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"Arrests I Did Not Make" – Washington's
Police Captains Tell of "Pinches" They
Passed Up

*Oh, it's easy enough to make records
For locking men in the caboose;
But the copper who'll rise
Is the copper who's wise
As to just when to turn his man loose!*

Thus sang the wandering minstrel of the police department, and he, based his lay on the actual experiences undergone by the eleven titular heads of the Washington blue coats – in other words, the eleven captains who, from as many precincts, direct the destinies of our official guardians of the peace.

"Of course, we make a pinch whenever it's absolutely necessary," said Capt Sullivan, who controls the destinies of precinct No. 3, "but just the same, there are a whole lot of arrests that might be, but aren't. We let 'em go right along. Why, when I was pounding the pavement I guess I let pretty nearly as many go as I took in, and I'm glad of it!

"Usually we let 'em go because we think we can fix things up better that way – save the man money and disgrace – give him a good plain talking to, instead of a fine. Of course, we have to use our judgment as to when that's the best way to proceed. Sometimes, however, we fail to make arrests for an altogether different reason. Sometimes we get it put over on us good and plenty. 'I got mine,' as the saying goes, a good many times, and there's one case in particular that sticks out in my memory like a sore thumb.

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"It happened a good many years ago, when I was a buck private down at old Number 6. One night, or rather one morning, about 2 o'clock, I was hoofing slowly up Pennsylvania avenue, swinging my club and thinking about nothing in particular, when I thought I heard a muffled cheer. I stopped and listened, and pretty soon I heard it again. There was no mistaking it this time, and it seemed to come from around on 6th street.

"I couldn't imagine what on earth it was all about,

but any sort of noise is unusual in this town at 2 o'clock in the morning, so I got a hustle on and beat it up to the corner.



"There wasn't any trouble finding out what the cheering was about. About half way up the block there was a regular circle of men reaching from curb to curb. Inside that circle a fine young open-air prize fight going on. A young fellow I'd been seeing around town for several days, who went by the name of 'Athletic Jimmy' of Philadelphia, and a local lad from my beat were going to it hot and heavy, and the crowd was cheering them on.

"Of course, I could have made a single-handed raid,

and maybe nabbed two or three folks, but I couldn't hope to get them all. Anyhow, it seemed better to me just to break up the mill, give everybody a scare and send them all home to bed with a warning. So I did it. It wasn't much trouble. Everybody was so engrossed in the fight that they didn't notice me until I was right in the ring. When they did see me there was one of the finest young exhibitions of jumping backward and sideways you every saw!

"Well, as I said, I sent 'em all home. They scattered slowly, but good-naturedly, and I stood and watched 'em go. Soon they were all on their way except one man, a little fellow, dressed in a bicycle suit – wheels were all the rage then. He'd been watching the fight and he still hung around. I gave him a black look.

"Beat it.' I ordered. 'Go on home and go to bed like the rest of them, and be glad you've got the chance.'

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The man looked me over whimsically.

"I shall go home in all good time,' he remarked, lightly. 'You needn't worry. I merely waited to congratulate you on the way you have handled this affair. You showed both wisdom and discretion. There should be more men on the force like you. Again I congratulate you.' And he smiled like he was tickled to death.

"Then it was my turn to look him over, and right away I concluded I'd run up against some fresh guy, trying to kid me along. So I acted accordingly. 'Very sweet of you.' I murmured; 'very, very sweet. I thank you. But now that you've handed out your congratulations, suppose you run along, and do it quick. I haven't arrested anybody yet, but I'll tell you this much, if you're not away from here in one minute from now, I will arrest somebody, and it'll be you. Now take the tip and go on home. I'm giving you your last chance. Shoo.'

"At that my man drew himself up.

"I don't think you realize whom you're talking to,' said he.

"No,' said I. 'I don't, and what's more I don't care.

All I know is you'd better go on home, or in a minute you won't be able to.' You see, I was beginning to get good and mad. It seemed to me the fellow was just stalling for time to keep up his kidding. And it didn't make me any better humored when he looked up at me with a wide grin.

"So that's the way you treat a man who tries to pay you a sincere compliment is it?' he asked. And at exactly that point I reached out and grabbed him.

"Since you're so crazy to argue the point, we can talk it over on your way to the station,' I remarked. 'Come along.' And I gave him a good, healthy yank.

