

Arthur James

(6 Jul 1881 – 4 Oct 1937)

James, Arthur. On Monday, October 4 1937, Arthur James, husband of the late Annie Harriman James. He is survived by four children, Mrs. Margaret Self, Mrs. Frances Post, Clinton and Helen James; his mother, Mrs. S.R. James; a sister, Mrs. Fannie Halley, and a brother C. Clinton James. Funeral Wednesday, October 6, at 11 a.m., from his late residence, 4308 13th st. n.e. Interment Congressional Cemetery.

The Evening Star, October 4, 1937, p. A2

Arthur James, 56, Fireman, Is Dead

Veteran Alarm Telegraph Operator Had been 36 Years in Department

Arthur James, 56, a veteran fire alarm telegraph operator, died in Sibley Hospital today after an illness of two weeks, his first illness in 36 years with the Fire Department.

Born in Washington on July 6, 1881, Mr. James entered the Fire Department in 1901. When the fire alarm office was transferred to the District Building from the old No. 14 engine house in October, 1908, Mr. James was the first operator ot sound an alarm.

During the last 25 years Mr. James sent out the alarms for most of the biggest fires in Washington. He was on duty the last half of the night of the Knickerbocker Theater disaster and he also sent out the call when the executive offices of the White House burned in 1929.

When he first went on duty with the Fire Department, Mr. James served a year as elevator operator. Then he was transferred to the alarm office as a telephone operator. A few years later, he was promoted to an alarm operator. In point of service he was the senior employe in the office.

Mr. James' parents had lived in Washington a long time before his birth. His mother, who is now more than 90 years old, lived near the Washington Barracks during the Civil War. When the arsenal exploded in the barracks on an historic occasion during the war, she was hurled through the window of her home by the force of the blast.

Mr. James was a widower, his wife having died several years ago. He is survived by a son and two daughters. Recently the family moved to 4308 Thirteenth street northeast.

Arrangements are being made to hold the funeral at his home 11 a.m. Wednesday.

The Washington Post, October 5, 1937, p. 25

Arthur James Dies; 36 Years a Fireman

Arthur James, 56, a member of the District Fire Department for the past 36 years, died yesterday at Sibley Hospital after an illness of two weeks. This was his first illness since joining the department.

James was born in Washington on July 6, 1881. He entered service with the Fire Department in 1901. In October, 1908, when the fire-alarm office was moved to the District Building, Mr. James was the first operator to sound an alarm. He was then attached to the telegraph alarm department, where he remained until his death.

On duty the night of the famous Knickerbocker Theater catastrophe. James also sent out alarms on all of the largest fires in this city for the past 25 years.

James was a widower, his wife having died several years ago. He is survived by three daughters, Mrs. Margaret Self, Mrs. Frances Post and Miss Helen James, and one son, Quentin James, all of Washington.

Funeral services will be held tomorrow at his home, 4308 Thirteenth street northeast, at 11 a.m.
Burial will be in the Congressional Cemetery.