

# DEAD LINE REVIVED TO STOP THIEVES' JUBILEE DOWNTOWN

## Recent Reaping of Rich Harvests by Thieves in the Maiden Lane and Wall Street District Leads to Drastic Measures of Reprisal by the Police.

### Former Barrier Against Crooks at Fulton Street Abolished by Waldo, Has Been Practically Re-established as Result of Activity of Robbers.

An elderly man with side whiskers, who might have been a Methodist parson, was stopped at Broadway and Fulton street by a prosperous person who might have been a Wall Street broker.

"Aren't you glad to see me?" he asked, with a grin.

"You've made a mistake," said the first man frigidly.

"Not a bit of it," said the other. "You're Jimmy McCue, the penny-weight artist. Beat it, Jimmy, back to Chicago for yours. We're doing business at the same old stand, and there's nothing in it for you."

Without further words the ministerial person hailed a northbound car and clambered aboard. He had "done time" for substituting paste diamonds for the genuine article in jewellers' trays, and he recognized the detective who had just spoken to him.

He returned uptown without arguing the point, because in the last few days there has been a practical revival of the old "dead line" in Fulton street, over which crooks may not pass under penalty of arrest. The police are unwilling to talk about the dead line. It is not to their interest to attract attention as yet to that famous institution abolished by former Commissioner Waldo. Even "Bill" Devery was invited to comment on it, as it was thought only fitting that he should have his say about the crooks. But "Bill" declined the invitation.

"I haven't got nothin' to say about it," was his only comment, thrown into the phone like a dish of oatmeal. "an' I ain't a-goin' to talk about nothin' else, nuther."

The reticence of "Big Bill" is a recent thing. It may be due to the late rumor that he wants his job back, in case Colonel Goethals refuses it.

When Devery was questioned about this recently, and about the statement that Mayor Mitchell would be informed that his strictness as Police Commissioner was witnessed by the fact that out of nine hundred homicides in his regime all but ten were arrested, he is said to have answered: "That's the right dope. I can clean up the town. I done it before, an' the books show it. What's the use of kiddin' about the police business? What New York wants as a Police Commissioner is a regular 'cop.' You wouldn't go to a barber to get your shoes soled, would you? Every man to his trade; an' believe me, son, I know mine."

In case Devery misses out he favors Perkins. "That's pretty tough on Perkins," said Mayor Mitchell.

### THE CROOKS HAVE RECEIVED FAIR WARNING.

But although Commissioner McKay joins Devery in his refusal to allow his subordinates to discuss the dead line, the fact remains that many of the oldtime detectives are taking up their stations at Fulton, William and Nassau streets; that the "sign" is being passed as it was in the good old days, and that the crooks of the metropolis have been warned that Wall Street, Maiden Lane and adjacent territory are decidedly unhealthy for well dressed gentlemen with no visible means of support, but with police records.

The dead line has been practically re-established along the old boundaries that were prescribed by the late Inspector Thomas F. Byrnes back in the '80's. Prior to that time the financial district was a land of plenty for the thieves, and the golden days have lately been dupli-



WOMEN WHO DRESSED IN MOURNING REPRESENTED THEMSELVES AS WIDOWS AND SOB STORIES ABOUT HAVING SEEN BETTER DAYS.

cated under the regime of former Commissioner Waldo. Waldo abolished the "dead line," and robbery has thrived in Wall Street and Maiden Lane ever since. Robberies amounting to \$100,000 have caused the jewellers of the neighborhood to lament the lack of strictness that was the rule in the reign of Inspector Byrnes. Unprecedented activity has been shown among the thieves, who have been allowed to come and go at

and during the last six months many members of the trade have been singled out as victims. During six months of 1913 the trade papers reported twenty-six safe robberies, totalling a loss of \$283,000. Windows were smashed in 126 stores, with a total loss of \$38,000; burglaries in jewellers' shops alone amounted to \$38,000; 106 sneak thefts from jewellers brought a profit to the thieves—of \$11,500, and fourteen daring hold-ups in which jewellers were the victims rolled up \$10,000 more.

