

‘Other Absences’



Michael T. Doran

May 31, 1884

An overseer at Eastern State Penitentiary bludgeoned to death by inmate, Joseph Taylor. Doran had been leading Taylor back to his cell after his allotted time in the yard, when the prisoner attacked him from behind.

Taylor was hanged at Moyamensing Prison in South Philadelphia for killing Doran.



Estella Weldon

March 17, 1905

Shot by her friend, Emily Lee, in the chest twice while on a walk through their neighborhood. Ms. Weldon was 23 years old; the dispute was reportedly over her husband.

Emily Lee's three-month-old child was nearby in a stroller at the time of the shooting. Lee was sentenced to serve time at Eastern State Penitentiary.



Thomas Dowling

June 26, 1912

Policeman shot and killed by 17-year-old Homer Wiggins while attempting to arrest him in a pawnshop.

Homer Wiggins escaped from Eastern State Penitentiary in 1913. He killed himself during a standoff with police to avoid recapture.



Abner Braun

May 27, 1919

Trenton Police motorcycle patrolman shot and killed while chasing a stolen vehicle in Pennsylvania. Abner Braun was forty years old and the father of seven children.

Henry Rick was one of two men convicted of the murder; he was sentenced to twenty years at Eastern State Penitentiary.



Anna Priest

April 14, 1920

Twenty-three-year-old shot and killed by her estranged husband, James Priest, after leaving him for another man.

James Priest served twelve years at Eastern State Penitentiary for the crime.

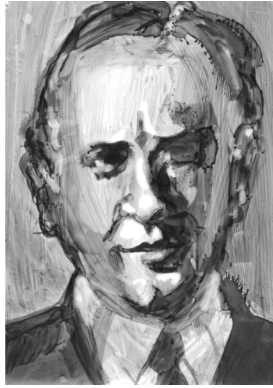


Blakely Coughlin

June 2, 1920

Thirteen-month-old kidnapped for ransom and accidentally smothered during the abduction by August Pasquale.

August "The Crank" Pasquale was sentenced to life imprisonment at Eastern State Penitentiary after confessing to the crime.



Joseph McGinn

October 2, 1920

Police detective shot and killed during a raid of an illegal gambling house.

Salvatore Battaglia, Christopher Murano and Michael Falcone were convicted of the murder; all three were sent to Eastern State Penitentiary. Battaglia was later transferred to Western State Penitentiary briefly, before ending up back at Eastern State for his role in a deadly prison riot in 1924.



Leo O'Donnell

March 2, 1923

Leo O'Donnell, 29, was one of three victims killed by a motorcar driven by wealthy banker, Henry Brock

Henry Brock was intoxicated at the time of the crime and was convicted of second degree murder. He served three years at Eastern State Penitentiary, where he later went on to serve as a board trustee.



Mary Murphy

March 2, 1923

Mary Murphy, 19, was one of three victims killed by a motorcar driven by wealthy banker, Henry Brock.

Henry Brock was intoxicated at the time of the crime and was convicted of second degree murder. He served three years at Eastern State Penitentiary, where he later went on to serve as a board trustee.



James Lambert

July 16, 1922

Police officer shot while attempting to arrest Armedio Cardone.

Cardone, alias Frank Donnelly, began his sentence at Eastern State Penitentiary in 1923.



Harvey C. Willow

December 9, 1923

Killed by his wife, Annie Willow, and her 17 year-old lover,
Ralph Shadel.

Ralph Shadel was sentenced to 10-20 years of solitary confinement at Eastern State.
Annie Willow was also sentenced 10-20 years at Eastern State but was soon transferred,
along with every other female inmate at that time.



John T. Coax

February 11, 1924

Prison guard shot and killed during a riot at Western State Penitentiary along with Warden John Pieper. Officer Coax was 29 years old; his wife was four months pregnant.

Inmate Salvatore Battaglia was identified as the man who shot Officer Coax. He was convicted of the crime and transferred back to Eastern State Penitentiary.



John A. Pieper

February 11, 1924

Deputy Warden shot and killed during a riot at Western State Penitentiary along with Officer John Coax. Warden Pieper was scheduled to go home early that evening to celebrate his 9 year-old son's birthday.

Inmate Salvatore Battaglia was one of the five men convicted of these murders. He was transferred back to Eastern State Penitentiary.

