Watchman Patrick Nuttle | City of Cincinnati

Age 30
Served 5 months
January 1861 to June 10, 1861

OFFICER

During the mid-19th Century, many Irish immigrated to the United States and some settled in the east side of Cincinnati in an area along Deer Creek. For a few decades, gangs festered in this area. When Mayor Hatch was installed into office during January 1861, he appointed Patrick Nuttle, a resident of Deercreek Valley, as a Watchman in the 13th Ward. He was described years later by Superintendent Deitch as a “great big, raw-boned fellow who knew only his duty.”

MURDER

Arthur “Atty” Hughes was one of the more notorious roughs in Deercreek Valley. On July 20, 1857 he and three others attacked and robbed a German man on Deercreek Road. He was found guilty on September 15, 1857. Yet, for some reason, he was out on October 18, 1857 and, with several others, robbed a prostitute on Walnut Street Hill. On April 8, 1858, he was sentenced to six days in the dungeon for an Assault on Charles B. Smith. By April 19, 1859 he was on his way to the penitentiary for two years for Larceny.

A week before Hughes was released, the South fired on Fort Sumter and three days later President Lincoln called up 75,000 militiamen. Soon after Hughes arrived back in Cincinnati, he was enrolled in the Tenth Ohio Regiment based in Camp Dennison. On June 10, 1861, there were celebrations at Camp Dennison including presentation of a sword to a Lieutenant Colonel and presentation of a flag to a Captain. Speeches were made and following the affair, furloughs were given to the soldiers.

INCIDENT

Hughes, a long-time gang friend John Brown, and other recruits, including George Truss, came to Cincinnati on furlough. They entered one saloon where they drank and convinced the owner they should not have to pay for their whiskey. On the way out, Hughes took a butcher knife. They went to another saloon near 8th and Broadway, ordered drinks and refused to pay. Here the barkeeper protested, and an altercation ensued. One of them gang struck the bartender with a tumbler.

By 11 p.m., beat policemen Nuttle, Hickey, Nolan, and Bolser were looking for the thieves, found them on 8th Street, and pursued them to Dublin Street where they caught Hughes, Brown, and Truss crossing the bridge. Watchman Nuttle caught Hughes. When they walked back across the bridge, Hughes pulled a knife, cut off two of Nuttle's fingers and stabbed and cut his abdomen so badly that he was partially disemboweled. Nuttle released him and Hughes ran.

Truss and Brown were removed to the Hammond Street Station.

DEATH

Doctors Doherty, Seymour, and Wood were called to tend to Watchman Nuttle. He was removed to his residence at 6th and Deercreek Road where every possible attention was shown him until he died at 9 a.m. the morning after, on June 11, 1861; but not before giving his dying declaration. He repeatedly said that Hughes stabbed him. Immediately upon notification, Colonel Dudley, Chief of Police, responded to the residence to assist with arrangements.

Watchman Nuttle was survived by his wife of nine years, Bridget Nuttle; children, William Nuttle (8), Margaret Nuttle (6), James Nuttle (4), and Thomas Nuttle (2); and aging parents; all of which were reliant solely upon him for support. Another son was born 9½ months later and Mrs. Nuttle named him Patrick J. Nuttle, Jr.

Watchman Nuttle's funeral was held at the St. Peter in Chains Cathedral and a procession left there at 1 p.m. on June 12, 1861. The Police Department attended and processed in body. They were followed by 56 carriages full of friends and relatives. We believe he is buried in Range 1 of the Old Cemetery Section of St. Joseph's New Cemetery.

INVESTIGATION

A manhunt was initiated for Hughes. Policeman Cranley, of the Ninth Ward, sent his brothers out to look for him. One reported back that Hughes was hanging around at the foot of Walnut Hill. Policeman Cranley was able to sneak up on him behind a lime kiln and Hughes struggled violently to get away. A citizen name McCarty came to Cranley's aid and Hughes swiped at him with the knife, cutting his chest. During the struggle, Cranley was also cut. Cranley finally overcame his resistance and he was taken

to the Night Street Stationhouse.

Judge Saffin ordered all three held without bail. Coroner Emmert also held an inquest.

On June 14, 1861, the three were brought again before Judge Saffin. Hughes was bound over to the Grand Jury on a charge of Murder with a bond of $5000. The other two were discharged.

Hughes was indicated by the Grand Jury and his trial began on December 20, 1861. The jury was given the case on December 23, 1861 and on Christmas Eve returned a verdict of Guilty of Manslaughter. He was sentenced to ten years.

Hughes was released early in 1867 and re-entered the world of Deercreek gangs. He was found killed and his body discarded in a pile of lumber about 1880.

If you know of information, artifacts, archives, or images regarding this officer or incident, please contact the Greater Cincinnati Police Museum at Memorial@Police-Museum.org.

© This narrative was further researched and revised June 4, 2014 by Cincinnati Police Lieutenant Stephen R. Kramer (Retired), Greater Cincinnati Police Historical Society President, with burial research and assistance from Cincinnati Homicide Detective Edward W. Zieverink III (Retired), Greater Cincinnati Police Museum Historian. All rights are reserved to them and the Greater Cincinnati Police Museum.