

Ted Mack

Son of “Mother” Mack (McDonald)

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Ted Mack, real name McDonald, led a troubled life. He was well known to Toledo police as a thief and highway robber with a long record. His arrest in December of 1904 for robbing a young delivery boy landed him in the Ohio Reformatory at Mansfield.



Ted Mack, paroled in September of 1907, returned to his life of crime, executing a series of robberies and break-ins. His participation in the robbery of Walcutter’s grocery store in December of 1907, only 3 months after his parole, resulted in a return to the Mansfield Reformatory.

After his release in August of 1910, he was arrested again, indicted for a series of robberies, assaults and hold-ups. He was out on bail when he was shot and killed in the early morning hours of December 17, 1910, in a gun battle with Toledo Motor Patrolmen Clarence Mead and August Salhoff at the Wabash Leaf railyards.

Police had received a call at just before midnight that boxcars in the railyard were being broken into by three men. Mead and Salhoff were dispatched to the scene on their motorcycles, followed by Patrolman Carl Kruse riding a street car.

At the railyard, Mead and Salhoff saw a shadow of a man next to a boxcar a few feet ahead. In an instant, the suspect pointed a pistol at Mead's head and fired at point blank range, missing Mead's head by a matter of inches. The bullet was so close that it left a powder burn on Mead's face.

Mead took a step back to gather himself before the two patrolmen then opened fire on the shadow. However, no bullets found their mark. The suspect again pointed his revolver at the patrolman only a few feet away, but this time Mead fired first, causing the suspect to drop his firearm, turn and run. The three suspects scattered at Mead and Salhoff fired another volley of shots. Pursuing the fugitives a short distance, a voice of one of the railroad workers shouted, "You got one of them." [Toledo Blade, December 17, 1910.] Mead and Salhoff continued pursuing the two remaining suspects a short distance, then returned to the scene of the first gunshots, where they found Ted Mack lying on the ground near a freight car.

The railroad men who first found Mack lying on the ground told police that he died within two or three minutes of being wounded. It was a .38 caliber bullet from Mead's weapon that took Mack down, penetrating his left hip and lodging under his right breast.

Patrolman Mead was grief-stricken by the death of young Ted Mack, saying, "I am more sorry than I can express that I killed the man, but it was either his life or mine, for if I had not shot him when I did he surely would have shot me as he had his gun leveled straight at my head and was not more than five feet distant." [Toledo Blade, December 17, 1910.]

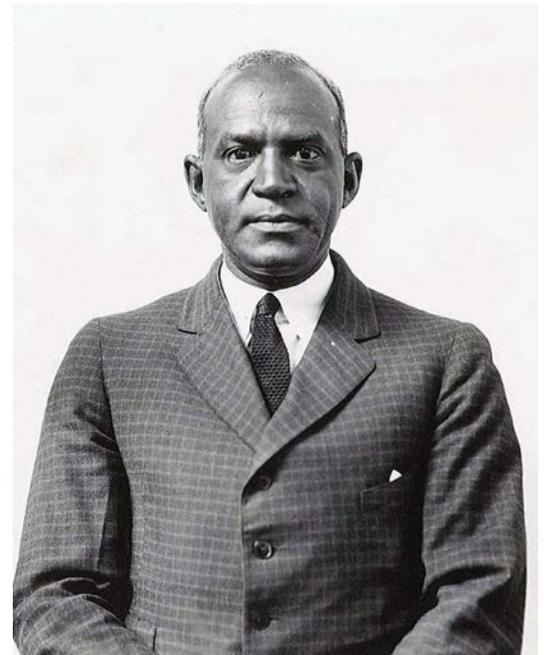
Mead, 35 years old with a wife and five children, was a former professional wrestler who had been with the Toledo Police Department for five years. He was highly respected by his peers and citizens and considered one of the bravest and finest officers on the force.

Less than two hours after the shooting, 21 year old Archie Knerr, suspected of being one of the two men breaking into boxcars with Ted Mack, was found by Patrolman Ed Harris hiding behind a stove in the basement of Relper's Saloon at Washington and Michigan Streets.

Knerr's clothes were covered with burrs, dirt and leaves that the police believed were picked up when Knerr fled the scene of Ted Mack's shooting. After two hours of interrogation at the Lagrange Police Station, Knerr confessed that he and John Mack were the two men who were with Ted Mack breaking into boxcars that night.



Patrolmen August Salhoff and Clarence Mead on their motorcycles in the winter of 1908.



Edward Harris was appointed as substitute officer in 1907. He was the first black police officer to be promoted to command rank. He was promoted to detective sergeant in 1912 and to detective lieutenant in 1914.

Harris was also an actor and singer who worked on Broadway, performing on all black musicals. He left show business in 1904 when his amazing baritone voice cracked.

Describing the shootout the next day, Mead said that it was Ted Mack who fired the first shot, temporarily blinding Mead. "Mack was five or six feet from us when he fired. [Toledo Blade, December 17, 1910.] Police later found that the seals of six boxcars had been broken.

Archie Knerr (aka Archie Dennison, already a well-known Toledo criminal and frequent resident of Toledo jails as well as the Ohio Penitentiary, later gained national criminal fame as a member of Toledo's notorious Cowboy Hill Gang. On September 14, 1920, in a sensational shootout with Toledo police at the Cowboy Hill Gang's Franklin Avenue headquarters, Archie was shot dead. (SEE COPS AND ROBBERS: COWBOY HILL STORY)