

Detectives at Oak Hill Turning to Horses, Chase Thieves: Date? 1912

Here is the second of a series of articles prepared for Lancaster Farming by Charles Slentz of Quarryville, a look from years ago:

At the annual get-together of the Detective Associations Union at Oak Hill early in January, 1912, one very important piece of routine business preceded adjournment of the meeting of the union which comprised ten companies. That item was "appointing 14 horse-back riders, who will be ready to mount their high spirited horses to run down thieves." While there was no publicized account of what thievery were thwarted by these vigilantes during 1911, the Intercourse Detective Association had a one-theft record for a 12-month period, 19 years later.

Accordingly, this alert group, conceded to be "one of the oldest organizations of its kind in the country," virtually threatened to go out of business when it reviewed this inactivity at its 79th annual report meeting, end of 1930 "Only one theft had been reported during the year — a flock of chickens from the farm of Benjamin Greider, near Gordonville." The 220 members, in considering this unusual lull in pilfering, "agreed that times, indeed, were changing." In contrast, it was said that "once upon a time, the Intercourse Detective Association rode almost nightly upon the trails of horse, chicken and livestock thieves, with fairly good results." But despite the fact that the "total payout for the year ('30) had been \$25 — for Greider's stolen pullets — the boys decided to stick together, just in case"

... And so much for leafing through pages touching on protection for life and property on farm and in countryside.

Speaking of high spirited horses (and we were a few moments ago), a local newspaper paragraph of late Jan., 1907, told about the makings of one in this brief concerning "a wild colt." The animal "owned by Harry Roop which was chanced off here (Andrews Bridge neighborhood) on Thursday night was won by A. B. Simmons, Christina"

The wild and spirited streaks in horse flesh are ever a challenge to riders and drivers. We truly believe that "both horse and driver in this particular piece of news of mid-January, 1912, had plenty of spirit, but judge for yourself as you read about this farmer's thrilling, though imagined race "One of East Drumore township's prosperous farmers, while on his way home from Quarryville recently, thought he was racing down the pike. It was about dusk and it was the rattling noise of the other wagon that he had tied on behind his that made it appear to him that some one was trying to pass him. When near Unicorn the people heard him coming like Jehu of old, crying out 'You can't pass me! Come on! No, you did not!' He felt flat when he discovered his mistake"

Philadelphia to Unicorn

Another horse-rider news-flash of January (this time, 49 years ago) — and the rider might well have been a worthy mounted candidate for any detective association, for note. "James Watson purchased a horse in Philadelphia, riding it all the way home" — meaning, to Unicorn

Post-holiday week fires, in 1905, plagued both city and county. In Lancaster, "flames broke out in a frame stable at the rear of the Hoffman House, fronting on West Mifflin St., and quickly consumed the structure, along with three horses and the rolling stock owned by A. E. Rudy, of the Standard Ice Cream Co., who occupied part of the building as a manufactory." On two farms, Christmas time of the same year, eight horses were lost, as well as other stock, crops and equipment. One fire result-

ed in the destruction of a "large barn on the farm of Mrs. Julia M. D. Lant, halfway between the Harrisburg Turnpike and the railroad bridge over Little Conestoga Creek." In addition to two horses, the following contents of the barn were also burned: "20 head of steers and cows, 20 pigs and 250 chickens, along with the year's yield of corn, the year's crop of tobacco and all the farm equipment. . . . They were able to save only one horse and one small wagon."

The other fire leveled the large barn on the farm of Mr. David W. Jackson, one mile northwest of Bartville. This large structure, almost new, housed six horses, one cow, 15 head of steers, crops and farming implements valued at thousands of dollars. Everything was destroyed, the barn reduced to ashes."

