

Bryant McMahon

(- 17 Sep 1934)

The Evening Star, September 15, 1934, p. 16

Hotel Gunfight Leaves One Dead, One In Hospital
Police Hold Four in Mystery Said to Involve Gamblers' Row
Shooting At Houston Opens At Early Hour
Taxi Driver, Elevator Boy and Woman Give Evidence,
And Two Pistols Are Recovered

Shooting Victims



SAM MELINCOV.



BRYANT McMAHON.

Two men known to police as gamblers fell in a blaze of gunfire early today in a downtown hotel room, one dead and the other critically wounded.

Police think the shooting, which occurred on the third floor of the Houston Hotel, E street between Ninth and Tenth streets, followed a personal quarrel and had no connection with the gambling racket here.

Less than 15 minutes after the affray four men were under arrest, the two guns thought to have been used in the shooting in police custody, and a lookout was broadcast for a fifth man.

The man slain was Sam Melincov, 39, who lived at a downtown hotel. One bullet pierced his chest and another his abdomen. He was dead when medical assistance arrived.

Second in Hospital

Bryant (Big) McMahon, 39, who gave an address in the 100 block of M street, is fighting for his life in Emergency Hospital with wounds in his abdomen, both arms and a leg. An operation was performed, but at noon it was not known whether it would be successful.

All persons thought to have been connected in any way with the shooting maintained a tight silence. Even McMahon, lying at the point of death on an operating table, refused to say who shot him.

Those being held are Alfred S. Pinsonault, 39, of the Houston Hotel; John R. Mitchell, 23, of the 1200 block of Massachusetts avenue; Thomas F. Tobin, 22, of the 1000 block of Fourteenth street, and Isaac B. Jones, 40, 1900 block of Thirty-seventh street, a well-known professional bondsman.

Fingerprints Searched

Police are hopeful fingerprint and ballistics tests on the two guns will disclose the identity of those who "shot it out."

The prints on the gun handles will be examined by experts and comparison made with the fingerprints of all suspects now in custody as well as of Melincov and McMahon.

Then the guns will be turned over to Lieut. John Fowler, department ballistics expert, and test made to determine whether bullets taken from the bodies of Melincov and McMahon were fired from them.

The dispute which culminated in the slaying, is thought to have started in a restaurant at 1410 I street, conducted, police say, by Harry Maynard.

Driver Tells of Argument

Leaving the restaurant, the group, including Melincov and McMahon, hired a taxicab and ordered the driver to take them to the Houston Hotel. The driver, whose identity police kept secret in fear that he might be molested, said he gathered from the conversation of his fares that they were going to the hotel to settle an argument.

Richard White, colored elevator boy of the 1500 block of Swann street, furnished the information that the group went to Room 311, all ascending together on the elevator about 2 a.m. The room was listed in the name of Sam Berlin, police stated. He now is being sought.

Tobin and Berlin, who is also known as Miller, came to Washington about two weeks ago from Norfolk, Va., police learned. Little was known here of their past and inquiries concerning them were dispatched to the Virginia city.

Less than a half hour later, Miss Madeline Coin, an actress, who occupied the room adjoining Berlin's was awakened by loud voices. She said she could tell several men were arguing, but could not make out what they were saying. A few minutes later five shots were fired, one of the reports seeming to come from the hotel corridor, Miss Coin told police.

The pistol reports rang through the hotel and Night Clerk Cecil Hobson sent White, the elevator operator, for police. He met half a dozen officers running toward the hotel. They had been on Ninth street nearby and had heard the shots.

McMahon Falls in Lobby

Summoning more police help, the officers threw a cordon about the hotel. Sergt. John Ronayne, first precinct, found McMahon staggering down the hotel stairs, blood streaming from his wounds. He helped him to the lobby where McMahon collapsed on a couch.

Tobin fled from the hotel west on E street and is said to have run into the woman's restroom at the gasoline station at Tenth and E streets. A.L. Finnegan, a night watchman, and Policemen Sam Davis and Frank Morette found him hiding there. A .38 caliber revolver was found hidden in a flower pot in front of a house near the filling station.

Mitchell was arrested by Precinct Detective H.D. Johnson in the hotel lobby, and Jones on the street outside by Sergt. Clarence Musselman and Pvt. Davis. Johnson took Pinsonault into custody.

