

# Haymarket Pub & Brewery

## Mathias Imperial IPA

Chicago, IL

haymarketbeer.com



On May 4, 1886, in Haymarket Square in downtown Chicago (just down the street from Haymarket Pub & Brewery), a worker's rights protest turned violent and resulted in the deaths of at least 11 people, including police officer Mathias J. Degan. The protest, the violence, the deaths and the ensuing fallout is now considered to be the most significant moment in labor relations in American history.

Before the Haymarket Riot, also known as the Haymarket Massacre, relations between workers and business owners in America were in a steady state of decline, especially in industries that required hard labor. Post-Civil War industrialization was occurring all across Chicago as well as the rest of the country and industrial production was reaching new highs. On average, workers were only making about \$1.50 a day and many worked more than 60 hours a week with hundreds of thousands of immigrants making especially low wages. Chicago became a microcosm of the battle between workers and employers and led to multiple city-wide attempts to improve wages and working conditions for laborers.

During this time, many pro-labor groups were created, including anarchist and socialist groups, to try to fight for better working conditions. One notable group was the Knights of Labor who fought for an eight-hour work day and saw their membership rise from 70,000 in 1884 to over 700,000 just two years later. May Day strikes during this period saw as many as 500,000 workers take to the streets in protest across the country.

The trouble in Chicago really started on May 1, 1886 when a group of workers staged a protest at the notorious union-busting McCormick Harvesting Machine Company

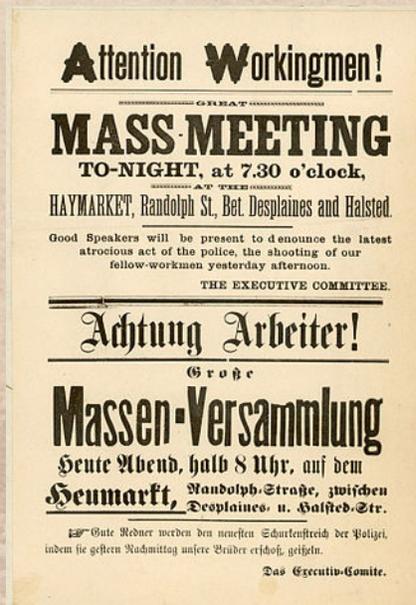
where they were met by over 400 police officers. At the end of the work day on May 3, a group of protestors stormed the front gate and were fired on by police, resulting in the deaths of two workers. Outrage from the incident caused the protestors to instantly organize a rally for the next night in Haymarket Square and they quickly distributed over 20,000 copies of a flyer calling others to action.

The rally began in a peaceful and organized fashion but took a heated turn as more radical speakers took the stage. As many as 3,000 workers attended the event although many had already left before the violence broke out. At about 10:30 in the evening, a large group of police officers began to approach the crowd and demanded that everyone leave the area. At that moment, a homemade bomb filled with dynamite was thrown at the police. When it exploded, it instantly killed Mathias J. Degan and mortally wounded another six officers. Accounts vary as to what happened next, but it is likely that police opened fire on the crowd resulting in the deaths of four workers and injuries to 70 more. Within five minutes the chaos was over and only the casualties remained, littered across Haymarket Square.

News of the event spread across the country and resulted in a huge boost of support for the police in addition to scorn for unions and workers. Eight men were arrested as accessories to Degan's murder even though almost no evidence connected any of them to the attack. Organizers of the rally, speakers at the rally, newspaper publishers and even the man who designed the flyer were all arrested. One man was actually found to have bomb-making materials in his house but still there was no evidence connecting him to the attack. In fact, only two of the eight men were even present when the bomb was thrown and they were actually trying to disperse the crowd as the police had requested. Almost all of those arrested were immigrants.

The trial saw prejudice from the start. The judge overseeing the trial continually supported the prosecution and let the courthouse become wild at times. All eight were found guilty, seven sentenced to death and the other given 15 years in prison. Of the seven, two had their sentences commuted to life in prison, one committed suicide and the other four were hanged on November 11, 1887.

The trial and resulting deaths were condemned around the country by some of the most prominent writers, politicians and celebrities. The labor movement embraced the eight men as heroes and rallied around their unfair treatment. In the months and years that followed, inspired by the plight of the "Haymarket Martyrs", many new labor organizations were formed, resulting in great strides forward for worker safety, wages, working conditions and quality of life. In the end, the Haymarket Riot became a catalyst for advancing labor conditions that quickly spread across the country and around the entire world.



A bilingual version of the flyer that was used to organize the meeting at Haymarket Square



From the Brewer: This Imperial IPA, named after officer Mathias Degan the first officer killed in the Haymarket Square riots of 1886, is hopped and dry hopped with Citra creating huge aromas and flavors of tropical fruit and citrus. ABV 8%, IBU 75

John Neurauter & Pete Crowley - Co-Founders