
Blast Wrecks Morgan Office: 27 Known Dead; Scores are Injured: Load of Explosive Being Hauled Believed Cause — Theories Vary.

Unsigned International News Service wire service report published in the *Minnesota Daily Star* [Minneapolis], v. 1, no. 25 (Sept. 16, 1920), pp. 1-2.

New York, Sept. 16 [1920].— The terrific explosion that rocked the bank building of J.P. Morgan & Co., menaced the United States subtreasury with destruction, killed at least 27 persons and injured more than 200 others, was the result of a bomb plot, according to officials of the police department and the district attorney's office late today.

New York, Sept. 16.— Department of Justice officials were notified <line missing> company late this afternoon it had only one delivery wagon in New York City at the time of the explosion and that it was not near Wall and Broad Streets. Police Commissioner Enright said there is a law prohibiting vehicles bearing explosives from traveling through the congested downtown districts in the daytime. This lent strength to the theory of a bomb plot it is said.

By International News Service.

New York, Sept. 16.— At least 27 persons were killed and scores injured and the offices of J.P. Morgan & Co. were wrecked by a terrific explosion at Wall and Broad Streets, in the heart of the financial district, at noon today.

The origin was believed this afternoon to have been a wagonload of dynamite on its way through Wall Street to the excavation site of the new Stock Exchange building on the southeast corner of Broad and Wall Streets. An automobile is said to have crashed into the

vehicle carrying the explosive just as it was between the Morgan offices and the United States subtreasury, where millions of dollars' worth of government funds and bullion are stored.

Two Theories Advanced.

Shortly after the explosion the police announced that 24 were known to be dead and 75 injured. Three others died later in hospitals, it was reported. It is believed the death list will go higher.

Two theories were held. One was that the explosion was an attempt to wipe out the Morgan firm and assassinate J.P. Morgan by planting a time bomb in a wagon in front of the Broad Street entrance to the firm. Another was that an automobile, Licence No. 24246, New Jersey, loaded with explosives, crashed into another automobile at Broad and Wall Streets.

J.P. Morgan is in Europe.

Panic in District.

The blast caused a panic throughout the financial district. The New York Stock Exchange and curb market were both closed.

All the members of the Morgan firm escaped, but Junius Spencer Morgan, son of J.P. Morgan, who was cut on the hands by flying glass.

The Morgan offices were shattered. Pedestrians in the streets were hurled from their feet.

There was intense confusion and several hours after the explosion the cause still was unknown. Mean-

time Wall street was filled with sensational rumors of every description. The death list was put as high as 60.

Exactly at Noon.

The police learned that a horse and wagon were in front of the building when the explosion took place. The horse was killed and the wagon was blown to kindling wood. One theory was that a time bomb had been placed in the wagon to go off at noon, the hour of day when Mr. Morgan would most likely be in his office. This theory received support from the fact that the bomb exploded exactly at 12 o'clock.

Another theory was that a small motor car, filled with high explosives, collided with another automobile in the street immediately in front of the Morgan offices. The police were certain that the explosion was outside the offices.

The rumble of the explosion and the shock was felt plainly a mile away. One person was reported killed and several injured in the Post & Flagg building in Wall Street, some distance from the scene.

Excitement Prevails.

Never in the history of New York have such scenes of turbulence and excitement accompanied a great disaster.

All approaches leading to Broad and Wall Streets were choked with people. The police were powerless to open traffic lanes for ambulances until all the downtown reserves were sent to the scene. Fire did not follow the blast. However, firemen were on hand. At 1 o'clock Fire Chief Henlon said he was unable to account for the explosion.

A great hole was torn in the street in front of the Morgan offices and the wall of the Morgan building on the Wall Street side is pitted with holes as if it had been bombarded by light caliber artillery.

Resembles Battlefield.

Broad and Wall Streets, the financial heart of America, resembled a battlefield with dead and wounded, blasted streets, and soldiers on duty.

