

SPECIAL POLICE OFFICER IS BADLY WOUNDED BY BURGLAR.



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OFFICER
GEORGE NICHOLS ...

George F. Nichols the Victim of a Thief.

GEORGE F. NICHOLS, a special policeman, patrolling a beat along Sansome street, was shot and dangerously wounded by a burglar at 2:25 o'clock last night in the Star saloon, at Sansome and Merchant streets. Nichols caught the burglar in the act of rubbing the place and attempted to arrest him. The robber fired two shots, both of which took effect. Nichols returned the fire, but the burglar rushed out of the place and escaped, apparently without injury.

Nichols was trying the doors in the neighborhood, and found the side door of the saloon unlocked. The place had been closed by the proprietor, G. Galli, soon after 7 o'clock, and it was dark. Nichols listened and heard a sound inside. Two Italian fishermen were at work at an adjoining market, and Nichols called to them to assist him. They ran toward him, but before reaching his side Nichols pushed the saloon door in and stepped inside, drawing his revolver and shouting "Hands up!"

A second later two shots were fired at him point blank, at very close range. Nichols fell, but shot at the burglar, who pushed his way past the officer and darted into Sansome street. The Italian, Joe Partnico and Nick Aratto, ran away as fast as they could. A negro named Charles Jackson happened to be passing Merchant street, on Sansome, at the moment of the shooting. The burglar jostled him aside with the remark, "Look out, or you'll get shot." Jackson got a fair glance at the man, who ran down Sansome street to Clay, where he turned and ran toward the water front.

Nichols was found by persons at-

tracted by the shots, and soon minutes later a patrol wagon arrived, and carried the wounded officer to the Harbor Hospital. Nichols lives at 425 Bank street with his wife and three children. His wife was notified and went to the hospital. The physician in charge found that Nichols was dangerously wounded. The bullets were 38-caliber. One struck Nichols in the left side, glanced around the lower ribs and lodged in the back, where it was cut out. The other struck him in the back on the left side, ranging downward and apparently lodging in the abdominal cavity. His chances were said to be about even for recovery, though only a cursory examination had been made. Nichols did not lose consciousness at any time, but he could tell very little about the affair.

"I did not get a look at the man," he said. "It was perfectly dark in the saloon. As soon as I stepped inside I was shot. I don't remember whether I shot then or afterward, when he went past me on the sidewalk. It happened within a few seconds. I saw only one man."

O. H. Ferguson of 2811 Baker street and H. Pedemonte of 5 Vallejo place were in the vicinity at the time of the shooting and saw two men running away from the scene. Ferguson was on Sansome, near Clay, and saw the men running down Sansome to Clay, where one ran down Clay and the other ran up toward Montgomery. Pedemonte was on Clay, below Battery, and saw two men approaching him on a run and greatly excited. They stopped running

just before reaching him and passed him at a rapid walk.

Jackson, the negro, gave the police a fair description of the burglar, which fitted the description of one of the men seen by Ferguson and Pedemonte. Jackson said he was an American, about 35 years of age, of dark complexion, with a heavy mustache and dark clothes and hat. As the burglar brushed past he had a revolver in his hand, which he was placing in his pocket.

A Jimmy and a white handkerchief were found on the floor of the saloon. The door had been pried open with the Jimmy, and marks on the nickel-in-the-slot machine on one side of the room indicated that the burglar must have been in the act of opening it when Nichols entered. The cash register behind the counter was wide open and papers were scattered about. Galli, who arrived half an hour later, said there was no cash in the register and that he had lost nothing.

Detective Reynolds questioned Jackson closely and was inclined to suspect him of connection with the burglary, but later became convinced that the negro was innocent. He took the man to the California-street station, however, and will hold him pending developments. No search was made by the police for bloody tracks, which might have been left by the burglar if Nichols' shot took effect.

At a late hour last night Nichols was reported to be in a very precarious condition.