Something to Beef About

While destructive fires invariably give losers considerable cause for lament, a man not too far from the Octoraro neighborhood really had "something to beef about," just forty-four years ago this month. The man was John B. Keene, of Green Tree, and the story goes that he, "with a few of his kind neighbors, attempted to butcher his beef one the fence and made his escape, coming toward Green Tree. There he turned north and was lost to

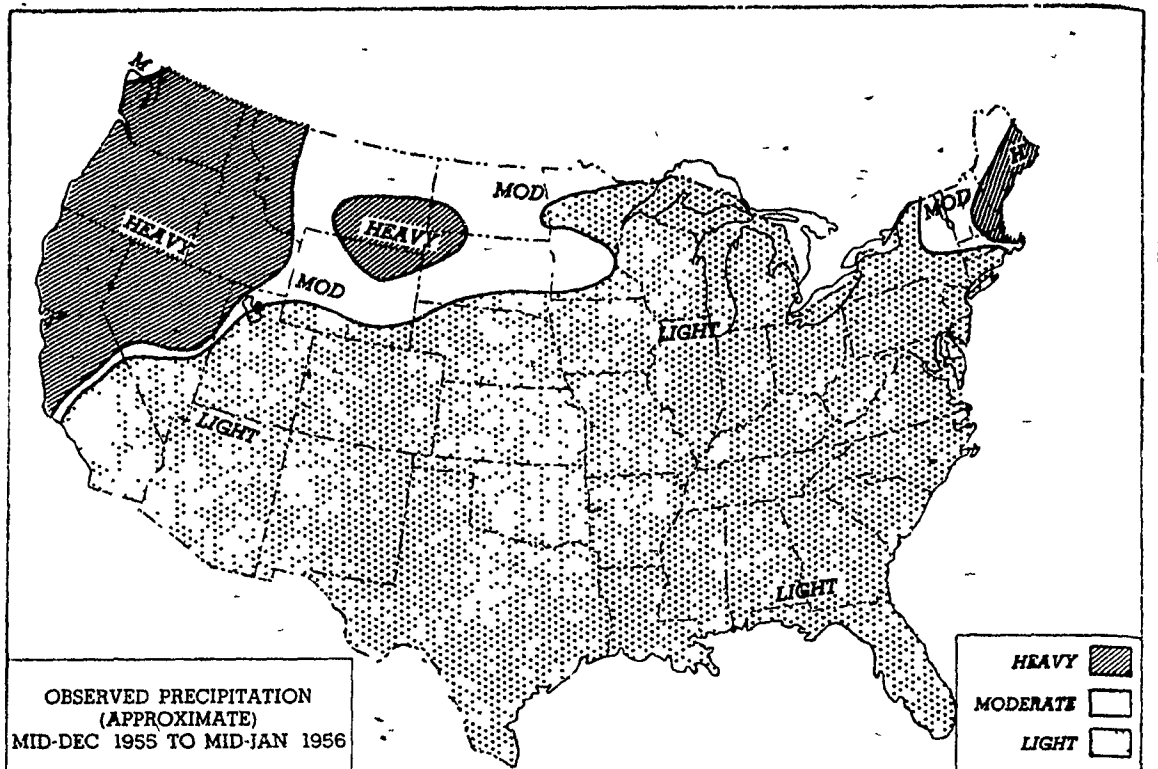
The Weather Bureau's 30-day outlook for mid-January to mid-February calls for temperatures to average above seasonal normals in the western half of the country. East of the Mississippi generally below normal temperatures are indicated, except for near normal in the Great Lakes

area and the Northeast.

Precipitation is expected to be subnormal in the southern half of the nation. Greater than normal amounts of rain and snow are predicted for the Northeast, Northwest, and northern Rocky Mountain States, with near normal elsewhere.

the posse on foot that were after it. They returned home to get teams to further trace it and Tuesday afternoon. One who professes to be a crack shot missed his mark and the beef imagined what was on the scaled Gap, with the owner in hot pursuit. Last accounts were it was heading for fresh beef for their supper. Last accounts were it was heading for Gap, with the owner in hot pursuit. Last accounts did not get suit."

Precipitation Reports



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