

TRAGEDIES OF THE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Veterans of the force who have met death
in the performance of their duty as
protectors of society.

By Harry Pence.



TABULATION of the members of the Cincinnati police force who lost their lives in the discharge of duty includes more than 50 names and reveals the fact that guardians of the law and protectors of the public peace became targets for the lawless nearly 80 years ago. To relate the circumstances attending each instance in which officer, patrolman and detective braved the dangers of combat with vicious men or the more mysterious forces of nature in the defense of the lives and property of their fellow citizens would require a volume.

And as only the outstanding tragedies can be related it is well to begin within the memory of living men. On February 27, 1895, there appeared at police headquarters one Mrs. Louis Stolzenberger, residing on the third floor of a tenement on Central Avenue, near Clark Street, asking protection against her husband, a man much given to drink and believed to have been driven half insane by the recent death of their only child. Stolzenberger had that morning attacked and choked his wife and left home vowing his intent to avenge himself upon her sister and others he believed to be his enemies.

A warrant was issued for Stolzenberger and turned over to Court Officer RICHARD MORRIS, with instructions not to tackle the job alone, but to find and take with him the patrolman on the beat. Morris, however, paid little attention to this warning. In former years he had handled a river front beat, one of the toughest in the city, and was a stranger to fear. He did meet the policeman on the beat and together they went to the Stolzenberger flat, but the man wanted was not at home so Morris waited for him alone. When he came back Stolzenberger submitted to arrest with apparent grace and agreed to accompany Morris to headquarters peaceably, but on the stairway jerked from him suddenly and shot him at close range. He then fled, pistol in hand, until he encountered Patrolman Fred Shafer, at whom he took a shot and was preparing to take another when Shafer, aiming deliberately, felled him with a fatal bullet.

MORRIS was rushed to the hospital, where he died the following day, conscious but calm to the end. He had been on the force for 14 years and was one of the few who had survived the reorganization of 1886. When new rules and regulations were put into effect in that year and a more rigid examination of the men instituted Morris was found to be of deficient sight, but he was deemed too valuable a man to be lost on that account, so he was made Court Officer in attendance at Police Court and on duty at headquarters. He was one of the most efficient and popular policemen of his day and his funeral from his home on McMillan Street was attended by men of distinction in all walks of life, whose sorrow and sympathy for his bereaved family was generously manifested by their words, acts and tokens of love and respect.

During the holidays of 1897 a jewelry store on Liberty Street was entered by bandits who bound and gagged the clerk and made way with much valuable property. On January 9, 1898, word reached headquarters that Herman Diehm, alias Ed Meyers, suspected of being the leader of the gang, was at a house on East Sixth Street with several pals and possibly some of the loot. A detail of specials and patrolmen under Detective Robert E. Moran was dispatched to round up the gang. They entered the house, made their way to the second floor and demanded entrance to a room which was locked. Cautiously the door was opened, but before the detectives could enter Diehm shot at Moran and escaped. Moran died the next day, the same upon which Diehm was arrested in Covington and returned to answer for the crime, but shrewd lawyers brought about his acquittal despite

the fact that in his dying statement the detective declared he recognized Diehm and saw him shoot.

AS WILLIAM SATTERS patrolled his beat on April 28, 1907, everything and everybody seemed orderly enough till he reached Sixth and Stone Streets, where a stranger accosted him and asked protection against a man on the other side of the street who, he said, was threatening his life. Sat-

ters started across the street to investigate and as he did so the other man pulled his gun and began firing. The patrolman was struck once before he could bring his own weapon into action and again after he had shot and wounded his assailant. They emptied their revolvers at each other, but Satters' wounds were the more serious and he fell unconscious. The other man, who proved to be Philip Schwartz, so-called "Duke of Shanty Town," a group of houseboats and shacks at the foot of Burns Street, was shot in the face, hand and leg, but refilled his weapon and kept the crowd at bay till a detail of police took him into custody. Satters died of his injuries on April 29. Schwartz was given a life sentence. It is probable that had the police then, as now, been armed with .38 instead of .32 calibre revolvers Schwartz and not Satters would have been killed, for before he received his fatal wound Satters had shot the "Duke" through the body without stopping him. After this tragedy the police were equipped with larger guns.

