Detective Walter T. Hart| Cincinnati Police Division



Badge: D1
Age: 49
Served: 26 years
May 1, 1929 to September 19, 1955

OFFICER

Walter was born December 20, 1905 in Cincinnati to English immigrant and distiller, John B. Hart, and Mary E. (Kennelty) Hart. John had five grown children from a previous marriage which ended in his wife's death in 1902. John and Mary married on February 22, 1905. In 1906, they were living at 1720 Denham. But in 1907, when Walter was about 1½ years old, his father disappears from the record. His mother was still living at 1720 Denham with his grandmother, Esther Kennelty, and aunt, Anna Kennelty. In March 1908, John put his saloon up for sale. In June 1908, Mary filed for divorce and alimony. In December 1908,

John transferred his farm to Margaret A. Wilson (daughter?) for $2000. Also in December 1908, Mary Hart sued John Hart for $500 on a note. Mary Hart is listed in the 1910 census as a widow. Then, when he was five, on March 1, 1911, Esther died. Anna sold the house and Walter and his mother were taken in by Frank H. Menkhaus, of 1724 Denham.

Walter attended St. Xavier High School. After two years, he left to attend Miller's School of Business and National School of Banking. At 17, he took a position as a Clerk at an establishment on the southwest corner of 6th and Sycamore Streets. Later, he took a position as a salesman.

On June 20, 1928, Walter married Lillian M. Schmidt and moved back into 1720 Denham Avenue with the Menkhauses on one side and Cincinnati Patrolman Edward Traub on the other at 1718 Denham. His mother moved back with them.

Walter joined the Cincinnati Police Department on May 1, 1929 as a Patrolman, issued Badge 348, and assigned to District 3 (3201 Warsaw Avenue).

About January 1930, their first child, Patricia C. was born. A son, Thomas, was born to them in 1932. Walter's mother, Mary, died on May 16, 1933.

Also by 1932, Patrolman Hart was assigned to one of the treasured radio cars and partnered with Patrolman Elmer Swissler. Then, with less than five years of tenure, they were serving as plain-clothes investigators.

Following a scandal, indictments, and demotions of Detectives at Detective Headquarters, twenty Patrolmen, including Patrolmen Hart and Swissler, were promoted to Detective on August 16, 1934. Detective Hart was issued Badge D-1 and assigned to the Gambling Squad at Detective Headquarters. He was replaced at

District 3 by newly hired Patrolman, (later, Police Chief) Stanley R. Schrotel.

In October 1934, Detective Hart was partnered with Detective Thomas Faragher. A month later, they and Sergeant George W. Schattle were established as the first Cincinnati Police Homicide Squad.

In 1936, the Harts were living at 1601 Manss. By 1948, his family was living at 3717 Applegate Avenue.

Detectives Hart's and Faragher's legendary partnership lasted 20 years. By 1955, the Detective duo bragged that they had handled "about 1000 murders" and recorded a 90% clearance rate. In fact, they probably handled 1000 cases including homicides, suicides, accidental deaths, and high-profile cases, including the Anna Marie Hahn case. Their names appeared in each Cincinnati newspaper every other week on average. If not for a murder or sensational death, it was for his work with the Police Holy Name Society – which Detective Hart founded in 1936 – or organizing testimonial dinners for high ranking or high-profile Cincinnati Police Division or Safety Department personnel. Police Chief Stanley Schrotel established the recording of letters of appreciation and/or commendation in officers' personnel records in 1952. In the first three years that Police Personnel documented letters of commendation, Detective Hart received three, one from the Florence, Alabama Police Chief, and two from Chief Schrotel.

And if Detective Hart's name was not in the newspaper, his wife's was, with her activities in the Kappa Delta Mother's Club and University of Cincinnati Mother's Club. Even their daughter's upcoming nuptials were posted on the Society page.

Eighteen years into the partnership, events began to weigh heavenly Detective Hart. On Tuesday, October 7, 1952, while on

his way home from work in a city car, Detective Hart was forced off the road by a truck as he traveled westbound on the 8th Street Viaduct. The car crashed through the concrete rail, off the viaduct, and down 29 feet where it was snagged by an iron railing, 40’ above Evans Street. He was pinned in the nearly vertical vehicle with gasoline streaming through and over the car. After two hours with heavy equipment, he was freed and transported to General Hospital from which he was released three days later on October 10.

