George Joseph Smith Biography

George Joseph Smith

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Biography

George Joseph Smith achieved infamy as England's infamous "Brides in the Bath" murderer for the method by which he killed his three wives. Born in the early 1870s, Smith was a petty thief as a youth. He wed his first wife, Beatrice Thornhill, in 1898. Twelve years later, he met Beatrice "Bessy" Mundy, a well-educated woman with a large bank account. He committed bigamy by marrying her under the name Henry Williams. In July of 1912 Smith bought an iron bathtub for Mundy as a gift. He then told her doctor that she had started to suffer from seizures. On July 13, the doctor was called to their home at Herne Bay, where Mundy was found dead in the tub.

The coroner declared Mundy's demise "death by misadventure," and Smith inherited her assets. In Southsea the following year, he married Alice Burnham. The 25-year-old died a few weeks later in the bathtub at their Blackpool home on December 12, 1913. Next, Smith married Margaret Lofty in the spa town of Bath in late 1914. She died just four days later, but the story of the "Bride's Tragic Fate" was picked up by the newspapers, and Alice Burnham's father became suspicious at the similarities between his daughter's demise and that of Lofty's drowning. Police arrested Smith for bigamy in February of 1915, and he was hanged for the murder of Mundy six months later. One of his landladies testified that she had heard a great deal of noise and splashing, and when it became quiet later, Smith then played "Nearer My God to Thee" on his harmonium.