

## Organized Crime

During the 1920s, organized crime blossomed. The expansion of organized crime was a result of prohibition as large crime syndicates began their own bootlegging operations. Crime gangs fought each other with the intentions of protecting their territory and expanding into the territory of others. This created a constant stream of murders, with Chicago becoming the murder capital of America. Unsurprisingly, Al Capone, leader of one of the most notorious gangs, resided in Chicago.

Bullet proof vests were an invention of gunmen from crime gangs. These vests would absorb the impact of bullets and protect the wearer during inter-gang conflict or conflict with police officers. To combat the protection offered by the vests, police officers began carrying more powerful firearms such as the .38 Super and .357 Magnum.

A bloody example of the criminal acts of bootlegging gangs is the Saint Valentine's Day Massacre. Al Capone and George "Bugs" Moran both ran their bootlegging operations out of Chicago. On February 14, 1929, seven members of Moran's gang were gunned down while standing against a wall of a garage. Over 70 rounds of ammunition were fired into the men.

When police arrived on the scene, one gang member remained barely alive, but gave no answers when the police asked him for information as to what occurred in the garage before dying. The police eventually concluded that gunmen



disguised as officers pretended to arrest the gang members and then shot them. Moran and the police immediately blamed Capone, but he claimed he was in Florida during the attack and no one was ever brought to trial for the murders.