
Photographs Regarding the 1916 Preparedness Day Parade Bombing, 1916-1933

BANC PIC 1905.02825-.02856 -- PIC

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Collection Summary

Collection Title: Photographs Regarding the 1916 Preparedness Day Parade Bombing,

Date: 1916-1933

Collection Number: BANC PIC 1905.02825-.02856 -- PIC

Extent: 31 photographic prints, various sizes. 32 digital objects

Repository: The Bancroft Library. University of California, Berkeley.

Berkeley, California 94720-6000

Languages Represented: English

Access

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Preferred Citation

[Identification of item] *Photographs regarding the 1916 Preparedness Day parade bombing, 1916-1933*, BANC PIC 1905.02825-.02856 --PIC, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

Digital Representations Available

[Digital representations of selected original pictorial materials are available in the list of materials below.](#) Digital image files were prepared from selected Library originals by the Library Photographic Service. Library originals were copied onto 35mm color transparency film; the film was scanned and transferred to Kodak Photo CD (by Custom Process); and the Photo CD files were color-corrected and saved in JFIF (JPEG) format for use as viewing files.

Title: Carl Hoffman Papers

Identifier/Call Number: BANC MSS C-B 377

Title: Thomas J. Mooney Papers

Identifier/Call Number: BANC MSS C-B 410

Title: Photographs from the Thomas J. Mooney Papers

Identifier/Call Number: BANC PIC 1945.003-PIC

Title: Tom Mooney's Pamphlets

Identifier/Call Number: xF869.S3.9.M87 T63

Acquisition Information

The Photographs Regarding the 1916 Preparedness Day Parade Bombing were transferred from the Carl Hoffman Papers (BANC MSS C-B 377), which were purchased in 1947.

Background Note

During a 1916 Preparedness Day parade in San Francisco, a bomb exploded which killed 10 people and injured 40 others. Following the subsequent investigation, 5 persons--Tom Mooney, Warren Billings, Rena Mooney (Tom's wife), Israel Weinberg and Edward D. Nolan--were indicted for murder. Tom Mooney, the first to stand trial, was convicted and sentenced to death. Billings was then convicted and sentenced to life imprisonment. Rena Mooney and Israel Weinberg were acquitted, while Nolan was never brought to trial. Though all incriminating evidence against the defendants was eventually found to have been falsified, the State Supreme Court declared itself powerless to grant a retrial and referred the decision to California Governor William Dennison Stephens. After mounting national and international protest against the convictions, U.S. President Woodrow Wilson appointed a Mediation Commission to investigate the case. After the Commission discredited the verdicts, Stephens commuted Mooney's death sentence to life imprisonment. Repeated appeals over the years for executive clemency or to reopen the matter before the Supreme Court all failed until, in 1939, Governor Culbert L. Olson pardoned Mooney and reduced Billings sentence. Billings was finally pardoned in 1961.

As the Preparedness movement and its many nationwide demonstrations--such as the San Francisco Preparedness Day Parade--sought to bolster support for the United States' entry into World War I, responsibility for such a bombing was quickly attributed to the more extreme factions of the labor movement, whose pacifist, anarchistic, or otherwise anti-patriotic sympathies made them obvious suspects. Prior to their arrests for the bombing, Mooney and Billings were militant trade unionists. Their leadership involvement in recent strikes and other labor agitation had earned the enmity of the local public utilities officials and the politicians whose interests sided with these corporations. Mooney and Billings--along with the other defendants, who also had ties with the labor movement--were thus immediately singled out as the culprits. The investigation of the bombing was directed by District Attorney Charles M. Fickert--a staunch opponent of the labor movement and close ally of the powerful United Railroads after his dismissal of graft indictments against its officials--and private detective Martin Swanson--who had many times earlier, on behalf of many of the local public utilities corporations, failed to convict Mooney and Billings for other militant labor activities which threatened these corporations. Overwhelming evidence, some of it surfacing immediately after Mooney's trial and conviction, eventually proved that all incriminating evidence used to establish the original indictments was fabricated and that all key testimony used against the defendants was perjured. In time, nearly all parties involved in the original trials --including the presiding justice, the chief of police, a key prosecuting attorney and the trial jurors--demanded the pardoning of Mooney and Billings. Among the many reasons the Preparedness Day bombing affair has come to be considered one of the great travesties and embarrassments of American jurisprudence is that--despite consideration of all evidence--the judicial, legislative and executive branches of California repeatedly failed to adequately redress the injustices suffered by the defendants.

