

FORD

FORD

New South Wales Police Force

Sub-Inspector

Attempt Suicide – firearm

ACCIDENTS AND FATALITIES

[BY TELEGRAPH.]

Sudden Death of a Sub-Inspector's Wife.

Attempted Suicide of the Husband.

Sydney, Monday.

Barrier Miner (Broken Hill) Monday 20 July 1896 page 2 of

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A telegram from Orange reports that at the police barracks there Mrs. Ford, wife of Sub-Inspector Ford, who was suffering from an affection of the heart, was suddenly seized with a fit. Doctor Crase was called in and found that the patient had become nearly exhausted by violent spasms. He went for some chloroform to be administered to her, but on his return, after only a few seconds absence, he found that Mrs. Ford had died from syncope in the interim. Inspector Ford had been sent for and arrived a few minutes before his wife's death. He was distracted with grief and fired three shots from his revolver

in an attempt to take his own life. One shot struck him in the jaw but inflicted no serious injury ; the others missed. The inspector, however, lies seriously ill from grief and shock.

<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/44135896?searchTerm=su%20inspector%27s%20suicide&searchLimits=l-australian=y>

James SMITH

James SMITH

New South Wales Police Force

Sub Inspector

**Joined the NSW Police Force in 15 January
1868 – Mounted Police**

**Previously stationed at: Maitland (2
years), Singleton,**

Wollombi as Senior Constable,

Muswellbrook as Sergeant

April 1883 – promoted to Senior-Sergeant

1891 – promoted to Sub-Inspector

27 years Service

Illness – Suicide – Firearm

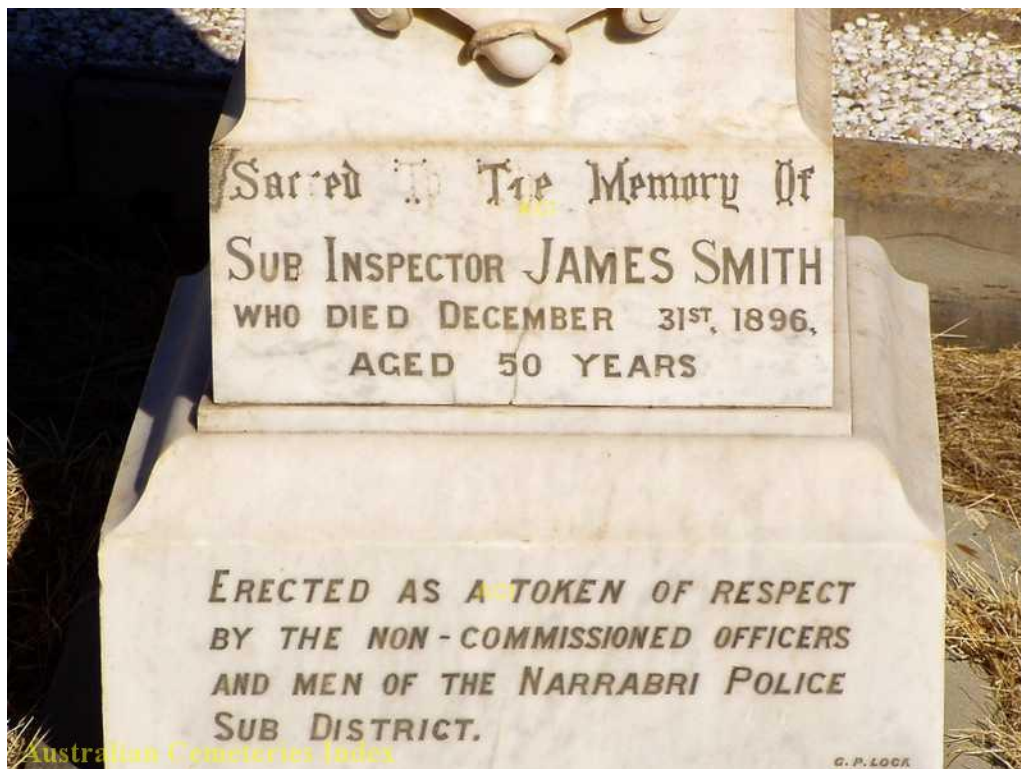
Born 1846 ??

**Died Thursday 31 December 1896 around
8am**

50 old

Funeral 2 January 1897

leaves behind a wife & 7 children



Grave of Sub-Inspector James SMITH



Grave of Sub-Inspector James SMITH

Narrabri Cemetery

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James Smith was a brother of Mr. G. Smith of Oak Farm, Rosemonte, near Goulburn, NSW, and his father, who died a few years ago, was a well-known gardener of that place.

Father's name: George

Mother's name: Isabella

The Sydney Morning Herald (NSW) Friday 1 January 1897
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SUICIDE BY A SUB-INSPECTOR OF POLICE.

NARRABRI, Thursday.

This morning Sub-inspector James Smith, the **officer in charge** of the **Narrabri police district**, was found dead. A report of a shot was heard and deceased's son, who rushed into the room, found his father lying on the bed with a **revolver** on his breast. From appearances that weapon had exploded in the mouth and the bullet had passed into the brain. During the past fortnight Mr. Smith had been indisposed, and it is stated that when unwell he always became very despondent and developed symptoms of melancholia. Only one chamber of the revolver was discharged, and death was apparently instantaneous. Deceased was 50 years of age. He joined the police force 27 years ago, and, beginning as a constable, worked his way up to his present rank. During the past **six years** he has had charge of the **Narrabri police district**. Deceased leaves a widow and seven children. An inquest was opened at the courthouse this morning and adjourned till Monday.

