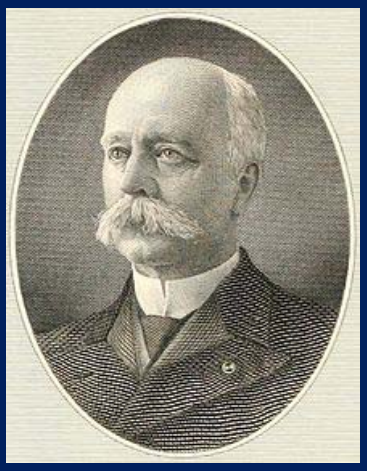
NO. 72 LOS ANGELES POLICE MUSEUM APRIL - MAY 2016

Reflections - Chief William H. Parker

by Bob Taylor

This edition of the Hot Sheet is devoted to the memory and legacy of one of the department's greatest chiefs. This year marks the fiftieth anniversary of the passing of Chief William H. Parker. He died at the relatively young age of sixty-one, on July 16, 1966. It is both fitting and appropriate that we review the accomplishments of this man, who is properly credited with professionalizing the police service, locally and nationally. There have been numerous stories and opinion pieces written about Chief Parker and most of the recent efforts were based upon editorial opinion, downright fabrication or personal bias rather than factual information. It is somewhat amusing to note that many of these Parker protagonists seem to travel in the same circles and share the same sources of unsubstantiated and biased information. Perhaps in contemporary America, it is more important to view history as a revisionist and not be confused with facts or consider the context of the times people lived in and the language that was used. It seems that it is far easier to judge people by contemporary standards or rumor or the social construct of a writer than by facts. Oh how these writers could learn from genealogists. Here at the Los Angeles Police Museum we try to stick to "Just the facts, ma'am."

Parker was born in Lawrence County, South Dakota, in 1905. His family migrated from Deadwood, South Dakota to Los Angeles in 1922, when he was seven years old. Like many other Americans of that era, they were in search of a better life. Parker was a good student. He decided early in his life he wanted to be a lawyer like his grandfather, William Henry Parker II. His grandfather served in the Union Army during the American Civil War from June 24, 1861, to October 16, 1866. He was also a graduate of the law department of Columbian College (now George Washington University), Washington, D.C., and was admitted to the bar of the supreme court of the District of Columbia in 1868. He moved to Deadwood, Territory of Dakota (now South Dakota), in July 1877 and practiced law and was a member of the constitutional convention for the proposed State of South Dakota, June 30, 1885. He was elected as a member of the State house of representatives in 1889 and prosecuting attorney of Lawrence County 1903-1907. He was elected to the Sixtieth



William Henry Parker II

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What's Happening at Old Number 11

by Bob Taylor

May is Memorial month. On May 5, 2016, members of the LA Police Museum Board attended the annual Los Angeles Police Department memorial ceremony held to remember fallen LAPD officers. The ceremony was held at Deaton Auditorium at the new police administration building. On May 18, 2016, members of the Board attended the LA County Peace Officers' Officers Memorial Ceremony, honoring all fallen LA County peace officers, held at the LA County Star Center in Whittier.

On May 7, 2016, members of the Board also attended the opening ceremony for the new Metropolitan Division station, the old Rampart Division station on Temple Street. Chief Beck was unable to participate in the ceremony because he was attending the funeral for former Chief of Police Willie L. Williams in Philadelphia, PA.

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Congress and served from March 4, 1907, until his death in Deadwood, Lawrence County, South Dakota, on June 26, 1908. He is interred at Arlington National Cemetery.

In 1926, Chief Parker enrolled in law school. He joined the Los Angeles Police Department in 1927. While on the department, he continued his studies, graduated from law school and passed the California State Bar in 1930, bar #12050, but opted to continue working as a police officer rather than practice law. Policing in Los Angeles in the 1930's and 40's was much different than today. The city was evolving, growing and trying to find a way to provide services to its population by creating opportunities for jobs through the development of industry. Los Angeles had five police chiefs between 1930 and 1949. The city was rife with political corruption and criminal activity. One of the more notorious political regimes was that of Mayor Frank Shaw and his brother and bagman, Joe Shaw. The Los Angeles Times was a solid supporter of Shaw and some thought their support was related to the Times sale of property to the city for the civic center at four times its assessed valuation.