Information Refused

Johnson and Morette took McMahon to the hospital after rounding up their prisoners. They tried to question him at that time, but he refused to talk.

Most of those arrested were said by officers to have been drinking, but none was drunk.

A second gun, of the same make and caliber as that located in the flower pot, was found in the hallway outside the room where the shooting occurred.

Seven hundred dollars in cash was found in Melincov's pockets.

McMahon is well known to police. He was one of the principal suspects in the notorious hijacking of the El Salvadorean legation several years ago. At that time he was identified as an employe of "Jimmy's" gambling establishment just across the District line on Bladensburg road.

He also was questioned in the killing of Talley Day, a local gambler, and in the death of "Tack" Grady, who fell through a skylight in a Fourteenth street gambling establishment four years ago.

Wounded in 1932

In March 1932 McMahon was shot in the back while asleep, police recalled, and walked into Casualty Hospital, clad only in pajamas. At that time also he refused to disclose the name of his assailant or help police toward a solution of the case.

A rumor was heard by police that a few minutes after the shooting, five men, thought to be friends of Melincov, walked into the Houston Hotel and asked for him. They are said to have left threatening to avenge his death. Late this morning this report had not been confirmed.

Capt. William E. Holmes, commander of the first precinct, who was summoned to the scene shortly after the shooting, praised the speed and efficiency with which his men had worked. Detective Sergts. George Darnall, chief of the homicide squad, and Walter J. Beck, member of the squad, commanded the investigation today. Coroner A. Magruder MacDonald was summoned to the hotel room and viewed Melincov's body.

All witnesses located so far were summoned to homicide squad offices late this morning for detailed questioning. Police hope at that time to reconstruct a motive for the murder.

The Evening Star, September 17, 1934, p. 17

Second Gambler In Shooting Dies

Bryant McMahon Remains Silent to End –

1 Man Held, Another Sought

Bryant McMahon, 39, reputed gambler and strong-arm man, died in Emergency Hospital early today from wounds received in the shooting affray that previously had cost the life of Sam Melincov, also a gambler.

To the last McMahon maintained the stubborn silence which had baffled police in their efforts to identify the person or persons who fired the fatal shots. A bullet which pierced his abdomen caused his death, despite an operation performed Saturday a few hours after the shooting early that morning in a Houston Hotel room. He also was wounded in both arms and a leg.

One Man Is Held

Meanwhile, police released all but one of the four persons taken into custody near the scene of the crime, the man being held is Thomas F. Tobin, 33, of the 1000 block of Fourteenth street, who has been described by Norfolk, Va., authorities as a gambler from that city.

Search still is in progress for Sam Berlin, to whom the room where the shooting occurred was registered, and an unidentified man believed by police to have been present when the guns blazed.

The motive for the shooting remained a mystery today, despite numerous theories advanced by police and others. All are agreed, however, that it was a dispute growing out of the gambling racket which caused the fight.

One theory was that McMahon, Melincov and another man fought over division of profits. Police, however, lean toward the belief the fight was over distribution of the business of furnishing information on race horse results.

A recent raid by Federal agents crippled the service of the ring which had a monopoly in the Washington field, police say, and another group took over part of its territory.

Autopsy to Find Bullets

Coroner A. Magruder MacDonald announced he would perform an autopsy on McMahon's body this afternoon. At that time the bullets will be removed so they may be examined to determine from which gun they were fired.

Ballistics tests already have determined that the shots which killed Melincov were fired from the gun found hidden in a flower pot in front of a nearby building. Whether the leaden pellets which killed

McMahon were fired from the gun found in the corridor outside the hotel room has not yet been decided because physicians feared to remove the bullets from his body while he yet lived.

Tobin, the only man still held in the investigation, was discovered hiding in a woman's restroom near the spot where the gun was found in the flower pot.

The Evening Star, September 18, 1934, p. B1

Police Still Seek Murder Suspects

Investigation of Slaying of Two Gamblers at Hotel Strikes Snag

Police investigation of the double murder of two gamblers in a Houston Hotel room early Saturday appeared to be at a standstill today with officers still seeking two suspects.

Since the shooting, detectives have searched the city for Sam Berlin, alias Miller, in whose name the hotel room was registered, and another man whose identity is undetermined, but who is known to have been present during the affray.

