led Heimer to believe that the revolver was not loaded, so that the storekeeper entered into a tussle with him in front of the counter, near the door, where Heimer was wounded.

A son, Edgar Heimer, 27 years old, and his brother-in-law submitted to a blood transfusion operation performed by Drs. Daniel L. Borden and J.A. Dean at the hospital early yesterday.

*The Evening Star, March 8, 1925, p. 2*

### **Detectives Begin Methodical Hunt For 2 Murderers**

### **Entire Force Seeks Slayers of Store Manager and Restaurant Man**

### **Rewards Are Offered; Robbery Held Motive**

### **Purchasers of Shirt and Hat Being Sought Here and in Boston**

Its reputation as a criminal-catching machine at stake, the local detective bureau has settled down to a grim, methodical hunt for the perpetrators of the two murders that occurred in such quick succession here last Thursday.

Murders are far from common in the National Capital. But two murders in one day, committed under the circumstances involved in these two, is almost unprecedented. Consequently the atmosphere around police headquarters is tense. The detectives have forgotten that they have such a thing as a working schedule and are constantly dashing in and out of headquarters running down "tips" and fresh clues.

Tom Pappas, a Greek, was beaten to death with a monkey wrench in his restaurant, the Marathone, 1202 Seventh street northwest, early Thursday morning.

James F. Heimer, prominent Mason and wholesale candy merchant, was fatally shot by a bandit in his store at 608 E street northwest, late Thursday night. He died in Emergency hospital.

#### *Robbery Motive in Both*

Robbery was the motive in each case. Of this there is no doubt, according to the detectives. There is no possibility that there was a vendetta or anything of that sort involved, they say. Outside of that, however, the detectives say nothing.

The bandit who killed Heimer left behind a hat with a Boston store's trade-mark on the band. It will be "traced" from its origin in an attempt to identify the purchaser. It may turn out, though, that the hat was stolen, and in this case it will be valueless as a clue.

The murderer of Pappas left behind as evidence a bloody shirt. It is assumed he took this off after he had slain the Greek and then put on one belonging to his victim. Police are now engaged in exhibiting the shirt to merchants on Seventh street in the hope that one of them will be able to identify it and recall its purchaser.

#### *Two Rewards Are Offered*

A reward of \$200 has been offered for the murderer in each case. Maj. Daniel Sullivan, superintendent of police, has offered the reward for Heimer's slayer, while the reward in the other case is offered by Bill Pappas, brother of Tom Pappas.

Four men are being held in connection with the murder of Pappas. Police say, though, that no one of them is suspected of the murder. They are being held so they will be available whenever the police want to ask them questions. A fifth man, Jesse Green, colored, is being sought. He is a former employee of Pappas and had absconded with money entrusted to him by Pappas. Another man named Jesse Green was arrested Thursday by the police, but it was discovered that he was the wrong man, and he was released.

No arrests have been made in connection with the murder of Heimer.

*The Evening Star, March 8, 1925, p. 4*

#### **\$200 Reward Offered For Slayer Of Heimer**

##### **Police Balked in Effort to Establish Identity of Bandit Who Shot Merchant**

That police are up against a stone wall in seeking to establish the identity of the bandit who shot and killed James F. Heimer, manager of the Big Four Candy Co., at his place of business, 608 E street, last Thursday night, was held to be demonstrated yesterday by the offer of a \$200 reward by Maj. Daniel Sullivan, chief of police, for information leading to the apprehension of the slayer.

Outside of the hat left by the bandit in his flight, there is no clue to his identity. The hat bore a Boston store mark, but efforts thus far to trace the purchaser have been fruitless.

*The Evening Star, March 10, 1925, p. 2*

#### **Murder Verdicts Returned by Jury**

##### **Pappas and Heimer Cases Unsolved –**

##### **Shriners Offer \$250 Reward**

Washington's two murder mysteries of March 5 last, neither of which is approaching solution, went to the coroner's jury today, and verdicts of murder at the hands of persons unknown were returned in both cases.

The first inquest was into the death of Tom Pappas, proprietor of Marathone restaurant, at 1202 Seventh street, who was killed on the morning of March 5. The verdict of the jury in this case was that Pappas came to his death as a result of a fracture of the skull, hemorrhages and shock, the fracture being caused by a blunt instrument, an automobile wrench, in the hands of a person unknown to the jury.

The jury, in the second inquest, foundt that James Heimer, manager of the Big Four Candy Company at 608 E street, came to his death as result of a bullet wound in the abdomen fired by an unknown assailant at the above address on the evening of March 5.

