

BOOTLEGGERS LURED HERE AND MURDERED

Body of Detroit Man Found in East River With Five Bullets in It.

GANGSTERS TIPPED POLICE

Told Them Two Weeks Ago It Would Be Found Where It Was With Five Wounds.

FLED TO ESCAPE FEUD

Victim Had Killed a Rival—Four Murders Since July in Gang War.

Isidor Kantrowitz, also known as Isidor Cantor, a plumber who had turned bootlegger, disappeared from Detroit last February and hid himself in the labyrinth of the east side of Manhattan. He had been a witness in a murder case against members of a rival gang of whisky dealers and was in deadly fear that they would put him out of the way to still his tongue.

Two weeks ago the New York police, acting on a tip from the underworld, went to the morgue to see if they could identify the body of a man who had been murdered and thrown into the East River. The body was not Cantor's, but the detectives went back to their informants and were told, "When you find his body it will be in the East River and will have five bullets in it."

Yesterday morning a body with five bullets in it was fished out of the East River at Twentieth Street by the crew of a police boat. The initials "I. K." were tattooed with three stars and the year "1908" on the right forearm, and the body was identified by a brother and cousin as that of the Detroit bootlegger.

"Those crooks that told us he would be in the East River with five bullets in his body had the right 'dope,'" said the police.

Advance News From Crooks.

In Detroit as well as in New York the mysterious channels of underworld communication worked to spread the news of Cantor's assassination long before his body was found. There was another murder in the same bootlegging feud in Detroit last Saturday. Samuel Jacobs, 17 years old, was shot and killed while driving an automobile owned by a partner of Cantor's, and at Jacobs's funeral last Sunday detectives circulating among the mourners heard over and over again the whispered rumor that Cantor had been shot to death in New York City and thrown into the East River.

Although the police of New York and Detroit have not the slightest doubt that Cantor was killed to keep him from testifying, they are unable to penetrate the mystery as to exactly where, when and by whom he was slain. Between the time Cantor fled from Detroit and the time his body was found floating on the water there is a big gap in the story of the bootleggers' revenge.

The feud between Cantor's group and the rival gang of bootleggers began about a year ago. Cantor had grown wealthy with prohibition. Investing a few hundred dollars in contraband liquor he had succeeded so well that a year ago he practically controlled the supply of raw sugar cane to bootleg whisky manufacturers in Detroit and the surrounding part of Michigan.

Beginning of the Feud.

His success caused Cantor to become a marked man in the Detroit underworld. There were other "bootleg" kings who had not been so lucky. One day an adherent of one of these monarchs was arrested. He could not get bail, and his patron went to Cantor for the money. Cantor refused, and the feud began. The rival gang tried to "shake down" Cantor for a large sum of money. They threatened to betray him to the prohibition authorities unless he let them in on the profits of a big deal he was negotiating. He again refused, and his rivals declared war.

Since last July there have been four deaths in the feud between the bootleggers, including the murder of Cantor and his young henchman, Jacobs. The first shooting took place on July 11 last, when Cantor killed Frank Spede on a street corner in Detroit. Cantor surrendered to the police, pleading self defense. He said that he would have been killed had he not slain Spede first. A jury acquitted him.

On September 5 last Cantor and a friend were talking in front of Cantor's sugar warehouse on Oakland Avenue, Detroit, when four men drove up in an automobile and began to shoot. After firing more than twenty shots they sped away. Cantor escaped unharmed but four others were shot. One of the wounded, Sol Conrad, died.

Two members of the rival gang were arrested on the charge of murder, and Cantor was held as a material witness. He let it be known that he intended to testify against the two gunmen at the trial. About Feb. 1 Cantor was released on bail.

Refused Offer of \$5,000.

As soon as he was out of jail Cantor was approached by emissaries of the rival gang and was offered \$5,000 if he would leave Detroit and not testify. He refused. But he disappeared suddenly from Detroit a few days before he was to have appeared as a witness in the Recorder's Court. Cantor arrived in New York on Feb. 5 or 6. He went to 22 Pike Street, where his brother, Samuel Kantrowitz, and his cousin, Meyer Madensky, were then living. A strange man was with him.

"The mob from Detroit are after me," Cantor told his brother. "I've got to hide somewhere. This fellow is going to take me over to Brooklyn."

Cantor had \$1,000 with him when he and the stranger left Pike Street the same day. Nothing is known of his movements after that. The police think that the stranger was a treacherous member of Cantor's gang, who lured him to a house in Brooklyn, where the murder was committed by hired gunmen. It is believed that the body was taken to the East River at night in an automobile.

The body was fully clothed when found yesterday, except for the hat. The clothing included a brown overcoat and blue suit. A gold signet ring was on one finger and several cards of other persons were in the pockets, but there was no money and nothing to establish identification except the tattoo marks.

Dr. Charles Norris, Chief Medical Examiner, who performed an autopsy at the morgue yesterday afternoon, said the body had been in the water at least two weeks. According to Dr. Norris, Cantor evidently had been shot first from behind, as a wound in the back of the head was the cause of death. After this shot the murderers apparently fired four times into his body to make sure he was dead. The bullets were steel-jacketed and from a .38 calibre pistol.

Cantor was 31 years old, six feet tall and more than 200 pounds in weight.