"Well, sir, that chap walked along with me to the box meek as you please, never saying a word, but still grinning. He didn't open his mouth until I had unlocked the box and was just about to take the receiver off the hook to call the wagon. Then he touched me on the arm.

"Just a minute,' said he; 'I guess it's not so surprising that you don't know me after all, seeing that I've only been in office about a week. But before we go any farther with this thing we might as well get acquainted. I happen to know that your name is Sullivan. Allow me to give you my card.' And he handed out a bit of pasteboard.

"I looked at that card – and then I looked again. Then I looked at my prisoner – and then I turned him loose.

"Why? Oh, nothing much – he was one of the District Commissioners, that's all!"

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"The most famous arrest that I didn't make goes right along with the solid gold hero medal I didn't get," said Capt. Elliott of No. 10, "and it happened just a couple of weeks after the stunt Sullivan mentioned.

"I was in the same precinct with Sully, old No. 6. At the particular time I'm speaking of I was on night duty, and things were as dead as a side street in the suburbs on Sunday. There weren't even any pedestrians worth speaking of, and so I browsed

around on the beat



until about 2 o'clock in the morning I found myself at the mouth of an alley opening on D street between 6th and 7th.

"You've heard about the seventh sense? Well, my seventh sense told me to walk through that alley. There was no reason on earth, seemingly, why I should. Apparently everything was calm and peaceful. But something just told me to walk up that alley, and I did.

"About half-way up, the alley I'm speaking of makes a turn and runs along the back yards of houses fronting on E street. I followed the turn, and I

hadn't gone more than ten feet before I heard a sound that made me jump. Ever hear a burglar tapping a window pane to break it? Well, that's what I heard. To make sure, I located the yard and put my ear to the fence. I could hear the noise distinctly. There would be a tap every few seconds. Evidently my man was working steadily and easily.

"Well, I tiptoed back down the alley to D street and there, in front of a grocery store, I found a bread box. It was exactly what I wanted. I picked it up, tiptoed back to the yard and put it up against the fence. Then I listened again. My burglar was still working.

"I climbed up on the box. Then I drew my gun, and put the other hand on top of the fence – I was considerably of an athlete in those days – gave a yell and vaulted over into the yard.

"It was a good, long leap. There was only one trouble with it. I landed right smack in a great big pail of garbage. That made me forget all about the burglar for a quite a while – and then I noticed that although I yelled, and although my leap couldn't very well have escaped attention, I didn't hear anybody trying to get away.

"Nevertheless, I got my gun up to a ready position. 'Whoever you are,' I ordered, 'throw up your hands and come on out, or I'll shoot.'

"There was no answer. Instead, there was a dead silence for a second, and then once more I heard the furtive 'tap tap' that had brought me over the fence and the noise was only about two feet distant.

"That settled it. I reached in my pocket, found a match, struck it, and began to look around. I found my burglar all right. It had rained early in the evening, and water was still trickling down the drain pipe and falling, one drop at a time, on a big piece of glass that lay on the ground directly in its course. Every time a drop hit the glass there was a tap, and that was the answer. No, there were no arrests that night.

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"I had a burglar experience myself, where I expected

to get a hero medal and my pictures in all the papers, and didn't get anything but a big laugh," said Capt. Henry Schneider, who rules precinct No. 7. "In my case, though, I had a real person to deal with, a person who, but I'd better tell it all from the beginning.

"It happened several years ago, when I was a



sergeant in this same precinct. Early one morning – it lacked just a few minutes of being 3 o'clock – I was beginning to think about how good a bed would feel. I was strolling down Pennsylvania avenue near 32d street, when a street car conductor came rushing up to me all out of breath.

"'Sergeant!' he called, when he was still about ten feet away. 'Come on! Come on quick! Burglars! You can catch 'em in the act!'

"Naturally I began to take notice. 'Whereabouts?' I asked, and he replied that they were in a big warehouse down on Potomac street.

"'Sure about it?' I queried.

"'Dead sure,' he responded. 'I heard 'em at work. They're looting the place. I could hear 'em, I tell you. Come on!'

"My first thought was that I had better get some additional men. Then I happened to think that if I took time to do that the thieves might finish their job and make a getaway. Besides, there was the conductor to help me. So I gave my belt a hitch, and we started for Potomac street at a dead run.

"It didn't take us long to get to the warehouse. There at the door we paused and listened. Certainly strange sounds were coming from the inside. The burglars seemed to be moving the whole place out. I turned to the conductor.