Twenty years ago there was an Italian colony out on Queen City Avenue in the Lick Run district known as "Little Piedmont" and in a tenement occupied by a number of families on May 23, 1908, one of the occupants, Russo Levato, became suddenly crazed and set fire to the building. Armed with a sawed-off shotgun he killed another occupant who tried to extinguish the flames. The fire attracted the attention of Mounted Patrolman CHARLES G. PETERSON, who galloped to the scene and rushed upstairs to see what could be done before the Fire Department arrived. He was not warned of his danger or of the origin of the fire until he was almost upon Russo, who fired at him, riddling him with buckshot and killing him almost instantly. Peterson was born in Denmark, had served two enlistments in the United States Navy and was in the Battle of Santiago. It is needless to say he was a brave and efficient officer.

On the morning of Thursday, De-

GOLD STAR MEN OF THE FORCE

JOHN BRASHER May 6, 1849
 PETER DAVIDSON June 18, 1850
 JOHN STOWDER September, 1852
 CHARLES DORAN October 9, 1853
 LEVI PARKER April 27, 1856
 DANIEL HALLAM January, 1861
 CLAYBURN LONG January, 1861
 PATRICK NUTTLES June 10, 1870
 URIAH H. SEARS April 17, 1870
 ABRAHAM BIRD September, 1874
 MARTIN KUNKEL January 24, 1878
 FREDERICK KARSCH November 3, 1880
 JOSEPH STURM March 29, 1884
 PATRICK RILEY March 8, 1887
 WILLIAM SAUNDERS March 11, 1888
 HENRY ROESE July 16, 1890
 CRAIG SCOTT January 10, 1893
 RICHARD MORRIS February 28, 1895
 HENRY ZIMMERMAN May 31, 1895
 LOUIS KLUSMAN December 25, 1896
 ROBERT E. MORAN January 10, 1898
 JOHN SCHROEDER August 17, 1901
 LUTHER BROOKS November 22, 1901
 MICHAEL MULVIHILL September 8, 1902

WILLIAM SATTERS April 29, 1907
 CARL P. HAUCK July 29, 1907
 ANTHONY BACHMAN October 8, 1907
 CHARLES G. PETERSON May 23, 1908
 EDWARD F. KNAUL May 23, 1914
 JAMES O'NEIL April 20, 1915
 SAMUEL J. ROBINS April 25, 1916
 JACOB KUENZEL June 24, 1916
 HENRY RUBERG July 28, 1916
 WILLIAM C. BOERS April 16, 1917
 ALBERT W. WEGENER November 12, 1917
 GEORGE LE PORIS November 12, 1917
 HENRY HANAKAS March 3, 1918
 WILLIAM H. DEITERS August 28, 1918
 RICHARD C. ELL December 14, 1918
 FRANK HUEFTLEIN April 15, 1922
 LAWRENCE M. KLUMP August 11, 1923
 WILLIAM BOND April 20, 1924
 ANTHONY TEKULVE July 9, 1924
 CLIFFORD L. CORNISH September 14, 1925
 ALLEN J. ALTHOFF October 20, 1925
 THOMAS E. DAMERON December 17, 1926
 OLIN C. WILSON May 16, 1927
 JOHN A. FRANKEN July 7, 1927

On September 17, 1914, the Provident Savings Bank & Trust Company's branch at Eighth Street and Freeman Avenue was entered by a lone bandit, who, at the point of a most business-like revolver, compelled the teller to sweep all the loose money into a valise, and escaped in a nondescript automobile no different in appearance from hundreds of other such vehicles on the streets. An hour or two later the Liberty Bank, at Liberty and Freeman, was the victim of a similar visitation, with the same result and descriptions of the lone bandit. Later in the day the manager of the Mohawk Bank, at Fifteenth and Central Avenue, as he was reading accounts of the robberies in an early extra edition of the afternoon papers, was asked by a stranger, also answering published descriptions, if he might use the telephone. On being refused the privilege the stranger left, leaving the impression that he had contemplated holding up three banks in one day.