Clifford Clinton, founder of Clifton Cafeterias and anti-crime and graft crusader, had earlier formed with others the organization CIVIC (Citizens Independent Vice Investigating Committee) to look into rumors of corruption in local government. With urging by county supervisor and reformer John Anson Ford, Judge Fletcher Bowron appointed Clinton to the County Grand Jury to look into allegations of corruption at City Hall. After an investigation of his own, Clinton issued a report that identified more than a thousand gambling and prostitution rackets allegedly under the protection of Shaw's administration. Clinton's cafeterias endured unusual scrutiny and inspections by city health inspectors and police during that period.

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On Sunday, May 15, 2016, the Los Angeles Police Museum again participated in annual MOTA (Museums of the Arroyo) Day. It is a day to celebrate a diverse mix of art, architecture, culture and history of the Arroyo Seco. MOTA Day featured six unique history-based museums that preserve and perpetuate the history of early Los Angeles life. The public was allowed to visit one or all of the museums during the day at no charge. The museum tour include: The Autry's Historic Southwest Museum Mt. Washington Campus, the Gamble House, Heritage Square Museum, the Los Angeles Police Museum, the Lummis Home and Garden and the Pasadena Museum of History. Each museum featured a special part of their collection in addition to their regular displays. This year the museum attracted some 1243 visitors, an all-time record. We were fortunate to have a full crew of volunteers, members of the University of Southern California police explorer post, and our docents. The Vintage LA Coppers were also a part of this year's event, decked out in vintage uniforms and their vintage cars. Those vintage police cars certainly caught the attention of visitors and members of the general public driving along York Boulevard. It was a great day for everyone. Here are a few photos of the day: Welcoming guests, visiting jail, Sam describing The Onion Field and watching the North Hollywood shootout. ❑

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On January 14, 1937, a bomb exploded in the car of private investigator and former police officer Harry Raymond. Raymond had been investigating the Shaw administration for anti-Shaw forces and was scheduled to give testimony to the Grand Jury. Despite being struck by more than 150 pieces of shrapnel, Raymond survived the blast. The media initially suggested the bombing was the work of the mob. Shaw critics, however, immediately aired their suspicions the Shaw administration was involved. A Los Angeles Times article suggested Raymond and Clinton themselves had staged the bombing as a publicity stunt. Such accusations, however, were quieted when it was discovered that Raymond had been under surveillance by a secret police unit for months. Even more damaging was the eyewitness account of an immigrant fruit vendor, who, despite threats, identified those who planted the bomb. Los Angeles Police Captain Earl Kynette was indicted and convicted for the bombing attack. There were clear indications that Kynette took his direction from somewhere in City Hall. As Los Angeles Times Columnist Patt Morrison pointed out in an article about LA's mayors, "You'd be hard-pressed to outdo the flagrant Frank Shaw, who protected bootleggers and bordello owners and virtually put the city up for sale." By 1938, Shaw was recalled as mayor and replaced by Fletcher Bowron. So began a new chapter in Los Angeles history and the history of its police department. None of this history of violence and corruption was lost on young Bill Parker, who on May 15, 1940, was promoted to captain.

EXTRA - Assassin's Bomb in Auto Blows up Vice Prober Harry Raymond

While Bowron began to make changes in city government, his efforts were somewhat delayed when the Japanese government bombed Pearl Harbor and thrust America into World War II. The war had an impact on America nationally and a significant impact on California and Los Angeles. The Los Angeles area was a hub for ship building, aircraft manufacturing and all things related to the war effort. Many people working for the Los Angeles police and fire departments were soon donning a different uniform. Among those called to duty in 1943, was William H. Parker, who at the age of 40 received a commission in the United States army as a first lieutenant. The city experienced a large number of employees either being drafted or volunteering for the war. The loss of employees was so great that "war time emergency employees" were hired to fill vacancies.

During his 26 months overseas, Parker was assigned to the United States Army Government Branch and saw action in Africa, Italy, Sardinia, France, Germany and Austria. He was promoted to captain in 1945. He was wounded during the Normandy invasion and received a Purple Heart. He additionally was awarded The Croix de Guerre with a Silver Star by the French Government and the Star of Solidarity by the Italian Government. He returned to the department in November 1945.