Those killed were Sam Melincov, who was dead before medical assistance could reach him, and Bryant McMahon, reputed strong-arm man who died early yesterday in Emergency Hospital, silent to the end as to who shot him.

A bullet taken from McMahon's body yesterday at an autopsy was fired from a gun found in a Houston Hotel corridor, police disclosed after ballistics tests. Another gun, found in a flower pot in front of a building half a block from the hotel, fired the shots that killed Melincov, it was said.

Out of four persons arrested immediately after the shooting, only Thomas F. Tobin of Norfolk, Va., is still being held. He was arrested in a women's restroom in a gasoline station adjoining the spot where one of the guns was found.

Both Tobin and Berlin are said by police to have come to Washington from Norfolk several weeks ago.

Police say they do not know the motive behind the killings, but point significantly to the fact that those slain were gamblers.

The Evening Star, September 19, 1934, p. 7

Jailed For Quiz In Double Killing

Occupant of Hotel Room From Which Doctor Was Called Is Held

Police today arrested Henry G. Carter, 34, for questioning in connection with the fatal shooting early Saturday of two gamblers in a room in the Houston Hotel.

Carter was picked up along Ninth street by Precinct Detective Harold D. Johnson after police had obtained information to the effect that a telephone call for a doctor, after the shooting, had been made from Carter's room in the Houston.

Capt. B.W. Thompson, assistant chief of detectives, said he plans to question anyone who may be shown to have been near the scene at the time of the shooting, as well as any other acquaintances of those present.

Those killed were Sam Melincov, who was dead before medical assistance could reach him, and Bryant McMahon, who died early Monday in Emergency Hospital, after steadfastly refusing to give police any information which might aid them in solving the killings.

Police still are seeking Sa Berlin, alias Miller, in whose name the hotel room in which the shooting occurred was supposed to be registered.

Carter was merely booked for investigation at police headquarters pending questioning by the authorities.

One other man, Thomas F. Tobin of Norfolk, Va., is now being held for investigation in connection with the shooting. Tobin was arrested along with three other men soon after the shooting occurred, but the other three were released after being talked to by members of the police homicide squad.

The Evening Star, September 20, 1934, p. 21

Hotel Slaying Deaths Probed

Web of Underworld Intrigue to Be Aired Tomorrow Before Coroner's Jury

A web of underworld intrigue which led to the slaying of Sam Melincov and Bryant McMahon, local gamblers, in a Houston Hotel room early Saturday, will be unraveled before the coroner's jury, which probably will consider the case tomorrow, investigators promised today.

Names of the principal suspects will be produced and an attempt made to trace the motives behind the violent outbreak. Meanwhile, detectives refused to discuss the matter.

Two Men Are Held

Two men were being held this morning. One was Thomas F. Tobin, 33, alleged Norfolk, Va., racketeer, who was among the four arrested near the scene of the crime, and the other is Henry G. Carter, 34, taken into custody yesterday for questioning concerning a telephone call the morning of the shooting to summon medical assistance.

The inquest date had not been set definitely this morning, but police said that if all goes well they will be in a position to go before the coroner's jury tomorrow.

Meanwhile, search for Sam Berlin, alias Miller, to whom the hotel room where the shooting occurred was registered, turned today to Baltimore with a request from local authorities that police there look for him.

It also was suggested to Maryland officials that he may have been known to them during the investigation of the notorious Old Colonial Tea House shooting at Bladensburg three years ago.

The Evening Star, September 21, 1934, p. B14

Accidental Raid Routs Gamblers

40 Patrons Flee E Street House as Police Hunt Accused

Two men who jumped from a third-story window and about 40 others who dashed out of a gambling house above a restaurant in the 1300 block of E street must have been surprised to learn that police weren't after them when they raided the place yesterday.

The vice squad was searching for Wilbur Dorsey, indicted on a gambling charge, when it broke into the establishment, which formerly was operated by Bryant McMahon, who was killed in a gun battle at the Houseon Hotel last Saturday.

Frustrated by a heavily barred door on the front staircase, the officers ran around to the back of the place and proceeded up the back stairs. Half way up, some twoscore patrons of the gambling house rushed down the stairs as police were ascending. Two others, who apparently thought they were to be arrested, ran into a wash room on the third floor and leaped out the window, landing on a shed below.