The main floor of the Broad Street Hospital, where most of the injured were taken, was covered with

blood, so great was the number of victims. There were insufficient cots and the injured were laid in rows on the floor.

Several of the injured were said to have died in the hospital while their wounds were being dressed.

Two unidentified men and one woman died at Broad Street Hospital at 1:30 o'clock from injuries sustained in the explosion. The hospital officials now say that many of the injured are in a precarious condition.

Number of Injured Die.

All available doctors, nurses, and ambulances, including army surgeons, ambulances, and Red Cross nurses, were rushed to the scene. A number of the injured died in the Broad Street Hospital.

Pandemonium reigned throughout lower New York. An immense crowd of tens of thousands of persons jammed the narrow streets in the financial zone.

Scores of police reserves had to fight the crowd back to open the way for ambulances and fire trucks. The Hanover exchange of the New York telephone system, which serves the financial district, was put out of commission by the blast, adding to the confusion.

Debris Piled High.

A mountainous pile of debris was thrown up in front of the wrecked Morgan building. Carcasses of horses and wrecks of half a dozen automobiles cluttered the corner of Broad and Wall Streets.

Police Commissioner Enright took personal direction of the army of policemen. After a superficial investigation, the police commissioner said, he believed a wagonload of dynamite caused the blast.

Mayor Hylan went to the scene to give such aid as he could.

Within 20 minutes after the explosion, 15 bodies had been recovered. Some were badly mangled. They were removed for identification. Later the death list was increased.

Young Women Caught.

Many young women stenographers, on their way to lunch, were caught in the hurricane of debris thrown

up by the explosion. Many were hurt, others were hurled from their feet; others fainted from fright.

The dead were carried across the street and laid on the steps of the United States Subtreasury.

In front of the Subtreasury building was a pool of blood and part of a straw hat, all left of a pedestrian who was blown to bits.

So far as could be learned the only member of the Morgan firm on the scene was Thomas W. Lamont. He was in his private office dictating letters and talking with a business caller when the explosion occurred.

200 to 300 Injured.

The police estimated that from 200 to 300 persons were injured. Most of them were pedestrians. Many suffered injuries so slight they were able to go home or to offices where they are employed for treatment.

Dwight Morrow of J.P. Morgan & Co. stated officially none of the partners of the Morgan concern was injured, due to the fact that they were present at a conference in the Morgan offices on the second floor of the building. Among those present were Thomas W. Lamont, George Whitney, Elliott C. Bacon, and Mr. Morrow. Thomas Cochran left the city for the night.

\$10,000 Reward Proposed.

Mayor Hylan announced this afternoon that he would ask the Board of Estimate to offer a \$10,000 reward for information leading to the identity of the

persons responsible for this afternoon's explosion if the authorities decided a bomb caused it. The police officials on the scene have not given up the theory that a time bomb had been placed in front of the Morgan bank.

It was estimated this afternoon that the damage to Morgan's bank would be between \$500,000 and \$600,000. The huge glass dome over the main floor is shattered. It is also stated practically all employees suffered injuries of some sort and that more than a dozen were badly hurt, while as many as 7 were killed.

The bombproof netting behind the windows of the Morgan office on the Wall Street side was twisted and bent, but it is believed to have saved lives.

Stock Shares Missing.

Reports of lost stock shares began to be received at the stock exchange this afternoon and it is believed these securities were in the hands of messengers who may have been injured in the explosion.

The blasted building was roped off and no one was allowed to enter. This accounted for the delay in learning the exact cause of the explosion.

Sensational rumors as to fatalities were circulated. At 12:25 o'clock it was said that the death list might go to 60. At the time only 15 were actually known to be dead. Many of the Morgan employees were severely cut by flying glass.

The tremendous force of the explosion was shown by the fact that a piece of iron was hurled into the Stevenson Brokerage offices on the 18th Floor of 61 Broadway, 4 blocks away.

Edited by Tim Davenport.

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