"'You can take my club, and I'll take my gun,' I said. 'Come on. We'll get 'em.'

"But the conductor had another idea. 'I'm a married man with a big family,' said he, backing off. 'I'll—I'll—I'll tell you what I'll do' – his voice grew glad and eager. 'You go in, and I'll wait out here and catch 'em if they try to escape.'

"That naturally disgusted me, though, to be frank, I didn't at all like the idea of going into that dark warehouse alone after burglars who probably were armed. But it was my duty to go, so I drew my revolver, and, holding it in one hand and my club in the other, I had the conductor open the door – it was unlocked – and bounded inside. Then I stopped a moment, held my breath and listened

"I could hear the sounds far more plainly now, but they didn't sound like burglars at all. In fact, they sounded so little like them that I boldly struck a match and looked.

"And there, lying curled up on the floor was about the tiniest dinky I ever saw in my life, sound asleep, and snoring to beat the cars. He had been out late, was afraid to go home and so crawled into the warehouse and made his bed on the floor.

"Of course, technically, he was trespassing. But did I arrest him? I most certainly did not. I didn't even wake him up. I just tiptoed out and let him sleep on. But I came mighty near to arresting that conductor just on general principles."

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Capt. Robert E. Doyle – "Uncle Bob" as he is affectionately known to the folks in precinct No. 8,



CAPT. R. E. DOYLE,
Eighth Precinct.

where he holds forth and sees to it that everybody behaves at the ball park – grinned reminiscently when asked to tell of some notable arrest he did not make.

"Tell about just one?" said he. "I could tell you about enough to fill up a whole book. Seriously, about half the time it's best to let the man go. That way you make him a good citizen. The other way you run a fine chance of making him a crook, for the arrest hurts his reputation and he is liable to drift into the 'don't-give-a-hang' class.

"But I guess the incident that impressed me most didn't concern a man at all, except indirectly. It concerned a youngster, a little ten-year-old lad, freckle-faced and sassy as they make 'em. We'll call him George.

"George had been playfully amusing himself by throwing stones and oyster shells at passing street cars. He did it for several days, and finally, one afternoon, he took careful aim and succeeded in breaking a window. Then one of my men nabbed him, after a long chase.

"Well, sir, he was the worst scared lad you ever saw in your life. As soon as he got in the station he began to blubber, and in about ten seconds he was wailing as if his entire family "had been visited by sudden death and he was marked for the next victim.

"They were just preparing to enter a formal charge against him on the blotter when I came in and took a hand.

"'We're not baby snatchers,' I told the desk sergeant. 'We can't lock up a little kid like that. Let him come over into my office and talk to me a while.'

"So I took him in hand and gave him a stern talking to. Of course, he was terrified and promised by all that was good and holy never to do it again. That was to be expected. But the main thing was that I found, after a while, that he wasn't a vicious kid at all. He was just mischievous and had been allowed to run loose too much. He didn't need the reform school. He needed home training. So I sent for his

mother and father.

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"They came, wringing their hands and protesting that they had 'tried to raise George right.'

"'Never mind about that,' I said. Then I turned to the mother. 'What do you do with George when he's bad?' I asked.

She looked at me, wonder in her eyes. 'Why, tell him he mustn't, of course.' She replied.

"'H'mm!' said I. 'Ever try giving him a good sound thrashing?'

"The mother looked at me indignantly. 'I have not.' She snapped. 'I love my boy too much to whip him. Besides, he isn't strong. You surely wouldn't be brute enough to whip a mere child, especially when he isn't strong?'

"I turned to the father. 'How about you?' I asked. 'Did you ever try whipping him?'

"He started to reply, but before he could get a word out his wife answered for him. 'I'd just like to see him try it!' she exploded, her eyes flashing. 'I'd just like to see him lay his hands on him – just once – that's all!' Whereupon hubby became vastly interested in the toe of his left shoe.

"'Well.' Said I, 'I guess that's about all for you two. You can go on home now. I'll attend to George.'

"The man started off, but the woman hung back. 'What are you going to do to him?' she demanded, hatred of the entire police force in every inflection of her voice. 'I suppose you're going to lock him up and send him off to the reform school, just for breaking one cheap little old window – and him a mere baby, too.!''

"'No,' said I, 'I'm not! I'm not going to do either one of those things. But I'll tell you what I am going to do. I'm going to give him the finest young whipping ever handed out in Number 8.'