Hurt in Jump

A man who gave his name as Ralph Wilson, 32, of the 1700 block of P street, was one of those who jumped, police said. He was treated at Emergency Hospital for head and wrist injuries which were said to be not serious.

The identity of the other man who jumped was not learned. Spectators said he apparently was uninjured and left in a taxicab.

Elaborately Equipped

Sergt. George C. Deyoe said the gambling house was one of the most elaborately equipped he has ever seen here. A racing board stretched half the length of a room about 100 feet long. A roulette wheel and poker table, with chips scattered about, were on the other side of the room. Signs on the walls advertised "Black jack every day at 1 o'clock"; "Stud poker, \$1, \$2 and \$4 limit, every night at 7 o'clock."

After police had been in the place about five minutes a loudspeaker that had been blaring race results from Havre de Grace, Lincoln Fields, Rockingham, New York and Detroit, was shut off from an outside source. Apparently getting word that a raid was going on, the operator of the loudspeaker shouted "Pull the plug out," and all was quiet.

The Evening Star, September 21, 1934, p. 21

Murder Inquest Delayed By Hunt

Sam Berlin Sought in East In Slaying Of Two Gamblers Here

Police today searched the underworld of half a dozen Eastern cities for Sam Berlin, alias Miller, wanted for questioning concerning the murder of Sam Melincov and Bryant McMahon, gamblers, in a Houston Hotel room early Saturday. Meanwhile, the inquest into the deaths, set tentatively for this morning, has been indefinitely postponed.

Inspector Frank S.W. Burke, chief of detectives, said his investigators have not yet ascertained the truth behind the shooting affray. He blamed the stubborn silence with which the gambling fraternity habitually meets police questioning.

He discounted published reports that attributed far-reaching underworld significance to the slayings.

"We don't doubt that the dispute which led to the shooting was about a gambling matter," Burke asserted, "but so far as we know there is no mysterious intrigue figuring in it. They were gamblers and probably they fought about gambling. Perhaps someone was called a name and one word led to another and then the shooting started."

The rumor was widely circulated that the slain men were participants in a rivalry for the city's horse-racing wire service.

Thoms F. Tobin, 32, a suspect described by police as a Norfolk, Va., racketeer, was transferred from a precinct cell to Gallinger Hospital last night. The reason for this move was obscured. Sergt. George Darnall, chief of the homicide squad, said the transfer was made to give Tobin a more comfortable place. Examination at the hospital showed he was suffering only from a bad cold. Physicians reported also his case history indicated he had consumed a pint of whisky daily for three months up to the time of his arrest.

The Evening Star, September 22, 1934, p. 14

Coroner To Probe Murders Monday

Inquest in Hotel Slayings to Be "Very Interesting," Says Chief of Detectives

Police will take before a coroner's jury Monday a mass of evidence, much of it conflicting and confusing, which has been gathered during the investigation of the murder of two Washington gamblers in a Houston Hotel room early last Saturday.

Inspector Frank S.W. Burke, chief of detectives, said the date of the inquest, originally fixed tentatively for yesterday, now is definite. He said he expected the hearing to be "very, very interesting."

Those slain were Sam Melincov and Bryant McMahon, who fell in a blaze of gunfire after a quarrel. Eight men are believed to have been in or near the room at the time.

Police still are holding Thomas F. Tobin, 33, described as a Norfolk, Va., racketeer, and are searching for Sam Berlin, alias Miller, who is believed to have come here from Norfolk with Tobin. The hotel room was registered in his name.

The Evening Star, September 23, 1934, p. 19

Carter May Tell Of Dual Slaying

Man In Custody Believed Eye-Witness to Two Hotel Murders

Police revealed last night that Henry G. Carter, arrested several days ago, is thought to have been in the Houston Hotel room where Sam Melincov and Bryant McMahon, Washington gamblers, were fatally wounded a week ago yesterday.

At the time he was taken into custody it was announced that his only connection with the case arose from his having telephoned for medical assistance for the two men.

The new disclosure, which was accompanied by the announcement that Carter has a police record dating back to 1916, gives him a more important roll in the investigation.

Also being held is Thomas F. Tobin, described as a Norfolk, Va., racketeer, who was arrested soon after the gunfire brought police on a run to the hotel.

