
Detectives Follow Many Clues in Inquiry on Wall Street Blast: New Tips May Lay Tragedy to Plotters: Anarchist Circulars Are Found in Mail Box, Says Flynn

Unsigned International News Service wire report in
Minnesota Daily Star [Minneapolis], v. 1, no. 27 (Sept. 18, 1920), pp. 1, 3.

By International News Service

New York, Sept. 18 [1920].— Reported discovery of circulars signed “American Anarchist Fighters,” a pair of new horseshoes, and the skeleton of the “mystery wagon” that police say they believe carried a time bomb, formed the main clues today in 8 separate investigations of the explosion in front of the Morgan banking offices at Broad and Wall Streets at noon Thursday [Sept. 16, 1920].

The death toll from the tragedy which rocked the financial center of America — and of the world — in its foundations stood at 34 early today, but several injured persons are in hospitals for whom little or no hope of recovery is held out. The number of those suffering from more or less serious wounds is nearly 200.

At noon today the police announced they had definitely established that the total number of dead is 34. Earlier police figures had 38, then 36, as the number killed.

Flynn, Palmer on Scene.

Attorney General Palmer, his assistants, Garvan and Hoover, and William J. Flynn, chief of the Bureau of Investigation of the Department of Justice, were on the scene early, working to substantiate their preliminary theory that the explosion was the work of plotters.

The most significant factor that led the federal investigators to this conclusion was the assertion by Flynn that half an hour before the blast happened there were placed in a mail box at the corner of Cedar Street and Broadway 5 circulars reading:

“Remember, we will not tolerate any longer. Free the political prisoners or it will be sure death for all of you. — American Anarchist Fighters.”

It was asserted this same organization signed circulars wrapped around bombs sent out in various parts of the country June 2, 1919.

Cans Reported Clues.

An additional clue, though less definite, was seen by the investigators in the alleged discovery amid the wreckage of three battered tin cans bearing traces of gasoline and kerosene. These, it is believed, were intended by the supposed plotters to hurl flames in all directions when blasted by the explosion.

What the sleuths consider most promising in the hunt for the cause of the disaster is the pair of new shoes found on the horse that drew the “mystery wagon.” On these shoes was *<line missing>* is said to stand for “Horse Shoers’ International Union.”

New York has only one horse shoers’ local and every one of its 500 members were made the

subject of inquiry, investigating agents visiting every shop and trying to trace the horse's owner.

Conspiracy, Says Palmer.

Attorney General Palmer asserted belief today that present indications pointed to a criminal conspiracy. Flynn expressed belief that the explosion was not aimed directly at Morgan & Co., but was intended as a demonstration against the financial district.

Interest in Edward Fischer, former New York tennis expert now in a lunatic asylum in Canada, on whom investigators focused their attention yesterday, was lessened overnight, Flynn said.

"I do not attach much importance to Fischer's arrest," Flynn stated. "I believe he is a nut who happened to hit it off right. However, he will be investigated."

Fischer is the man said to have sent a mysterious warning of an impending Wall Street disaster to the French High Commissioner.

Wagon Owners Visited.

Next to the horse shoes, the "mystery wagon" as reconstructed from its debris is looked upon by the authorities as the most important clue. Every

one of the hundred-odd places in New York where wagons of this type can be rented was visited by agents today.

It was asserted for the first time today a warning similar to that reported sent to the French High Commissioner was received at Morgan & Co. the day before the disaster. It was said to have borne a Buffalo postmark and conveyed a warning "to all to stay away from Wall Street Thursday between 2 and 3 o'clock."

Flynn outlined his theory today as follows:

"The plotters probably left the wagon with the horse attached in Wall Street, having set the timing device a few moments ahead. They didn't want to take a chance on mailing the circulars, nor did they want to throw them in the street. So they just dropped them, without postage or wrapper, in the nearby mail box on their way from the scene of the crime. Three minutes later their bomb exploded."

The whole Wall Street area swarms with Department of Justice agents, police, and plainclothes men.

The American Legion, several of whose members were among the victims of Thursday's blast, is raising a fund to aid the authorities to seek persons believed to be connected with the explosion.

Edited by Tim Davenport.

Published by 1000 Flowers Publishing Corvallis, OR, 2009. • Non-commercial reproduction permitted.