

Friday night

John Faber
NPPA Historian
10 Boulevard Lakes, N.J.

Dear Hohn:

I really was happy to get your letter upon ^{your} return from Russia. To be frank and honest, I thought you were ignoring me. It is I, who must apologize for so thinking. I can readily understand trying to put out a book, make a trip to Russia, and then as an honest effort, try to earn your Eastman salt.

Regarding the old-old story, told in more ways than Chris Columbus' trip to America, I will tell mine, with no desire for publicity or honorable mention. The only mention I would care for, would be the Chicago News on this story and or dozens of others where they scooped the competition. The persons who gave you the information on Hack Miller are fine fellows, but between us there is naturally much friction. Al Madsen, whom I worked with on the Trib, has a complex for being the criterion or answer book for just about every thing. I do know the Tribune is a big buyer of supplies, I do know manufacturer, contact him first, for any information wanted, but, Al Madsen was not around for many of the stories he hands out information on. The same with Tony Barardi. The only two who are in the know, would be Ralph Frost and Dave Mann.

The story of the Valentine Day Massacre is as follows.

At 10:30 A.M. on the morning of St Valentines day Feb 14th 1929

A Chicago Daily News truck driver was delivering newspapers to a small store adjacent to the S.M.C Cabbage Company (name crossed out) moving 2122 North Clark st in Chicago. While handing his papers to the store

owner who directed his attention to what he thought was police coming out of the Cartage company carrying machine guns.

The driver picked up a phone and called the ^{News} office describing a jumbled story about a shooting on Clark st. I was called out to the city desk by our city ^{correspondent} Editor John Craig and told to duck over and take a look. Dashing hell-bent for election (having covered many other gang shootings) I arrived on the scene before the majority of police had arrived

(just for the record, not taking anything from Hack Miller whom I
dearly love) he mentioned being at Van Buren and Ogden aves
That is exactly five miles further away than from where I started
and in a very heavy traffic area)

When I arrived on the scene there were crowds as usual, the news
having spread that men were shot. Pushing thru the crowd I went into
a very small office with a narrow short tunnel like exit to the rear
Several police were standing facing the door hesitating on going in
The reason being a very-very vicious dog barking, growling and sound
ing as tho he would tear you limb from limb. These officers pulled
out their pistols making ready to kick the door open. I set my focus
for 15 feet and made ready to follow them in. They kicked the door
open and for the moment waited for the dog to run for them. The dog
was locked in the cab of a loaded truck, loaded with cypress wood
a knocked down still ready to be delivered. The sight that hit my
eyes was sickning, seven bodies, in a blood splashed scene. One
still alive and trying to climb up on a chair at the far rear.
By this time the room was seething in people with more and more
trying to squeeze thru the narrow tunnel leading in. To get an
over all scene I climbed up on top of this tunnel that ^{also} had
a knocked down cypress still stacked up on it. Shouting and waving
to people to get the hell out of the picture I proceeded to shoot
flash after flash. 4x5 Plate holders were handed up to me with
requests from detectives standing below telling me to shoot one for
your partner down here who cant get in. Knowing damn well the scene
would not change and to help a fellow photog in distress had been
a long practice in Chicago so I shot several not even knowing who
they were for. All this was done with an Imp flash gun loaded with
slow burning powder. My gun became so darn hot I finally had to
give up and come down. My picture was rushed to the News processed
and a full 16x20 print made. My editors (all now dead) stood in the
center of the newsroom in awe, stunned. The picture was just to

grewsome for our family newspaper. Result..it was never used in the news until years later. Now...as for Hack Miller he did not take the so called P^upy home...the dog was raving mad and was destroyed. It was a giant police type dog. Later that same day our paper discovered that the one most wanted in this mass murder had beat the clock,he was delayed in getting there, and when he receieved the sad news, he made a duck to a hospital in Evanston where he buried himself under the sheets

and under an assumed name. Guess his illness was stuff in his blood. we found him and did get a few words but no pictures. The hospital was very unco-operative...also Mr BUGS^M Moran...and a few of his cohorts hanging around the outside.

Also for the story records, one of the machine guns used and dropped on the scene, was brought into the Daily News office thru error...

(~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ why, or who brought it in, was never known.

But it was around the office for some time. I did hear later it was turned over to the Cook County Coroner for evidence.

Tis funny how these things happened, they happened many times with bottles of booze confiscated and needed for evidence. Someone always brought the darn stuff into newspaper offices.

So much for the actual massacre assignment. It was restaged with characters dressed to represent those involved over and over again.

For the Dillinger story, thousands of pictures were made from the moment he dropped in the alley on Lincoln Av to the time his body was on exhibit to the thousands of morbid onlookers. I covered Dillinger from the time he escaped by making a gun out of a cake of American family soap (not a wooden gun as many say) he used shoe polish to color it.

