Substitute Patrolman Henry Roese | Cincinnati Police Department

Age: 30¾
Served: 2¾ months
April 22, 1890 to July 16, 1890

OFFICER

Henry was born October 17, 1859 to William and Mary Roese. Little else is known about him or his family other than by 1890 he lived with his mother and brother at 214 Bordon Street (at Warden Street).

He joined the Cincinnati Police Department as a Substitute Patrolman on April 22, 1890.

INCIDENT

Patrolman Roese was on his way home to 214 Bordon Street (at Warden Street) after his tour of duty on May 21, 1890. While in front of the 10th District Stationhouse, he ran to catch a streetcar. As he ran, his revolver fell from his uniform pocket to the roadway and discharged a bullet into his heel.

At first it seemed like it was a simple wound, but after a couple of weeks gangrene had set in and doctors were predicting a fatal outcome.

DEATH

He died 2¾ months after the accident on July 16, 1890.

Patrolman Roese was survived by his mother, Mary Roese; brother, Gustave Roese; and a sister. He was buried in Spring Grove Cemetery on July 18, 1890.

EPILOGUE

Policemen did not officially carry revolvers in most agencies until the late 1880s, though it was understood to be a right of any American citizen. When, in 1888, the Cincinnati Police Department issued standards for firearms (which the officers paid for), law enforcement holsters were not yet developed, and the firearms were carried concealed in a breast pocket of their uniforms. A number of these were dropped and physics dictated that they fall toward the heavier end. Sometimes, they dropped directly on the hammer and discharged. This circumstance caused four Cincinnati officers' deaths and several other injuries. In the first decade of the 20th Century, the hammer block safety was invented, and no more officers died from accidentally dropped revolvers.

If you know of information, archives, artifacts or images regarding this officer or incident, please contact the Greater Cincinnati Police Museum at Memorial@Police-Museum.org.

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