

# CARBARNERS

## PAY PENALTY

### Marx and Vandine Embrace Religion, But Neidermeir Refuses--All Meet Their Deserved Fate Stolidly

Chicago, April 22--Peter Neidermeir, pale and weak from his double attempt at suicide, stubbornly refusing to embrace religion within a few hours of certain death, joking and laughing with his guard and smoking cigarettes the greater part of the night, isolated from Marx and Vandine, his companions in crime, who themselves, converted to the Christian faith, spent the night in peaceful slumber, were the incidents that marked the closing hours of the Auto matic trio. None of the bandits showed signs of weakening. While Neidermeir did not go to sleep until 5, Marx retired at 1:30 and Vandine two hours later. Vandine's last hours were spent writing letters to his mother and relatives. While the two condemned men slept, holy candles burned by their bedside.

Up to midnight, Marx and Vandine played sixty-six, Vandine winning the last game. Ten minutes later they bade each other farewell to meet on the scaffold.

Neidermeir slept until 8:20. "Well!" he growled to the jailer, while the man who stood by his bedside was preparing to awaken him. "It's nearly nine, Pete, how do you feel?" said the jailer. Neidermeir arose and turned his back on his jailer without reply, and stolidly moved away.

"Anything you want, Pete?" "Yes, to be let alone," snapped the bandit.

Chicago April 22--Neidermeir's breakfast consisted of berries, cream, and vegetables.

Mamie Dunn, Vandine's sweetheart, arrived early and was admitted to the office of the jail. She left clean lined and a white silk shroud. The garments were taken to Vandine's cell. He donned them, stopping in the act to feel the texture of the silk, pulling the loose threads from it, then resumed his seat on the bed, where he read his prayer book, after eating his breakfast of strawberries and cream and eggs.

Two Sisters of Mercy were eagerly greeted when they came in.

Mark, who breakfasted in a similar manner, was permitted to enter the prison chapel with Vandine, and together with the sisters the bandits prayed for an hour. Before leaving their cells, the doomed men gathered their effects and sent them to the jail office and the undertaker was then admitted to see them.

Neidermeir was morose sullen and more visibly affected than the others. Father Cox gave Neidermeir a book entitled "Notes on Ingersoll." The bandit read four pages and then returned the volume with the comment:

"I get my opinions from my own thoughts, not from Ingersoll nor any one else. I wish I could believe in your religion. If I could hypnotize myself into the belief that I was going somewhere to be happy forever, don't you think I would be glad to die?"

"The world is all wrong. There's no attractions for men like me. We grow up in the slums half starved and always miserable. We work day after day like slaves, only to die miserably. Chicago is full of boys like me, growing up without advice or help. I've been pretty bad, I admit, but I'm going to pay all the penalty I shall ever pay, this morning."

"If the church did something they would do more good than they can by converting men about to be hanged. But you do some good; you've cheered two men in the other cells into the belief that they are going to Heaven. That's consoling to them. If you had not got Vandine into that belief, it would have taken a dozen men to strap him for the noose."

At ten the jailer notified the men to get ready, and announced that the hangings would be separate.

Delay was caused by Neidermeir's refusal to permit the guards to escort him to the scaffold. He was carried through the long corridor. A thousand prisoners signaled the hour of execution by shouting "Hats off." Another shout warned those in the execution chamber of the approach of the condemned.

Neidermeir was pale and trembling as he approached. The doomed man was quickly pushed into an upright position on the drop. The jailer strapped his arms and legs, adjusted the white domino and noose and stepped back, and the drop fell at 10:30.

For six minutes the body writhed and twisted. The doctors gathered about to feel the pulse. "The man is conscious," said one, "He realizes his condition. He may be too numb to feel physical pain but his mind is not clouded to know the solemn import of the event taking place."

The doctors' fingers felt the pulse fully five minutes, when life became extinct.

"Neidermeir kept up his stubborn resistance to religious counsel. Weakened by his efforts to commit suicide, he barely could sit alone in the chair in which he was carried under the dreaded loop, but at the last moment he held his head erect, to enable the jailer to adjust the noose and then it fell limply on his breast.

Neidermeir's body was cut down at 10:55. Two hundred officials and spectators witnessed the executions. After Neidermeir's body had been removed, the jailer closed the trap and tried the rope for the second victim, then returned to the chapel to escort Marx.

Marx, who was praying rose and tried to speak. He turned to Vandine, who was kneeling with him and extended his hand. The men stood silent a moment, then embraced each other. "Good bye, Gus," exclaimed Vandine. "Keep a brave heart, old man. Remember what the priest says: we shall be together again."

Marx answered in an inaudible under-

tone and the journey to the scaffold began, while another about came from the prisoners. Two priests uttered prayers while Marx waited for the black cap to be adjusted, and submitted to being strapped. The drop fell at 11:17. The convulsions lasted two minutes and death ensued in six minutes.