Both will be produced as witnesses tomorrow morning, when all evidence so far uncovered will be laid before a coroner's jury. Eight men are supposed to have been in or just outside the room when the shooting occurred and all but one are expected to testify. The missing witness is Sam Berlin, also of Norfolk, for whom police vainly have combed the underworlds of half a dozen eastern cities.

Inspector Frank S.W. Burke promised the inquest would prove "very, very interesting." And said he hoped some order would evolve from the tangled web of evidence when the witnesses testify.

The Evening Star, September 24, 1934, p. 7

Quarrel Traced In Two Slayings

Remarks Leading to Killing of Gamblers Unfolded at Inquest

A remark by Bryant McMahon, so-called "strong-arm" man and gambler, made about Sam Melincov, another gambler, was the basis of the argument which led to the killing of both men in a shooting affray at the Houston Hotel early on the morning of September 15, police investigators told a coroner's jury today.

In a crowded hearing room, where an atmosphere of tense expectation was apparent, Sergt. Walter S. Beck, a member of the homicide squad, unfolded for the first time the results of the police investigation.

Beck said a statement made to him by Arthur G. Dorey, 3200 block of North Capitol street, a cafeteria proprietor, seemed to furnish a clue to the shooting. He quoted Dorsey as relating that Melincov said to Sam Berlin, who is the principal figure in the case not yet in custody:

"Did you tell this fellow the truth. I am going to ---."

Dorey is said to have informed police that Melincov referred this remark to McMahon who replied, "Oh, no you won't." Beck said Dorey told him he had left the room after the argument became violent and before the shooting occurred.

Beck said he learned from several witnesses that seeming animosity existed between Melincov and McMahon earlier in the night when they drank in a restaurant operated by Harry Maynard in the 1400 block of I street. He said he believed the two men went to Berlin's room in the Houston Hotel to Berlin's

room in the Houston Hotel to learn whether or not McMahon had made a certain statement concerning Melincov to Berlin. What the remark was was not revealed.

Beck told the jury Sadie Johnson, who operates the oyster bar in Maynard's restaurant, told him she saw a gun in Melincov's pocket.

Of the two men being held in connection with the double murder, Thomas F. Tobin, alleged Norfolk gambler, and Henry G. Carter, only Tobin was in the hearing room during the inquest. Witnesses, Beck said, placed Tobin, Melincov, McMahon, William Mitchell, Berlin, Isaac B. Jones, local bondsman, and Dorey in the room at the time or immediately before the shooting.

The Evening Star, September 25, 1934, p. 2

Hotel Slaying Story Withheld

Testimony of 4 Witnesses Not Disclosed to Prevent Police Hampering

The testimony of four persons believed to have knowledge of the crime was withheld from the coroner's jury which yesterday ordered six men held for the grand jury in the slaying of Sam Melincov and Bryant McMahon, Washington gamblers, in a Houston Hotel room a week ago Saturday.

Two of those whose testimony was withheld are well-known local attorneys who for years have figured prominently in the defense of underworld notables. Another is the taxicab driver who drove Melincov, McMahon, Isaac B. Jones, well-known local bondsman, and another man from Maynard's Cafeteria, in the 1400 block of I street, to the hotel shortly before the shooting affray. The identity of the fourth witness has not been divulged.

Wish to Conceal Hand

Police explained they did not wish to show their hand too plainly at this time, as it might hamper their future investigation.

As a result of the inquest, Thomas F. Tobin, described as a Norfolk, Va., gambler, is being held in the District Jail without bond on a murder charge.

The jury found Melincov was shot by a gun "known to have been in the hand or hands of one Thomas F. Tobin." In their verdict, the jurors intentionally refrained from stating that Tobin held the gun when the bullet which pierced Melincov's heart was fired, or that he was responsible for Melincov's death.

Held as Witnesses

The jury ordered the five others held for grand jury action as witnesses with "guilty knowledge" of the murders. They are Jones, who lives at 1900 Thirty-seventh street; Arthur Dorey, 48, 2300 block of North Capitol street; John R. Mitchell, 1600 block of A street northeast; Henry G. Carter of the Houston Hotel and Sam Berlin. Berlin has not been apprehended.

Although police last night charged the four witnesses they were holding with being accessories after the fact, the district attorney's office announced today that they were arrested merely as witnesses and were not charged.

