

# Captain George Buchwalter Dooley | Cincinnati Police Division

HIGHEST RANKING CINCINNATI LINE OF DUTY DEATH



Badge: L-34

Age: 52

Served: Almost 30 years

December 1, 1913 to August 21, 1943

## **OFFICER**

George was born August 1, 1891 in Cincinnati to a first-generation Irishman and electrician, William P. Dooley, Sr., and Indiana-born Clara (Heltman) Dooley of Northside. He went to school at St. Patrick's Catholic Grade School on Blue Rock Road in Northside. About 1907, at age sixteen, he took a position as a machinist and plied that trade for the next six years.

At nineteen, in 1910, he was living with his parents, five siblings, an uncle, and a cousin, at 4313 Hays Avenue. His

father was still working and his older brother, William P. Dooley, Jr., was a rodman working for the City Engineer's Office.

## **PATROLMAN**

George was 22 when he joined the Cincinnati Police Department on November 28, 1913 as a Substitute Patrolman. He was assigned to District 7 (2401 Concord Avenue). He was very quickly promoted to Patrolman on March 14, 1914 and assigned as a traffic officer at Peebles Corner for the next ten years, except for time spent in World War I.

On February 21, 1917, Patrolman Dooley stopped traffic for a Fire Marshal driving his car to a fire at Gilbert and Yale Avenues. Just as the car speedily approached, an aged woman began to cross the street, to hurry to a stopped streetcar. Men screamed at her in warning, but she continued. Without a thought for himself, Patrolman Dooley raced to the woman, pushed her to safety, and was struck by the marshal's car. He was treated by the Police Surgeon and was badly bruised, but not enough to prevent him from taking his post the next day.

On July 22, 1918, Patrolman Dooley joined the United States Army to fight in World War I. He was assigned to the 12<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Regiment. A month after he enlisted, on August 7, 1918, a metal service flag with one blue star was hung at Peebles Corner in honor of the popular officer. On September 30, 1918 his battery was assigned to the Meuse-Argonne and he fought in the Battle of Argonne Forrest. It was the last battle of World War I, spanning 47 days until the Armistice. It was also the largest offensive in United States military history, and the deadliest, with over 350,000 casualties. On March 7, 1919, he

was promoted to Private 1<sup>st</sup> Class. He was returned home five months later on August 6, 1919, and honorably discharged August 14, 1919. The next day, Police Chief William Copelan assured the Peebles Corner businessmen that he would be reassigned to his post.

By January 8, 1920, he and his parents and three siblings had moved to 1415 Apjones Avenue.

In another display of valor, on August 20, 1920, while directing traffic, Patrolman Dooley rushed to an explosion at the Glengariff Apartments at McMillan and Copeland, ran to the fourth floor of the building, and found 70-year-old Anthony Kreuzinger, a former fireman, with his clothes still on fire. He battled at the flames and, with assistance from a Fire Captain from the firehouse across the street, pulled him alive from the building.

#### SERGEANT

On July 1, 1924, the Cincinnati Civil Service Commission announced that fourteen patrolmen and corporals, including Patrolman Dooley, had passed the promotional exam. Patrolman Dooley was promoted to Sergeant on April 30, 1925 and assigned to District 4 (754 West Fourth Street). The 'new' sergeant quickly became recognized as an outstanding supervisor.

After the bootleg-liquor-involved murder of John Schrof in Cherry Alley (off Plum Street) on June 22, 1925, Sergeant Dooley led Detectives Herman Reichman and Lee Flaughter in the successful investigation, arrest, confession, and prosecution of Gene Bockel.

Then, on March 20, 1926, while driving across West Fifth Street, he heard a strange noise, investigated, and found and caught a burglar in the act at the I. F. Sutphin Company.

## **DETECTIVE SERGEANT**

A year after his promotion, he was appointed Sergeant of Detectives on May 1, 1926. By October 1926, Chief of Police William Copelan occasionally assigned him as Acting Chief of Detectives or even Acting Night Chief. In the next 22 months, his name was in newspapers nearly a hundred times for investigations and arrests for robberies, shootings, vice, Prohibition violations, and other felonies.

