

SHERIFF TAYLOR AND POSSE CAPTURED A BAND OF BURGLARS.

Tracked to the Old Faust Hotel Barn in the Seven Mountains they are Found Sleeping and Surrounded.—Refused to Surrender Until After one of the Band was Mortally Wounded, then They Parleyed Half an Hour Before they Threw Down their Arms and Came Out.

The mountain fastnesses of the southern end of the county have contributed another thrilling chapter to Centre's criminal history. Though it cannot be compared in excitement to the Ettinger tragedy at Woodward, on March 6th, 1896, for it was all over before many people knew that it had actually occurred. But when the story of the capture of four burglars in the old barn at the famous old Faust hotel in the Seven Mountains, about three miles south of Potters Mills, became generally known everyone realized that the element of risk run by sheriff Taylor and his posse was even greater than that that surrounded sheriff Condo when he was trying to capture the murderer of constable Barner.

The first intimation had that there was a well organized band of burglars working this way came from Laurelton, on the line of the Lewisburg and Tyrone railroad, last Thursday morning. The night before four men had assaulted and robbed Reno Zimmerman of that place. They secured \$15.75 from him. Later that night they robbed the office of the Laurelton Lumber Co. A. M. Reedy's clothing store and the Laurelton hotel. Mr. Zimmerman described his assailants as having coarse voices and speaking with German accent.

AT WOODWARD.

The next night, Thursday—after midnight, Wolf's store at Woodward was burglarized and five pair shoes, 2 watches, 2 revolvers, 1 a .38 calibre and 1 a .32 calibre, and a number of knives and razors and \$160 in postage stamps were taken. No one saw any suspects about the place and the burglars got away as quietly as they had come.

AT CENTRE HALL.

Friday night a party tried to rob the bank at Centre Hall and there the first clue that led to their capture was secured. The Penns valley bank is located on the corner of the public square at that place and is guarded by William McClenahan, the night watchman. Immediately over the bank is the exchange of the United Telephone and Telegraph Co. Night operator Mrs. Annie Boozer was on duty, but could not be seen from the street below. The burglars climbed up onto the railing in front of the bank and saw the interior of the bank as the light was burning. Then, it is presumed, in order to ascertain whether anyone lived up stairs they threw a small stone against the window. It broke the glass, frightening Mrs. Boozer so badly that she made no outcry. Convinced that there was no one about the bank windows when McClenahan heard the noise and fired a shot from his revolver. This scared the band off and they did nothing further there than to break open the tool house at the station and take a hand car.

OFF FOR LINDEN HALL.

With the hand car as a conveyance the band proceeded by rail to Linden Hall. There they stopped at the crossing of the public road and walked back to Ross' store, in which the post office is also located. Forcing an entrance by a side window they entered the store and had taken the lock off the safe and had it about two-thirds sealed preparatory to blowing, when something evidently interrupted them at their work, for they then unfastened the front door and went out onto the store porch where they talked quite loud. This aroused A. E. Zeigler, who is assistant postmaster and sleeps in a room immediately above the front entrance. Thinking that it was some of the lumbermen, who are accustomed to rattle on the door at all hours of the night just as a joke, he got up and pounded on the porch roof. The men were silent for a little while but one of them went out onto the road and looked up at Zeigler. Then they got together and held another consultation and Zeigler pounded again, after which they walked off down the road. Then they pushed the hand car down to the station and walked back again, up the main street, talking quite loud. It was after 3 o'clock in the morning by that time but they went on to the home of William Catherman, where they broke into his cellar and took a table cloth, meat, bread and other victuals and a tin bucket. Then struck off on the road toward Earlstown.

Meanwhile Mr. Zeigler had aroused Hale Ross, the owner of the store, and together they went down to the saw mill to see if any suspects were loitering about there. None were to be found and none had been seen by the men at the mill. Then they went back to Catherman's and discovered that the burglars could be easily tracked in the muddy road.