Little more than a year after the accident, combined with the daily drudgery of high-profile case investigations, on orders of the Police Surgeon, Dr. M. C. Menard, in January 1955, Detective Hart requested a transfer out of Homicide Squad to the Hotel Squad and general investigations.

He did not let his health detract from his other activities, though. Detective Hart organized a 300-person testimonial dinner for retiring Detective Chief Pearcey on March 2, 1955. He chaired the committee to put on the 17th annual Police Holy Name Society Mass and Breakfast during May 1955. And then he organized the 500-person retirement testimonial dinner for Assistant Chief William Adams on September 8, 1955. His own retirement, however, would not be planned by anyone.

On September 19, 1955, on his way home from work, Detective Hart was organizing again – this time a local reception for his daughter who had been married in Okinawa. He stopped in the Grey Eagle Café, to speak with owners and was speaking to one of them, Mrs. Gertrude Becraft, at 11:50 p.m.

MURDERERS

Lemuel Sam Cross (aka: Lemuel Trotter, Rico Glover, “Sam,”

“Son,” and “Sonny”)

Sam was born February 23, 1925 to Frank Cross and Willie V. Glover in Shubuta, Mississippi. By April 4, 1930 he was living with his grandparents, Lemuel and Ella Trotter. In 1935, he was living in Mobile, Alabama. At 13, he was living with his parents again in Mobile, Alabama.

At 17, he was charged with Assault Within Intent to Murder, found guilty, and sentenced to three years in prison. We do not know the delay, but we suspect that he was sentenced to a juvenile facility and escaped or otherwise had a disruptive stay, because he entered Kilby Prison in Montgomery, Alabama on February 9, 1945 at the age of 19. He was given early parole on March 27, 1947.

Little more than a year later, on March 16, 1948, he was involved in a confrontation at Wallace’s Café at 572 W. 6th Street and pulled a knife on the bartender, Sterling Brown. Brown pulled a revolver from behind the bar and shot Trotter in the abdomen. The initial prognosis was that he suffered a survivable wound. Brown was charged with Shooting to Kill but was acquitted on July 14th.

Trotter survived his wounds and within nine months was causing more havoc. On December 2, 1948, he was the second suspect arrested of a gang involved in a crime spree in Montgomery, Warren, and Hamilton Counties. They stole a car in Dayton, held up a Waynesville service station, then drove to Mongomery, Lockland, and downtown Cincinnati smashing jewelry store windows and taking jewelry. Eventually, three were arrested and two prosecuted in Hamilton County. Trotter was identified as the triggerman in the Waynesville holdup and turned over to Warren County for prosecution. He was convicted and, on February 16, 1949, he was sentenced to 1-25 years in the Ohio State

Penitentiary.

He served for little more than six years before being paroled back to Mobile where he moved in with his aunt. He met Carrie May Hayes who moved in with him and became pregnant in June 1955. Soon after, whether he knew of her condition, he left Mobile and returned to Cincinnati about August or September 1955. He drifted aimlessly around the West End of Cincinnati.

There he came across an old acquaintance from Kilby Prison that he knew only as “Hambone.” On September 19th, he bumped into Hambone again, went to his home and had dinner, and then they went to the Hideaway Cafe where they met another Kilby Prison ex-convict that Hambone knew as “Chinn.”

Robert Lee Jackson (aka: Simon Carter, Robert Lee Carter, “Hambone”)

Hambone was born about 1916 in Birmingham, Alabama. He attended Lane and Campbell Grammar Schools up to the 5th Grade.

