

The Unsolved Murder of a U.S. Customs Officer

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In 1925, U.S. Customs officers were busy protecting our borders and trying to stop the avalanche of illicit alcohol being smuggled into our nation. The task of enforcing the Prohibition laws was difficult, dangerous and sometimes fatal. Unfortunately, this was the case for U.S. Customs Inspector Orville A. Preuster who met a violent death at his home in Niagara Falls, New York on Sunday, March 1, 1925.

The death of Officer Preuster who was an aggressive enforcer of the Prohibition laws was tragic. The fact that his killer was never brought to justice is heartbreaking. That is right, 97 years after his death in a gangland style car bombing, the case is still unsolved despite the intensive efforts of Federal, state and local law enforcement officers.

The details of this case can be found on the internet at the U.S. Customs and Border Protection Cross Border Podcast. Paste this hyperlink into your web browser to listen to the podcast: <https://podbay.fm/p/cbp-cross-border-podcast-north-border-new-york/e/1589499759>.

After you have listened to the podcast, let us know how you like receiving U.S. Customs history in this format. NCMF may need to explore this method of delivering content.

U.S. Customs Officer Preuster was a widower who left behind two daughters. He is remembered on the CBP Wall of Honor and the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial in Washington D.C.

Primary Sources:

“Customs Official, Hunter of Rum Runners, Killed by Bomb Concealed in His Car,” *The Burlington Free Press* (Burlington, Vermont), March 2, 1925, p. 1.

“Determined to get Solution of Crime,” *The Buffalo News* (Buffalo, New York), March 2, 1925, p. 1.

“Murdered,” *The Buffalo Times* (Buffalo, New York), March 2, 1925, p. 1.

“U.S. Starts Search for Bomb Slayers,” *The Buffalo News* (Buffalo, New York), March 2, 1925, p. 1.