

James Johnston

(- 24 Feb 1877)

The Evening Star, February 24, 1877

An Old Man Shot Dead

The Man Who Fired The Shot Says It Was An Accident

This morning about 7 o'clock, Mr. James Johnston, who keeps a small store at the corner of K and 14th streets southeast, was shot and almost instantly killed by a ball from a pistol fired by George N. Powell, a young colored man. It appears that Powell drives the bread wagon of Mr. John Appich, and was in the habit of delivering bread at Johnston's store. This morning he was at the store as usual at a few minutes of 7 o'clock, and having delivered his bread he was examining a small Sharp's four barreled pistol which he states Johnston offered to sell him, and in handling it one of the barrel's accidentally went off. The ball struck Mr. Johnston in the vicinity of the heart, and Powell greatly alarmed at what he had done immediately drove to Dr. Adams' office and asked him to hurry to the place and then drove to the eighth precinct station where he gave himself up to Lieut. Austin and stated the case as above. Mr. Johnston lived but a few minutes after the occurrence, and was dead when Dr. Adams reached the place. Mr. Johnston is an old man about 70 years of age, and for many years kept a saloon near the eastern terminus of H street, but for a few years past assisted by his nephew has carried on a little store at 14th and K streets southeast.

The coroner held an inquest, and the jury found a verdict that death was caused by a pistol shot wound by the hands of George D. Powell, and that the shooting was entirely accidental. Powell, who had been in custody, was therefore discharged.