~~My one picture that beat all, and was later copied by every Tom Dick and Harry, was a picture of Dillingers feet sticking out from under the morgue sheets. He had a big butchers tag tied on his right big toe, John Dillinger deceased. I snitched the tag to keep others from~~

getting the idea, but others later found out, and it became a rat race for the morgue keeper trying to write out and keep ident tags on his body. That very same night I was tipped to where he was hiding out in a small bedroom on the second floor of a flat on Halstead st

After the shooting, of course, I hit for the place. His room was right inside the front door, a big group of F B I were far down a long hall in a sort of dining room, much talking was going on and no one paying any attention to the front. Making a quick survey of the room I saw a picture standing upright on a small table along with some detective

magazines. snitching and hiding the picture before being discovered
and run out of the place, I made for my office to copy and identify
her. Nothing could be done until next morning when a woman was
brought into the area police station, by the F B I to make a long
story short..she was THE LADY IN RED...Anna Sage....and the Daily
News had a copy print and cut all ready to roll before the compititi
could break thru the F.B.I. to photograph her.

4

The Daily News scooped hell out of all, and that is one reason there are those, now in command around several papers, that would like to make it look like their paper was fustest with the mostest. Cant real y blame them tho;

The Loeb-Leopold story was mine from the moment the Franks boys body was found until they both entered Joliet prison.

A cub reporter worked with me at the start and later went on to win the Pulitzer award on the story. I can tell you all about it at a later date. Today there are several big law suits pending against the guy who wrote the book COMPULSION...he claimed ~~xxxx~~ ^{also} to be there on the spot...but it was not so...he was a cub part time student going to the University of Chicago and knowing the boys involved Both the book and the ^{Movie} picture are not kosher by a damn sight. Well John..this has become something of a chain letter...on and on. I did not intend to get so involved..your letter came just as I was going home for the week end and I knew if I did not answer pronto it would never be answered. In the mean time I caught dozens of the usual dept this "that problems, I tried to carry on and finish this. So please do a copy readers job, correct errors,

and cut this down to a two head...or better yet...lets wait until we meet and then kick the gong around. Personally tho, I would rather not be mentioned in a col in NPPA

Sure hope you can visit us here in Lauderdale. It is beautiful now as it always is, "The Venice Of America."

Will look for you soonest

SUN--cerely



Russell V. Hamm

TAPES: HACK MILLER

Hack Miller lived about 100 ft. away??? Mike Fish from the Tribune and Hank was on the American. They wouldn't let anyone else in. Everything was chaos, you got use to it. Mike Fish and I got on top of a Ford Sedan, with tripods, opened flash. There were 7 bodies on the floor. Don't know if his name was Wineshank or what. The cops took him out. The cops said no pictures would be made unless okayed by Police Commissioner. Leaky Steger wa there got in afterward.

Confession

I was on an assignment out on Van Buren and Ogden Ave. I called the office, and they said hold on just a minute we don't know what it is, but hold on/ They told me to go up to Garfield and Clark Street. A few doors north of Garfield there was a shooting, a helluva shooting, so I got into the car and made a straight shot foru Ogden avenue to Clark Street, so I was there and I guees I didn't care for anything. I went thry red lightss and got there and the first bunch of cops were goin in the door. I went right in with them. I was in abiut 3 minutes and ~~xxxxxx~~ ^{here comd} Mike Fish coming ih. We were usinh Speed Graphic. Open powder flash. We put the camera on a tripod. We wwere on top the Ford Sedan, it was a soft top, ribs or something and we stood there. A big fat copper says "there'll be no more pictures ~~until~~ made unocess the profesutor says you can make them. Now don't make any pictures. Will Mike was standing up just where they could see hi, so I says BLAAAAAAAAA. He says Okay smart guy, okay smart gut, I'll see to it you don't get any pictures at all. Mike turns around to me and says you SOB.

I got the police dog. I had him for a couple of years then they stole him back from me. But I had Fritz, son of Rin tin tin. He bit everyone that had at him. Then they finallt knew I wanted a dog and called me. He bit everyboduy esle but me. Thta dog was a killer and I had ababy that was just crawling on the floor, the dog just adore that baby. He'd pull his nose, and whiskers. The dog just followed baby all thetime.

We were using film. I damed near got killed---Wineshanks widow in the corner's office----not for BOOK.

Jack King rushed me, got me with bunch of hoods in an office. I stood on top of two desks put together. King's wife grabbed his gun arm, he was weaeing heavy dark tipcoat, and said "For God's sake, Jack, please don't shoot him." I gave reporter Willis O'Rouke came in and gave him film, They smashed my camera to smithereens.

Only trouble I had with police is when they discovered who the women was that called the police, she daw the guys pull up in a police car. When I went up stairs to geg a picture of her, the investigator for the prosecutor stated swing at me with his big cane. He had a gimp. Don't know his name.

6 Guys laying on floor, did you make, yes after we got started we kept on making them after the one guy was pulled out.