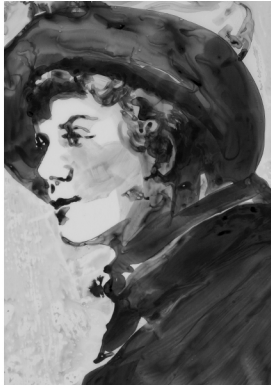


Frank P. Cook

December 1925

Police Officer shot and killed by John Saffour during a routine traffic stop.

Saffour was sentenced to life imprisonment at Eastern State Penitentiary in 1926.



Anna May Dietrich

January 27, 1926

Thirty-five year-old milliner strangled by her married lover, David Marshall. Marshall then dismembered her body and left it in a tree in an attempt to avoid detection

Marshall, a wealthy chiropractor, confessed to the crime and was sentenced 10-20 years at Eastern State Penitentiary.

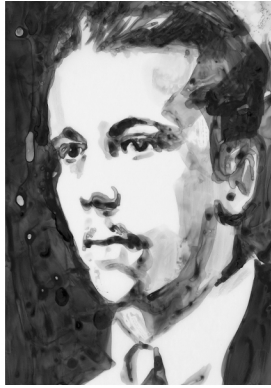


Wilson H. Lewars

May 12, 1928

Sixty-year-old police chief shot and killed while apprehending a gang during a silk mill robbery.

Daniel Donahue and Morris Orenstein, two of the four youths convicted of the crime, were sentenced to Eastern State Penitentiary.



Percy Eiker

July 10, 1928

Twenty-two-year-old shot by his wife over an infidelity. On his deathbed, Percy Eiker tried to assume blame for his injuries to protect his 19-year-old wife and mother of his two small children, but she admitted to the crime.

Helen Eiker was sentenced to 5-10 years. She was held briefly at Eastern State Penitentiary but soon transferred.



Emmanuel Molino

October 11, 1928

Murdered by an unrequited love, Rosetta Davis.

Davis was sentenced to life imprisonment at Eastern State Penitentiary but was transferred to another prison.



Michael Donnelly

April 12, 1929

Patrolman shot to death while pursuing two young robbery suspects. Michael Donnelly was 33 and had been married less than one year.

Thomas Caulfield, 19, was convicted of the crime and sentenced to serve his term at Eastern State Penitentiary.



Samuel "Sammy" Jacobs

July 13, 1929

Ambushed outside of his home by Danny Day Del Giorno and Frank Del Vacchio, Sammy Jacobs was shot during the ensuing gun battle. All three men had ties to the Philadelphia underworld.

Within a year of his release from Eastern State Penitentiary in 1938, Danny Day was shot while driving in South Philadelphia.



Della Mae Lyter

August 4, 1929

Shot by her former sweetheart, Samuel 'Red' Crane. Her companion John Oren was also killed.

According to Crane, a former professional baseball player, the murder was fueled by jealousy and alcohol. Crane began his sentence for Second Degree Murder at Eastern State Penitentiary in 1929. He was released in 1944.



John Oren

August 4, 1929

Shot and killed along with Della Mae Lyter by her jealous former-lover, Samuel 'Red' Crane.

Crane, a former professional baseball player for the Baltimore Orioles, began his sentence for second degree murder at Eastern State Penitentiary in 1929. He was released in 1944.



William F. Prophet

November 22, 1930

Shot in the bedroom of his home by his brother-in-law Harold Williams. Clara Prophet, wife of the murdered 49 year-old salesman, was convicted of commissioning the crime

Both Mrs. Prophet and her brother, the murderer, were sentenced to serve terms at Eastern State Penitentiary.



Wellington deGroat

December 2, 1930

Shot and killed during a hunting trip for trespassing on Bertha Armbruster's farm.

Bertha Armbruster was convicted of second degree murder and sentenced to serve 6-15 years at Eastern State Penitentiary.



Lewis 'Lew' Roberts

April 1, 1931

Police lieutenant shot and killed during a hold-up.

Paul Bader, 17, was one of four youths convicted of the crime; he began his sentence at Eastern State Penitentiary in 1933.



Dorothy Lutz

February 1932

Missing for several weeks, 7 year-old Dorothy Lutz was found dead in a vacant house two doors down from her home. She had been attacked and choked to death by William Brown, 16.