When he returned home from the war, he reflected on his experience in the war, but also on the changes he witnessed since arriving in Los Angeles. What was once a largely agricultural area had given way to increased

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urbanization. Citrus groves and wineries were being replaced by houses, shops, stores and greater industrialization. World War II brought other changes as well. On February 19, 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued Executive Order 9066, authoring the deportation and incarceration of more than 120,000 Americans of Japanese descent. Families were uprooted from their homes, farms and businesses and shipped off to relocation camps. Their homes and businesses were then taken over by others.

Likewise, persons of Chinese heritage fell under the provisions of the Chinese Exclusion act of 1882 and were prohibited from immigration or citizenship. The act was repealed in 1952 by President Truman. Many German and Italian Americans were also subjected to internment. Some of these laws and regulations also had an impact on other groups as well. For example, in 1872 African Americans founded the First African Methodist Episcopal Church in Los Angeles, but it was not until the 1930's and forties that the black community really began to thrive with jazz clubs and a hotel on Central Avenue. The black population grew significantly during WW II due in part to the availability of jobs.

While these are interesting historic points, it should be noted there were legal restrictions, covenants and prohibitions on property for various ethnic groups. Entertainer Nat King Cole, for example, had to use the side or back entrance to many night clubs he performed in. When he purchased a home in the Hancock Park area of Los Angeles, he and his family experienced racial slurs and even a cross burning. During this same period of time, the military was segregated as were many other governmental and industrial businesses. The famous and heroic Tuskegee airman, a black only Army Air Corps unit, was the result of blacks not being permitted to be a part of the regular Army Air Corps. On July 26, 1948, President Harry S. Truman signed Executive Order 9981, ending segregation in the United States Armed Forces.

The foregoing information is provided so the reader can better understand the social and cultural issues during the time when Parker began his career and when he came back to Los Angeles from military service. Not only were there still remnants of political corruption in the city and its police department, but there were significant differences in the way people and communities were viewed and how they were treated. None of this was Parker's making. This was a part of the larger social and cultural milieu of the time. It is a social construct that seems lost on today's critics.

When Parker returned to the department in November 1945, he served as the Commanding Officer of the Traffic Enforcement Division. He was promoted to Inspector (now Commander) on August 1, 1947, and oversaw the Internal Affairs Bureau. In May 1950, he was promoted to the rank of Deputy Chief and competed for the top job to replace Chief Worton, who as a retired Marine Corps General had been tasked by Mayor Bowron to be the interim chief to root out corruption and improve department operating procedures. On August 9, 1950, Parker was unanimously selected over Thad Brown as the top candidate for Chief of Police and was subsequently appointed. More than twenty candidates in the rank of captain and above tried out for the position.

Parker's appointment was the beginning of a sixteen year process of professionalism and change, not only for the Los Angeles Police Department but for all of law enforcement in California and nationally. When Parker took over he said, "I will strive to make this Department the most respected police force in the United States." It may have been an audacious statement at the time considering the average tenure of a chief was about two years, but it was clear from his statement and his actions what he intended to do. Parker remembered that before World War II, another police chief and 23 of his top-ranking officers had been forced from office along with a corrupt mayor.

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One of Chief Parker's first official acts was to release a list of promotions and transfers. In making promotions, he was especially sensitive to promoting those with the highest Civil Service score and he would not bow to political favor. Officer Vivian Strange, an African American female, scored well on the Sergeant's examination. There were some in the department who did not want her selected, but Parker selected her anyway. She became the first black female sergeant on LAPD.

Vivian Strange became the first African American female Sergeant on the Department.

Parker is also credited with a number of innovations like implementing scientific management principles which focused on analytical data like crime statistics, calls for service and deployment of resources; he required performance measures, instituted probationary periods for new officers; he developed an operations and policy manual system; he implemented a planning and research division; he instituted standards that moved the department to a professional model in police hiring standards, recruitment and training; he oversaw the expansion and use of technology from radios to scientific tools for the crime lab. He streamlined the department's structure, enforced Civil Service procedures, and kept the public informed of department

Photo of Parker, center with staff, in rear, Julio Gonzalez, later appointed United States Marshal for the Central Region, and Tom Bradley, who later became a city councilman and LA City Mayor.

activities through his personal appearances and his public affairs section. He frequently worked seven days a week, making multiple appearances. He demanded tough disciple standards, eliminated wasteful spending, and pioneered narcotics and vice enforcement methods.