"And I did. Furthermore, George remembered it. Today he is the best behaved kid in the whole precinct."

Capt. Jimmy Mulhall, who has spent forty-two years of his life on the police force – most of that time being put in precinct No. 5, where he is now the boss, had to hearken far back for his experiences, for he served only four years as a private.



"But I had plenty of experiences during those four years," said he, using the faintest touch of the brogue of the Emerald Isle, which through all these years has never left him. "I remember one experience in particular, back in '75, which happened to me and Dick Boyle (Dick's an inspector now, but he was a buck private then and we were partners.)

"We were both at old No. 6, and our beat included the land where the Union station is standing today. It looked different then. It was mostly hills and weeds, and in the center was a great big pond, fed by a stream called Tiber creek. I guess Tiber creek is still running under the Union station today.

"There was a long intercepting sewer running into the pond. The pipes were about seven feet in diameter, and extended back about four blocks. The water which ran through the sewer was rain water, and good and clear.

"Now, that pond was a regular nuisance. All the lads in the neighborhood used to come there and go swimming, and they never thought it worthwhile to wear bathing suits. We got complaint after complaint about them, but when we'd go after them they'd run to the bank, grab up their clothes and then run up the sewer. And, of course, there being always two or three feet of water in the pipes, we couldn't follow them.

"Finally I got tired of having the same old game worked on me day after day, so I hatched out a little scheme. I had Boyle go to the pond and chase the lads into the sewer. Then I went to the other end of it, took off my shoes, tied them together and hung them around my neck, took off my socks and tucked them in my shoes, rolled up my pants to my hips and went into the sewer myself.

"Of course, when the kids saw me coming, the only thing they could do was to go back the way they had come – and there at the other end was Boyle waiting for them. For a minute the lads were in a pickle. They didn't know whether to take a chance on getting past me or Boyle. Finally, though, they decided on him, and so, turning, they made a quick rush, a leap and a dive.

"The whole thing was done so quickly that they caught Boyle unawares. Three of them were in the pond before he realized what was happening. Then out came the fourth and last of them, making a beautiful curving dive. As he passed through the air Boyle raised his club, took quick aim at the soles of the lad's feet, and let drive.

"That was one of the most foolish things Boyle ever

did. In the first place, he was excited. Second place, he swung too hard. The result was that he not only missed, but his club flew out of his hand, and into the pond. There, being loaded, it promptly sank to the bottom.

"They put Boyle in one awful hole. If a policeman loses his club nowadays it doesn't make so much difference. But in those days if you lost your club you were just about certain to be brought up on charges of criminal carelessness, or something like that, and fined just about half a month's pay.

"It was about this time that I emerged from the sewer, sat down and put on my socks and shoes. While I was doing this we talked the thing over – and finally found a way out. How? Why, we called to the lads who were out in the middle of the pool making faces at us, and got them to dive for the club. They soon found it.

"But do you know what those kids did? After finding the club they not only refused to give it up until we had promised not to touch a single one of them, but they made Boyle cough up half a dollar to boot!"

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Capt. Charles T. Peck, general factotum in precinct No. 2, laughed when The Star man approached and asked him if he had figured in many arrests that never were made.

"Have I?" exclaimed Peck. "Have I? Well, I guess! Just a few. Why I figured in a great one just last week.

"You see, there's a big merchant who lives up in the vicinity of Thomas Circle who closed up his house and went away a couple of weeks ago. Before leaving he called up and asked me to have an especial watch kept on his house. It was robbed once during his absence several years ago.

"Well, one night last week, about 11 o'clock, I was sitting here in the station when the telephone bell began to ring. When I finally got connected I found myself talking to a woman who lived next door to the merchant, and her voice showed that she was just about scared to death.

"Come up here quick," she begged. "Don't waste a minute, and bring plenty of men with you! Burglars have broken into Mr. -----'s house again."



CAPT. CHARLES T. PECK,
Second Precinct.

"How do you know?" I asked. And she had the answer waiting for me. "I can hear them walking around." She gasped. "They've even lighted the lights in one of the rooms at the top of the house. They're rifling the whole place."

"That was enough for me. I picked out eight big strong men from my squad, and then called out our automobile – my precinct has the only one in the city. We all jumped in, and I told the driver to let the car out to the limit.