Jackson was arrested at 16 years old in 1932 and convicted in a Burglary. He was sentenced to Kilby Prison for 15 months on a road gang. He was arrested again on June 6, 1935 for Suspicion, using the name Simon Carter. Those charges were dropped. Four months later, on October 6, 1935, he was arrested in Montgomery, Alabama for a robbery, and sent back to Kilby Prison for ten years. He escaped on July 22, 1939 and found his way to Cincinnati. In October 1942, a Robert Lee Jackson was arrested on suspicion of receiving stolen property in Cincinnati, but there is no indication that detectives were able to make a case on him. We do not know that it was the same Robert Lee Jackson, but four months later, on April 1, 1943, the escapee was apprehended in Cincinnati and returned to Kilby Prison. It is

unlikely that he served his full ten years, because in 1950, he was back in Cincinnati as a lodger in Dunham Hospital in Price Hill, at the time a tuberculosis sanitarium. Later in 1950, on November 1st, he was arrested, using the name, Robert Lee Carter, for carrying a concealed weapon. Police did not make a connection to his real name, and he was sentenced to three years' probation. On March 19, 1954, he was driving a truck without the permission of the owner, crashed into a car, pole, and fire hydrant and left the scene on foot. We do not know the outcome of that case. On June 10, 1955, he and his common law wife moved from 408 Liberty Street to 623 W. 6th Street on the second floor.

On September 19, 1955, for the third for fourth time in recent weeks, he came across Jackson on 6th Street near Smith Street, invited him to dinner at his home. They then went to the Hideaway Café on 5th Street where they met another Kilby Penitentiary convict known to Jackson for seven or eight years as "Chinn," but not known to Trotter.

Willie Barnett (aka, "Chinn")

Chinn was born in Birmingham, Alabama about 1920. He also attended Lane Grammar School in Birmingham and completed the 7th grade, though he did not know Jackson from there. Barnett was charged in 1944 with Assault with Intent to Rob and Robbery. He was convicted on January 17, 1945 and sentenced to 30 years in Kilby Prison where he met Jackson. Eleven years into his sentence, about April 1955, he escaped from Kilby Prison. About a month later, he was in Cincinnati. A couple of months after that, he met Jackson. In 1955 he lived at 507 Carlisle Avenue.

On September 19, 1955, he was drinking at the Hideaway Café on 5th Street when Trotter and Jackson came in and they struck up a

conversation.

INCIDENT

The Plan

Trotter, Jackson, and Barnet drank and talked about women at the Hideaway Café until about 9:30 p.m. They then went to the Central Café at 5th Street and Central Avenue for some more beer. About half an hour later, they went to Jimmy's Café at Post Square and 5th Street.

At Jimmy's, the conversation turned to money and the fact that none of them had any. Jackson advised that he had some guns at home and the three went to his home. Jackson furnished a .32 semiautomatic pistol to Barnett, and he carried a put- a-long, nickel-plated .38 Special revolver into his waistband. They had no specific plan for the robbery they were going to commit, but when they got new 6th and Elm Streets, they discussed robbing the Grey Eagle Café. Barnett went to the café to see how many people were inside. Jackson gave Trotter his Smith and Wesson revolver. It was agreed that Trotter and Barnett would go inside for the robbery and Jackson would stay outside to keep watch. Jackson gave Trotter his revolver. They further planned the Trotter would the side door, while Barnett entered the front door, guns drawn. They would all return to Jackson's home to split the loot from the robbery.

The Robbery and Murder

After Trotter and Barnett entered the café and announced the robbery, Detective Hart whispered to Mrs. Beacraft to move aside so he could retrieve his revolver, but before he was able, a gun

was at his back. Trotter and Barnett herded the customers into a restroom, taking their wallets as they went. Detective Hart determined it was safest for all concerned if he went into the restroom as if he were just a customer, including giving up his wallet.

He then decided to leave to thwart the robbery. Mrs. Beacraft warned, “Don’t go out Walter! You’ll get shot.” Detective Hart explained, “I’ve got to. I’m a cop.”

He flung open the restroom door and walked out with his Colt Police Positive .38 caliber revolver. Barnett was rifling through the cash register, and Detective Hart shot him. Hart did not see Trotter, who had moved and was now behind him. Trotter shot him in the back. Later, Coroner Doctor Frank Cleveland found the bullet had entered the left side of his back, passed through his lung, and left his body through the upper left side of his chest. Detective Hart spun and a second shot grazed his chest. He returned fire while falling, and his shot did not take effect. The robbers fled the café.

The three ran in separate directions with a plan to regroup at 229 W. 6th Street. Jackson arrived there first, followed by Barnett, but Trotter never showed.

