

# The Centre Reporter.

VOL. LXXVI.

CENTRE HALL, PA., THURSDAY, JUNE 25, 1903.

NO. 26.

## BOLD AND DARING ROBBERS CAPTURED IN SEVEN MOUNTAINS

After a Series of Robberies and Attempted Robberies at Laurelton, Woodward, Centre Hall and Linden Hall—Surrounded by Deputized Citizens James Geltwalt Draws a Revolver and is Seriously Wounded by a Rifle Bullet.

### THE STORY OF THE CAPTURE.

Sheriff Taylor and posse capture the burglars after seriously injuring one of them.

The four desperate characters who committed a series of robberies between Laurelton and Linden Hall last week were captured in the Seven Mountains Saturday afternoon at 3:30 o'clock.

When Sheriff Taylor reached the foot of Sand Mountain he was met by W. Frank Bradford and his supporters who had kept a watchful eye on the stable in which the burglars were in hiding. There was a hurried consultation, during which time the sheriff gave his men orders where to stand. These points were at a distance and out of line of sight from the stable. They were further directed to close in on the building when they would see their leader drive down the pike toward the stable.

The men were obedient, and at once started for their posts. After the sheriff had given the men ample time to reach their destinations, he and Mr. Foster got into their buggy and leisurely drove to the old hotel site. Their team was hitched on the west side of the pike immediately south of the building. Sheriff Taylor, unarmed, at once went to the door of the old building, threw the door open, and, in a firm tone, demanded that the men come out and permit themselves to be placed under arrest. On the first floor of the stable the sheriff saw three of the men—two being located to the left, and one directly in a line with the door at the back wall. The fourth man was heard up in the hay loft which was loosely covered with boards.

Having located his prey, the sheriff retreated, again asking the men within to come out. By this time he had reached his buggy, near where Mr. Foster was standing, secured his Krag Jorgenson rifle, and while in the act of uncovering his gun and walking in front of the stable, the sheriff's attention was called to a hand protruding through the weatherboarding of the second floor. The hand was not empty, but was clutching a thirty-eight or forty-four calibre revolver. Sheriff Taylor realizing the fearlessness and fierceness of the characters within the fort, and the futility of the mechanism of the modern firearms at once ordered the deputies who stood nearest to him to fire, he himself doing likewise. The rotation of the firing was as follows: Foster, Taylor, Bradford, Foster—four shots.

A silence followed. The sheriff and deputies retreated to the road, from which point the sheriff again asked the fortified prisoners to surrender. His appeals were unheeded, the prisoners realizing that they held not only a good fort, but had a miniature arsenal to fall back on, and that if they could stay the advances of the sheriff until night-fall they might by chance escape under the cover of darkness.

For a full half hour the sheriff implored the prisoners to come out and surrender, pointing out to them that he had the entire building surrounded with men not only with revolvers, but with shot guns and Winchester and Krag-Jorgenson rifles. Silence followed.

There was a condition existing in the interior not known to those on the outside, which finally drove the nery characters to treat for peace. "A man has been hit," came from one of the quartet, "and if you will guarantee protection, we'll come out." The sheriff vouchsafed their safety, and in a few moments three fierce and depraved looking characters stood before the shed door, each armed with two revolvers. "Drop those guns and throw up your hands," was the stern and firm demand of Centre County's High Sheriff. There was obedience. The three men, with hands raised skyward, walked abreast to a point on the sward midway between the shed and the pike. "Halt!" the sheriff cried, with a distinctly military accent. The men were handcuffed and hastily searched, and lined up as though for inspection. Later they were taken to the county jail.

### DEPUTIZED CITIZENS.

W. F. Bradford  
Walter Garrity  
E. J. Sweetwood  
R. W. Colyer  
Frank Pennington  
Frank Shutt  
R. W. Smith

### OTHER ARMED MEN.

J. S. Bebehimer  
A. J. Richley  
W. A. Catherman  
Wm. Booser  
Bruce Runkle  
Elmer Runkle



JAMES GELTWALT, THE WOUNDED MAN.

Two planks were leaned against the side of the shed, and 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.

### A SICKENING SIGHT.

Battered With Blood, and Pierced by a Bullet Through the Neck, More Dead than Alive, the Fourth Man Lay on the Loft Clutching his Weapon of Defense.