Marx before stepping on the scaffold requested none to speak to him as he was concentrating his mind on religion. He was in the midst of prayer when the drop fell. His body was cut down at 11:34.

The yellow grass rope was then removed from his neck, and again tied and tested for the third victim. Marx neck was broken.

Vandine was found in prayer when the executioners visited the chapel. Two priests took positions by his side, and with eyes bent on the crucifix in his hand, the march began.

Arriving at the scaffold, Vandine held his head erect to permit the adjustment of the noose. While he was uttering a prayer the drop fell at 11:55 1-2. The short muscular body hung without a movement. Death was almost instantaneous, the neck being broken.

The bodies will be left at the undertakers' until Monday, and with the consent of the families, sight-seers may view the remains.

Eight murders were committed by the youthful desperadoes known as the "Carbarn Gang." Neidermeir, their leader before his execution confessed to having killed five additional men whose names he did not know. All the crimes of the trio were characterized by the same absence of moral sense that is displayed by the beast of prey when it destroys a victim.

Criminal annals nowhere have produced more soulless or pitiless monsters than these beardless boys. They were products of atavism and degeneracy. Each murderer had a drunken father. They grew up in Chicago's slums, frequented "sawdust saloons", read nickel novels, belonged to "boys' athletic clubs" and began their criminal careers by stealing lead pipe from vacant houses.

A cowardly, slow-witted lounge, Emil Roeki was taken into their confidence. He carried their weapons and tools when they ordered him to do so.

On July 9, 1903 before midnight, the gang held up a saloon. Roeki entered it and ordered a glass of beer. His confederates followed, pistols in hands. The saloon-keeper and patrons fled. The robbers emptied their pistols at the fleeing men, killing Otto Bauder, a half-grown boy.

Almost nightly thereafter the bandits robbed saloons and pedestrians until August 23, when they killed B. C. La Gross and Adolph Jensen in a saloon. The bandits ceased operations until police search for them subsided. Realizing their danger they planned a "big job and a get away."

At 3 a. m. August 30th. Neidermeir, Van Dine and Marx held up the street car barns at 61st. and State sts. Frank Stewart, a cashier, had the day's receipts on a desk in front of him, counting them. Henry Biehl and James Edmunds, clerks, assisted him. James Johnson a motorman lay asleep on a bench beside a door communicating with the employes waiting room.

Neidermeir approached the window a few feet distant, thrust his pistol through a pane of glass and emptied it at the three clerks. Marx rushed into the waiting-room, Johnson opened his eyes to discover the cause of the noise and Marx shot him in the head. Van

Dine, sledge hammer in hand, burst in the door of the cashier's room, Biehl staggered to a closet and hid there stanching the flow of blood from the wound and watching the robbers. Edmunds lay on the floor on his face and feigned dead. Stewart and Johnson were slain outright. The three bandits ran into the room scooped up \$2250 and escaped.

They divided the money at daylight in a park. Before their departure from the city Van Dine and Neidermeir held up a suburban express and ticket office on the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad and failed in an attempt to dynamite the tracks, so they could rob a train. The bandits fled the city, but three months later they returned to rob other car barns.

Detectives John Quinn and William Blaul learned that Marx had a pistol of the kind used by the car barn robbers. They found him in a saloon on the night of November 22. Quinn and Blaul separated and entered the saloon, Quinn by the side door, behind him. On Blaul's entrance Marx jerked out his pistol and leveled it at the detective. He heard Quinn behind him and wheeled, shooting the latter through the abdomen. Blaul and Marx emptied their revolvers at each other. The detective wounded the desperado several times and took him to the police station.

After three days confinement Marx believed his accomplice had deserted him and he confessed to the murderous crimes they had committed. Van Dine, Neidermeir and Roeki were within a block of the police station, waiting to dynamite it and kill the turnkeys, to carry out a pact to rescue Marx, when the newspapers announced Marx's confession. They fled to Miller's Station, Ind., and hid in a hole in a hillside. Their hiding place became known to seven Chicago detectives, who surrounded the dugout. The outlaws gave battle fatally wounding Detective Joseph Driscoll and shooting Detective Matthew Zimmer through the temple. They made a dash to a nearby railroad track through a fusillade of bullets. I. J. Soeva, a brakeman tried to prevent them from seizing a locomotive, and was instantly killed. Van Dine and Neidermeir rode the engine to Liverpool, Ind., where their progress was stopped by a locked switch. They abandoned the engine and fled across corn fields under fire from a posse of farmers.


Wounded and bleeding and numbed by the zero temperature, in which they had been exposed for hours, Van Dine and Neidermeir surrendered to the farmers just as a posse of 100 policemen, armed with winchesters and determined to avange their comrades, arrived on a special train. Roeki was picked up an hour later.

Five months later Van Dine, Neidermeir and Marx were tried, convicted and sentenced to death for the carbarn murders.

Roeki was tried separately for the Bauder murder.

Van Dine professed religion but Neidermeir refused all spiritual advice, declaring there was neither a heaven nor a hell.

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