As the police pursued their few shadowy clues a boy approached Lieutenant Imwalle and Patrolman

EDWARD F. KNAUL, telling them that a man of the description they sought was then in his mother's rooming house at 918 West Ninth Street. Without waiting for reinforcements the policemen rushed to this house and Knaul dashed up the stairs to the room indicated. "I had no chance," he afterward said. "As soon as I opened the door the fellow shot me."

The fellow not only shot Knaul but made good his escape to his automobile around the corner and an exciting chase followed, which might have had another ending had the bandit been as good a driver as he was "stick-up artist." He seemed, however, to be an inexperienced and clumsy, though a most reckless and daring, motorist. He brushed against

heavier machines and wobbled when opportunity to make a quick getaway presented itself. He finally collided with a telegraph or trolley pole and so damaged one wheel of his machine that he had to stop, but by this time his pursuers had got a range of fire upon him and it was a dead man the police dragged from the wreck.

THE dead man proved to be Frank G. Hohl, a notorious crook whose exploits were all famous for their skill and audacity. He had done time, escaped and was wanted for having committed big jobs in several cities.

At the place on Ninth Street he was known as Fred Walker, but a few days later it was discovered that under another name he had rented a room on upper Vine Street, in which was found concealed \$8,000 of the \$13,000 he was believed to have netted by his two holdups. The police found evidence that he had mailed a parcel-post package on the day after the robberies and this package, never recovered, probably contained the rest of his ill-gotten gains.

Patrolman Knaul was a veteran officer who had many deeds of bravery

and a high record of efficiency to his credit.

On April 25, 1916, a quiet and apparently harmless young man entered the pawnshop of Louis Katz, at Longworth and Central Avenue, and after dickering with Katz over the purchase of a revolver hit him over the head with it and fled, pursued by Katz, intent upon the recovery of his property. Patrolman SAMUEL J. ROBINS took up the chase, but when he had about overtaken the fugitive, a lad by the name of William Groendike, who had never been in any kind of difficulty before, Groendike turned and shot ROBINS with fatal effect. At this juncture a pair of well-known city detectives came upon the scene, sized it up at once and one of them, Albert W. Wegener,

later destined to become himself a victim of the bandit's bullet, shot and killed the patrolman's slayer.

When an unknown, but suspicious looking individual undertook to pawn a watch with Walton C. Levi, on Central Avenue near Fifth Street, Levi got into communication with headquarters and Detective A. W. WEGENER went to investigate. He evidently recognized the man, who also seemed to know who the officer was for he instantly opened fire at the detective, who was shot and died before he could reveal the identity of his assailant.

THE noise of the shooting and the chase which followed attracted policemen and civilians, but the crook escaped, though not until another brave guardian of the public safety became a victim to duty. GEORGE LE PORIS, motorcycle policeman, joined in the man hunt and as he was in civilian clothes he was mistaken for the fugitive and was shot by accident at Third and Elm Streets.

Although in this unfortunate instance two policemen were killed the wretch responsible for their death

was never apprehended and brought to justice. The police were reasonably certain they knew the murderer but could not obtain sufficient evidence to warrant his prosecution.

While the detectives of the Cincinnati force were cooperating with the authorities across the river in the effort to run down the man who had held up a Ludlow bank messenger on a street car and made away with several thousand dollars, word reached headquarters that the suspect was at an office on Garfield Place in negotiation for the sale of an automobile,

believed to have been stolen.

Detectives Frank Hueftlein and Albert Guethlein answered the summons, but the delay aroused suspicion of the man who was wanted. He was on the alert and when the detectives entered the office he drew his revolver and fired, mortally wounding FRANK HUEFTLEIN and inflicting injuries upon GUETHLEIN, from which he has never recovered.