When the hay loft of the old shed, which was selected as the preferred place of retirement during their resistance, was reached by the deputies, a horrifying, sickening sight was met. Here lay a finely developed human being in a crimson pool, his face bespattered with his own blood, pale as death, more dead than alive, tightly clutching a fierce looking weapon of defense. Two planks were leaned against the side of the shed, and on this the wounded man was slid to the ground. From the end of the plank he was carried to a carriage and conveyed to Potters Mills hotel and placed under the care of Dr. H. S. Alexander.

The rifle bullet entered the neck on the left side, a trifle back of the larynx, and passed through the neck to a point on top of the shoulder midway between the arm and neck. The missile possibly cut the back part of the wind-pipe.

### TRAPPED BY A FISHERMAN.

W. F. Bradford Shadows the Burglars—Scours Mountains for Rifles—Puts Men on Picket and Awaits the Sheriff.

To J. Hale Ross, of Linden Hall, and W. Frank Bradford, of Centre Hall, belongs the credit of locating the burglars. Before daylight Mr. Ross was out with his rifle, looking for the parties who only a short time before had rifled the cash drawers of his store and had prepared to blow open his safe with nitroglycerine. Mr. Ross tracked the culprits to Earlstown, at which point they left the public road and went out the lane of L. C. Lingle.

Mr. Bradford and son William and James Smetzer were on the way to Pat. Garrity's to fish, and at the Old Fort they met Mr. Ross, who related his experience. The fishermen at once proceeded to Potters Mills, where they discovered one of the four men had been in Reish's hotel for a pint of whiskey. Later they passed several conveyances that had passed the men. On reaching the orchard this side of the Foust stable, a man with a bucket was observed in the bushes. Mr. Bradford and his companions passed by in an unconcerned way, drove past the Foust stable and down the lane to Garrity's, all the while keeping an eye in the direction of the man with a bucket. Before reaching the woods along the lane, the individual was seen to enter the stable.

The fishermen hurried to the home of Mr. Garrity and related their story. Mr. Bradford secured a Winchester rifle and took a brush route for Sand Mountain to intercept any assistants coming from the valley. The first to arrive was J. H. Ross, G. R. Meiss, Wm. Cummings and W. A. Catherman. Mr. Ross' carriage was sent to Potters

Mills for additional support, and in a short time Calvin Ruhl, R. W. Colyer, E. J. Sweetwood, F. A. Carson, T. S. Bebehimer came along, each armed with rifles and side arms. Mr. Ross took a course around the old improvements and located on Bald Mountain, and the balance of the men impatiently awaited the arrival of the sheriff. With Sheriff Taylor was Treasurer Paul D. Foster, Frank Shutt, W. A. Sandoe and Walter Garrity.

### ATTEMPTED TO LOOT SAFE.

Burglars Enter the Store of J. H. Ross, Linden Hall.

Friday night four burglars entered the store of J. H. Ross, at Linden Hall, wrenched off the handle to the door of the safe, plugged the seams around the door and were about ready to blow up the safe, when the experts were disturbed by A. E. Zeigler, a

### TRAIL OF THE ROBBERS.

The Trail of the Robbers from the Time They Left Laurelton Until Their Capture at the Foust Stable.

The party of burglars arrested on Saturday on the Seven Mountains are the same gang who during Wednesday night of last week blew open several safes at Laurelton, and clubbed, bound and gagged a young man by the name of Reno Zimmerman, took from him what money he had, amounting to fifteen dollars and twenty-five cents. From the safes they realized twelve dollars and fifty cents, amounting in all to twenty-seven dollars and seventy-five cents. They got some jewelry and other articles, besides a large amount of signed checks, drawn to the order of the men employed by the Laurelton Lumber Company. These they threw into a stream of water, from which they were nearly all recovered.

The gang then started up the turnpike toward Woodward, where the next night, Thursday, they broke open the store of R. M. Wolf's heirs, and robbed the postoffice, which is in the same room, getting a small amount in money and some postage stamps. They took from the store several revolvers, razors, umbrellas, shoes, etc.

Friday evening they were seen at Coburn, later at Spring Mills, evidently following the railroad. About two o'clock Saturday morning they made an attempt to enter the Penn's Valley Bank, by removing a large light in the front, which awakened the watchman, William McClenahan, who at once opened fire on them. They were evidently frightened as they left a basket containing some eatables, the tools which they had taken from the planing mill of A. P. Luse & Son, several umbrellas, and smaller articles. They went back to the railroad and

### WOODWARD POST OFFICE ROBBED

\$150.00 in Stamps, Revolvers, Umbrellas, Shoes, Etc. Missing.