The next step was to telephone to Bellefonte for detective Rignour. The exchange here was able to find policeman Jodon at head-quarters and he went home to change his clothes to accompany the detective, but when the latter was aroused he said he had business at State College on Saturday and couldn't put it off. Jodon telephoned this message to Linden Hall, whereupon Mr. Ross, his eldest son Charles, William Catherman and Harry Hagan took up the trail of the burglars.

THE PURSUIT BEGINS.

It was easy to follow the tracks in the soft mud. It was soon discovered that there were four men in the party and they were evidently hungry for bits of bread along the road indicated that they were eating it dry as they walked. No one along the route had seen the men, however, until John Reish's was reached. He said he had seen a man carrying a tin bucket but there were no others with him. A little later the pursuers came to Curt Lingle's farm and found out that he had seen three men going down his lane towards the woods.

He told a WATCHMAN reporter that just after he had gotten out of bed, about 5 o'clock in the morning, he stepped to the window to look out. His attention was attracted to three men going down his lane and he remarked to his wife that some one was getting out to work very early. Then he thought they might be going fishing and stepped back to the window for another look, but could discover no rods. At his second observation he noticed that there were three men in the party, one smaller than the others who was behind and evidently walking as fast as his legs would carry him to keep up. His peculiarly erect carriage made him quite conspicuous.

TRAILED TO THE BARN.

It was about 8:30 when Frank Bradford, of Centre Hall, met the Ross party. He and James Smetzler were on their way over to Gheritty's to fish, they had known of the attempted burglary, at Centre Hall, also of the successful affair at Linden Hall, and when Mr. Ross told them that he had tracked the robbers to a point about a mile west of the Old Fort, where they had out into the woods towards Potters Mills, they said they would be on the lookout for them. Bradford and his companion saw nothing of the men while driving to the bank, but when they arrived there they were told by landlord Reish at the hotel that four men had been there only a short time before and purchased a pint of whiskey, paying for it all in pennies. Further inquiry revealed the fact that one of the quartet had stopped at the home of Mrs. Annie Hartman and asked for a tablespoonful of salt, saying that he intended to cook breakfast up in the mountains and had no salt. Mrs. Hartman was especially attracted by the man's pleasant manner and later, when the robbers were brought back to the village, she recognized the one who is wounded as the man to whom she had given the salt.

Bradford was about to start on up the mountain when two fishermen came down the road. They told him that they had passed four men only a short distance back, that they were cooking breakfast. This convinced him that the game was only a short distance off, so before starting on he telephoned back to Centre Hall for the Ross party to hurry up. The answer came back that they were on the way so he and Smetzler started on. All along the muddy road they could see the tracks of the quartet but not until within a quarter of a mile of the famous old Faust place did they see any one. There they saw a man with a bucket answering the description of one of the band apparently fooling around in the brush of the old orchard. They were convinced at once that he was one of the party but betrayed no suspicion that they were trailing him. They drove on past the barn that stands close to the road beside the charred ruins of the old hotel, noticing that the tracks led into it. Bradford had already an idea that the men were in there, so after they had driven past a considerable distance he became convinced of it when by peeping out through the back curtain he saw the man with the bucket go into the barn and close the door.

Hurrying on to Gheritty's, only a short distance away, he told Pat and Walter of the situation and, borrowing a Winchester rifle, made a detour back to Sand Knob where he could still command the barn and intercept the Ross party whom he believed to be following.

THE WARRANT SECURED.