Many of these crimes took place in Maiden Lane and the vicinity. There was the Coulton case of February 19, 1913, which is one of the most daring crimes on record below the "dead line." When George Coulton, one of the members of H. K. Bicker & Co., was alone in his office, two men called on him with the request to see some diamonds. While he bent over the tray one of them struck him over the head with a blackjack, but, although he was partly stunned, he succeeded in grappling with his assailant and holding him until help arrived. His companion escaped and has never been run down by the police, who believe that the robbers came to the district in an automobile, and that the attempted theft was the result of long and careful planning.

There was the case of L. R. Theise, of No. 47 Maiden Lane, who was robbed of \$50,000 worth of gems last August. After he had taken from a safe deposit vault a sack of jewels, he carelessly left them on his desk while he stepped across the hall to see a neighboring jeweller. When he returned after two or three minutes the sack had disappeared and no trace of it has been found to the present day.

"We don't know what the 'dead line' is worth from the detective's point of view," said James H. Noyes, secretary of the Jewellers' Security Alliance, "but we do know that when it was in operation our show windows were comparatively safe. The robberies that have troubled us have occurred since it was abolished, and for one I should like to see it re-established."

Up to 1880, when Inspector Byrnes

originated the "dead line," the robberies in the financial district totalled more than \$1,000,000. When the "dead line" went into force they were reduced to practically nullity.

Sneak thieves, "pennyweights," window smashers and "paper workers" decided to take their talents to other fields. Whether they were guilty of any crime or not, as soon as they set foot across the line at Fulton street they were arrested. This may not have been in accordance with the notions of fair play that have become current in the Police Department since that time, but it had a wonderfully salutary effect in the saving of money and jewels.

A thief is a thief, not a citizen. That was the theory of Inspector Byrnes, who found no method of handling crooks too harsh, providing it resulted in conviction or public safety. Byrnes was the man who first reduced the much talked of "third degree" to a science. He was feared by the underworld more than any man on the police force before or since his time.

His method was well illustrated by the case of a murderer named McGloin, who had killed a Frenchman in a particularly revolting manner. There was little evidence against the criminal until Inspector Byrnes took him in hand. Then there was all that was needed. Byrnes himself has told the story of how he secured the evidence against this criminal.

### HOW BYRNES USED TO WORK THE "THIRD DEGREE."

"It was a beastly murder," said Byrnes. "I knew he had committed it, but how to prove it was the question. I even hired a woman to keep him company for six weeks—and she would have left an arm before she had known what I wanted him for. But all she had to do was to keep me posted as to what he was doing and what his haunts were and who were his associates. She never appeared in the trial."

"At last, in desperation, I played my last card. I had him arrested and I arrested his three accomplices—each being taken separately and kept

apart, so that there could be no collusion. I took him into a room looking out on the court in the middle of the Central Office Building, and I sat him down so that he could see the court and I could not. It was a grewsome place where we sat, with nooses and weapons and black caps and unpleasant things all about. He thought I did not know what he saw, but I could see him start at each part of my plan was put in motion.

"I kept him there forty-five minutes. His three accomplices were in the building, and every fifteen minutes one of them was brought across the courtyard in full view of where he sat. I could feel him start each time, although he supposed I did not know what he saw. He was a bravado, if ever there was one. He would not give up a word. He kept asking what I wanted with him and what he had done. I had a pawnbroker brought in, and the man handed me the pistol with which McGloin had done the murder. The man went out, and I sat there with the weapon in my hands, playing with it."

"At last Banfield, third and last of his associates, crossed the yard handcuffed to a detective. McGloin dropped on the floor on his knees and begged me 'for God's sake' to save him from the gallows. I knew the whole story, but it would be necessary for him or one of his associates to tell it in order that the law could be set in motion. Even the clothes McGloin wore, as he sat in that room with me, I had paid for."

When Byrnes asked for a room in the Stock Exchange, the better to enforce the policing of the financial district, the brokers were astonished at his audacity, but they soon found that it paid. A detective was forthcoming on any alarm within two minutes of the time that it was given. The "dead line" was invented, and results were prompt and far reaching.