"We got to the house in about two minutes and there, sure enough, on the third floor, was a dim light. Immediately, I had the house surrounded. I put three men in an alley at the back and three more in front. Then, with two men I walked up to the front door. It was locked, so we smashed a window, crawled into the parlor, drew our guns and made our way to the stairs.

"We passed the second floor and were on our way to the third when a dim figure appeared at the head of the stairway. "'You dirty crooks.' Says this figure, 'throw up your hands, or I'll fill you all full of lead!'"

"Then I took a hand. 'Good bluff, but a little old,' said I. Then I turned to my men. 'Come on,' I said. 'We'll have to charge him and take a chance.' And we started up three steps at a time. The man didn't shoot, and we were just on the point of grabbing him when he called out again. 'Good gracious.' He said, 'Is that you Capt. Peck?'"

"Then I woke up and a minute later instead of clapping steel bracelets on the burglar I had him by the hand and was telling him I was glad to see him.

"You see, he happened to be the owner of the house. He had merely run back to town for the night unexpectedly, and hadn't let anybody know."

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Capt. John C. Daley, who runs things over in precinct No. 9, was smoking a short-stemmed corn-cob pipe when The Star man approached. "For the love of Mike!" he exclaimed when the reporter had explained his mission, "If all the people who have been turned loose had been locked up the city government would have gone broke feeding its prisoners!"

"I've had a lot of funny experiences along that line. I guess the funniest of them all though was back in the days when I was hoofing it as a high private in No. 2. Sergt. McTaggart – he wasn't a sergeant then – and I were partners when it happened.

"There had been a lot of housebreaking going on, and while we hadn't caught the thief we had found



that he was carrying his tools in an umbrella – took that means of avoiding suspicion while walking to a ‘job.’ So we got orders to arrest any man we saw carrying an umbrella after midnight.

“About 2 o’clock one moonlight morning McTaggart and I were standing at the corner of 3d and M streets when we saw a young negro beating it down the middle of the street, carrying an umbrella. I called Mac’s attention to him, and the two of us promptly hid behind a tree box until our man came along. Then we stepped out and shouted ‘Halt!’

“But the man didn’t halt worth a cent. Instead he gave us one look, then he made a wild leap and

started running like a deer. Of course that showed us we were on the trail of the real housebreaker, so we started after him.

“After the chase had lasted about half a block the man began to yell murder at the top of his voice. Windows began to fly up, and heads began to stick out. Still the chase kept up, with us gaining slowly but steadily.

“Our man finally turned down 6th street, and we were right on his heels when suddenly he dashed into a front yard, up to a house, flung the door open and rushed inside. We followed right after him and found him crouching under a table, panting like a dog.

“‘What’s the matter with you?’ I asked. ‘Come out from there.’

But he wouldn’t. He just crouched lower and began to moan. ‘Oh Lordy, Lord.’ He murmured, ‘de night doctors done got me aftah all!’

“No. We didn’t arrest him. There was nothing to arrest him for. He wasn’t any burglar. He had merely taken his umbrella with him for fear it might rain. Carrying an umbrella, whether the moon or sun was shining or not, was a habit of his, so his father told us.

“About two weeks later his father told us something else, too.

“‘I cern’ly am glad you done what you did to my son.’ Said he. ‘Befo’ dat he was away frum de house all de time. But now – well, suh, come night time, an’ dat boy is home. Can’t git him out aftah dark, fo’ nothin’.’”

* * *

“For the very finest example of an arrest you don’t want to make – and probably won’t, even if you do want to – is to get yourself mixed up in a nice little row between husband and wife.” Said Capt. Tom Hollinberger, who presides at No. 1 – probably the most important precinct in all Washington. “I’ve had a good many experiences along that line, and I know whereof I speak.

"I remember one incident in particular. It happened when I was patrolling a beat down 7th street in the southwest section. I was walking down an alley one afternoon when I heard a man and woman jawing each other in one of the back yards. The voices kept getting louder and louder, first the man's, then the woman's, then the man's, and then more of the woman's, and then came a different sound. Of course, I couldn't swear to it, because I didn't see it, but it sounded mightily like a slap and a good hard one at that. Also immediately following that, came a little scream, and then a big splash – a splash as if someone had dropped a five-ton boulder into the Potomac from the Aqueduct bridge.



"About thirty seconds later the gate of the yard flew

open and out bounced a young Amazon – she must have weighed about 190 pounds – soaking wet, and shouting 'Police!' at the top of her lungs. Then she caught sight of me.

