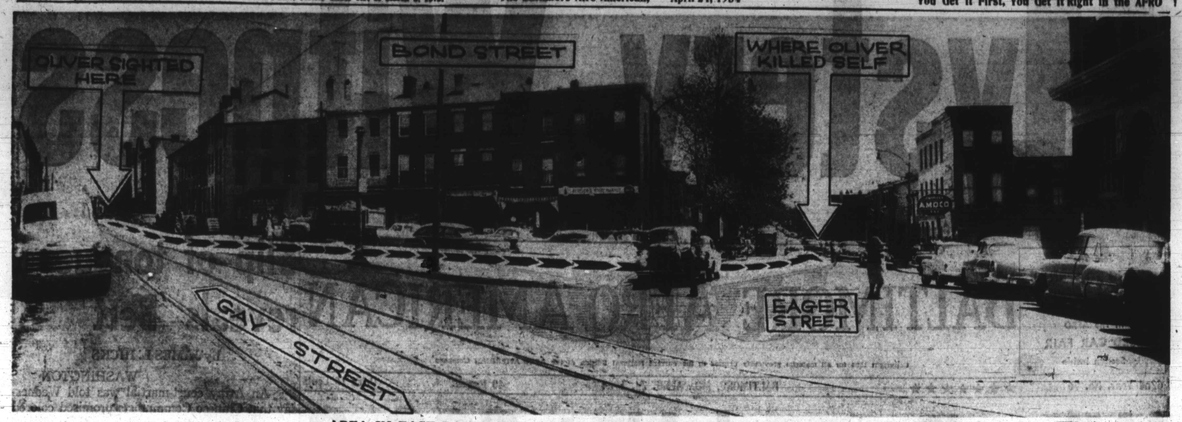

AREA IN EAST BALTIMORE WHERE "BANG BANG" OLIVER MET DEATH

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Edward T. Ellis has been appointed sales manager in charge of tea sales for McCormick & Company, Inc., by Charles P. McCormick, company president and chairman of the board has announced.

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MELVIN OLIVER
Shoots self with .45

—Body at morgue

(Continued from Page 1)

of a sister from New York City.

Oliver ended his own life on Wednesday morning when he placed a .45 caliber pistol to his head and pulled the trigger.

His death ended one of the largest scale man hunts in the annals of the Baltimore police department. Oliver had been sought for almost three days in connection with the brutal murder of Officer Aubrey Lowman at Division and Mosher sts.

Found on Oliver's body when he was taken to Johns Hopkins Hospital was a note in which Oliver admitted that he "shot the policeman to avoid a lifetime in prison." Capt. Julian I. Forrest said that note was written neatly and police were still not positive that it had been written by Oliver.

When did the story of Melvin Oliver really begin?

You could say it started on Jan. 29, 1945, when he was only 18 years old and was sent to the Maryland Penitentiary for ten years, after being convicted on eight burglary charges.

Given New Name

In prison his fellow inmates gave him the name "Bang Bang" because most of his talk was of guns. He was far from being a model prisoner. If he had behaved himself in prison he could have gotten out in a little less than seven years with time off for good behavior.

However Oliver served his time the "hard way." He spent time in the segregation unit, where the prisoners who refuse to submit to discipline are kept. Once he hid in the cellar of a penitentiary shop building, in what was believed to be an escape plan.

After slightly more than eight years in prison, he was released. It was May 1953.

Police lost track of Oliver for several months but recently officers in the Southwest area began a search for the ex-convict in connection with a burglary in which a shot was fired at a policeman.

What was Oliver doing in the meantime? As far as can be learned there is no evidence that he had any visible means of support, but he was known to frequent night clubs in the vicinity of the Lafayette market.

Saw Automobile

It was a few minutes before midnight on Sunday when a passerby noticed an automobile parked near Mosher and Division sts. He recognized the car as one that had been stolen from a friend.