Many famous crooks from all parts

of the world have been arrested trying to cross it. "Charlie" O'Connor, the bank sneak, who escaped from the prison pen in General Sessions when he was about to be sentenced to a long term in Sing Sing prison, was arrested there. "Hobney" O'Reilly, who hooked wads of bills from the cashier's window with a bent steel wire, was also arrested while attempting to cross the line. A couple of well known Western thieves, relying on the fact that they were strangers in New York, tried to cross in open disdain of the detectives, and were promptly judged for it.

Sometimes the thieves would lay wagers with each other on their ability to cross the line. They attempted it in elevated trains, in cabs and in disguises. Once in a great while some one of them would be successful, but running the blockade was finally considered too dangerous for profit. It was known that Byrnes cared very little whom he caught as long as a thief was landed in prison for a certain time. No matter who the thief was or what he had done, he was fairly certain to take a trip up the river if he ventured below Fulton street. There even came to be underworld regulations in regard to the walled off territory. When an ex-criminal was compelled to enter it for legitimate business, he informed the police authorities, and a detective was sent with him as an escort.

Certain types of thieves are always eager to enter the financial district. Swindlers offering showy diamonds as security for loans used to make a good thing out of the jewellers and bankers in the vicinity of Maiden Lane. This type of dishonesty was often adopted by women, who dressed themselves in mourning, represented themselves as widows, and told "sob" stories about having seen better days. Sneak thieves appeared in various guises. They might have watches to be set, or would visit a store several

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WHILE HE BENT OVER THE TRAYS ONE OF HIS MEN STRUCK HIM OVER THE HEAD WITH A BLACK JACK.

pleasure in the money district and who have amassed rich plunder since the bars were taken down at Fulton street.

"A crime wave of unprecedented magnitude has swept over the jewelry trade since the first of the year," says the official paper of the Jewellers' Security Alliance. "The unusual activity of thieves of all descriptions has centered attention on means of providing added protection against their attacks. Small in bulk, as compared with other kinds of merchandise, and easily transformed into cash, the jeweller's stock offers great temptation to the predatory classes,



M'GLOIR DROPPED ON THE FLOOR ON HIS KNEES AND BEGGED ME FOR GOD'S SAKE SAVE HIM FROM THE GALLOWES.

# A MIDSHIPMAN WHO HELPED MAKE HISTORY AT SANTIAGO

Continued from first page.

collision or simply a desire to annoy it is rather hard to tell, but they certainly should be under navy control. They are absolutely independent of us, the only navy people on board being a midshipman and several signalmen.

The transports are of all ages and every known type of architecture. One old paddlewheel steamer loaded with mules is waddling along like a duck about a mile to port of her proper position. The Bancroft and the Helena are doing their best to nose her back into the column, but she ignores them completely.

### A THREATENING SEA AND SEVERAL WATERSPOUTS.

June 15th. Still at sea. The weather to-day was very threatening, with many heavy rain squalls. A number of waterspouts were seen from time to time and one large spout was sighted dead ahead. As its presence uncollected would have soon become a danger to the transports, the crew of No. 1 eight-inch turret were sent to their guns and a shot fired, which hit it square amidships, demolishing it completely, to the great delight of the soldiers.

Every one is indignant; there is a lot of mail on the Dupont and they won't let us have a bit of it until we get to Santiago and deliver the admiral's letters; it is official courtesy to give him his first, so we will run for six days with mail in sight and not get any of it. We were obliged to go out of our course to get fresh water for the horses, but will probably arrive at Santiago day after to-morrow. We have heard no

news, except the Dolphin's exploit in knocking a troop train off the track with a shot from her bow gun while doing inshore work at Santiago.

### THE FORTS BY DAYBREAK—NOCTURNAL RUMORS.

We are about ten miles away from Santiago, and to-morrow the troops will be landed under the guns of the fleet.

We are to attack the forts at daybreak, and there is talk to-night of sending in a naval landing party with the army; four of the midshipmen are to go. T—, L—, M— and myself. I am to command the third cutter. Revolvers and ammunition have been served out and we are all ready.

A short time ago one of the transports passed within fifty yards of us with her decks and rigging crowded with soldiers; they gave us a tremendous cheer, and we replied with all the volume we could muster and shouted: "Who are you?" They replied: "The Twenty-second." Some one near me remarked: "There will be a lot of vacant mess numbers on that ship when she goes home."

