

Reporter Shot to Death Accidentally by Friend

Detective in Long Beach Press Room Drops
Pistol Which Discharges, Killing Newsman

THU APR 23 1964

An award-winning reporter for the Long Beach Independent-Press Telegram was accidentally shot to death early today in the second-floor press room of the Long Beach police station.

William B. Hunter, 35, of 3503 Centralia Ave., Lakewood, died instantly when a .38 caliber bullet pierced his heart as he sat at his desk.

Police said Det. Creighton Wiggins Jr., 29, son of Police Inspector Creighton Wiggins Sr., had dropped his service revolver and that it went off accidentally when he picked it up.

Were Close Friends

Officers said Hunter and the younger Wiggins were close friends.

The shooting occurred at 12:05 a.m.

Lt. W. D. Tubbs, station commander, said Wiggins and Det. Errol Greenleaf, 32, had walked into the press room to talk to Hunter, a night police reporter for the Long Beach paper.

Tubbs said Wiggins sat beside the reporter and when the detective removed his coat he dislodged the gun from the cross-draw holster on his left hip.

Gun Went Off

Tubbs said that when Wiggins reached down to pick up the snub-nosed revolver the gun went off.

Hunter is survived by his wife, Leela, and three children, Cynthia, Brad and Laurie.

The reporter won the California Publishers Assn. award last year for a special series, "Three Days in Dallas," an eyewitness report from the Texas city following the assassination of President Kennedy.

Hunter, who was a native of Dallas, also covered the trial of Jack Ruby for the

murder of Lee Oswald, suspected slayer of President Kennedy.

Hunter had worked on a newspaper in Wichita Falls, Tex., before he came to Long Beach in 1959.