Brown's death sentence was commuted to life imprisonment at Eastern State Penitentiary.



Angelina Formento Spano

March 10, 1932

Eighteen year-old strangled with a clothesline by her husband, Vito Spano, 35, during an argument in which she threatened divorce.

Vito Spano confessed to the crime and entered Eastern State Penitentiary in June of 1932.



David H. Wiley

April 10, 1932

Patrolman shot when he approached a car where Charles Terry and friends were serving as lookouts for a robbery.

Charles Terry was sentenced to life imprisonment at Eastern State Penitentiary in 1932.



Helena Davis

July 12, 1932

Thirty-four year-old shot in church by her suitor, Stanley Barker, after refusing his offer of marriage.

Stanley Barker turned himself in for the crime and was sentenced to life imprisonment at Eastern State Penitentiary.



Isadore Reinheimer

August 2, 1932

Policeman shot six times by Arthur Ward. Officer Reinheimer had been attempting to take Ward into custody during a domestic call.

Ward was sentenced to life imprisonment at Eastern State Penitentiary in 1933.



Thomas Manning

October 1932

A night watchmen shot shortly after rescuing a fellow dockworker from an armed robbery.

Stanley Budka was sentenced to life imprisonment at Eastern State Penitentiary for the crime.

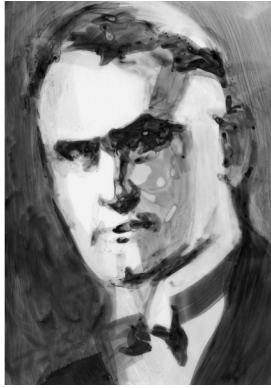


Etta Hunt Taylor Wolf

January 7, 1933

Twenty-seven year-old shot by her former husband Chief Running Wolf, 58, after a failed attempt to reconcile.

Chief Running Wolf shot himself immediately after the crime but survived. He was sentenced to a 6-12 year term at Eastern State Penitentiary.



Michael Croskey

February 1933

Thirty-three-year-old police detective murdered with an ice pick by former convict, George “Sugarfoot” Green. Detective Croskey was off-duty at the time of the attack.

Green was sentenced to 6-12 years at Eastern State Penitentiary.



William Feitz

September 2, 1934

Camden police detective shot from behind while investigating a brothel. The crime had ties to the notorious Tri-State gang.

Charles Zeid was convicted of the murder. He was first sentenced 15-40 years at Eastern State Penitentiary for his role in a hold-up with Frank Wiley in Pennsylvania. Both Wiley and Zeid were also implicated in the William Weiss murder in 1934. Charles Zeid was executed in New Jersey for the murder of Feitz in 1936.



William C. Wilson

September 3, 1934

Police officer shot and killed during a bank robbery.

Two of the five youths convicted of the crime, Peter Talarico, 18-years-old, and John Costello, 19-years-old, served time at Eastern State Penitentiary.



William Weiss

October 1934

An alcohol racketeer kidnapped for ransom and killed by members of the notorious Tri-State gang.

Martin Farrell and Francis "Frank" Wiley served time at Eastern State before their execution for the crime in 1935. In addition, Robert "Flatnose" Eckert, a drug addict who was also convicted of the crime, was sentenced to Eastern State Penitentiary.



Bertha Shaffer

October 12, 1935

Accidentally shot by her brother, David Shaffer, the “coal region desperado,” while he was trying to shoot his way out of a police trap.

David Shaffer openly wept in court over the fate of his sister; he began his sentence at Eastern State Penitentiary in 1936.



Glayse Lawson

March 16, 1935

Mysteriously disappeared after an operation at the home of Dr. H. C. Zimmerly, 67. The 26-year-old girl's bones were later found in his furnace.

Dr. Zimmerly died of a heart attack at Eastern State Penitentiary after serving seven years of his sentence.



James T. Morrow

November 29, 1936

Thirty-two year-old police patrolman shot six times while investigating a string of crimes in Northeast Philadelphia.

George Bilger, 19, confessed to the killing and served two years at Eastern State before another man confessed to the crime. Bilger was consequently released.