The assailant, afterward discovered to be Noble ("Red") Holt, was arrested while attempting to escape. He was promptly indicted, tried and convicted and eventually electrocuted for his crime.

A STOUNDING as it may seem, this is the first case of which the writer can find record in which the slayer of a Cincinnati policeman paid in kind for his deed. More than 40 brave defenders of public safety were killed, many of them by cowardly assassins acting deliberately, and only one legal execution was recorded by way of protection and salutary example. An even more humiliating spectacle was presented three years later, when, on the strength of the evidence of his associates, a jury acquitted John H. Whitfield, a negro, who was under suspicion of being a bootlegger and drug peddler, in his trial for killing Patrolman CLIFFORD L. CORNISH September 14, 1925. The jury chose to believe the evidence of his pals that the policeman had attacked Whitfield first, and freed him on his plea of self-defense. He was the third slayer of Cincinnati policemen to escape punishment through the machinations of shrewd lawyers and the odd mental twists of apparently intelligent juries.

And while the matter of the leniency of Courts and juries is under consideration, it is timely to remark that the mistaken kindness of Governors of the state has contributed its share to the awful toll. Several slayers of peace officers were pardoned by Ohio Governors after serving but a few years of their sentences, and a fair share of them were soon afterward in the toils again for crime.

This, too, in spite of the warning of the almost grotesque case of Harry Harrington, a saloon-keeper, who, in 1856, shot and killed Police Lieutenant LEVI PARKER, when the officer interfered with his beating his wife. He was given a life sentence, but

friends interceded with the Governor in his behalf a few years later, explaining that Harrington was yearning and pining away for his native Ireland. So convincing was the plea that the Governor issued a pardon on condition that Harrington return immediately to Erin. Once free, Covington—or it may have been Newport—Kentucky, was as near to Old Ireland as Harrington ever cared to go, and nothing could be done about it.

TO OFFSET the acquittal of Whitfield, it can be recorded that the negro who shot and killed Acting Detective ANTHONY TEKULVE, June 29, 1924, from the effects of which he died July 9, was electrocuted for the murder.

This deplorable condition has been corrected, at least in part, for a new Ohio law has taken from judge and jury the option of substituting a prison sentence for the death penalty in cases of conviction on the charge of murder for killing a policeman in uniform. The law is good as far as it goes, but it does not stiffen the processes of grand juries nor make more severe the punishment for perjury in such cases.

But the apparent certainty of extreme punishment seems not to stay the hand of the enraged and the violent, especially when rage and violence are the results of drink or drugs—and sometimes of both. It was such a fit of madness on the part of one John Rucker, a drug-crazed negro, who ran amuck on Kenyon Avenue on the night of July 4, 1927, which was responsible for the death of that veteran of the Police Department, JOHN A. FRANKEN—the last tragedy of the kind we have to record. Rucker got all "hopped up" and, arming himself with a shot gun and an automatic, went on the warpath, shooting two negroes and so frightening a negro woman that she died of heart failure. It was such a melee that Franken and Sherman Yarrion