#### *Witnesses Rehearse Facts*

Witnesses at the Pappas inquest testified about facts already generally known. Henry J. Tappy, who roomed above the lunchroom, told of a colored man coming up with a bucket to clean up the room at about 7 o'clock on the morning of March 5, approximately one hour after Pappas is believed to have met his death. He described this man as wearing cheap green glasses and being about 5 feet 7 inches tall, and weighing 135 pounds.

James W. Hale of 401 Stanton place northeast, an iceman, told the jury that, as customary with him, he rapped on the window of the Pappas lunchroom to see if any ice was wanted at 6:45 a.m. on the morning of March 5. He said a colored man was in back of the counter and that he stood up and told him that Pappas had gone to market. He said that he thought that he recognized the voice of this man at police headquarters a few days ago, but headquarters detectives testifying later failed to support this implication that a suspect in the murder had been found.

#### *Greek Legation Interested*

Wilton H. Wallace, from the firm of Holliday, Clifford & Pettus, attorneys, appeared at the inquest as the representative of the Greek legation, which will administer the estate of Pappas in event a will is not found.

Witness at the inquest of Heimer included Lieut. Guy Burlingame of the sixth precinct, Dr. Howard Searles of Emergency Hospital, Gerald Walsh and John A. Brawner. They told of the hold-p of Heimer at his store on the evening of March 5 and of the subsequent pursuit and disappearance of the man who fired the fatal shot.

#### *Shriners Offer Reward*

Coincident with the inquests today, announcement was made by Almas Temple, Mystic Shrine, that a reward of \$250 would be paid the person bringing information to the police leading to the arrest and conviction of the murderer of Heimer.

Detectives Mullen and Murphy also returned from Boston, where they were attempting to identify the owner of the hat left by the murderer at the candy shop managed by Helmer. Their trip was fruitless, the store at which the had had been purchased being able to throw no light on the identity of the purchaser.

*The Evening Star, March 12, 1925, p. 3*

#### **Heimer Clues Lacking**

#### **\$450 in Rewards Offered Fail to Produce Lead to Murder**

Rewards totaling \$450 offered by the Police Department and Almas Temple, Nobles of the Mystic Shrine, for the apprehension of the slayer of J. Fritz Heimer, manager of the Big Four Candy Co., 608 E street, shot to death a week ago at his place employment, have not yet been claimed. Detectives admit the absence of a single clue in the investigation of the slaying, other than the hat dropped by the slayer.

*The Evening Star, June 18, 1925, p. 12*

### **Maine Man Held In Heimer Probe**

#### **V.V. Grant Denies Knowledge of Murder When Hat Clue Causes Arrest**

Information furnished by a member of the force of Col. Sherrill's park police led to the arrest of Vondell Vernon Grant, 24 years old, son of a farmer, near Cherryfield, Me., about 50 miles from the Canadian border as a suspect in the slaying of John F. Heimer, manager of the Big Four Candy Co., 608 E street, three months ago. Grant denies knowledge of the crime.

Detectives Ira Keck and J.C.P. Weber investigated the information imparted by Col Sherrill's policeman, and the latter went to Cherryfield and arrested Grant. The prisoner, asserting his innocence, voluntarily returned here with the detective.

Grant is alleged to have been in this city, stopping at a house on D street, about the time Heimer was shot to death by an armed bandit, who appeared in the store and demanded money. The bandit dropped a hat in his flight from the candy store, but, it is stated, it has not been identified as having belonged to the suspect.

It was reported to the detectives that Grant had told a woman friend of intending to stage a hold-up. Grant is said to have admitted having jokingly made such a remark, adding that he would not have made it had he planned such a crime.

J.A. Brauner, proprietor of the candy firm, who was in the store the night of the shooting, saw the prisoner yesterday. He said the prisoner resembled, in some respects, the slayer of his trusted employe, but was not positive.

*The Evening Star, June 19, 1925, p. 4*

### **Witnesses Called To Identify Grant**

Half a dozen witnesses to the attempted holdup at 608 E street northwest, last March, in which James F. Heimer, manager of the store was shot and killed, yesterday were called into police headquarters in an attempt to identify Vondell Grant, 21 years old, as the slayer.

Grant, police say, was traced through a hat, purchased in Boston, Mass., which was found near the scene of the shooting.

The Evening Star, December 31, 1925, p. 24

Police Department

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Crimes of violence were pronounced during the year, but not especially outstanding. There were 45 murders, one of which remained unsolved, the killing of John F. Heimer, proprietor of a candy store on E near Sixth street.