When Parker became chief, police headquarters was in city hall. The old Central Division, built in1896, located near First and Hill Streets, was the downtown police building. The building still had quarters for the horses and paddy wagon used in an era before cars.

In December 1952, ground was broken on a site for a new police facility at First and Los Angeles Streets. The proposed eight story structure was expected to revolutionize law enforcement. The building was intended to bring together various divisions and functions scattered throughout the city. In 1955, police headquarters, the new Police Administration Building (PAB), aka "The Glass House," opened.

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The old Central Division, built in1896, located near First and Hill Streets.

Parker was blessed with a great group of staff officers, seven deputy chiefs and a dozen inspectors (now commanders). His Chief of Administration was Richard Simon, who kept a very tight rein on all administrative functions. If someone screwed up, they had to report to Chief Simon and get "Simonized" and it was usually a very unpleasant experience. However, it was very much part of the discipline and accountability that was necessary to lift the department out of its past. Some of the Deputy Chiefs and Inspectors of the time were Roger Murdock, Harold Sullivan, Thad Brown, Noel McQuown, Tom Reddin, Bob Houghton, John Kinsling, Ken McCauley, Jack Collins, John Powers, Jim Fisk, Jim Gordon, Jim Fulton, Ed Davis, Pete Hagan and Norm Rector.

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The PAB boasted a new crime lab which took up most of the space on the fourth floor and was headed by one of the best criminalist at the time, Raymond Pinker. This new facility made Ray feel like a kid in a candy store because it had some of the best forensic tools and instruments available anywhere. The building also had a new modern jail or custody facility.

Raymond Pinker, the best criminalists at the time.

In 1955, police headquarters, the new Police Administration Building (PAB) opened.

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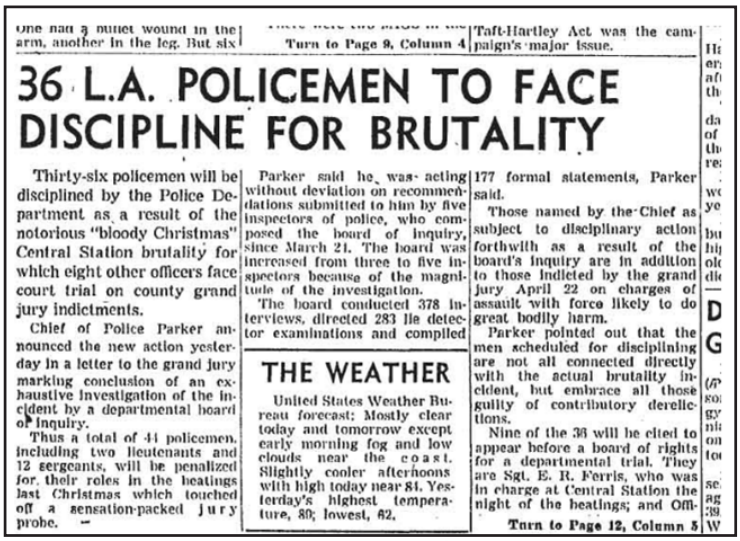
Chief Parker had his share of major events during his tenure. One event provided an early test of his leadership of the department. This event occurred a little more than one year after his appointment to chief and became known as "Bloody Christmas." Officers Nelson Brownson and Julius Trojanowski responded to a report of minors drinking alcohol at the Showboat Bar on Riverside Drive. On arrival, they found Daniel Rodela, Elias Rodela, Jack Wilson, William Wilson, Raymond Marquez, Manuel Hernandez, and Eddie Nora inside. All seven men produced identification verifying they were of drinking age, but the officers insisted that they leave the bar. The men refused, prompting the officers to try and force them out of the bar, which resulted in a fight. The officers were hurt in the scuffle: one sustaining a black eye while the other received a cut requiring stitches.



One had a bullet wound in the arm, another in the leg. But six

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Taft-Hartley Act was the campaign's major issue.