On May 11, 1927, he arrested Mrs. Augustus Imogene Remus, wife of the legendary bootlegger, George Remus. She and her current beau, Franklin Dodge, sold fictitious warehouse certificates in Portsmouth for one hundred barrels of whisky.

Three days later, on May 14, 1927, Detective Sergeant Dooley and Detective Schwach investigated the murder of Cincinnati Patrolman Olin Wilson, successfully prosecuted the murderer, and witnessed his electrocution eight months later.

On May 21, 1927, he returned a man from Akron who had shot at and missed Cincinnati Patrolman De Young. Then on June 8, 1927, he was involved in the investigation and arrest of a man who robbed and then shot Cincinnati Patrolman Edward L. Willie.

On July 4, 1927, he investigated the shooting of two officers, Patrolman John Frankin and Sherman Yearlong. During the fray, a witness to the shooting fell dead of a heart attack. Patrolman Frankin eventually died and Patrolman Yearlong lost his leg. It took sixteen months, but that murderer also went to the electric chair.

On August 3, 1927, he was investigating another shooting of an officer, Patrolman John Bugganer, during a raid. In this case,

the shooter was felled by the patrolman's bullet.

Then it was Detective Sergeant Dooley who was shot. He had been Acting Night Chief for two weeks and he and his detectives were acutely aware of the fact that there was a gang in town responsible for breaking into 26 businesses and safes and had not been caught. They dedicated good portions of each night patrolling for likely places for burglaries, and the Perfection Brake Company at 2428 Spring Grove was high on their list because they had tried unsuccessfully a week before. Acting Night Chief or not, Dooley perceived himself as a cop first and, on August 15, 1927, about 3 a.m., he and two detectives found a car near the brake company. Detective Metzger pulled alongside the car, and Dooley yelled "Police!" Suddenly the blue car erupted in a fusillade of bullets. Sergeant Dooley was hit; Detective Metzger had a round go through his hat; and Detective George Lutz suffered powder burns to his face. Dooley emptied his revolver into the car and Lutz fired a load of buckshot into it, but the officers' car stalled, and the burglars escaped. It was not known until later that one of Sergeant Dooley's rounds wounded one of the burglars. The officers drove Sergeant Dooley to the hospital. The bandits were finally identified and captured in three different states between September 30<sup>th</sup> and November 10<sup>th</sup>.

On October 6, 1927, Imogine Remus had not yet been tried for her false certificates charge, but she was headed to divorce court. Mr. Remus pursued her taxi, caught up with her at Eden Park where the taxi crashed, then ran up to and shot her to death. He then turned himself in and, after interrogation, led Detective Sergeant Dooley to Eden Park and reenacted the shooting.

**LIEUTENANT**

On January 20, 1928, the Cincinnati Civil Service Commission announced that after examining seventeen sergeants for promotion to Police Lieutenant, only six passed and Detective Sergeant Dooley finished first.

Nineteen days later, on February 8, 1928, he married Nellie Green at the Church of the Assumption at Gilbert and Yale Avenues.

After returning from his honeymoon, he was promoted to Lieutenant on March 1, 1928 and assigned to District 2 (314 Broadway).

On November 25, 1929, Rosemary Dooley was born. On April 19, 1930, the new family was living at 1005 Schiff Avenue.

Ever the policeman, Lieutenant Dooley could be found often pounding a beat, the extent of which was at his discretion since he could roam the entire district. Or he might be leading a squad of men against real or reported dangers. On December 6, 1928, he was personally involved in capturing a thief from the Findlay Street Kroger Store. In February 1929, he arrested a man for malicious destruction of property at 1421 Walnut Street. Ever the sleuth, he could also be found often investigating crimes in his district alongside detectives from headquarters.

On September 28, 1929, he was searching for a burglar from the Singer Sewing Machine Company at 1202 Main Street. On October 19, 1929, he was investigating a double shooting, including one victim that was an off-duty patrolman. The resulting melee caused the response of several policemen and Lieutenant Dooley to quell the mini-riot and bring order to the situation. He was involved in the capture of a burglar in the basement of Powell and Clements Company at 430 Main Street on November 25, 1929. And so it continued, year after year, for more than a decade.

