Deputy Daniel Edward Souders, Sr. | Hamilton County Sheriff's Office



Age: 34
Served: to December 16, 1932

OFFICER

Dan was born August 23, 1898 in Cleves to Amos and Sara Souders. Amos and his brother were auto repairmen. During 1915, Dan married Ruth Brannon of North Bend. By 1920, he was a street railway lineman and they were living on Porter Street with their first son, Ernest. In 1930 Dan was an electrician for a traction company and his family included 6 sons residing at 116 Elliott Street. Two years later, he was a Hamilton County Deputy Sheriff, living at Ridge and Miami Avenues with 7 sons, and Ruth was pregnant with their 8th child. Deputy Souders fervently hoped for a girl.

INCIDENT

On December 16, 1932, Deputy Souders was on routine patrol during a snowy winter day. He found a Cadillac crashed alongside Cincinnati-Louisville Pike (now Bridgetown Road) at Tower Road. He continued east on the Pike and stopped at Steinmann's Garage, 2.6 miles away in Mack, and found three men who claimed the Cadillac as theirs.

Edward Steinmann and a mechanic, Edward Bross, drove a wrecker to the Cadillac. Deputy Souders drove two of the men, Ray Allard (25) of Chicago and Charles W. Menges (23) of Indianapolis. The third man stayed at the garage.

Deputy Sheriff Charles Coddington, also on routine patrol, was separately notified by farmers that they had seen three men run from the car. He was eastbound on the Pike when he saw Deputy Souders and the wrecker. He turned around, followed them to the wreck, and signaled Deputy Souders to come and speak with him. Souders left his vehicle and came back Deputy Coddington who told him about the men suspiciously running from the vehicle. Neither deputy knew Menges stole the Cadillac at gunpoint from a Dayton, Ohio dealership – or that the three men had just perpetrated a $3,418 payroll robbery (almost $59,000 in 2019 dollars) at the Textile Building in Cincinnati.

Together, the deputies approached Allard and Minges who were getting out of Deputy Souder's car and walking toward the front of the vehicle. Wary of the deputies' intentions, there is no doubt that Allard and Menges decided in the car to kill them.

They drew firearms and began firing at the deputies. Allard shot Deputy Souders three times with a .38 caliber semiautomatic pistol. One round struck him the heart killing him instantly.

Menges fired his 9mm Luger semiautomatic pistol at Deputy Coddington and missed. Deputy Coddington ducked behind the wrecker and returned fire with his semiautomatic pistol, striking Allard. Allard fell to his knees but continued to fire. Deputy Coddington fired again and Allard fell on his face.

Menges ran around the other side of the wrecker where Bross and Steinmann were hiding and took a shot at them – and missed again. Deputy Coddington then shot Menges in his left side, but Menges kept running. Deputy Coddington tried to fire again and his pistol jammed.

He ran back to his car and retrieved his shotgun from its scabbard. He saw Allard pulling himself up and shot him dead with the shotgun. He then ran after Menges who was running across the field. Menges collapsed in the snow with wounds to his side and leg and surrendered. Deputy Coddington arrested him.

Bross and another mechanic, Alfred Bennet, rushed Deputy Souders to Dr. H. R. Fullerton's home in Cheviot. He pronounced him dead. They then took him on to the General Hospital in Cincinnati. Allard's body and Menges were transported to the General Hospital. The third suspect disappeared from the garage and was never found or identified.

Five Cincinnati Detectives – William Sweeny, Clarence Ford, Adolph Metzger, John Oman, and Walter Carney – hearing the broadcast of the shooting, piled into a car and raced to the scene. Along the way, their vehicle was struck by a truck and all five were injured, two seriously.

