

# ROGERS, SEA HERO, GUILTY IN BOMBING

Morro Castle Survivor Faces  
5 to 20 Years for Blast That  
Injured Police Superior

TO BE SENTENCED DEC. 15

Decision in the Case Against  
Bayonne Patrolman Is Made  
by Court Without Jury

George W. Rogers, who stuck to his key in the radio room of the Morro Castle while that vessel burned off the New Jersey coast four years ago, was convicted yesterday in Special Sessions Court in Jersey City on a charge of attempting to kill Lieutenant Vincent J. Doyle, his superior in the Bayonne Police Department, with a home-made bomb enclosed in a fish-tank heater. He faces a sentence of five to twenty years in State's Prison.

Rogers, a big, heavy man who was lauded, photographed and interviewed dozens of times after his heroic work on the Morro Castle, did not change countenance when the conviction was announced by Judge Thomas H. Brown. The only sign that he had heard and understood the significance of the judge's words was a whitening of his broad knuckles as he gripped the arms of his chair. When he was shack-

led by an attendant and passed his cell, there was no exchange of glances. She stared straight ahead, fighting back her tears.

The trial lasted nine days. The request of Alexander Simpson, defense counsel, who was prosecutor in the Hall-Mills case some years ago, Judge Brown contended in his long summary yesterday that the State had cost Lieutenant Doyle three years when the heater-bomb exploded in the radio room at Bayonne Headquarters last March 4. It has been caused by an explosion.

**Asserts Proof Was Lacking**  
"There is an absolute failure of proof to show that the explosion was caused by the use of any powder or infernal machine," he asserted, "while, on the other hand, the proof shows that there was electricity present."

The lawyer termed as "so much junk" the material evidence in the case—the cylindrical tank heater with a tail of thirteen inches of wire, and the can of gray paint and bottle of cement found in Rogers's home.

"Just a lot of junk," he repeated, "but nothing to show there was an explosion. There is no powder."

The State had contended that the gray paint found in Rogers's home matched the gray paint with which the "bomb" had been coated and held that the cement matched the cement with which the heater was waterproofed.

William Cahill, assistant prosecutor for Hudson County, spoke one and one-half hours. He contended that Rogers, who joined the Bayonne police force in June, 1936, working under Lieutenant Doyle in the radio repair room, was anxious to attain to Doyle's rank. He admitted, as Mr. Simpson had pointed out, that his case was entirely circumstantial, but declared that the defense had failed to explain away any damaging circumstantial evidence.

He took issue with Mr. Simpson's statement that "Rogers was a hero of the Morro Castle and not the type who would commit this type of crime."

"Rogers," he said, "has lived in Bayonne for twenty-one years and though he claims to be the hero of the Morro Castle, he did not produce a single character witness."

## Judge Ponders on Bench

When Mr. Cahill's summation was over, Judge Brown sat for a few moments, as if in deep thought. He said that he had studied, at the end of each court day, the full transcript of the testimony; that he was familiar with the entire record of the case.

"In this case," he said, "I have had to subject myself to the same rules of law—as if I were sitting with a jury—that is, I must resolve any reasonable doubt in favor of the defendant." He paused for a moment. "After considering all the evidence and all the testimony

adduced at this trial, it is the solemn conclusion of the Court that this defendant is guilty as charged."

The chamber was silent, then a murmur swept the room, but Rogers stared straight ahead.

The Court later remanded him to the custody of the Sheriff, pending passing of sentence on Dec. 15. "I wish to go into further details of this case before I do pass sentence," he added.

Rogers was led from the chamber. Last night he was in a cell in the Hudson County jail. It is understood that the Court may have him examined by alienists before he comes up for sentence.