Jones was released on \$500 last night and Dorey and Mitchell were freed on posting \$1,500 bond. Carter, who is said to be an out-of-town man, is still held in default of \$2,500 bond.

The Evening Star, October 29, 1934, p. 1

Drive On Crime To Be Mapped At Meeting Tonight

Police Read to Defend Record – Prisoner quizzed in Gang Slaying

Baltimore Detectives Are Sent By Ritchie

Head of Business Men's Federation Sees Legalized Gambling As Blow To Rackets

The Metropolitan Police Department today was prepared to stand on its open record of law enforcement as civic and church leaders rallied to a huge, public meeting, called by the District Bar Association at the Mayflower Hotel tonight to map an intensive drive against gambling and crime.

A three-year picture of investigations and convictions obtained by the department will be laid before the meeting by Police Chief Ernest W. Brown, Inspector Frank S.W. Burke, chief of the Detective Bureau, and Lieut. George M. Little, head of the vice squad.

The meeting grew out of public indignation against the "mistaken identity" ambush of Allen B. Wilson, a newspaper route carrier, slain by gangsters early Tuesday, who mistook him for "Mickey" McDonald as they lay in wait at McDonald's Takoma Park home.

Prisoner Quizzed

Twenty picked men from the Detective Bureau have been working on the case night and day since Tuesday, but Inspector Burke said today no definite leads had been developed.

Maj. Brown told reporters this morning that one man arrested on another charge was under questioning in the Wilson murder and he was "hopeful" the prisoner might throw some light on the case. The police chief declined to name the man, but admitted he might have been "at the scene" of the shooting.

Police described McDonald as a "numbers" operator.

They declined to say if they have information that Wilson was the victim of colored gunmen, while admitting this is a "possibility."

Maj. Brown, Inspector Burke and Lieut. Little were summoned into conference at the District Building this morning by Commissioner Melvin C. Hazen, who inquired as to how the investigation was progressing and discussed the Police Department's part in tonight's meeting.

Firemen Also Quizzed

Officials of the Fire Department also were called to the conference. It was said that an effort will be made to charge the owner of a building raided early Sunday either with violation of the fire regulations, through the obstruction of a fire escape, or with violation of the building code through the installation of barricaded doors by alleged gambler tenants.

Maj. Brown's statics will show the murders, homicides, shootings and other crimes of violence here for the past three years of Maj. Brown's tenure of office, together with the arrests and convictions and the percentages of increase or decrease.

Committee to Meet

The District bar's Emergency Committee of 60 was to meet late this afternoon at the Mayflower to draw up recommendations to be presented at tonight's meeting, George Maurice Morris, chairman of the committee, announced today.

Active support in the campaign has been pledged by James G. Yaden, president of the Federation of Citizens' Associations, and Arthur Clarendon Smith, head of the Federation of Business Men's Associations. Both expressed their intention of attending the meeting tonight, along with other representatives of their organizations.

Yaden declared it was high time for Washington police to "do something about gambling rackets in the Capital." He said he had instructed the Law and Order Committee of the Citizens' Federation to begin work on an "anti-gangster" program. The committee, headed by Attorney George Sullivan, is to meet tomorrow night.

Will Present Plan

Yaden said the committee was expected to report a plan of action to the federation Saturday night.

"The federation is going to do everything in its power to prevent further outbreaks of gang violence," Yaden added.

Smith said the Executive Committee of the Business Men's Federation had pledged active support to the enforcement drive. The president and three vice presidents will represent this federation at the mass meeting.

Smith pointed out the business men's federation is the only organization in Washington to urge legalization of horse racing in the District. He offered as his personal opinion that the legalization of all gambling under police supervision would put a stop to gang warfare over the gambling "take" in Washington.

"The measure to legalize horse racing all but carried at the last Congress," Smith said. "At the next meeting of our federation, November 15, a proposal will be put to legalize all gambling under police supervision. I believe it will carry, and representatives of our federation, which has more than 3,000 members, will go before the next session of Congress to urge passage of the measure."

Smith said the issue was too controversial, however, to inject into tonight's mass meeting.

State's Attorney Stedman Prescott of Montgomery County said Gov. Ritchie of Maryland telephoned him last night and asked if he would like the aid of Baltimore detectives in the Wilson order.

Prescott replied in the affirmative and the governor sent two ace investigators from Baltimore today.