36 L.A. POLICEMEN TO FACE DISCIPLINE FOR BRUTALITY

Thirty-six policemen will be disciplined by the Police Department as a result of the notorious "bloody Christmas" Central Station brutality for which eight other officers face court trial on county grand jury indictments.

Chief of Police Parker announced the new action yesterday in a letter to the grand jury marking conclusion of an exhaustive investigation of the incident by a departmental board of inquiry.

Thus a total of 44 policemen, including two lieutenants and 12 sergeants, will be penalized for their roles in the beatings last Christmas which touched off a sensation-packed jury probe.

Parker said he was acting without deviation on recommendations submitted to him by five inspectors of police, who composed the board of inquiry, since March 21. The board was increased from three to five inspectors because of the magnitude of the investigation.

The board conducted 378 interviews, directed 283 lie detector examinations and compiled 177 formal statements, Parker said.

Those named by the Chief as subject to disciplinary action forthwith as a result of the board's inquiry are in addition to those indicted by the grand jury April 22 on charges of assault with force likely to do great bodily harm.

Parker pointed out that the men scheduled for disciplining are not all connected directly with the actual brutality incident, but embrace all those guilty of contributory dereliction.

Nine of the 36 will be cited to appear before a board of rights for a departmental trial. They are Sgt. E. R. Ferris, who was in charge at Central Station the night of the beatings; and Offi-

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THE WEATHER

United States Weather Bureau forecast: Mostly clear today and tomorrow except early morning fog and low clouds near the coast. Slightly cooler afternoons with high today near 84. Yesterday's highest temperature, 80; lowest, 62.

A false rumor began to circulate in the department regarding the incident at the bar alleging one of the involved officers lost an eye in the fight. Several hours later, all of the suspects involved in the earlier altercation were taken from their homes, arrested and taken to central jail. Daniel Rodela, however, was taken to Elysian Park, and beaten to the point where he required two blood transfusions at a hospital because of his injuries. While at Central Jail, the other suspects were removed from their cells and savagely beaten by as many as fifty officers, some of whom had been drinking in celebration of the Christmas holiday. As a result of this incident a grand jury convened and eight officers were charged criminally. Seven were convicted and one was sentenced to a year in prison. There was a great deal of public outcry over this incident and considerable political discussion about the department being able to conducting its own personnel investigations. Parker was adamant in having his internal affairs investigators pursue the matter as well as cooperating with the grand jury investigation. After the grand jury indictments, Parker transferred 54 officers—including two deputy chiefs—and suspended 39 other officers. His actions clearly set a tone for his expectations and his no nonsense approach to discipline.

There were other hallmarks to his tenure as chief. For example, the department became one of the first police agencies in the country to purchase a helicopter for traffic control in 1956. Parades, sporting events, conventions and special attractions consumed a great many man-hours in the fifties as it does today. One such year of celebration was 1958 because it marked Los Angeles having its own major league baseball team, the Los Angeles Dodgers. In 1959, the department had 575 special events including the visit of Soviet Russian Premier Nikita Khrushchev. By the way, there is no truth to the rumor that he pounded his shoe on Parker's desk as he would do at a United Nations meeting in 1960. He was upset, however, when his request to visit Disneyland was not approved by the department and the State Department.

The sixties marked the beginning of Parkers second decade as chief. Los Angeles had been selected as the site for the 1960 Democratic Convention held at the Los Angeles Sports Arena. The department continued to make significant capital improvements in its facilities, including new stations for West Valley and in

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1961 Foothill Division. At the same time, University Division, now Southwest, was nearing completion. The Los Angeles International Airport substation was also opened. Technology continued to improve as well and the department began to use the breathalyzer as a tool for driving under the influence investigations. Crime reports were being copied by an offset duplicating machine and portable two-way radios were being provided to detectives. Like every decade, this one was no stranger to catastrophe. 1961 was a major brush fire season with two major fires simultaneously springing up in Bel-Air and Topanga Canyon, severely testing department resources. Tragedy was about to strike a little closer to home.