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JOHN FRANKEN



CHARLES G. PETERSON



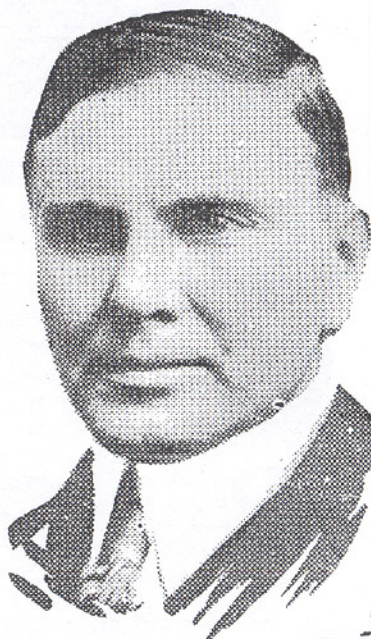
EDWARD KNAUL



LAWRENCE M. KLUMP



WILLIAM C. BOERS



ALBERT WEGENER

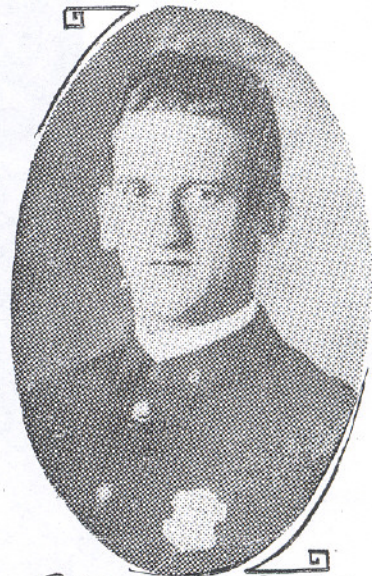


THOS. E.
DAMERON

ALLEN J.
ALTHOFF



ANTHONY
TEKULVE



GEORGE LE PORIS

TRAGEDIES OF POLICE DEPARTMENT

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tried to quiet him, with the result that both were shot. Franken, a veteran of the force, who had served as a messenger when he was a boy, and as a station house keeper till his district was eliminated, and had for several years been an active and efficient patrolman, died of his wounds three days later. Rucker was convicted, denied a rehearing and will probably have died in the electric chair before this article reaches the reader.

DURING the 20 years preceding this tragedy a number of patrolmen met their death in their attempts to maintain the peace or to arrest disorderly persons.

CARL P. HAUCK was killed by one of a number of "can rushers" who were creating a disturbance in an alley near Eighth and Harriet Streets July 29, 1907.

ANTHONY BACHMAN was shot by a drunken plumber who was annoying his neighbors on West Sixth Street October 8, 1907.

JAMES O'NEIL was killed by one of four negroes whom he undertook to arrest under the Cincinnati end of the Southern Bridge, April 20, 1915.

WILLIAM C. BOERS was mortally wounded by a man who was his friend but who mistook him for another policeman whom he believed had come to his home on West Fourth Street to arrest him for wife-beating.

HENRY HANAKAS died on March 3, 1918, of gun shot wounds and blows on the head received while arresting a negro four days before.

WILLIAM H. DEITERS was shot and almost instantly killed by one of two negroes whom he was questioning at the corner of Liberty Street and Freeman Avenue late in the night of August 28, 1918.

RICHARD C. ELL, mounted patrolman in the East Walnut Hills District, was riddled with buckshot from the gun fired by a drunken saloon hanger-on who had been ejected from a drinking place on Madison Road in O'Bryonville and who resented the officer's efforts to quiet him.

"Ain't any cop kin put me to bed," declared John L. Hunter, a surly

negro of West Fifth Street, when, at three o'clock in the morning of August 11, 1923, Patrolman LAWRENCE M. KLUMP told him and his pals they would have to get off the street and quit disturbing the peace. Hunter now goes to bed when ordered to do so by prison guards. He is serving a life sentence, but no expiation of his can bring back the policeman he shot and killed.

WILLIAM BOND lost his life in a similar encounter when he sought to discover the cause of pistol shots in the neighborhood of Fifth and Freeman on April 20, 1924 and followed one of the fugitives to a house on Richmond Street.

REFERENCE has already been made to the murders of ANTHONY TEKULVE and CLIFFORD L. CORNISH. Both were slain by heavily armed negroes congregated late at night and acting suspiciously. Both officers took desperate chances with their dangerous adversaries and both paid for their devotion to duty with their lives. As stated, the slayer of one was acquitted, the murderer of the other was electrocuted.

ALLEN J. ALTHOFF was shot in broad daylight at Fifth and Race Streets, October 20, 1925, by John E. McKibben, a young white man, whom he had arrested for a petty theft and who, in his effort to escape, wounded another man. McKibben's crime was committed without any excuse whatsoever; yet a jury recommended mercy for him and he was given a life sentence with the possibility of a parole or even a pardon after a few years in prison.