Detective Hart rose to his feet, staggered to, and dialed the telephone (probably “0” for the operator) and said “Police! Police!.” He then collapsed. Mrs. Beacraft was next to come from the bathroom, unaware that the two bandits had already fled, she picked up Detective Hart’s revolver. Finding them gone, she called the police.

The police were already on the way. Patrolmen George Rees and Wilson Day, District 2, heard the shots, and responded to the café at 11:55 p.m. They unknowingly passed Jackson on the corner on the way to the café. They found Kenneth Trent outside holding

a revolver. They ordered him to drop it, and he responded, “My God, don’t shoot! This is Walter Hart’s gun, and he has been shot!” Mrs. Beacraft was inside holding a revolver. They told her to drop it, which she did. Patrolman Rees went back out to the car and called for a Life Squad (Call Number 187) and for others to respond.

Patrolman Day attempted to ascertain from Detective Hart what had occurred, but Hart, still alive, was unable to answer. Homicide Squad Detectives Greene and Young arrived on the scene very soon thereafter, before midnight, followed closely by Detective Faragher and Lieutenant Martin.

The Escape

In a panic, all three subjects ran through the adjoining alley. Jackson met Barnett at 229 W. 6th Street as planned. Trotter came by immediately thereafter and just kept on running.

Jackson took his .32 automatic and a split of the money from Barnett and promised to call a cab to come pick him up. He then ran to his home at 632 W. 6th Street. Jackson returned to his home. Jackson changed his clothes and left. He saw patrol officers here and there and finally called for a cab to take him to Kentucky. He called a cab and was apprehended going across the C&O Bridge.

Trotter first went to the vicinity of 6th and Mounds Streets. But when seeing a police presence, he took a Ferguson Cab to a former girlfriend’s home at 1543 Baymiller Street. Laura Williams and Rose Burton were present. He then went to 1001 Elm Street, where he had previously been staying with James Henderson. While there, he examined the revolver that he still had in his possession and the empty chambers. He ejected the

empty cartridges and tossed them out the window. They were later recovered. He also visited his girlfriend at 750 W. 8th and told Pat Gray that he had gotten into some trouble and that he was going home to Mobile, Alabama. He and Gray went to Newport, and they became separated in the freight yards. He boarded a freight train and worked his way to Mobile.

FUNERAL

Detective Hart was deceased by the time the Life Squad arrived. After a preliminary processing of the scene, he was transported to General Hospital and pronounced dead by Dr. Goettle at 12:36 a.m. His old partner, Detective Faragher, had the sad duty to notify Lillian and his children. Then he went to identify his remains.

Detective Hart was survived by his wife of 27 years, Lillian M. (Schmidt) Hart; children, Patricia C. Linesch (25) and Thomas W. Hart (23); and aunt, Mrs. Anna (Kennelty) Cunningham. A visitation was held at Reibold Funeral Home on Glenmore Avenue in Cheviot. A Requiem High Mass was celebrated at St. Martin Church, also on Glenmore, on September 23, 1955. Detective Hart is buried in Section 12, Grave 320, St. Mary’s Cemetery in St. Bernard.

INVESTIGATION

Barnett’s Capture

The cab never came for Barnett. After tending to Detective Hart’s remains, Patrolmen Rees and Day talked to people outside and found that two men had run south on Elm Street and west through an alley. The two officers went in two different

directions and Patrolman Rees found and apprehended a wounded Barnett in the hallway at 229 West Sixth Street, 1½ blocks from the bar. They drove him back to the café where he was identified by the witnesses there.

They then drove him to City Hall and talked along the way. He named Robert Lee Jackson, known as “Hambone” of 623 W. 6thStreet. They contacted Station X with that information. He was then taken to the hospital for his wounds.

Lieutenant Carl Wittmeyer, with Cincinnati Enquirer reporter Frank Weikel in the passenger seat, drove Barnett to Police Headquarters. On the way, Barnett confessed his part in the killing, including that he had plotted the robbery and supplied the two firearms. He identified his accomplices, supposedly knowing Trotter as “Sam.” Barnett gave police the name of at least one of his accomplices, Jackson.

Jackson’s Capture

Detectives Marvin Friedman and John Ritter responded to the West Sixth street address and recovered personal papers and money belonging to victims robbed in the café. Walter Hart’s wallet was recovered in the pocket of the pants that Jackson had worn during the robbery. The semiautomatic pistol and some of the stolen money were recovered in Jackson’s refrigerator.