The friend was notified and he in turn notified police. Officer Lowman was detailed to watch the car. A few minutes later he was dead and Oliver who had been a burglar now became a murder suspect.

Who Was Lowman?

Who was Officer Lowman? He was a policeman who had spent almost 12 years in the Northwestern district. He was an ex-boxer who fought under the name "Al Lowman." He was a policeman who was respected and liked by the people who knew him on his beat.

He was a frequent visitor at Provident Hospital, at the Royal Theatre, at the places on his beat. That's why the merchants along Pennsylvania ave. bought a floral piece for his funeral.

They say he was a "good guy."

After shooting Officer Lowman, Oliver was a hunted man. Every policeman in town was looking for him, and they were helped by the scores of plain citizens who were horrified at the brutality of the murder.

Name Withold

In the early stages of the manhunt, police did not release Oliver's name, but early Tuesday they labeled him as the man they wanted and his picture appeared in the AFRO and other newspapers.

Police also announced that shortly after the murder took place a man answering Oliver's description had held up two persons in a house on Argyle ave. and stolen a quantity of clothes.

The manhunt continued through Monday and Tuesday. Early Wednesday morning, an ex-convict who had served time with Oliver, told police the man had been seen at Fremont ave. and Lombard st.

Almost At End

He was described as wearing a khaki jacket, and khaki pants. The new description was broadcast and the end was almost at hand.

It came a short time later when Oliver was spotted on Gay st. He fired a shot at police and ran south on Gay up Bond st. for one block and down the middle of Eager st. to a car that was double parked.

Perhaps Oliver thought that the keys were in the ignition but they were not. Whatever the reason that prompted him to jump in the car, it became his execution chamber.

One bullet fired through his head by his own hand and the story was at an end. Melvin Oliver had come to the end of the line.

Ask any policeman, he'll tell you:

"You can't get away with killing a cop."

—Crew censured

(Continued from Page 1)

dent, which is a predominatly colored institution.

He said that when the ambulance crew arrived on the scene the place was swarming with police, and the two firemen heard someone mention the Maryland General Hospital. They immediately placed the officer in the ambulance and took him to the hospital at Linden ave. and Madison st.

Police Absolved

Chief Lotz said an investigation of the incident had been conducted by officials of the Fire Department and the two men had been given instructions to follow the department rule which requires that all injured persons be taken to the nearest hospital.

Meanwhile, Northwest District Capt. Millard Horton said that police had nothing to do with the decision to take the officer to Maryland General.

Captain Horton said that when an ambulance crew arrives on the scene of an accident, that they then assume responsibility for the patient and they decide to which hospital he will be transported.

In the past President has treated a number of white accident victims, a nurse who has been at the hospital for ten years, said on Thursday.

Most of the white patients treated at Provident have been victims of accidents that took place near the hospital, the nurse said. She was unable to give the number of such persons but she said that it was "considerable."

Wife in Retirement

Under the strain of the tragedy, Mrs. Lowman was in complete retirement during the week.

Members of the family were reluctant to talk about the situation. Asked specifically whether the family would have had any objection to Officer Lowman's being taken to Provident hospital, a brother said:

"Certainly there is no issue there. My brother had a lot of colored friends."

High ranking officers attend funeral services for Aubrey Lowman

Headed by Col. Beverly Ober, all the high ranking officers of the Police Department accorded an inspector's funeral today (Friday) to Officer Aubrey Lowman.

The short services were held at All Soul's Episcopal church, a small white frame building at Second and Jeffery sts., Brooklyn. Some 200 uniformed honor guard for the funeral officer, about ten per cent of whom were colored, formed an honor guard for the funeral procession.

An estimated crowd of about 200 neighbors gathered at the scene, standing under a hot sun to watch the proceedings. The church was so small that the honor guard remained outside during the funeral services.