Scope and Content

The Photographs Regarding the 1916 Preparedness Day Parade Bombing collection contains 31 photographs taken between 1916 and 1933 which document the scene of the San Francisco bombing and many of the individuals and activities associated with the bombing, trials, and subsequent investigations and attempts at retrial and pardon. Pictured in the collection are Tom Mooney; Warren K. Billings; Frank C. Oxman, a star witness who submitted perjured testimony against Mooney; Justice John Preston; District Attorney Matthew Brady; Mooney's attorney Bourke Cochran; investigating attorneys Frank P. Walsh and John F. Finerty; Labor leader Ed Nockels; Frederick J. Koster, president of The San Francisco Chamber of Commerce and their anti-labor Law and Order Committee; reporters H.R. Hill, Arthur Brisbane and James T. Williams; San Francisco Police Chief Gus White; San Francisco Police Captain Charles Goff; and family members of both Mooney and Billings. Many of the photographs were taken on the occasion of Mooney's return to San Francisco Jail from San Quentin Prison in 1933 to stand trial on an undismissed indictment related to the 1916 bombing.


The collection also includes a clipping from a 1930 San Francisco Post Examiner issue picturing the pardon hearing for Warren K. Billings. The collection consists almost entirely of press photographs, many of them taken by International News Photos, Inc. The only identified photographers are C.V. Estey and Howard Robbins.


:02825 [Crowd gathered around bomb explosion site. Corner of Steuart and Market Streets, San Francisco. During Preparedness Day Parade, July 22, 1916.]  <http://content.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/tf2h4nb6vh>


:02826 [Crowd gathered around bomb explosion site. Corner of Steuart and Market Streets, San Francisco. During Preparedness Day Parade, July 22, 1916.]  <http://content.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/tf6z09p5ng>

:02827 [Lacking.]

:02828 [Bomb explosion site. Corner of Steuart and Market Streets, San Francisco. During Preparedness Day Parade, July 22, 1916.] [Cropped duplicate of No. 02829.]  <http://content.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/tf838nb9mk>

:02829 Scene of bomb explosion at the corner of Steuart and Market streets, during the Preparedness Parade, Saturday, July 22, 1916. One marcher in the parade was killed and seven spectators were killed and forty injured. [Duplicate of No. 02828.]  <http://content.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/tf1r29p23w>


:02830 [Unidentified men, including police officers, inspect site of bomb explosion. Corner of Steuart and Market Streets, San Francisco. During Preparedness Day Parade, July 22, 1916.]  <http://content.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/tf1k400876>

:02831 Frederick J. Koster addressing Law and Order meeting at Civic Auditorium, Wed. July 26 16 [i.e. 1916].  <http://content.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/tf2779p2h4>

:02832 [San Francisco] Chief of Police Gus White (center wearing fedora hat).  <http://content.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/tf1c6007sp>

:02833 [San Francisco Police] Capt. Chas [i.e. Charles] Goff. Nelson. Mooney Case. Apr. 26, 1933.  <http://content.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/tf1d5nb3s2>














:02834 [Courtroom scene. Thomas Mooney Case, 1933? Photograph by C.V. Estey.]  <http://content.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/tf8t1nb9vs>

:02835 Bourke Cochran. Thos. [i.e. Thomas] Mooney. Nolan [i.e. Edward D. Nolan] (leaning on rail).  <http://content.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/tf0f59p1f9>

:02836 Justice John Preston of Calif. Supreme Court who acted as "prosecutor" in the Billings pardon hearing (Mooney Case). [Photograph by International New Photos, Inc.]  <http://content.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/tf796nb929>

:02837 [Tom Mooney. 1933.]  <http://content.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/tf5779p54t>