THOMAS E. DAMERON was shot after an exciting chase of a gang of negroes who had attacked, disarmed and wounded another patrolman at Third and Smith Streets, August 1, 1926. He, too, recklessly followed a desperate criminal into quarters where every advantage was with the crook and, although his assailant died from wounds received in the encounter, Dameron lingered on a bed of pain until relieved by death December 17 of the same year.

That negro crooks seem to be no respecters of color is indicated by the manner in which Patrolman OLIN C. WILSON, negro policeman, met his death on May 16, 1927, at the hands of John Coverson, a negro whom he was

questioning about a negro. A bad rumor of his careless use of firearms. Without warning or provocation Coverson shot and killed Wilson, for which crime he has been duly executed, bringing the total score of executions for the murder of policemen to four.

MANY men of the police force have been dangerously wounded but have recovered from their injuries and returned to active duties. Cal Crim, the veteran detective, wrestled valiantly with death during the weeks after he was shot by the notorious Foley, "The Goat," October 21, 1901. Detectives John Wank and Leonard Hays, as well as Albert Guethlein and Patrolmen Michael Maloney and Stonewall Jackson and others deserve places on the roll of honor, and would be included in the list save for the fact that their injuries—no thanks to their would-be murderers—were not fatal.

A number of policemen have been the victims of the careless use of fire arms on their own part or that of their associates, and others of accidents which probably were not the result of carelessness and could not have been averted. In a number of such cases policemen have lost their lives.

On March 8, 1887, PATRICK RILEY was killed by the revolver of a fellow patrolman which dropped from his pocket and exploded while they were on their way to raid a groggery on "Rat Row" in which a crap game was in action.

HENRY SAUNDERS died on March 11, 1888, of wounds received when his revolver accidentally exploded during roll-call at the station house a few days before.

HENRY ROESE'S death, on July 16, 1890, was caused by the accidental discharge of his revolver as he stepped off a street car.

LUTHER BROOKS shot himself with his own pistol as he crawled out of a cave near Millcreek, where he and several other officers were looking for tramps suspected of freight car robberies. Brooks died November 22, 1901.

The veteran station-house keeper, Chris Haller, and Policeman Jack Calman met with similar accidents, but the injuries did not prove fatal.

Several policemen have met with violent deaths in manners that can scarcely be described as in the

line of duty. One was shot and killed by his divorced wife, because, it was alleged, of his attentions to her sister. Another, Armstrong Chumley, was shot and killed in Central Station by Colonel Thomas E. Snelbaker, once Chief of Police and then manager of the Vire Street Opera House, but the affair was a family dispute and had nothing to do with the enforcement of law. More pathetic, however, was the death of JACOB KUENZEL. His wife had become demented over worry about his safety, and to prevent a similar fate at other hands she is said to have shot him in his sleep, June 24, 1916.

Two patrolmen, one on duty and the other just leaving, were killed by street cars in front of the Sixth District Station, on Eastern Avenue. HENRY DEERING died March 24, 1902, and CHARLES LIND on July 5, 1908.

LOUIS KLUSMAN, who had won a reputation for bravery, was killed in the attempt to stop a runaway horse, Christmas Day, 1896. HENRY RUBERG, a mounted officer, did not seem to be seriously hurt when his horse fell, on July 26, 1916, but internal injuries caused his death two days later. Patrol Driver MICHAEL MULVIHILL met his death answering a hurry call, September 8, 1902.

Perhaps the most unique accident to befall a Cincinnati policeman happened to JOHN SCHROEDER in the quiet district of Corryville, July 17, 1901. A live wire had fallen to the street at Charlton and Zeltner and, believing this to be a menace, Schroeder sought to remove its end to the curb, using his baton for the purpose. It was raining and although the wood of his stick was a non-conductor, the water set up contact and he fell, unable to release his grasp. He was electrocuted by the current.