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D. ARNETT MURPHY, Vice-President and Managing Editor
MAE E. DYSON, Secretary
ELIZABETH M. PHILLIPS, Asst. Sec'y
CARL MURPHY, President
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National Representative
ASSOCIATED NEGRO PRESS, INC. 51 West 48th Street — New York, N.Y. 164 W. Washington Street—Chicago, Ill. West Coast — Wesley C. Gaines Company 4401 Suite Bldg.—San Francisco, Cal. 4513 Hollywood Blvd.—Los Angeles, Cal.
BALTIMORE AFRO-AMERICAN 628 N. Tryon Street MU. 5-8010
WASHINGTON AFRO-AMERICAN 1840 Minnesota Ave., S.E. LU. 2-8400
PHILADELPHIA AFRO-AMERICAN 527 S. Broad Place WA. 5-7291
RICHMOND AFRO-AMERICAN 301 E. Clay Street MO. 2-7111
NEW JERSEY AFRO-AMERICAN 176 W. Kinney Street MA. 2-8075 Newark 2, N.J.
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CURIOUS CLOG AREA—More than 500 curious East Baltimoreans swarmed around Bond and Eager sts., Wednesday morning, shortly after Melvin Oliver, wanted for killing Patrolman Aubrey Lowman, blew his brains out with a .45 cal. automatic.

—Witness suicide

(Continued From Page 1)

wanted to see what was happening," was Howard Sommerville's laconic comment on the police chase and suicide.

Another calm witness to Oliver's violent death was Carl Hoggard, owner of a garage located a few doors from the corner of Bond and Eager sts.

Mr. Hoggard was getting in his car, preparatory to going for some automotive parts when he heard pistol shots. As he looked around, Oliver came around the corner and dashed to Julius Wolfson's car.

Sees Suicide

His body partly shielded by another car, Hoggard watched to see what Oliver was going to do. Meanwhile the police cruiser backed around the corner, and he saw the officers talking to the boy.

Seconds later a shot rang out and Mr. Hoggard could see the man in the car slump over to the right - hand side of the auto seat.

The police also heard the shot, careened up the street in the police cruiser and leaped out. Just as the officers dashed to the car with drawn guns, Mr. Hoggard said:

"You don't have to shoot him, he's already dead."

He was right.

On Street Corner

Mrs. Lily Mae Suddeth, a Seventh Day Adventist mission worker living in the 2000 block Walbrook ave., was standing on the corner of Bond and Eager sts., when the police cruiser wheeled around the corner.

Almost simultaneously she heard the shot which snuffed out Oliver's life. Rushing to the car on the heels of the policeman, Mrs. Suddeth said: "It looked like the whole top of the man's head was blown off."

Mrs. Selena Edmonds, 1624 E. Eager st., was on the sidewalk in front of her house playing with her two-year-old son, Emmanuel, when Oliver fired the gun.

Grabbing the son to her bosom, the young mother ran to her vestibule. When she looked down the street, the police were approaching the car with drawn guns.

"When I looked up to see what was happening, after hearing the shot, it was all over, "Mrs. Edmonds said.

In On Beginning

John Fowlkes, barber in a shop at 1028 N. Gay st., saw the beginning of the whole affair. Oliver was looking in a wallpaper and paint store located across the street from the barber shop when the police spied him.

"When the police car drove up the man looked down at the window. When the car had passed he looked back, and the police car stopped.

"The police car started backing up. The man pulled out a gun and started shooting.

"I left," said Mr. Fowlkes.

Indifferent Witness

Mrs. Hattie Bright, 1032 N. Gay st., was standing in front of her house, when the shooting started. "I heard the shots and when I looked up the man was running down the street.

"I didn't see any more, because I didn't even go down to Eager st. to see what was going on.

"I heard the man killed himself — did he?" Mrs. Bright asked.

Commends Policemen

Capt. Julian Forrest, commanding the Northeastern district, warmly commended Patrolmen Bayne and Holle. "It was a fine piece of police work and all on description," the police official declared.

Shortly after news of Oliver's death was broadcast over police radio, Commissioner Beverly Ober was one of the high ranking officials who rushed to the scene.