"'Come on.' She commanded. 'Come on in here and see what he did to me; that husband of mine. There I was washing clothes for the ungrateful, worthless coward and not doin' a thing to him, an' he ups and slams me in the jaw and then throws me right in my own washtub. I'll bet he's spoiled every bit of them clothes, too.'

"I stepped inside the yard, and for several moments husband and wife stood and glowered at each other. I tried to get some explanation out of the man, but he was sulky and wouldn't say a word. So, finally, I reached out for him.

"'Come on.' I said. 'We'll go round to the station. Assault for yours.'

"But before the man could take a step, Friend Wife found her voice – and it wasn't a gentle voice, either.

"'Go to the station.' she screamed. 'I guess not. What right you got comin' in our own private back yard and arresting my husband for nothing?' She reached out a soap-sudsy hand and grasped me by the shoulder. 'What'd he ever do to you, huh?' she demanded.

"'You'd better go on about your business, that's what you'd better do.'

"'But – but, I thought –' I began.

"'Oh, yes, you thought, you thought.' The woman mimicked me. 'You think too much. You're too fresh, that's what's the matter with you.'

"'But – but didn't he slap you, and throw you in the tub!' I asked mildly, edging toward the gate the while.

"'And what if he did?' snapped my Amazon. 'What if he did? Ain't I his wife, and ain't he my man? Ain't we got a right to play together if we want to?'

“‘But it strikes me that’s pretty rough playing.’ I suggested.

“‘That ain’t none of your business.’ Friend Wife assured me. ‘I tell you we was only playin’. Why he does that every wash day, don’t you, Henry?’

“‘Certainly I do.’ said Henry belligerently. ‘Certainly I do. Who says I don’t? Who says we wasn’t playin’?’

“‘Nobody. Nobody at all.’ Said i. ‘Good-day.’ And I walked out and gently closed the gate behind me.

“No, I didn’t make any arrest. In fact I considered myself lucky to get out with a whole skin.”

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“The strangest arrest that I didn’t make,” said Capt. George Williams of precinct No. 4, “was the case of a thief who got scared at the size of his own loot.

“I was a member of this same precinct when it happened, but I was just a sergeant then. It was several years ago, but I remember it as if it were yesterday. There was a negro who ran an eating house down on 7th street who made fairly good money and who saved it all, rarely spending a cent except when he absolutely had to. One day a book agent came along with a big Bible illustrated with pictures in about thirty-seven different colors. Tom – that was the negro’s name – couldn’t resist that Bible, so he bought it.

“Then he decided that the book would be a pretty good place to keep his money. He didn’t trust banks, and besides he liked to have the coin where he could count it over every now and then. So he got his wealth changed into big bills and stuck them – the amounted to some \$468 – between the leaves of his new purchase.

“Now Tom had a young negro named Harry working for him. Harry was also deeply religious. He also wanted a Bible, but he couldn’t afford to buy one. So he decided to steal Tom’s.

“It was three days later that Tom came rushing up to me, so worried he was almost white.

“‘Mistah Williams, he gasped, ‘somebody’s done stole my new Bible – but dat ain’t all, Mistah Williams. I done had all mah money – foh hundred an’ sixty-eight dollahs – stuck between de leaves of dat book. Oh, Lawd, Mistah Williams. I’s ruined – plumb ruined.’

“Of course I immediately asked him if he had any



**CAPT. GEORGE H. WILLIAMS,
Fourth Precinct.**

idea who had robbed him, and mentioned Harry, but he shook his head.

“‘Naw, suh.’ said he sadly, ‘Harry wouldn’t do it. Harry’s a good boy, b’longs to mah church, an’ been workin’ foh me foh five yeahs. Dat boy wouldn’t steal nuthin’. Tain’ him.’

"We had an investigation, but we couldn't do anything. We didn't have anything to work on. One evening about a week later I was walking down 7th street when Harry came up to me.

"Mistah Williams,' said he. 'I'se a sinful niggah, an' I is scared.'

"How's that?' I asked.

"Well,' said he, 'it's dis-a-way. You see, Mistah Tom, mah boss, he done bought a luvly Bible. Mah heart got sinful, an' I coveted dat book, an' so I up an' stole it. But Mistah Williams, lemme tell you. Las' night I got de book out to read it, an' I opened it – an', Mistah Williams, dat book is jus' chuch full o' money. I wanted de book, but I don' want all dat money. Man, dey'd git me and send me to jail foh life. So I asks you, Mistah Williams, please to take de book an' de money back to mah boss an' tell him I'se sorry. You kin tell him, too, Mistah Williams, dat I ain't a-comin' to work in de morning. I'se a-leavin' dis town tonight.'

