

Account of the Haymarket Riot (Chicago Herald May 5, 1886)
(abridged)

Policeman Joe Deegan [Mathias Jdot; Degan] and three unknown Bohemians dead, Policemen Sheehan, Barrett, Redden, Keller, and Miller mangled and dying, thirty-five other policemen wounded more or less severely, and nobody knows how many citizens and rioters wounded is the result of an encounter between the police and an Anarchistic meeting in the old market square at the corner of Randolph and Desplaines streets. . . . Mayor Harrison was early on the scene, but it was not until after 10 o'clock that the police determined to disperse the crowd by reading the riot act. A bomb or hand grenade thrown into their ranks wrought terrible havoc with life and limb, and then ensued a scene of wild carnage with revolvers, bludgeons, and other missiles. . . .

Three thousand men and boys stood around three barrels and boxes erected as a platform on the square at 8 o'clock last evening. August Spies, the editor of the Arbeiter Zeitung the Anarchist organ in this city, stood upon one of the barrels. He made a brief speech to the crowd, and then introduced A. R. Parsons, one of the prominent leaders of the Socialists of Chicago. The latter told his hearers that instead of getting ten hours' pay for eight hours' work statistics proved that workingmen to-day were only getting two hours' pay for ten hours' work, and if they worked eight hours at the same wages they would only be getting three hours' pay for eight hours' work. He warned his audience that the time would come when the brutal oppression of the capitalists would drive every one save themselves into the ranks of socialism. . . . Samuel Fielden, a grim-visaged Anarchist, wearing a black slouch hat, then leaped upon a barrel. He said that the newspapers of the city charged the Socialists with cowardice, saying that they would sneak away from real danger. They were there to-night to repel the lie and prove that they were willing to risk their lives in the cause. It were a glorious death to die like a hero rather than be starved to death on 60 cents a day. . . .

. . . South of Randolph on Desplaines street a body of men was dimly seen approaching in measured tread. The silent marchers came nearer, until the gas lamps on Randolph street threw their flickering light upon them. Then a hundred stars and a thousand brass buttons flashed in horizontal and perpendicular lines at the street intersections. The silent marchers were 400 police officers arranged in platoons, and choking the street from gutter to gutter. . . . Just as the officers reached the barrels upon which Spies, Parsons, and Fielden were standing a serpentine stream of fire burst from a window or the roof of Crane Brothers' manufacturing establishment on the opposite side of the street. It burned like the fuse of a rocket and hissed as it sped through the air. The mysterious stranger sputtered over the heads of the Anarchists and fell amid the officers. There was an explosion that rattled the windows in a thousand buildings, a burst of flame lit up the street, and then a scene of frightful and indescribable consternation ensued. The mysterious meteor was the fuse of a bomb hurled from the Crane Building by an Anarchist.

Over a score of officers were stretched upon the ground. Blood gushed from a hundred wounds, and the air was filled with the agonizing cries of the dying and injured. Those who escaped the deadly missiles

which flew from the boom wavered for a moment. They dashed over the mangled bodies of their comrades with drawn revolvers, the glittering barrels of which were belching fire every instant. Bullets sped into the howling Anarchists in murderous storms, strewing the street with dead and dying...Officers and Socialists fall in hand-to-hand combat, and others were brought to earth by the assassin. Bystanders who had been attracted by the roar of the battle shared no better. They were shot down where they stood, or overtaken by the leaden storm while fleeing. The street was littered with the victims...The officers were crazed with fury. They pressed forward into the teeth of a hurricane of bullets and stones. . . The result of this terrible encounter will not be known for hours. Two policemen are already dead. John Degan, shot in the region of the heart; Olaf Hanson, and twenty-one others are more or less wounded, five of them seriously. Fifty or more of the strikers must be dead and wounded. The street was strewn with them, and many escaped, dragging broken limbs behind them. One, a boy, died in a drug store at the corner of Halsted and Madison streets, and an unknown Bohemian lies dead in the Desplaines Street Station.