After Ross and his party of pursuers had heard Lingle's story and were unable to find any constables they decided to go to Centre Hall and secure a warrant. It was while driving to that place that they met Bradford and Smetzler and advised them to be on the lookout. Arriving at Centre Hall justice Wm. B. Mingle was hunted up and Catherman swore out a warrant for the arrest of the men. Charley Hagan and Charley Ross were sent back home from this place and G. R. Meese and Wm. Cummings joined the elder Ross and Catherman when they reached Potters Mills. They drove on up the mountain until Bradford stopped them and a hasty consultation was held. It was decided that there were not enough of them to effect a capture and that the carriage should be sent back to Potters Mills for more men. While there the messenger learned that sheriff Taylor was on his way to the scene; having been apprised of the situation by justice Mingle. Arriving back at the bivouac near the barn the reinforcing party



JAMES GEWALT, THE WOUNDED MAN. Cuts published through the courtesy of the Centre Reporter.

"Two Planks were leaned against the side of the shed, on these the wounded man was slid to the ground, carried to a carriage and conveyed to the Potters Mills hotel and placed under the care of Dr. H. S. Alexander."

told the others that the sheriff was on the way so they all decided to await his arrival.

It was then nearly noon and the party had swelled to about twenty men and boys. Some with rifles, others with shotguns and the camera fiend was there also. The time had slipped away in the driving back and fourth to Potter's Mills, for it must be borne in mind that the spot where the watchmen were grouped is three miles up a mountain road from the Mills. They had gathered at a spot about one fourth a mile down the road from the barn, at a sharp turn in the road. From this point they could see the barn, yet not be seen themselves.

THE SHERIFF TO THE RESCUE.

When sheriff Taylor got the word here he made preparations to leave at once and with treasurer Phil D. Foster as his deputy and two new 30-30 Krag-Jorgensen rifles in the bottom of the buggy they left for the scene at 11:45.

The drive over the mountain to Centre Hall required only an hour and with a fresh team secured at that place the sheriff proceeded on his journey arriving near the Faust place shortly before one o'clock. At the turn of the road on this side of the barn he met all of the crowd of pursuers.

Following the sheriff and treasurer Foster were W. A. Sandoe and Frank Shutt, of Centre Hall. They swelled the entire party to twenty-seven or eight persons.

After a hasty consultation the sheriff decided to surround the place at once.

THE FIRST SHOT HIT.

While the sheriff was in the act of uncovering his rifle treasurer Foster saw one of the band crouching on the left above the barn doors. Two boards were off the side of the building and through this aperture he saw that the man had a revolver. Quick as a flash Foster's rifle flew to his shoulder and a sharp report reverberated along the mountain top, then all was still again. Those who were close enough could see that the deadly 33-30 ball from the Krag had gone home, for the man on the left was seen to stagger and grope his way toward the side of the barn. It had all occurred so rapidly that no one seemed to realize just what had happened until the little party was brought to its senses by the click of a revolver. Every rifle was up again in an instant and when someone discovered a revolver and about six inches of arm sticking out a crack on the side of the barn directly where they had seen the wounded man stagger there were six reports that rang out on the still air while their leaden messengers were ripping up the sides of the barn in a way that carried consternation to the hearts of the robbers within.

DEPUTIES SWORN IN.

Up to this time the sheriff had sworn in no other deputies than treasurer Foster. He had delayed this matter with the hope of saving the county all the expense possible, but after the shooting it became evident that the situation was a grave one. It appeared that the robbers intended to put up a fight for their liberty.



Three prisoners are to the left. First William Palmer, facing front; James Ryan standing in front of Samuel Shireman. This view was taken in less than three minutes after the prisoners had been handcuffed. The trio endeavored to avoid the camera, and it was only by deception that the view was taken.

The entire party was accordingly deployed in a semi-circle about the barn at a distance of about 500 ft. They covered the north and south and east escapes, leaving the large cleared field to the west unoccupied because any one attempting to cross it could easily have been stopped by a rifle shot without the danger of shooting into any of the guards. Then sheriff Taylor and Mr. Foster drove up the road to the barn, tied their horses to a telephone pole about 50 ft. distant. Mr. Foster immediately uncovered a Krag rifle and took up a position to protect the sheriff who started for the barn.