By the time officers arrived at 623 West Sixth Street where Jackson was staying, he had already fled there, changed his clothes, left, and caught a cab.

One of the first projects taken on by the newly established Hamilton County Police Association was the General Alarm system that, in part, after Detective Hart’s murder, sent police

officers on both sides of the Ohio River to the bridge entrances. District One Patrolmen William Breckel and William Hayes were assigned to the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad (Clay Wade Bailey) Bridge. They stopped a cab and found Jackson inside. Based on the description and probably with information from the cab driver, they detained him.

After Jackson was captured, he was taken to the hospital where he was identified by Barnett as “Hambone.”

Vice Squad Patrolman Harry Batters, District Four Patrolman Lehman Foster, and Detectives John Greene, Eugene Moore, and Donald F. Roney recovered the murder weapon and Detective Hart’s wallet in Jackson’s apartment. Tuesday afternoon, Jackson bragged at Detective Headquarters that no one saw him give the guns to the other two and no one saw him standing watch outside the bar. He was confident of his defense.

Trotter’s Capture

Trotter fled the café through a side door and through an alley. He caught a cab and went to 1543 Baymiller Street and changed clothes. There he arranged with Laura Williams to send his clothes to Alabama, telling her that he had gotten into a gunfight with “some nigger” on 6th Street and had to get out of town. Within a day and after more than 100 people were questioned. Detectives and patrolmen, many of whom were working off duty and around the clock, determined that he was the trigger man, where he had been during the last two weeks, and where he went immediately after the robbery. Detective Chief Henry Sandman ordered a manhunt for Trotter. By then, Trotter had gone to Newport, Kentucky and jumped onto freight trains working his way to Birmingham, Alabama.

Chief of Detectives Henry Sandman immediately sent five squads of police, armed with Thompson machineguns and shotguns, to five locations in the West End based on tips. The Hamilton County Commissioners, within hours of the murder, put up a $500 (almost $6000 in 2025 dollars) reward for his capture. As word got out about the murder, dozens of off duty officers joined the search. Flying squads of grim-faced detectives worked round the clock. But, without a known address, they had no focus on where to look.

Finally, police found a witness, James Henderson, at 1001 Elm Street, four blocks north of the Grey Eagle Café, who told police that Trotter visited his fourth floor apartment about midnight. He shaved off his mustache before leaving the apartment for parts unknown. A man fitting his description attempted to purchase a ticket to Oakland at the Greyhound Bus Terminal on East 5thStreet, but he left when he found he did not have sufficient funds.

He then showed up at Patrick (Johnny) Gray's room at 750 W. 8th street about 4:30 on Tuesday, the afternoon after the murder. Trotter tried to convince Gray to "blow this town," but he did not mention the shooting or his own wound.

On Thursday, a truck driver reported seeing a man fitting Trotter's description on the B&O Railroad tracks near Mitchell Avenue. An intensive search did not find Trotter, but did find that there were three freight trains passing through, one to the north and two to the south. All three trains were stopped and searched to no avail.

By Friday, the Cincinnati Enquirer organized a campaign to collect donations for a reward. By then, the Fraternal Order of Police announced that they would approve $500 at their next meeting on Monday. The Enquirer posted $100. On Thursday

evening, the Fraternal Order of Police Associates approved a $300 contribution. The goal was $4000 or $5000, about $60,000 in 2025 dollars.

Also by Friday, since Trotter was known to associate with homosexuals, all sexual deviants were rounded up and questioned.

On Saturday, a man from Cincinnati matching the description was found in LaFollette, Tennessee. However, he proved to be a walkaway from Longview State Hospital.

On May 9, 1956, a tip was received for a man that matched every one of Trotter's identification statistics, including scars, in Portsmouth, Ohio. They surround the building where he was supposed to be, apprehended him, fingerprinted him, and determined that he was not Trotter.