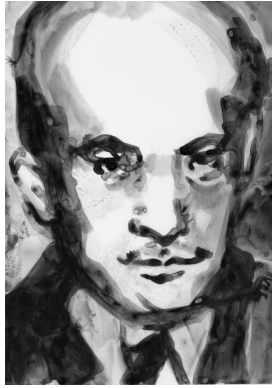


John J. Broski

August 14, 1937

Forty-year-old private in the Pennsylvania Motor Police shot in the back during a robbery by Victor “The Babe” Andreoli and Horace “Bow Wow” Bowers.

Andreoli escaped from Eastern State Penitentiary in 1943 by hiding in the back of a truck that was exiting the prison. He was killed in a gun battle with police 11 days after his escape. In 1945, Bowers escaped from the penitentiary with 11 other inmates via a tunnel. He was immediately recaptured. He was later paroled. In 1987, he shot his neighbor over a noise complaint.



Ferdinand Alfonsi

1939

A recent immigrant poisoned for insurance money by a notorious Philadelphia crime ring.

Morris Bolber was convicted of the crime and sent to Eastern State Penitentiary. Additional members of the ring were also incarcerated at Eastern State Penitentiary.



Edith Snyder

April 25, 1940

Sixteen-year-old high school student shot through her home's front window while studying. Her murderer, Robert Heineman, also 16, said he was "mad with love."

Robert Heineman was sentenced to life imprisonment at Eastern State Penitentiary.



Samuel Hewitt

April 23, 1947

Police sergeant shot and mortally wounded after pursuing a stolen vehicle driven by William Hallowell, 19. His partner, Officer James Quigley, died on the scene.

Hallowell was imprisoned at Eastern State Penitentiary until it closed in 1970. When he was released two years later, he murdered his foster mother, Dr. Dorothy Hallowell.



James J. Quigley

April 23, 1947

Police officer shot after pursuing a stolen vehicle driven by William Hallowell, 19. James Quigley died on the scene; his partner, Sergeant Samuel Hewitt, was also shot.

William Hallowell was imprisoned at Eastern State Penitentiary until it closed in 1970. When he was released two years later, he murdered his foster mother, Dr. Dorothy Hallowell.



Ellis Simons

January 1949

Twelve-year-old brutally slain with scissors by Seymour Levin, 16, who had invited Ellis back to his home to view his chemistry set. His bound, unclothed body was found behind Levin's house

Seymour Levin was assigned to Cell Block 14, a quarantine section housing youthful and first-time offenders, at Eastern State Penitentiary.



Arnold Schuster

March 8, 1952

Shot weeks after turning in escaped Eastern State prisoner and famed bank robber, Willie Sutton.

Although there is no compelling evidence linking the murder to an Eastern State Penitentiary inmate, Willie Sutton felt responsible for the chain of events. Sutton writes in his memoir, "Throughout my career I had plotted and planned my jobs to make sure that I would not have to hurt anybody, and now, after it was over and I was sitting in jail, a good-looking, promising young man had been killed because of me. The laughter of the gods."



Doris Silver Ostreicher

August 24, 1955

Twenty-two-year-old, newlywed heiress who died during an illegal abortion performed by Milton and Rosaline Schwartz.

Schwartz was sentenced to 3-10 years at Eastern State Penitentiary. His wife Rosaline was also convicted of the crime but served her sentence elsewhere.



Mary Ann Mitchell

December 1959

Sixteen-year-old bludgeoned to death by rapist, Elmo Smith, and left in a ditch to die

Smith served time at Eastern State Penitentiary before his execution in 1962. He was the 350th person, and last, to die in the state's electric chair.



Judith “Judy” Lopinson

June 16, 1964

Twenty-five-year-old shot and killed by a contract killer, Frank “Birdman” Phelan. Her husband, Frank Lopinson, was convicted of commissioning the crime, which also included the murder of his business partner, Joseph “Joe Flowers” Malito.

Frank Phelan was transferred to solitary confinement at Eastern State Penitentiary in 1965, after assaulting a fellow prisoner with an iron pipe at Holmesberg Prison.



Patricia M. Sholley

December 26, 1967

A 23-year-old hospital nurse brutally beaten to death. Patricia Sholley disappeared after working the Christmas night shift; her frozen, half-clothed body was found three weeks later in a snow bank.

A former orderly at the hospital where she worked, Maurice Talley, was convicted of the crime. He served time at Eastern State Penitentiary before it closed in 1970; he is currently still imprisoned for the murder.