THE SHERIFF ENTERS THE BARN UNARMED.

He first examined an adjoining shed and finding no one there opened the large barn door. Sweeping the place at a glance he saw the much talked of tin bucket. Convinced that his men were there, though hearing no creaking nothing of them, he called out in loud tones:

"I am the sheriff of Centre county and at this time am unarmed, and come to arrest you. I now call upon you to surrender peacefully, for I mean to take you, dead or alive. My posse has you surrounded. There is no chance for you to escape, for we are armed with Krag Jorgensen rifles."

Not a sound was awakened from within by the sheriff's demand. Still calling upon them to surrender he returned to his buggy to get his rifle.

Accordingly he went around his entire line, instructed all the men as to how they should act and depized the following of them: Frank Shutt, Frank Bradford and W. A. Sandoe, Centre Hall; P. D. Foster, Bellefonte; Calvin Cummings, Colyer, and J. F. McCoy, F. A. Carson, Frank Pennington, Calvin Ruhl, Walter Gheritty, Pat Gheritty, E. J. Sweetwood and Renben Colyer, of Potters Mills.

This circuit took about half an hour. All the time Foster was standing guard over the barn supported by a few men forty feet to the rear. Not a sound was heard from within. Not a moan or a word from the robber who was lying weltering in his own blood. Upon the sheriff's return he again called upon the gang to surrender, but received no response. He continued his demand persistently for another half hour until his deputies had become most impatient to make a rush on the barn.

THE SURRENDER.

Just when they had about decided to storm the barn in earnest a voice from within cried:

"Will you guarantee to protect us if we surrender?"

The sheriff answered by assuring them that he was the sheriff and would see that no one harmed them. "Yes," came the voice from within the barn again, "but some of them hot-headed fellows among you

might shoot us without orders." Thereupon every man was ordered to lower his gun and put the muzzle down. The sheriff, pacing in front of the barn, then commanded: "If you are not ready to surrender, now come out, one at a time, throw your revolvers on the ground and hold up your hands."

In a second or two the big man of the party, a fellow with a very florid complexion and heavy brown moustache, came out into the open and threw up his hands. "Now the next," rang out the sheriff's stern voice, and another stepped out and threw up his hands.

"Now the next!" Came the command that brought a third one out into the line. "Now the next!" Called the sheriff a fourth time but brought no response.

"Is that all?" Said sheriff Taylor and one of the band spoke up and said: "No there is another man up above, but he is shot." Upon their protestations that all who were able had surrendered the sheriff advanced and put hand-cuffs on them separately, then he directed treasurer Foster to go up above and procure the wounded man. Frank Shutt joined Foster and together they climbed the ladder to the loft above where a horrible sight met their gaze. Lying near the side of the barn, just where he had fallen after his futile attempt to fire upon the posse, was the fourth robber. He was gasping for breath and had his revolver still clutched tightly in his right hand. From his mouth great gushes of blood flowed at each effort to breathe and when Foster, approaching, said where are you shot, he replied: "Through the heart." The treasurer knew this could not be so and, told the wounded man that he must be mistaken. The sight was more than Foster could stand so he withdrew with instructions to Shutt to disarm the man and get him down.

Here was a predicament. It was evident to all that the man was very badly hurt and how to get him down the ladder was a question. Someone suggested that he be taken down the outside of the barn. This seemed the only way possible. Accordingly a plank was secured and stood up on a slant and the wounded man was slid down, as is shown in one of the illustrations in this issue. Sheriff Taylor immediately ordered him hurried to the nearest doctor so he was placed in Ross' carriage and taken to Reish's hotel where Dr. Alexander dressed his wound and was joined later by Dr. Braucht.

The other three prisoners were loaded into a spring wagon and taken to Centre Hall, where they were given a hearing.

BEFORE JUSTICE MINGLE.