In March 1963, two Hollywood Division officers, Karl Hettinger and Ian Campbell were working a plain-clothes felony car when they stopped Jimmy Smith and Gregory Powell for a traffic violation. Powell was armed and forced the officers to surrender their weapons. The officers were handcuffed, kidnapped and taken to an onion field in Bakersfield. Both officers were told to get out of the car. Powell shot Campbell first and as he fell, Powell fired several more rounds into him. At that moment, Hettinger fled, running through barbed wire and a volley of gunfire, for nearly a mile to a ranch house where he secured assistance. The detail of this story and the two officers was captured in Sergeant Joseph Wambaugh's best-selling book, *The Onion Field*. The history of The Onion Field lives on here at the LA Police Museum as it does in the lives of many others including the Campbell and Hettinger families.

The sixties also saw a shift in the jail operations of the department. For many years, the Department maintained the nation's largest city jail system, housing more than 5500 prisoners. A legislative change in 1962 initiated a shift in handling misdemeanor prisoners from the city to the county. The department had operated a rehabilitation center near Castaic since 1954. More than 20,000 persons underwent treatment at the facility, principally for alcoholism. The center included some 32 major structures, farming over 125 acres, planting 20,500 trees and shrubs and the construction of a one million gallon reservoir. Likewise, most of the department' stations had trustees assigned who would provide station maintenance and caring for the vehicle fleet. By the mid-sixties, the department was no longer handled sentenced prisoners. The mid-sixties also saw the construction of a new Hollenbeck station and a Rampart station. The population of the city continued to increase. However, the department did not correspondingly expand to meet the population needs and the net result was a fewer number of officers serving a larger population.

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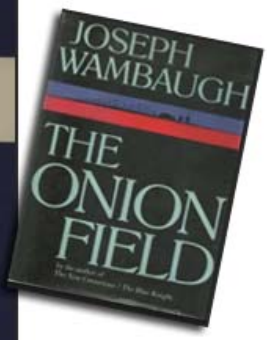

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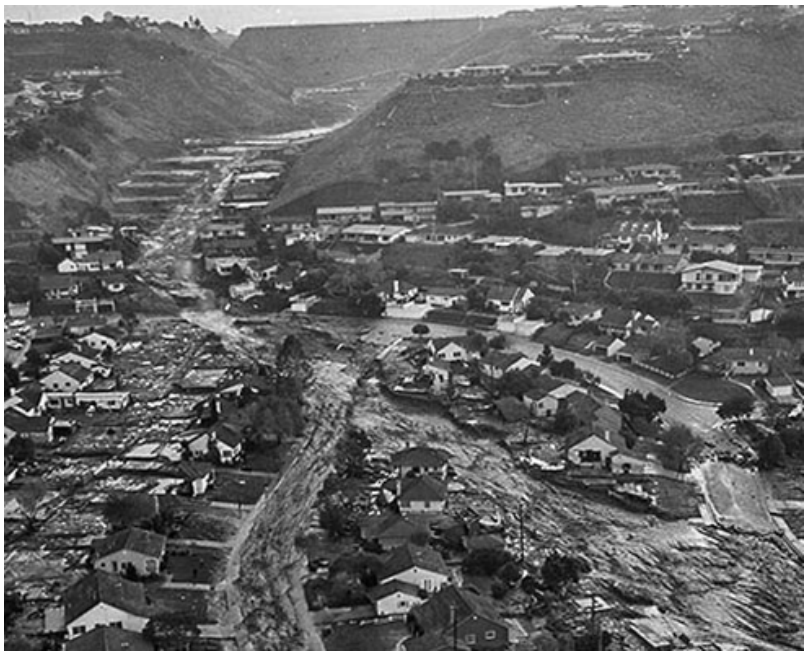
There were many other significant events during Parker's final years as chief. The department revised the use of the Daily Training Bulletins, which had been initiated in 1948 and deactivated in 1952. The bulletins became a new vehicle for providing training information to officers in the field to keep them abreast of procedural and legislative changes. Another major natural disaster in the sixties occurred in the Baldwin Hills area. A 259 million gallon reservoir in Baldwin Hills developed a leak and soon a major failure of the external wall of the dam was noted. On December 14, 1963, the department began the urgent task of evacuating residents and businesses that were in danger because of the dam's failure. Within two hours, a twenty-five foot section of the dam gave way and tons of water and debris washed down the hillside. Five lives were lost and more than $15 million in property loss was reported.