All hands were called this morning at 4 o'clock; we had coffee and went to our battle stations. At six we cleared for action and headed in; there was a big fire on shore, and in a short time it was easy to make out that the Spaniards had fired the town, not Santiago, but Daiquiri, where the army was to land.

quarters; there were three of us in the conning tower—the navigator, a seaman at the wheel and myself. We headed straight for the entrance, and the captain gave the order "Fire to the right of Morro," but the word was passed "Fire right at Morro." We fired several rounds before the Spaniards replied, but their first shell went directly over us and only a little high; it is all nonsense about their not being able to shoot; every shot they fired came within a hundred yards of us.

I had a fine view until the smoke covered everything; we would hear a whizzing in the air that sounded like a bumble bee, and then a great column of steam and water would suddenly appear a short distance away. A few minutes after we commenced firing there was a tremendous shock, as if a locomotive had run into the ship; a shell had struck the armor belt just below the port sheet anchor.

Whenever we fired our own 3-inch guns forward of the beam it seemed as if we had been hit by the enemy; the muzzles of these guns are close to the eye all in the conning tower, and the concussion were simply terrific. Clouds of smoke, dust and solid matter would come surging in, filling our eyes, and our ear drums ached so that I felt sure they would be broken, in spite of the cotton we were using to protect them.

The ship did some splendid shooting, one 13-inch shell going right into Morro and knocking the whole lower wall down. It was impossible to see this from the conning tower, but the people on the bridge reported it.

After the bugle sounded the "retreat" I went down to the stowage to get a drink of water, and saw M— sitting there with a trouser leg rolled up and a big red spot on one side of his calf and a corresponding one on the other side where the bullet had gone out. We were wondering how he could have been hit by a revolver at a range of several thousand yards, when he volunteered the information that he had been so absorbed in measuring ranges from the top that he had dropped his own revolver and shot himself through the leg.

We exchanged signals with the other ships, and learned that the Texas was struck and one man was killed and five were wounded. There is fighting still going on all around, and there is no telling when we will be sent to quarters. They fight all day here, the object being to exhaust the Spaniards. A party of Spanish soldiers tried to destroy the railroad bridge leading to Santiago this morning, but the Vesuvius ran in and chased them away.

We are all very tired, sleepy and dirty; our clothes are covered with a white coating of saltpetre. None of the ships has smokeless powder, and this brown powder leaves a residue that settles on everything in sight.

A number of the officers were not called this morning until the bugle had sounded "general quarters," and had to pull on their uniforms over their night clothes. As soon as it commenced to get hot we began stripping, and all the clothes I had on when "Cease firing" sounded were a dirty undershirt and a pair of trousers. The enlisted men had on absolutely nothing except duck trousers. The heat in the gun positions was awful. I was sent to the forward turret with a message in the midst of the action, and found the officer in command of the turret in a nightshirt with beautiful ruffles all down the front and a revolver strapped around his waist, pointing and firing the right 13-inch gun.

We have painted a sign for the stowage: "God bless our home."

A rather amusing thing happened last night. The executive officer is in constant dread of a night torpedo attack by the Spanish destroyers; our sportsy gunner was superintending the rigging of torpedo nettings around the ship. He had been working pretty hard, and before going on deck visited the stowage for refreshments. When he got on deck he said, with a sigh of relief: "Thank heaven, I've disposed of two of them." The executive heard him and came galloping up shouting: "Two what? Torpedoes?" Without turning around to see who it was M— replied: "Torpedoes —, bottles of beer."

The insurgents are having a fight with the Spanish troops ashore now, and it looks awfully pretty to see the puffs of smoke in the bushes; it sounds just like a wood fire crackling.

The Spanish have a mortar battery, the Socapa, which was firing at us this morning; the shells sound just like miniature steam engines coming through the air, "choo-choo-choo-choo," and then a tremendous bang as they explode.

June 25th.

The troops have all been landed and we can see their campfires at night.