Trotter had left for parts unknown to Carrie Hayes until she received a letter from Ohio in September 1955. He wanted her to send him his social security number that she had written in her Bible and to send him some clothes so he could look for a job. He then showed up shortly after she sent the mail. She lived with him for three or four months in Mobile before he left for Cincinnati. He was gone three or four months before he came back. On the 4th Sunday of September, they went to her mother's home in Hazen. For three weeks during Christmas, he went to visit her brother in Birmingham. The baby was born on February 22, 1956. He stayed with her for some time thereafter.

Trotter would occasionally leave Hazen for a couple of weeks to indulge in different games in Selma in a gambling house where they had dice tables, skin game tables, Georgia Skin, to make additional money.

On Tuesday, February 5, 1957 Trotter was arrested on a warrant resulting from a street fight outside a honkytonk in Selma,

Alabama. He registered as Reco Glover and charged with Assault With Intent to Rob, which was later modified to Assault and Battery. By then, Alabama had been the focus for the search for Trotter for a few months, obviously based on some information received from a source. Three days later, on Friday, February 8th, an FBI agent came to the Selma Police Department with some new FBI Law Enforcement Bulletins. While going over them, Identification Officer George D. Porter noticed a picture of Trotter. He said to the agent, “I think we have this fellow.” They compared the fingerprints, retrieved Trotter from his cell, and he admitted his real identity. He also admitted involvement in the robbery at the Grey Eagle but blamed the shooting on Barnett.

Crime Bureau Lieutenant Charles Martin interviewed Trotter and extradited him to Cincinnati. He was back in Cincinnati on February 11th and 30 minutes after he arrived, he was in a lineup where four witnesses identified him as the triggerman.

JUSTICE

Crime Bureau Lieutenant Martin signed charges on all three men for one count of 1st degree Murder and four counts of Armed Robbery. By December, the Hamilton County Jury returned indictments on the same charges for all three.

Robert Lee Jackson

On Friday, September 22, 1955, Barnett and Jackson were arraigned on Lieutenant Martin’s charges and neither spoke a word. Judge Ralph B. Kohnen entered a plea of innocence and bound them over to the Grand Jury.

Barnett and Jackson were arraigned on the indictment before

Judge Simon Leis, Sr. (father of the later famous Prosecutor, Judge, and Sheriff Simon Leis, Jr.). Hamilton County Prosecutor C. Watson Hoover prosecuted, and Jackson's attorney was Attorney Eugene Smith. Jackson withheld a plea until an attorney could be appointed for Barnett. On December 17th, both Barnett and Jackson pleaded not guilty.

A hearing date for Jackson was scheduled for April 23, 1956. Jury selection began on the 23rd before Judge Ferd Bader. The Prosecution began their case on the 26th. They rested on May 2nd. On May 3rd, Jackson took the stand in his own defense. He denied everything that he had told officers and then alleged that the officers beat the confession out of him. He and his common-law wife testified that he was at home at 11:30 on the night of the murder. The jury began deliberations at 3 p.m. on May 4, 1956. Most of the deliberations, about eight hours, were spent only on whether to withhold mercy. They returned a verdict of Guilty Without Recommendation of Mercy, requiring the death sentence.

His attorneys filed a motion for a retrial. On May 26th, Judge Bader denied the request and sentenced Jackson to death by electric chair on September 27th. His attorneys appealed.

The First District Court of Appeals suspended the execution date to October 27th but then set a hearing for October 30th. On March 4, 1957, they affirmed the conviction and sentence and, on March 14th, reset the execution date to June 22, 1957. His attorneys appealed to the Ohio State Supreme Court.

On December 18, 1957, the Ohio court ruled against him. The case was appealed to the United States Supreme Court which also, on June 2, 1958, denied the appeal. His and Trotter's executions were scheduled for July 7, 1958.

On July 7, 1958, he ordered no last meal, looked upon the

preacher praying for him with disdain, sneered at the corrections officer who placed the mask over his head, and was executed on July 7, 1958, at 8:15 p.m. He is buried in Potter's field on the grounds of the old State Hospital in Columbus.

Lemuel Trotter

Trotter was arraigned before Police Court Judge Otis R. Hess for the crimes for which he was already indicted. He advised that he needed no attorney, stating, "When you're guilty you don't need a lawyer." Hess continued the case to February 20th before which he advised he would appoint counsel. Trotter made a statement that was transcribed to 16 pages, but then he refused to sign it. On February 16th, Judge Hess appointed Harry A. Abrams and Joseph H. Fulton to defend Trotter.