FUNERAL



Deputy Sheriff Daniel Souders

Deputy Souders was survived by his pregnant wife, Ruth Eleanor Souders (32), and seven sons; Ernest L. Souders (13), Raymond E. Souders (11), Daniel E. Souders, Jr. (9), Eugene Souders (7), twins John “Jackie” & James “Jimmie” Souders (4), and William “Billy” Joseph Souders (2). Three hundred people attended his funeral services on December 20, 1932 at Argo Funeral Home conducted by Rev. Calvin McNelly of the United Brethren Church of North Bend. He was buried in Section 4, Lot 290, Grave 2 of Maple Grove Cemetery, Cleves.

JUSTICE

Sheriff Asa V. Butterfield, Special Investigators Joseph B. Schaefer (recently retired Cincinnati Detective) and Emil Gau, and Deputies Coddington, Peter Cassidy, Arthur Knose, Charles Matlin, and Joseph Hayes responded to the scene on the following day to search the area for the money taken in a robbery from the day before and for Menges’s weapon. Coddington found the pistol hidden in the snow. The money was never found.

A jury convicted Menges of First-Degree Murder with Mercy and the judge sentenced him to life imprisonment without hope of pardon.

Menges, four years into his sentence, failed in an escape attempt with five other inmates on December 7, 1936. On July 18, 1938, another foiled escape attempt included the stabbing of a

prison guard and ended in the death of a fellow prisoner and probably the death of the guard. They also found in the inmates' cell a homemade gun made out of a pipe; homemade cartridges; a bomb with bolts and screws in it; several dynamite fuses; and rope. He finally successfully escaped on June 7, 1954 by duplicating a key. He and another inmate were captured three days later.

Charles Minges began his adult life in the Indiana State Reformatory in Madison County, Indiana. When he was 23, to whatever crimes he had committed before, he added two armed robberies, the murder of Deputy Souders, and an attempted murder of Deputy Coddington. By his 46th birthday, he was additionally responsible for, two escape attempts, one escape, and the deaths of an inmate, prison guard, 33-year old Ruth Souders, and 6-year old Jimmie Souders. Regardless, the Ohio Parole Board paroled 56-year-old Menges on October 21, 1965. He went home, married, and died on February 1, 1994 at the age of 84.

EPILOGUE

Sheriff Butterfield did all he could for the widow. He organized a boxing and wrestling show at the Cincinnati Music Hall with all the profits going to purchase a home at 222 Porter Street for Mrs. Souders and her children, but little more was collected for the continued support of the family.

Seven months after her father's murder, on July 12, 1932, Willa Arlene Jones was born. Mrs. Souders named her after Sheriff Butterfield's wife, Willa Butterfield.

Mrs. Souders was unable to handle 8 children, the oldest of which was a young teenager and two of which were a toddler and an infant. Mrs. Arthur Morgan, Mrs. Souder's sister, took the

toddler, Billy. But it was not enough. Three months after giving birth, Mrs. Souders was so worn down that she contracted pneumonia. For two weeks her condition worsened and on November 4, 1933 she was taken to Deaconess Hospital. She died shortly after midnight, at 12:30 a.m. on November 5, 1933.

During the holiday season of 1932, the Souders Family was getting ready for Christmas in nine days. By the holiday season of 1933, they had lost both parents and were sent to the General Protestant Orphanage Home. Just before the next Christmas season, 6-year-old Jimmie died on October 22, 1934 after being accidentally fed indelible ink mistaken for cold medicine.

The rest were removed from the Orphanage, separated, and raised in homes of near and distant relatives. The rigors of their lives resulted in what most would consider early deaths of all except Raymond. Of the 10 members of the family Minges devastated, only three lived to sixty. None lived as long as Minges.

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

© The narrative was revised on October 19, 2015 by Cincinnati Police Lieutenant Stephen R. Kramer (Retired), Greater Cincinnati Police Historical Society President, with his research and that of Cincinnati Homicide Detective Edward W. Zieverink III, Greater Cincinnati Police Museum Historian, and members of the Souders family. All rights are reserved to them and the Greater Cincinnati Police Historical Society.