"And in view of the fact that he returned every dollar of the money, also the Bible, and was just about as deeply repentant as any man I ever saw in my life, I concluded the jail didn't need him, and let him go."

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Although Capt. Michael Byrnes of precinct No. 6 has served forty-two years as a member of the police department, he is as spry as other captains many years his junior, and is forever strolling about his district seeing that all is as it should be. This habit of strolling resulted, he says, in one of the most amusing incidents having to do with arrests that never were made of his entire experience.

"It happened one night last summer," said he, "I was in civilian's clothes and was walking down New Jersey avenue, when I noticed on the other side of the street a couple of young fellows in evening clothes, who seemed to have been celebrating a little too much.

"About half way down the block, up a little blind alley across from me, was an empty pushcart. The

young fellows noticed it and stopped. A moment later they had that pushcart out of the alley and were wheeling it up the street, smiling happily to themselves the while. At the corner, where there was a grocery store, they stopped again. One of them walked over to the store and in a minute came back lugging a big bread box. The two of them piled this into the pushcart and then started on once more.



**CAPT. MICHAEL BYRNES,
Sixth Precinct.**

"Well, sir, they wheeled that cart all the way to Dupont Circle, taking a round-about way and picking streets on which there were very few pedestrians. I followed them, keeping about half a block behind, and wondering what the end would be.

"I found out. When they got to Dupont Circle they

wheeled the cart up over the parking and right into the center of the circle. Then they shoved it up as close to the statue as they could, and then they turned and left, chuckling hugely.

"I kept right on following them, wondering what I should do. Of course, I could have arrested them, but I didn't want to do that except as a last resort. They were only mischievous. So I trailed them all the way down town, and then an idea struck me.

"The boys were just turning into one of the fashionable hotels when I touched one of them on the arm.

"Just a minute,' said I. 'Before you go in there, I think you've got a little engagement to keep, both of you.' Both declared feelingly that I was wrong, but I insisted.

"What is this engagement?' one of them finally asked.

"Well,' said I, 'if I'm not mistaken, and I think I'm not, it's with a pushcart and a bread box. Come on!'

"Did I take them to the station? Oh, no! I merely walked them back to Dupont Circle, made them take the pushcart and bread box and wheel them back where they got them. And I didn't let them take a roundabout way, either. Evening clothes and all, I made them march down the most crowded thoroughfares, where everybody could get a good look at them.

"Both of them have assured me since that they would rather have paid a ten dollar fine. Some of their friends, they say, haven't stopped ragging them about that return rip yet."

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"The strangest experience I ever had dealt with a burglar – the most harmless burglar that ever lived." Said Capt. W.T. Anderson, who holds forth across the river in Anacostia, in precinct No. 11.

"It happened one night not so very long ago. We were all sitting around the station when the phone rang and there came the voice of a lady who lives a

few blocks away, pleading with us to come to her house quick.



**CAPT. W. T. ANDERSON,
Eleventh Precinct.**

"Burglars are trying to break in.' she almost whispered, over the phone. 'They're out on the back porch. And there isn't a soul in the house but me. Oh, please come quickly. Oh! Oh!' – and her voice died away in a wail.

"There were about six of us who answered her appeal, and we went to her house on a dead run. She was waiting for us at the front door.

"Have they gone?' I panted.

"No,' she quavered, 'they're still there. Come out in

the dining room and you can hear them.'

"We went. We listened. And we heard. The noise was a stealthy creeping sound. No wonder she was frightened. It didn't make us feel any too comfortable ourselves. But we had to be careful not to alarm our quarry, so we tiptoed back to the kitchen door without making a light. Then we drew our guns, and then, at a signal, one of my men opened the door, and we leaped out on the porch.

"Instantly there was a wild, fluttering sound, as if someone were trying to get away. I pointed my gun in its direction.

"'Halt and hands up.' I ordered, but there was no response, and the noise continued. Just then the mistress of the house turned on the light in the kitchen, with the result that the entire porch was lighted up.

"I took a look, and there was my burglar. It was a stray chicken that had climbed to the porch to steal food from the garbage can."