Later particulars of the death of Sub-inspector Smith show that the deceased **left three letters**, one addressed to his wife, the second to Mr Kenyon, P. M., (Police Magistrate) and the third to Mr A. R. Stafford, of Barry and Stafford. In one letter he stated that he felt his **mind** was **becoming unhinged** and preferred death to living the remainder of his life in an asylum. The deceased had arranged all his affairs, leaving everything provided for. The Masons will accord the deceased a Masonic funeral, which takes place tomorrow morning. The family are left provided for.

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Singleton Argus (NSW) Saturday 2 January 1897 page 2 of 6

The Late Sub-Inspector Smith.

Many old residents of Singleton will regret to hear of the death of Police Sub-Inspector James Smith at Narrabri, an account of whose tragic end is published in another column. Sub-Inspector Smith joined the police force about 1868, and after doing duty at Maitland for about two years he was transferred to Singleton, where he remained for some time under Inspector Thorpe, and afterwards he was stationed at Wollombi with the rank of senior-constable.

<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/83250054?searchTerm=sub%20inspector%20james%20smith&searchLimits=l-australian=y#pstart8378896>

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Singleton Argus (NSW) Saturday 2 January 1897 page 6 of 6

SUICIDE OF A SUB-INSPECTOR.

Sub-Inspector James Smith who has had charge of the division at Narrabri aged 50 years, committed suicide on Thursday. He got up as usual, and went round the barracks, and at 8 o'clock went back to his bedroom. A few minutes later Senior-Sergeant Thomas Clarke, hearing a report of firearms rushed into the bedroom, and found the sub-inspector stretched on his bed with

a bullet wound in his head. Death was instantaneous. The revolver was quite hot when the sergeant took it from the dead man's hand. The only cause that can be assigned for the terrible deed is that the sub-inspector had been ailing for the last three weeks, and his wife has also been ill for some time, and is at the present moment in a very bad condition.

Great surprise was expressed locally at the news, and also regret. Sub-Inspector Smith was well liked both in his official and private capacity. He was a member of the Masonic order, and also the M.U. (Manchester Unity) Order of Oddfellows. The deceased inspector joined the mounted police on **January 15, 1868**. On leaving the depot in Sydney he was sent to the north-western district, being first stationed at Maitland. From that place he was transferred to Muswellbrook as sergeant, and was promoted to senior-sergeant in **April, 1883**. In **1891** Mr Smith attained the rank he held at the time of his death, and was appointed to the Narrabri sub-district.

<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/83250061?searchTerm=sub%20inspector%20james%20smith&searchLimits=l-australian=y#pstart8378900>

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The Maitland Weekly Mercury (NSW) Saturday 2 January 1897
page 3 of 16

Suicide of Sub-Inspector Smith at Narrabri.

Narrabri, Thursday

Great excitement prevailed in town this morning when a report became current that police Sub-Inspector James Smith had committed suicide at his residence between 8 and 9 o'clock by shooting himself through the head with a revolver, death being

instantaneous. The report was immediately confirmed, and the particulars furnished go to show that the Sub-Inspector had been suffering from some slight illness for the past week, and had been subject to fits of melancholia for some time previous, but the commission of such a rash act was never dreamed of by his friends. The greatest sympathy is felt for his wife and family. An inquiry will be held during the day. A later telegram states that Mr. Smith got up as usual, and went round the barracks. At 8 o'clock he went back to his bedroom, and a few minutes later Senior-Sergeant Clarke, hearing the report of firearms, rushed into the bedroom and found the Sub-Inspector stretched on his bed with a bullet wound in the head. Death had been instantaneous, and the revolver was quite hot when the Sergeant took it from the dead man's hand. The only cause assigned for the terrible deed is that the Sub-Inspector has been ailing for the last three weeks, and his wife had also been ill for some, and at the present moment is in a very bad condition. Great surprise is expressed in town at the news, also regret. Mr. Smith was well-liked both in his official and private capacity. He was a member of the Masonic Order, and also of the Manchester Unity Order of Oddfellows. The late Mr. James Smith, or "Long Smith" as he was generally called by other members of the force to distinguish him from another officer of the same name, was well-known in the Maitland district, where the news of his death will create some excitement. Mr. Smith joined the police force about the year 1868, so that he had served 28 years and would in the natural course of events have retired in a couple of years' time. In the 70's he was stationed at Singleton under Inspector Thorpe, who has since retired, and later with the rank of senior-constable he was in charge at Wollombi. He was also stationed at several other places, and for a number of years prior to 1896 he was a senior-sergeant at Muswellbrook, in which year he was superseded by Senior-sergeant Cowan, now of East Maitland. Mr. Smith then went to Narrabri, with the rank of sub-inspector in charge of the sub-district of Narrabri, which is a most important one, including

as it does Moree. During the miners' strike at Greta, Mr. Smith was one of the officers engaged there. He was 50 years of age, and, as stated in our telegram, leaves a wife and family. Mr. Smith was a fine soldierly man in appearance, and was a noted strict disciplinarian.

<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/126319284?searchTerm=sub%20inspector%20james%20smith&searchLimits=l-australian=y#pstart13710107>

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