They were Lieut. Joseph Itzel and Detective Joseph Hudak.

The State's attorney emphasized this action was not the result of any dissatisfaction with the aid given by Washington police.

"The District department is cooperating to the fullest degree," Prescott said, "and I have every confidence in the men now working on the case."

The local gambling raid dearly Sunday was directed at a place in the 700 block of Thirteenth street. Lieut. George M. Little, Sergt. George Deyoe and other members of the vice squad were making a tour of inspection of about 15 known gambling places.

In all save two of the places, Sergt. Deyoe said, no lights were showing and there was no sign of activity. These two were passed up, however, as no warrants were out against them.

Break Into Place

Watching a place in the 700 block of Thirteenth street, police saw a man alight from an automobile parked at the curb and admit a patron. Police said the man was acting as lookout and doorman, keeping the street under surveillance from his place in the automobile between visits of customers.

The officers said the doorman was Charles Powell, 28, of the 1000 block of Twelfth street, whom they promptly arrested. Having a warrant for the place, the police produced axes and forced the front door. They said a second barricaded door was dropped from the ceiling across the stairway. The raiders broke down this door and entered the place.

They arrested Frederick B. Harper, 44, of the 1800 block of New Hampshire avenue, described as the proprietor of the place. Both Powell and Harper were held for investigation. In addition to Harper, police also found in the room an elderly man somewhat the worse for liquor.

Sergt. Deyoe said Harper explained this man had been in no condition to depart precariously via a ladder, a trap door in the ceiling and the rooftops, as other patrons had done shortly after they heard the police knocking at their door. The place was equipped, police said, for taking race track bets and for a black-jack game.

The Evening Star, October 29, 1934, p. 4

Slain Gambler Leaves \$46,212

Sam Melincov's Estate Includes Over \$30,000 in Cash

Sam Melincov, one of two gamblers slain in the Houston Hotel September 15, left an estate valued at \$46,212, according to a petition filed today with the register of wills, in which authority was sought to administer the estate in the absence of a will.

Melincov was killed in a gun fight said to have resulted from his gambling activities. Shot at the same time, Bryant McMahon, also a gambler, lived for two days and died in a local hospital.

Five suspects were held by police, and at an inquest, delayed more than a week while police investigated one of them, Thomas F. Tobin, was held for grand jury action and the others were detained as material witnesses. One man still is being sought.

Melincov, according to the petition, rented safety deposit boxes under assumed names at three downtown banks. Although these boxes have not been opened, an affidavit filed by Annie Hyman stated there is \$15,000 cash in two of the boxes, while the third box contains personal papers. He rented the boxes under the names of Henry Jacobs, Joseph Mayer and Samuel Harris, it was said.

The petition also disclosed Melincov had \$4,500 on deposit with a building association, \$8,276 in an account at a downtown bank, \$1,517 on deposit with another building association, \$870 in cash and \$1,049 on deposit with another bank. These deposits were in the name of Samuel Harris.

The Evening Star, November 14, 1934, p. 21

Four Witnesses Are Indicted In Melnicov Murder

Refusal to Testify Held Assisting Perpetrator of Felony

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Refusal to testify at a coroner's inquest into the death of Sam Melnicov, slain gambler, today resulted in the indictment by the District grand jury of four men alleged to have been present in the Houston Hotel when Melnicov was fatally wounded.

Those indicted are John R. Mitchell, Arthur G. Dorey, Samuel Berlin and Henry G. Carter. The indictments charge they were present during the shooting September 15 and that by refusing to testify they "assisted the perpetrator of a felony."

No one has yet been indicted for the murder. Another well-known underworld figure, Bryant McMahon, also received fatal wounds during the shooting.

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The Evening Star, May 1, 1935, p. A12

Tobin Exonerated In Slaying Case

Seven in Gypsy Family Indicted on Charge of Abducting Girl

The District grand jury today exonerated Thomas F. Tobin, who had been held by a coroner's jury after the killing in a downtown hotel last September 15 of Sam Melnicov, well known character in local sporting circles.

Bryant McMahon, gambler and racketeer, was also slain in the gun battle in the hotel room.

Tobin was arrested after police had been given a description of a man who threw a pistol away in the street a few minutes after the shooting. The gun was found and identified as the death weapon, but its ownership was not traced to Tobin.