The postoffice at Woodward was robbed Thursday night of last week. The raiders secured \$5.00 in cash and about \$150.00 in stamps of various denominations, revolvers, watches, knives, five pairs of shoes, three umbrellas, razors, and other articles.

The post office is located in the general store of Mrs. R. M. Wolf, who succeeded her late husband as postmistress and merchant. Entrance was gained by the way of the front door, and exit by the rear. Once in the building the robbery was easy, because there was no safe to encounter, the stamps and money being kept in drawers.

The robbers left no clew whatever of their identity, where they came from or whither they went.

### Conveyed to Hospital.

Monday morning Sheriff Taylor and Commissioner P. H. Meyer, County Physician R. G. H. Hayes and Liveryman Baum drove to Potters Mills and conveyed James Geltwalt, the injured prisoner, to the Bellefonte hospital.

### Names of Burglars.

James Geltwalt.  
Wm. Palmer.  
James Ryan.  
Samuel Shireman.

### A Nerve Test.

Before beginning to remove the window light, in the Penns Valley Bank building, a stone was pitched through one of the exchange windows in order to discover whether or not any resistance would come from that quarter. Mrs. Anna Booser lay sleeping on a couch under the window and was thoroughly frightened.

### PROFESSIONALS ROUTED.

Penns Valley Bank Attacked by Professionals Who Were Greeted by a Bullet.

An attempt was made to burglarize the Penns Valley Bank, in this place, Friday night at 1:20, but the burglars were obliged to quit the scene without ceremony on account of a bullet from a 45-calibre revolver in the hands of William McClenahan, the watchman. The burglars, four in number, attempted to gain entrance through a front window by removing the glass. Watchman McClenahan sleeps in the rear of the building, but only about six inches of the glazing had been removed before he awoke, and intuitively jumped to his feet, grasped his firearm, took aim, fired!

In an instant after the shot, the watchman heard the men hastily retreat. Mr. McClenahan calculated that an effort was being made to loosen the window fastening on the upper part of the lower sash, and he aimed accordingly. The bullet struck the middle partition of the double window almost immediately opposite that point, and made a clear cut through and through. He also heard a noise similar to the fall of a man, and he was confident that his weapon had more than frightened the burglars, but the noise was evidently caused by an outside watchman jumping from the window sill. The inside shutters were almost closed, which hid the burglar from view.

An investigation in the morning revealed that the tools used in the attempt to remove the window light had been secured at the planing mill. The tools of the section men on the railroad had also been taken from the tool house, and were stacked in front of the bank building.

A hand car was used to make the journey to Linden Hall, where, as is told elsewhere in this issue, the store of J. H. Ross was burglarized.

### ROBBERY AT LAURELTON.

Reno Zimmerman Roughly Handled by Robbers whom he Surprised while at Work.

Wednesday night of last week robbers blew open the safe in the Laurelton Lumber Company's office and Pressler's Hotel, at Laurelton. They secured \$50 from the former and almost \$6000 in money, bonds and negotiable papers from the latter.

Reno Zimmerman, of Laurelton, happened along when the robbers were preparing for the first job. He was caught, bound, blindfolded and led a hundred yards up the railroad track, where one of the robbers stood guard. Because he fought, Zimmerman was struck three times on the head with a pick, receiving dangerous wounds.

At daybreak the robbers raided the kitchen of John Strausser, a farmer, at a breakfast and escaped. Zimmerman staggered to town early in the morning, his hands still bound. Before the robbers left him they removed the bandage from his eyes.

clerk, who sleeps in the store building on the second floor.

Mr. Zeigler was awakened at about 2:30 a. m., and heard a slight noise about the building. He lay awake for a while, and finally went to the window when he heard distinct noises. He, however, thought that the noise was made by workmen on their way to the Bear Meadows, who frequently tap at the store door to see whether he is a good sleeper. Mr. Zeigler did not care to become the butt of a joke, so he retired. Later he got up and hammered on the porch roof; the noise below ceased; he returned. The third time Mr. Zeigler arose from his bed, he saw two men walk toward the bridge, near the store building, where they held a whispered conversation; they returned to the store again, and in a few moments four men leisurely walked away from the premises. Mr. Zeigler went to bed, but in a half hour the four men came back and again disturbed the clerk, who all the while thought he was avoiding being made the laughing stock of his companions by keeping quiet. He nevertheless watched the quartet who were disturbing his peace, and saw them again walk away from the building.

