

James M. Mitchell (- 21 Jan 1935)

The Washington Post, January 23, 1935, p. 4

Police Grilling Sixth Suspect In Slaying of 2 Officers Follow Cold Trail of Thugs Who Killed Transit Agents

Guarding their every move with utmost secrecy, Maryland and District police yesterday pressed their investigation of the murder of two Capital Transit Co. employes in a holdup of the Chevy Chase car barn office early Monday.

The four men and one woman taken into custody late Monday and early yesterday were still being held, authorities refusing to divulge whether or not they had shed any light on the slaying of James M. Mitchell, 68, and L. Emory Smith, 40. One of the five is William F. Clarke, a former employe of the company, who surrendered, here after learning he was wanted for questioning.

Clarke, who lives in the 800 block of F street northeast, is under detention at the Eighth Precinct police station. Willis Leadman, a Capital Transit carman, was held yesterday in the Bethesda substation of Montgomery County police, booked on a charge of investigation.

Sixth Suspect Quizzed

The other three persons who were quizzed and kept in custody were Mary H. Branch and James D. Ware, who lived at separate addresses in the 400 block of Girard street northwest, and Joseph Goddard, of the 1400 block of Harvard street northwest.

Early last night another carman was brought into the Bethesda substation to face questioning.

A reward of \$500 for information leading to the slayers' arrest and conviction was offered yesterday by the Montgomery board of commissioners, following announcement by the Capital Transit Co. that it will pay \$1,000 for solution of the crime.

Following a cold trail, police investigators yesterday made pictures and took notes at the office-waiting room where Mitchell was shot and at the Rock Creek bridge half a mile up the Kensington road where the bandits dragged Smith out of their car to kill him and dump the body into the water.

D.C. Police on Scene

In the group which visited the scenes were Detective Sergts. Frank Brass and Robert Barrett, of Washington; Sergts. T.F. Vollten and Leroy Rogers, of Montgomery police, and Detective Sergt. Stewart W. Deal, of Baltimore.

Mitchell's funeral will be held at 10:30 a.m. tomorrow at the family residence, 2216 Thirtieth street southeast. Following services in the Chapel of the Nativity, Massachusetts avenue, between Thirteenth and Fourteenth streets southeast, the depot clerk's body will be laid to rest in Congressional Cemetery.

Funeral arrangements for Smith, who lived at 7241 Arlington avenue, Bethesda, will be announced later.

The Washington Post, January 24, 1935, p. 4

Police Question Secret Witness In Dual Murder Person Heard Shots and Sounds of Struggle at Chevy Chase

A mystery witness, who heard shots, sounds of a struggle, the grinding of brakes and the roar of an automobile near the Chevy Chase Lake car barn Monday morning was being questioned by Montgomery County police last night in connection with the slaying of two Capital Transit Co. employes.

Authorities refused to reveal anything about the witness.

Meanwhile, an autopsy on the body of Emory Smith, 45, of Bethesda, Md., one of the victims who was found in a creek some distance from the scene of the crime, revealed he died of a severed cranial artery.

This authorities explained, meant he had been shot in the automobile from which his body was thrown. All garages and drycleaning establishments were notified to watch for blood-stained clothing and automobiles with red stains on their upholstery.

Montgomery County police have released two men questioned Tuesday night, and a woman, who was held in the case.

Several articles of clothing used by the bandits, who obtained about \$1,800 during the killing and robbery, were held by officers.

Funeral services for James M. Mitchell, 38, one of the victims, will be held at the family residence, in the 200 block of Thirtieth street northeast, today at 10:30 a.m., and later in the Church of the Nativity. Burial will be in Congressional Cemetery.

Funeral arrangements for Emory Smith have not been completed.