

THE INVESTIGATION

Neighbors who had witnessed a part of the incident, including one who saw the actual shooting of Officer Zientara, telephoned the police. When additional officers arrived they quickly found the two robbery cars, with the two safes, in garages behind the Upton address. They searched the house and found it deserted except for a small Collie dog, a gift for the Baker (Nugent) children from one of the neighbors. They also found a large stockpile of guns and ammunition and also nitroglycerine and blasting caps and fuses.²⁰ They were able to quickly connect the robbery with the shooting of Officer Zientara. Sometime later, police found additional nitroglycerine in the basement of the dwelling.

Although some reports stated that it was the intent of the gang to blow open the safes on the property at 2304 Upton, this was never the case. Doing so presented a substantial risk to surrounding property and would have certainly aroused the neighbors to contact the police. As previously stated, the gang first intended to open the safes by blowing them in the wooded area of Scott Park. When this was prevented by Nugent's failure to bring the explosives, the intent was to try to open the safes in the garages on Upton Avenue through the use of tools. Failing this, the safes would have been removed to a remote area and then blown open with the explosives.

There is also some question as to the value of the safes' contents. Reports range from \$4,000 to \$2,000,000. The author could not find where any definitive amount of loss/recovery was ever calculated.

Investigators learned that Baker (Nugent) had rented the house two or three months prior to the hijacking. He had also rented two other garages nearby in addition to the one behind the Upton address in order to keep the three vehicles used in the robbery out of sight.²¹ About noon, the car belonging to John White was found abandoned. The gang member operating this car is believed to have transferred to the police car before it too was abandoned. The stolen police Whippet was found in an alley near Jackson and 13th Streets. Six men were seen to have fled from the auto.²²

The Packard and one of the Chrysler automobiles used in the robbery were both stolen on March 23. The Packard was taken in a robbery in Evanston, Illinois, and the Chrysler was stolen in Chicago.²³ The second Chrysler automobile had also been stolen.

Acting on other information, detectives located two women and two children at the Birkshire Apartments, 2640 Monroe Street.²⁴ The detainees included: Mrs. Joseph C. Baker (Julia Mary Baker), 27, and Anna May Baker, 6, and Martin Baker, 5, (Nugent's wife and children) and Mrs. Loretta "Pooch" Ryan, 35. They were identified through photos found in the Upton residence.²⁵ Nugent's wife's identity was later confirmed with Cincinnati Police. Raymond Nugent was a native of Cincinnati and well known to authorities there. His fingerprints had been obtained by Cincinnati Police after his arrest on a loitering charge on March 22, 1922.

A loitering charge was often used by police to arrest suspected gangsters in order to obtain their photos and fingerprints.

All of this information provided the final confirmation that the Bakers were actually the Nugents. The women were subsequently charged with the possession of burglar's tools based on the items found in the Upton house. They were held for approximately six weeks on these charges. Raymond Nugent was given the Toledo Police Department's B. I. R. (Bureau of Identification and Records) No. C-28793.

Ryan was the girlfriend of Bob Carey, who was using the name Conley in Toledo. Carey was subsequently identified as Robert Newberry, one of Carey's aliases, and charged under that name. The author could not find any evidence that the Toledo detectives ever identified Carey under his real name.

Also at the Upton address, police found photos of underworld figures and were convinced that the robbers were from Chicago.²⁶ Detectives were subsequently dispatched to that city and other cities including Detroit and Miami in order to identify the suspects.²⁷