At the hearing before justice Mingle the prisoners had little to say. In fact they would give no further information than that their names were: William Palmer, age 49; Samuel Shireman, age 32; James Ryan, age 34. The names given were no

doubt fictitious. Immediately justice Mingle committed them to jail here without bail.

The sheriff procured his own team again and taking one of them in his buggy, left the other two for Treasurer Foster to bring over in a carriage that was secured there. They arrived here about 7:30 Saturday evening. A great crowd had gathered along the streets and followed the officers to the jail, where only the clanging of the big prison doors put an end to the invasion of the curious.

IN JAIL.

Once in the sheriff's office the men were given a hasty examination and the names as above entered in the jail register. They were locked up in steel cages on the second tier on the north side. Ryan and Shireman together and Palmer by himself. The latter seems to be the head of the gang, for the other two will do nothing or say nothing unless he takes the initiative.

They have been very taciturn since their arrest, yet at times they have shown a disposition to talk some, but have steadily evaded answering leading questions. They were persuaded to stand for their photographs on Sunday and lined up before photographer Mallory in the jail yard as if they enjoyed it. When asked to stand again on Monday they seemed to realize that they had made a mistake the day before and said that they weren't counting any more notoriety than they had already gained.

THEIR ARMAMENT AND PLUNDER.

At the time of the arrest sheriff Taylor found the following articles on them, all of which were brought here and turned over to district attorney Spangler:

Five revolvers—38 calibre and lot of cartridges, stick of dynamite, knives, razors, purse containing paper money and lot of small change, tin bucket and table cloth—identified by Mr. Catherman, of Linden Hall, basket, bread, bacon, coffee, pan, soap, mirror, etc.

Before leaving the scene the sheriff specially detailed Pat and Walter Gheritty to make a careful investigation of the place for other plunder. The two mountaineers searched high and low and not without reward for in various parts of the barn they uncovered a tin tobacco box containing five fuses and percussion caps, found in the wounded man's pocket after he had been taken to the hotel, a 10c piece of tobacco of the "Worth" brand, a new two bladed knife of large size, an Ingersoll watch with a plated gold chain, about a pint of nitro-glycerine in two half pint bottles, four cheap silk handkerchiefs, a piece of cotton rag, might be a bread cloth, and a black oil cloth pouch, about 12c containing a post-office registry envelope in which were stamps to the value of \$167.44 in the following denominations, 1076 one-cent stamps, 800 twos, 340 threes, 493 fours, 492 fives, 491 sixes, 575 eights and 107 tens.

All these articles were delivered to sheriff Taylor at the jail about mid-night Saturday by Walter Gheritty and J. F. McCoy.

THE WOUNDED BURGLAR.

To turn back to the wounded burglar who was left at Reish's hotel at Potters Mills where he was receiving medical attention from Drs. Braucht and Alexander. Their investigation revealed the fact that the ball entered the left side of the neck about an inch and a-half above the collar bone, passed through the windpipe and came out on top of the right shoulder. The clean nature of the wound confirms the story, as told above, that it was a Krag that hit him. The effect of the shot would not have been bad at all had it not torn his windpipe making the danger from strangulation with blood very great. This man gave his name as Showalter, and Gewalt says he is 39 years old and hails from Wisconsin. He is rather tall, weighs about 160 lbs, has light blue eyes, a brown moustache, bald on the front part of the head giving the appearance of an abnormally high forehead and speaks German.

On Monday morning Sheriff Taylor, Commissioner P. H. Meyer and county physician R. G. Hayes drove over to Potters Mills and brought him to this place in Baum's ambulance. He seemed none the worse of the trip and arrived at the hospital about 2 o'clock in the afternoon. He is apparently resting easy there, being able to sit up in bed. The tube that had been inserted in his windpipe has been taken out. His guards at the hospital are Isaac Dawson and Samuel Smith.

THE MEN OF THE PARTY OTHER THAN THE ONES



SHERIFF HUGH S. TAYLOR.