Potentially sacrificing his life rather than his men, on February 2, 1931, officers responded to John Wyeth and Brothers Chemists and found a ball of putty in a hole in the safe with wires attached to it. The ball contained nitroglycerin, a relatively unstable explosive. Lieutenant Dooley gingerly took the putty and walked it nine blocks to the river and threw it in.

On December 22, 1932, a man robbed a grocery store at 64<sup>th</sup> Street and Fairpark Avenue in Carthage and got into a rental car from a drive-it-yourself car company. When he returned the car to the rental company, Lieutenant Dooley and Patrolman William Breedon met the armed bandit and arrested him at gunpoint.

During his tenure as a Police Lieutenant, he was in one or both Cincinnati newspapers on average once every nine working days for reporting on activities with which he was familiar, leading squads of men into incidents, investigating felonies, locating suspects or suspect vehicles, arriving on the scenes of crimes or critical incidents as a first responder, and/or making arrests and or participating in dangerous activities.

## **CAPTAIN**

In 1941, the Ohio State Legislature passed a statute that set some requirements for promotional examinations. On October 15, 1941, 13 lieutenants competed in the first state-approved promotional examination for Police Captain. Fifty-year-old Lieutenant Dooley finished with the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest score. Within a month, when Major Charles F. Easton suddenly died, Lieutenant Dooley was promoted to captain on December 16, 1941 and assigned as Superintendent of the Fourth District.

By April 1942, he was back involved in investigations, including that of a string of fourteen burglaries where the burglars confessed to him their involvement.

On March 18, 1943, Captain Dooley coordinated the temporary move from 754 W. Fifth Street to 748 West Fourth Street while the district stationhouse was being remodeled; then coordinated their return on June 2, 1943. By then, Police Chief Eugene T. Weatherly considered his 52-year-old captain to be one of his most proficient administrators.

On April 27, 1942 he was living at 2356 Loreda Avenue with his wife. By June 1943, they moved to 1101 McLaughlin Place – where tragedy struck. After fifteen years of marriage, Nellie suffered a heart attack on June 14, 1943. She was rushed to Bethesda Hospital and died three days later on June 17, 1943. She was buried in St. Joseph (New) Cemetery on June 18<sup>th</sup>. It appears that Captain Dooley was busy taking stock of his situation and making plans for the rest of his and his fourteen-year-old daughter's lives. There were no newspaper articles. No one could have known at the time that her husband would be laid beside her in less than ten weeks.

On August 1, 1943, Captain Dooley attained the retirement age of 52.

## **MURDERER**

Jesse James Anderson was born April 1, 1900 in McKinney, Kentucky to Samuel Davidson "Dave" and Louanna (Reynolds) Anderson. On June 11, 1900 he was living with his father (a farm laborer), mother, and brother, in Hustonville, Lincoln County, Kentucky. During 1910, he was in an institution, probably an orphanage, with his siblings in Stanford, Lincoln County,

Kentucky. On September 12, 1918, he was living with his father at 509 South Third Street in Danville, Boyle County, Kentucky, and working on a farm.

By January 15, 1920, he had moved north and was a lodger at 2353 Symmes Street, working in a bakery company. By 1930, he was living in Steele Subdivision of Springfield Township and doing odd jobs.

Anderson was committed to Longview in 1937. He was permitted to leave in the custody of his sister, Anna Belle O'Conner, in 1938 and was discharged from the hospital in 1939. On January 22, 1939, now of 623 W. Sixth Street, he was arrested for a theft at 928 Filmore Street. In 1940, he was living in Cumminsville and then recommitted to Longview in 1941.

On June 10, 1943, his sister checked him out of Longview Hospital on a 7-day pass. She did not return him. With only one social worker and 2,888 patients, the hospital lost track of Anderson – for more than 2 months.

