

Peter H. Smith

(- 3 Sep 1903)

The Evening Star, September 4, 1903

Overcome By Gas

Death of Peter H. Smith at His Home in This City

Peter H. Smith, twenty-eight years old, a former resident of Chicago, who has been employed as a plate printer in the bureau of engraving and printing for about five years, was found dead at his home, No. 18 12th street southeast, about 5:30 o'clock yesterday afternoon. His death had been caused by inhaling illuminating gas. The condition of the body indicated that death had occurred at least 48 hours before his wife made the horrible discovery. Mrs. Smith accompanied her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Perry Baldwin, to Baltimore, Sunday, taking her only child with her. Their outing ended yesterday, and about 5:30 o'clock the party reached the 12th street house. The condition of things in front of the house indicated that Mr. Smith had probably not been home for a day or two. Mrs. Smith pressed the button of the electric bell, and, receiving no response, she opened the door with her night key.

The odor of gas that greeted her made it apparent that there was something wrong, and hurrying to the upper floor of the house, she found the body of her husband on the floor. She stopped the flow of gas and opened the window, and Dr. Lothrop was summoned. He told the family that Mr. Smith had been dead for at least two days.

Coroner Nevitt called at the house later and made an investigation. The conditions as he found them convinced him beyond any doubt that the man's death was due to an accident. It was apparent that Mr. Smith had retired after having accidentally left the gas turned on. It is believed he detected the odor of gas during the night and that in making an effort to reach the window he fell and was unable to get up.

A certificate of accidental death was given and the body was prepared for burial.

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Last Rites Performed

Remains of Peter H. Smith Buried in Congressional Cemetery

Funeral services were held yesterday afternoon at 18 12th street southeast over the remains of Peter H. Smith, who last Thursday was found dead in his bedroom at the number mentioned. Death resulted from asphyxia, caused by escaping gas from a jet. It was proposed to hold the funeral Saturday morning, but the date of burial was postponed on account of the failure of the mother of the deceased to arrive here by that time.

Rev. Father Dowling of St. Peter's Catholic Church offered prayers at the residence before an assemblage of the relatives and friends and a delegation of the Plate Printers' Union of which Mr. Smith was a member. The pallbearers were chosen from this union, and were Clarence A. McClure, James McNally, Louis Nichols, Thomas Leforte, John Webster and Michael Bohle. Among the floral offerings on the casket were contributions from the Plate Printers' Union, the National Union and intimate friends. The body was interred in Congressional Cemetery.