Failing to recognize any of the men, Mr. Zeigler decided to call Mr. Ross, the proprietor, who lives near by. Upon going down stairs he was surprised to find the front door open. An investigation showed that entrance had been gained through a window, and that the safe was in the condition above described. The cash drawers in the postoffice and store were taken on the front porch for inspection, but the only cash they contained was one dollar and twenty cents, respectively, which was not discovered.

The experts now made preparation for retirement for a season, and accordingly went to the home of William Catherman, the blacksmith, entered the cellar and took therefrom three loaves of bread, lard, meat and a tin bucket.

When daylight dawned there was considerable excitement in the hamlet, and it was decided to send out a scouting party, accordingly J. H. Ross, Wm. Catherman, Harry Hagen and Charles Ross took a trail which led them to Earlstown, and across the valley to Potters Mills.

### At the Justice's Office.

All along the road from Potters Mills to Centre Hall little groups of men, women and children had gathered to get a glimpse of the robbers. When Centre Hall was reached the victims were taken before Justice W. B. Mingle, who bound them over to court, and in default of bail they were committed to jail.

To Mr. Mingle belongs the credit of enlisting the aid of the commissioners' attorney, Harry Keller, and District Attorney Spangler, who prevailed on the commissioners to send the sheriff into the mountains, and finally won their suit.



Three prisoners 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.

took a hand car, and next turned up at Linden Hall, where they broke into the store of J. H. Ross, who also has the postoffice. Here they were again frightened off, but came back the second time and succeeded in getting a few stamps and a small amount of money. They then broke into the cellar of W. A. Catherman, a near neighbor of Mr. Ross, and took eatables and a tin pail, which was hanging on the fence. This pail proved their downfall as this was what they were identified by.

By the time they were through at Linden Hall it was about daylight. They then took the public road back toward Centre Hall and came as far as L. R. Lingle's farm, about one and one-half miles from Centre Hall where they crossed the fields toward Potters Mills, evidently with the intention of going to Milroy.

To Mr. Ross belongs the credit of their arrest. He at once started after them with a rifle and when fully daylight found their tracks which he and Wm. Catherman and Harry Hagen followed to where they took to the field. They found that a number of people had seen them carrying the tin pail which belonged to Mr. Catherman. Mr. Catherman came on to Centre Hall and made information against them before Justice W. B. Mingle, who issued a warrant and placed it in the hands of a constable.

W. F. Bradford was just about starting to fish at Pat. Garrity's place in the Seven Mountains, and heard Mr. Ross' story and description of the men. In about half an hour afterward he learned at Potters Mills that the gang had been there.

They had taken the public road across the mountains. Mr. Bradford at once notified Mr. Mingle, who told him to follow and keep track of them until the officers would follow. Mr. Mingle found the constable was not acting and called District Attorney Spangler who with the help of Harry Keller, persuaded the Commissioners to send Sheriff Taylor to the mountains.

### THE BOOTY.

\$12.62 in Cash, Postage Stamps, Revolvers, Explosives, Ammunition, Watches, Jewelry, Etc.

When the looters were safely handcuffed a quick survey of the old stable and adjoining sheds was made. The booty found in the stable and pockets of the now very meek and docile men is here enumerated:

In the stable were found two razors, a pint of nitroglycerine, stick of dynamite, a revolver, postage stamps, in various denominations, to the value of \$167.44. In the pockets of the men were found a half dozen or more revolvers, razors, twenty-five percussion caps, about seventy-five rounds of ammunition, watches and jewelry.

Before leaving the stable, Sheriff Taylor deputized Messrs Garrity to thoroughly search the premises, and in fulfilling their duty they unearthed the postage stamps by digging in a pile of manure in one of the stalls.

### Look Out for Fake Pictures.

The outlaws repeatedly turned their backs to the Reporter's camera, and it was only by deception that one of the three had his face exposed. Pictures that appear in newspapers, other than those credited to the Reporter, purporting to be a likeness of the outlaws, are more than likely fakes. The Reporter's camera was the only one on the ground, and it is not likely that the men, after the excitement was over, would permit their pictures to be taken for newspaper use. The man on the sliding board was utterly helpless and could not avoid being pictured in this journal.

Sunday several views were taken of the old Foust stable with men stationed around the building, which will be palmed off as the "real thing." The only views taken on the day of the tragedy will be reproduced in the Reporter. These views were taken just as the incidents took place without any preparation whatever.

Centre Reporter \$1.00 in advance.