## **INCIDENT**

On Saturday, August 21, 1943, twenty days after Captain Dooley could have retired with full benefits, O'Conner called police to her mineral water store at 519 W. 5<sup>th</sup> Street, near Smith Street (located now about the merger Fifth Street exit ramps from southbound I-75 and eastbound Sixth Street Viaduct). She reported that Anderson had taken a pistol from her cash register and threatened to kill her and/or commit suicide.

Station X dispatched Patrolmen Walter Sands and William Newbert who were assigned to one of the few patrol cars in that era. The store was just a couple of blocks from the Fourth District.

Captain Dooley heard the dispatch, knew Anderson, and thought he could help diffuse the situation. Still a cop's cop, he directed Patrolman Leroy Brown to take him to the scene.

On the way, Sand and Neubert's patrol car was struck by a vehicle operated by Marie Strunk and overturned at Central Parkway and Race Street. Captain Dooley and Brown, now the primary responders, arrived on Fifth Street without backup.

O'Conner advised the officers that her brother had gone to the back yard with the gun. As they started through a passageway, Anderson fired two quick shots from the rear yard and both officers fell. Brown was shot through the right side of the neck, between the windpipe and jugular vein. Captain Dooley was shot through the heart and died instantly.

Patrolman Brown was rushed to St. Mary's Hospital. He was found to have a severed jugular vein and was transferred to General Hospital.

Riot squads responded to the scene with machine guns (probably Model 1921/1928 Thompson submachine guns) and surrounded the neighborhood. Anderson barricaded himself in an outhouse. Detective Sergeant George Ebbers fired a gas bomb into the privy. Anderson fled the outhouse and, with a Spanish-made revolver in his hand, fired at Sergeant Harry Singleton and Patrolman Frank Magin. He was met with a fusillade of police bullets, six of which stuck him in the head and chest, killing him instantly. During the two shooting incidents, Anderson fired all six shots from the revolver.

## **FUNERAL**

Captain Dooley was predeceased by his wife and youngest brother,

James E. Dooley. He was survived by his parents; daughter, Rosemary Dooley (13); siblings, William P. Dooley, Jr., Mrs. Clara (Herbert) Vonderheide, Mrs. Cecilia (Frederick) Wolf, and Joseph Dooley; father-in-law Jeramiah Green; and siblings-in-law, Lillian Green, Julia Green, Anna McMullen, Mrs. William Meare, and Mrs. Edward Burgoyne.

Captain Dooley's funeral was held at Charles A. Miller Sons Funeral Home at 4138 Hamilton Avenue on August 24, 1943. On Wednesday, August 25, 1943, at 10 a.m. a requiem high mass was celebrated at the Church of Our Lord Christ the King on Linwood Avenue (near Delta Avenue). His pall bearers were Captains Walter Martin, George Percy, Willard Elbert, Mack Hall, and Walter Fricke and Lieutenant George Ertel (Captain Dooley's successor). Honorary pallbearers included Captain Patrick Hayes, Lieutenants John Oman and Harry Tobertge, and Detectives Albert Schwach, Adolph Mezger, and John Tebbe. He was buried in St. Joseph (New) Cemetery on August 25, 1943 next to his wife.

## **EPILOGUE**

An abundance of flowers from his funeral were distributed to area hospitals, some of which found their way into Patrolman Brown's room as he recuperated in General Hospital. Patrolman Brown survived his wound, but his voice was affected for the rest of his life. He returned to his career and was later promoted to Detective then to Sergeant in 1963, twenty years after being shot.

Captain Dooley was the highest-ranking Cincinnati officer to have died in the line of duty. As a command officer, he was not expected to personally protect the lives of the citizens or to back up those who were, but he did, and he sacrificed his life for others. His brother was an engineer who worked for the City

of Cincinnati. Cincinnati City Council named William P. Dooley Bypass after the engineer and has, eighty years later, done nothing for the hero.

If you have information, artifacts, archives, or images regarding this officer or incident, please contact the Greater Cincinnati Police Museum at [Memorial@Police-Museum.org](mailto:Memorial@Police-Museum.org).

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