On February 27th, Trotter pleaded insanity. Three court-appointed psychiatrists adjudged Trotter to be sane on March 26, 1957.

Judge Carson Hoy set his trial for April 22nd. By April 17th, Trotter had not yet discussed his case with his lawyers, saying instead, "I'll tell my story in court." After numerous interruptions trying to pick his own jury and to try his own case, on April 24th, after the jury was selected, he told his attorneys that he fired the shots, but without intent of killing anyone. The prosecution began its case on the 26th. They rested the next day, and, at the request of the defense, the judge continued the case until Monday, the 29th. On the 29th, Trotter testified in his own behalf and repeated his contention that he had no intention of killing anyone.

The case went to the jury at 12 p.m. on the 30th. The returned a verdict of Guilty Without Recommendation for Mercy, with an

automatic death sentence. On Monday, May 6th, he was officially sentenced to death.

On May 24th came the seemingly obligatory stay of execution by the First District Court of Appeals. They affirmed the verdict and sentence on October 14th. His attorneys appealed the case to the Ohio Supreme Court on November 22nd.

On December 18, 1957, he lost his appeals and appealed to the United States Supreme Court. On June 2, 1958, the Supreme Court denied that appeal. He and Jackson were both scheduled for execution on July 7, 1958.

Trotter found religion in prison, ordered roast duck and desserts as a last meal, and was executed just before Jackson on July 7, 1958, at 7:59 p.m., almost three years after the murder. He is also buried in Potter's field on the grounds of the old State Hospital in Columbus in the State's New Insane Cemetery.

Willie Barnett

On Friday, September 22, 1955, Barnett and Jackson were arraigned on Lieutenant Martin's charges and neither spoke a word. Judge Ralph B. Kohnen entered a plea of innocence and bound them over to the Grand Jury.

Barnett and Jackson were arraigned on the indictment before Judge Simon Leis, Sr. Hamilton County Prosecutor C. Watson Hoover prosecuted. Barnett, without a lawyer, pleaded guilty, but Judge Leis refused the plea until he was appointed an attorney. On December 17th, Barnett was appointed attorneys Harry Abrams and J. Marc Trabert. Both Barnett and Jackson pleaded not guilty.

On Monday, Barnett was taken from the Hamilton County Jail to

General Hospital for surgery to remove Detective Hart's bullet from his hip.

Barnett was sent to Lima State Hospital on February 1, 1956 on a motion by his attorneys. On March 11th, he was adjudged "insane and irresponsible," and committed to the hospital until such time that he could stand trial.

For 16 years, he was periodically examined and continuously determined by the doctors to be unable to stand trial. Their opinion was that his insanity probably began immediately following the murder, not necessarily before, and might some day be able to face a trial.

In 1972, after the death penalty was eliminated in Ohio, the doctors suddenly decided he could stand trial. It was one of the fastest First Degree Murder Trials in Ohio history. He was adjudged to be criminally insane and remanded back to Lima State Hospital of the Criminally Insane where he died. He is also buried in Potter's field on the grounds of the old State Hospital in Columbus in the State's New Insane Cemetery.

EPILOGUE

Frank H. Menkhaus's great-grandson, Michael Menkhaus interned for Detective Walter Hart's son, Thomas Hart, at Hart Pharmacy. Neither of whom knew that it was Frank Menkhaus who took in Mary and Walter Hart sixty years before.

Elmer Robisch, Cincinnati Patrolman and artist, sculpted two bronze heads of Detective Hart. One sat for decades at Cincinnati Police Headquarters at City Hall and then Lincoln Park Drive. It is now at the Greater Cincinnati Police Museum. The other sat for decades at Hart Pharmacy.

In May 2008, three gun-wielding men entered the rear door of Hart Pharmacy at 4861 Glenway Avenue with intent to rob it of narcotics. The unarmed 77-year-old pharmacist, Detective Hart's son, refused, and chased them back out the back door cussing him and warning him never to return. They overwhelmed him, knocked him to the floor, and stole his wallet, but they did not get what they came for. Police responded quickly and arrested all three. The acorn does not fall far from the tree.

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

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