:02838 [Tom Mooney. 1933.]  <http://content.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/tf6f59p65f>

- :02839 [Tom Mooney. 1933.]  <http://content.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/1f1m3nb4m8>
- :02840 [Tom Mooney. 1933.]  <http://content.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/1f796nb93t>
- :02841 [Tom Mooney and unidentified man signing papers. 1933.]  <http://content.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/1f967nc15d>
- :02842 [Tom Mooney and unidentified man at cell door, San Francisco Jail. 1933.] 
<http://content.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/1f2w101093>
- :02843 [Tom Mooney. 1933.]  <http://content.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/1f3x0nb6k9>
- :02844 [Lacking.]
- :02845 Tom Mooney & H.R. Hill, Post Enquirer reporter at S.F. [i.e. San Francisco] Jail, May 19, 1933, on occasion [of] Mooney's return from San Quentin for trial before Louis Ward on old indictment in bomb murders other than the one on wh [i.e. which] he was or  <http://content.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/1f2c60091k>
- :02846 Tom Mooney. May 19, 1933. Returned from San Quentin for trial in S.F. [i.e. San Francisco] before Judge Louis J. Ward on old indictment in the Preparedness Day bomb murders. 
<http://content.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/1f8489p653>
- :02847 [Tom Mooney, left, and H.R. Hill, reporter for [Oakland?] Post Enquirer. San Francisco Jail. May 19, 1933.] 
<http://content.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/1f5w1011fk>
- :02848 San Quentin, California.. Thomas J. Mooney was convicted of murder in connection with the bomb explosion during the Preparedness Parade in 1916, and is serving a life sentence in San Quentin. He has served about fifteen years and will be tried on May 22nd on an old indictment which was never dismissed. The above photo taken today by the prison photographer at San Quentin Prison shows (front row sitting) left to right: John F. Finerty, Tom Mooney and Frank P. Walsh. Standing: left to right, Ed Nockels, labor leader and Leo Gallagher, conferring with Mooney. [1933. Photograph by International News Photos, Inc.]  <http://content.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/1f1t1nb5z7>
- :02849 Police keep Mooney crowd on move. San Francisco, California.. Thomas J. Mooney was convicted of murder in connection with the bomb explosion during the Preparedness Parade in 1916, and is serving a life sentence in San Quentin. He has served about fifteen years and will soon be tried on an old indictment which was never dismissed. The above photo is scene taken during proceedings for a new Mooney trial. police keep the crowds on the move to avoid demonstrations. [1933. Photograph by International News Photos, Inc.] 
<http://content.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/1f8s2013qz>
- :02850 Part of throng that gathered for Mooney trial. San Francisco, California. Thomas J. Mooney was convicted of murder in connection with the bomb explosion during the Preparedness Parade in 1916, and is serving a life sentence in San Quentin. He has served about fifteen years and will soon be tried on an old indictment which was never dismissed. Photo shows portion of crowd of 3000 that gathered in Portsmouth Square here today as the way was being paved to bring the famous prisoner to trial May 22nd on an old indictment. Mounted police keep the milling throngs moving and broke up demonstration. [1933. Photograph by International News Photos, Inc.] 
<http://content.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/1f4v19p3tt>
- :02851 Mooney family hears trial date set. San Francisco, California.. Left to right above are shown: Mrs. Belle Hammerberg, Mrs. Mooney's sister; Madeleine Wieland, Billing's [i.e. Warren K. Billings'] cousin; Mrs. Mary Mooney, mother; John Mooney, brother and Anna Mooney, sister of Thomas J. Mooney. Photo was taken during proceedings in court here today for a new Mooney trial on May 22nd. Thomas J. Mooney was convicted of murder in connection with the bomb explosion during the Preparedness Parade in 1916, and is serving a life sentence in San Quentin. He has served about fifteen years and will be tried on an old indictment which was never dismissed. [1933. Photograph by International News Photos, Inc.]  <http://content.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/1f0c6007xf>
- :02852 Oxman [i.e. Frank C. Oxman, witness].  <http://content.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/1f3g5010jd>