P—, who went in charge of our steam cutter and two whaleboats, to help get them ashore, returned this morning; he says the enemy made no resistance. Two of the infantrymen were drowned; they went overboard with their knapsacks on and their belts filled with ball cartridges and sank like a shot. There was a heavy swell running, and great difficulty was experienced in getting the soldiers off the transports, as most of them had never seen a small boat before, and instead of waiting for the boats alongside to rise on the top of the roll they climbed down the sea ladders and threw themselves in, regardless of where the boats were, landing sprawling, rifle and all, usually on the head of one of the boat's crew.

A regimental commander in getting in his boat put his foot on her gunwale as she was coming up with the swell; his knee got caught under one of the rungs of the sea ladder, and as something had to give, his leg was broken between the ankle and the knee and he is out of the campaign at its very beginning. Imagine how he must feel.

There being no barges to transport the horses and mules they were thrown overboard, the idea apparently being that they would "make the best of their way" ashore. Most of them did so, but a not inconsiderable number headed out to sea. A cavalry trumpeter ran down on the beach sounding the assembly, and all the horses swam around as if on drill and headed for the sound of the trumpet. The mules kept on and were drowned.

We can see the Spanish flag over Morro very plainly from here; one of the dis-

patch boats ran in this morning, flying a tablecloth as a flag of truce, and offered to exchange for Hobson and his men, but they refused. The admiral then gave notice that the next time the ships bombard it will be for good, and the women and children would better leave the city.

One of our launches went on picket duty last night to within a mile of the harbor entrance and saw the Spanish troops working on their fortifications. It was impossible to see any of their ships.

Off Santiago, June 28.

The army is within three miles of the city, so we will soon have some work to do. From the squadron bulletins, published every day on the flagship, we heard of a cavalry fight in which twenty-two were killed and eighty wounded. Hamilton Fish was among the killed.

All sorts of rumors are running around the fleet concerning the fighting ashore. One is that a volunteer regiment refused to advance under fire. As they were blocking the way they were ordered to lie down and the regulars charged over their prone bodies. Another is that an observation balloon was sent up directly over a large body of troops; the Spanish opened fire on it, and their "loos" created so many casualties among our men that they commenced firing at the balloon, too, and got it back to earth again as quickly as possible.

### MIDNIGHT AND WITHIN A MILE OF MORRO.

We went to general quarters last night at midnight and remained at our battle stations until 2 o'clock this morning; we ran in to within a mile of Morro and kept our searchlight on the entrance. One ship has to do this every night; the steam launches are stationed inshore of the vessel on searchlight duty to act as pickets. They are armed with one-pounder boat guns and have rocket signals ready to fire if they see anything. Their duty is to keep close to the beach, outside of the searchlight beam, and make sure that no destroyer can slip out and torpedo the illuminating ship.

Great excitement was caused last night by one of the auxiliaries firing a whole batch of rockets and blazing away with all her guns; every ship in the fleet went to quarters and closed in. The cause of the disturbance reported that she had distinctly seen a strange destroyer speeding along close to the shore. What she did see was a train running along the bank. X—, who commanded our picket launch, got so excited that he dropped his one-pounder overboard; it's just as well, for him, at least, that the Spaniards were obliged to confine their manoeuvres to the railroad tracks.

The Vesuvius has a great system. Every night, between darkness and dawn, she fires three dynamite shells into the forts; they may be fired either at short time intervals or hours apart, the result being that after a few aerial earthquakes have landed in their midst it is only natural for the enemy's garrison to speculate as to the exact time of the landing of the two succeeding ones, and such speculation is certainly not conducive to restful sleep. It is a very uncanny performance, as the projectiles are fired not from a gun but from a pneumatic tube.

### IMPRESSIONS OF PROJECTILE FIRED FROM TUBE.

There is no loud noise at discharge, only a prolonged whine, taken up by the whistle of the body as it goes through the air, then a period of absolute silence, followed by a tremendous detonation in the far distance, as if a powder magazine had exploded in the enemy's works.

The Spanish blew up a large railroad bridge last night, which caused considerable scurrying among the smaller craft, but the damage was done before they could get close enough in to drive the soldiers away.

It is the general opinion that the enemy have to be careful of their ammunition, as a number of our yachts have gone away ashore without having been fired upon, while it would be dangerous for a jack rabbit on the beach to show itself to one of our pickets.

(To be continued.)