

'Onion Field' killer Smith dies

by UPI

LOS ANGELES - Jimmy Lee Smith, one of the two men convicted for Los Angeles' infamous "Onion Field" murder, died this week in jail at the age of 76.

Convicted for the murder of Los Angeles Police Officer Ian Campbell in 1963, Smith spent most of his life since then in prison, and the Los Angeles Times said he was in the city's Pitchess Detention Center when he died of a heart attack Friday.

The high-profile murder of Campbell was made into the 1973 novel "The Onion Field" by Joseph Wambaugh and ultimately adapted for the big screen in 1979.

In March 1963, Campbell and fellow police officer Karl Hettinger were kidnapped by two men, believed to be Smith and Gregory Powell. Campbell was later shot five times but Hettinger ran off and escaped.

The newspaper said that while Smith was paroled in 1982 for his part in the murder, he maintained a pattern of illegal behavior until his death and rarely stayed out of jail.

Both victims and both perpetrators are now dead.

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