Commissioner Ober also praised the police work and commended the two police officers.

Following the suicide, the area was soon clogged tight with police cars.

Police Cars Jam Area

Several colored plainclothesmen were at the scene. Detective Milton Gardner and William Burke arrived with other detectives.

Patrolmen Carl Owens, Leroy Moody, Neal Brockington, Flan Couch, and James Watkins arrived in un-marked police cars.

A rapidly gathering crowd of more than 500 persons milled in the block.

Women Peer At Body

Many of these sightseers, some of them women, ran to the car to peer at Oliver's body.

The car owner, Mr. Woolfson, a salesman for the Caplan-Farber co., was collecting a payment in the house of Mrs. Mildred Harrison, 3607 Eager st. when Oliver used his car for a hiding place.

The first officers to arrive at the scene were quickly briefed on what happened. They fanned out and, augmented by fellow patrolmen, dispersed the crowd clustered around the automobile.

The ambulance arrived and rushed the man to Johns Hopkins hospital where he was officially pronounced dead.

It was still not certain as to whether the dead man was Oliver, the cop-killing suspect.

A fingerprint crew raced to the hospital from Police Headquarters.

These experts compared the dead man's prints with that of the suspect and verified his identity as that of Melvin Oliver, 1800 block Laurens st., wanted for Patrolman Lowman's murder.

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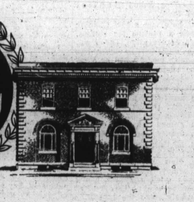

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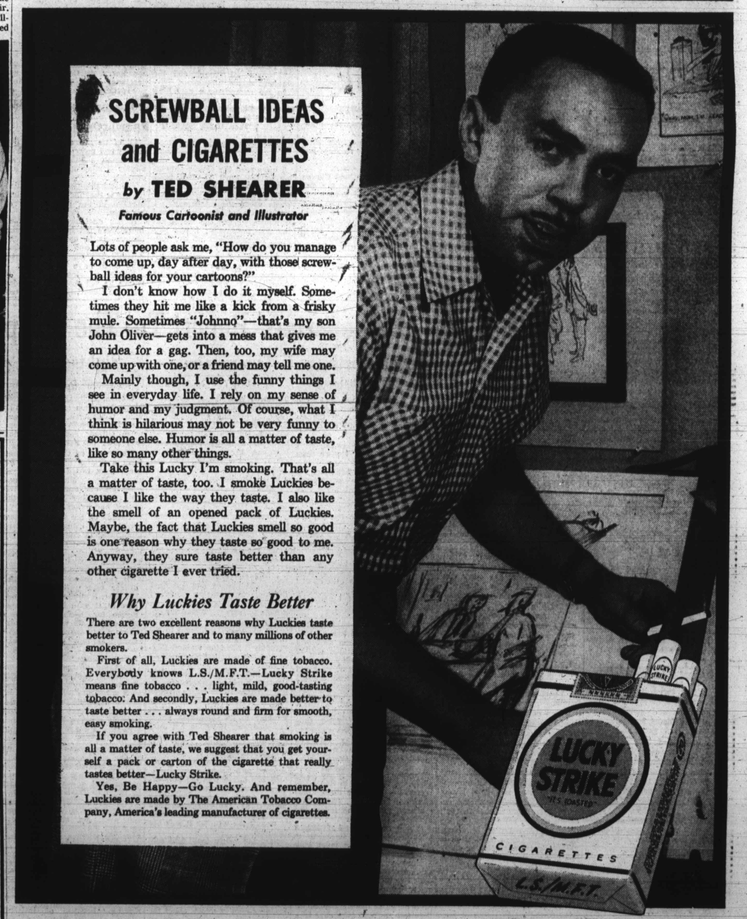

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Mainly though, I use the funny things I see in everyday life. I rely on my sense of humor and my judgment. Of course, what I think is hilarious may not be very funny to someone else. Humor is all a matter of taste, like so many other things.
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