In 1964, the department developed its own Explorer Scout post under the authority of the Boy Scouts of America. While the first post was started in Accident Investigation Division, soon every station had its own group of police explorers, young people between the ages of 14 and 20 who were interested in a law enforcement career.

On August 11, 1965, the California Highway Patrol Officer Lee Minikus stopped an alleged drunk driver, Marquette Frye, near Avalon Boulevard and Imperial Highway. A hostile crowd of about 300-500 people began to gather during the field sobriety test and assistance was sought from the Los Angeles Police Department. People driving in the area reported being assaulted by rocks and bottles. Officers were also subjected to rocks, bottles and pieces of concrete. Seventeen officers subsequently received medical treatment. The Rioting seemed to subside during the day of August 12, only to flare up again when darkness fell. Anarchy seemed to fall over the southern part of the city and it continued for days. The California National guard was requested and other Los Angeles County law enforcement resources were also used. It is estimated that between 31,000 and 35,000 adults participated in the riots over

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the course of six days, while about 70,000 people were sympathetic, but not active. Over the six days, there were 34 deaths, 1,032 injuries, 3,438 arrests, and over $40 million in property damage. From the perspective of officers in the field, it was a community out of control and people were exhibiting little regard for property or for other people. Buildings were burned, calls for service could not be answered, and streets were littered. There was debris everywhere, in the streets and on the sidewalks. Mobs were screaming. People were yelling. Raw anger was evident. In some places there was a human tidal wave of thieves and opportunists. Store windows were broken. Blocks of commercial buildings were destroyed. Men, women and children were carrying away anything of value, or anything they thought had value.

When it was over, there were investigations at various government levels. Promises were made and recognition of multiple factors such as unemployment and poverty as contributing to the riot. There were also recommendations made for the department to consider. As a result, Chief Parker appointed Inspector James Fisk to head all community relations programs in the department. Under his leadership lieutenants in geographic areas were appointed as Community Relations Officers. Their role was to develop a better understanding between diverse communities and the department. Another program that grew out of the Watts riot was Special Weapons and Tactics Team. During the riot, officers came under attack from snipers and their ability to respond was limited. One hundred and twenty men, with their own weapons, volunteered to be a part of this new organization. The applicants had to undergo rifle qualification at 100, 200 and 300 yards on a pistol targets. Fifty-four were designated as proficient at all three distances and thirty-three were designated proficient at 100 and 200 yards. Four teams were then designated. The team members retained their regular assignments and it was proposed they would be called if needed.

Chief Parker was known to be consumed with work, taking little time off during his tenure. He never stopped working and rarely refused requests for public appearances. He continued to work even after having undergone a dangerous operation for an aortal aneurysm and resection. He was driven to seek continual improvement in the department. There was always more to do. There was always reason to expect more. On July 16, 1966, after speaking at the Second Marine Division Association banquet at the Statler Hotel (later the Hilton Hotel) at Wilshire and Figueroa in downtown Los Angeles, he suffered a fatal heart attack at 61 years of age. Parker was, like most of us, an imperfect human being. It could be argued that he was too intolerant of those who did not strive for excellence with his same zeal. He left a legacy and an example to be maintained by all future Los Angeles police officers and for all police agencies. His legacy provides that honest, professional law enforcement is an attainable goal. His body lay in state in the City Hall rotunda where crowds lined up for blocks to bid him a final farewell. There was an overwhelming outpouring of respect from the public and from those who admired him. The respect and admiration for him continues today. ❑

LOS ANGELES POLICE MUSEUM
6045 York Boulevard
Los Angeles, CA 90042-3503

OPERATED BY
LOS ANGELES POLICE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

ISSUE NO. 72 LOS ANGELES POLICE MUSEUM APRIL - MAY 2016

MUSEUM & GIFT SHOP

Hours of Operation:
Monday to Friday 10:00am-4:00pm
3rd Saturday of the month 9:00am- 3:00pm

Admission Fees:

MEMBERS FREE

General (ages 13 thru 61) $9.00
Seniors (age 62+) $8.00
(Includes Audio Tour)
Youth (Age 12 and under) ..... FREE*
* Must be accompanied by an adult
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