



YEGG MAN SUPPLANTS THE OLD TIME CRACKSMAN.

Travels in Bands, Sends Out Scouts and "Locaters" Locate—Will Kill Rather Than Be Captured—Retreats to Mountains to Avoid Detection—Story of How it is Done by the "Umbrella Menders."

The robbery of the Centre Hall post office committed evidently by characters traveling the country as umbrella menders, in August of 1900, and again a few weeks ago; the cracking of the safe in the Lewisburg railroad station; the attempt on various occasions to loot the Penna Valley bank; the capture of the robbers several years ago in the Faust barn, in the Seven Mountains, have set the people of Penna Valley to talking how all these robberies are committed without more arrests being made—how the perpetrators hide their crime. The average citizen has no idea of the extent of the raids of the yeggman, or tramp vault and safe burglar, during the last five years.

From September 15, 1900, to the same date in 1906, there were in this country 718 banks attacked by burglars with explosives. From these banks \$857,824 was stolen.

HOBBO SUCCEEDS PROFESSIONAL.

These yegg or hobbo burglars are the successors of the professional cracksmen who traveled on railroad trains, hired conveyances to and from the scenes of the burglary, carried tools weighing from fifty to seventy-five pounds, and after looting a bank generally lived extravagantly in the larger cities until their money was spent. With these the taking of a human life was an exception to the rule, only occurring when necessary to escape capture.

Detectives were able from the earmarks of the old time professional burglar's work to decide very quickly whose particular handiwork it was and could invariably within a short time locate them and cause their arrest.

The expert bank burglars of old did not number more than thirty first class men in the United States while "Johnny Yegg" grows like a mushroom in the night.

"GAY CAT," A "LOCATER."

A common tramp, in many instances a cripple or peddler, known in the vernacular of the "yegg" as a "gay cat," a "locater," selects a suitable bank post office, store or private safe to attack, notes the surroundings, how many policemen or watchmen there are, if any, (usually preferring a small town without protection of any kind), whether there are burglar alarms or electric protection on vault and safe, route of retreat and hiding places to evade pursuers, all of which he obtains in the guise of an innocent umbrella mender, beggar or peddler of needles, court plaster and small wares, without his real purpose being suspected, and which he reports to the leader, or "soupman."

Without giving the exact location of the proposed burglary the leader instructs from three to five desperadoes to proceed separately to a water tank, railroad crossing or camp within five or ten miles of the place where the burglary is to occur. This rendezvous for working Centre Hall and surrounding territory is usually "the spring," east of Centre Hall railroad station, which spring in the early history of the state furnished the water for the "Indian Fort" erected by the whites. One of the band is delegated to carry nitroglycerine or dynamite, another fuses, pocket electric lights, detonators, etc. The darkest night, when there is a storm or no moon, is usually preferred for the work. Moonlight, however, is not a hindrance, once the plans are laid and other conditions are favorable. The last robbery committed here demonstrates this, for it was light enough to observe a man at a considerable distance.

THE ATTACK DIVULGED.

Once at the meeting place agreed upon the location of the establishment to be attacked is divulged by the leader. One or two, known as "soup" or "oil men" or "insiders," use the explosives on the vault or safe, while the other two or three, known as "outsiders" or "strong arm men," remain on the outside to frustrate any interference by citizens. The distance from the scene of activity the "strong arm men" are located depends on circumstances. When the last robbery was committed one of this class was crouched by the side of the editor's house where he was within one hundred feet of his pails. He could obtain a good view, the location affording easy retreat. Another "outsider" was stationed at the Penna Valley bank, where they realized there was a watchman inside; also a telephone exchange, the operator in which might be wide awake or asleep. It was necessary to keep tab on both these persons, consequently the outsider re-

garded his location as a strategic point. As soon as there is the slightest intrusion or indication that the citizens are preparing to give them battle the burglars open fire in every direction. This, with the explosions of nitroglycerine or dynamite, used in committing the burglary, usually intimidates the people of the entire village from attempting their capture or preventing attack.

Escape from the scene of attack is like the entrance, each burglar usually departing in a separate direction and agreeing to meet in some large nearby city or in some uninhabited house or shack, or at some unfrequented camp in the mountains—for instance the Ripka improvements, in the Seven Mountains, or the Faust property along the pike across the same mountains—or woods miles distant, so that their capture or identification is invariably difficult.

TRIBES NAMED AFTER LEADERS.

They are in bands and tribes named after their leader and known by such names as Deaf Tom's followers, Black Billy's gang, Slater's gang, Canada Billy's gang, Frisco Slim's gang or Cal Sturdy's tribe.

The increased operations of these yegg burglars can be attributed to the little experience required to attack a vault or safe with explosives as in several hours one yeggman can teach a novice how to use explosives effectively.

WILL KILL IF NECESSARY.

The intent of the yeggman before he commits his crime is murder if necessary. "Kill to avoid arrest and apprehension" is his motto.

He carries the best make of weapon, with sufficient rounds of ammunition to insure escape as was abundantly proven by the four men captured in Seven Mountains, at Faust's, several years ago, who had enough fire arms and ammunition to supply an arsenal. Besides they carry sufficient explosives, if properly used, to demolish a building in which the attack is to be made and, lighting adjoining buildings to cause conflagrations resulting in some instances in loss of life.

SENTENCE TOO SHORT FOR YEGGS.

During the last ten years the authorities have tried to cope with these burglars, but the trouble is that the average sentence of the convicted safe burglar has not exceeded six years imprisonment, which with good behavior usually meant release in four, and there are few if any cases of reformation. Consequently with his release the yegg renews his old vocation.

A strong effort is being made to secure the passage of laws which would fix the penalty of the bank burglar at imprisonment for a term of not less than twenty-five nor more than forty years. Such a law has been passed in Maryland. It is thought that it will settle the yegg problem in Pennsylvania. Such a law would at least have prevented "Deaf Tom" (Mitchell) from scooping almost \$500 from the Centre Hall post office safe, because he had just emerged from the penitentiary after having served a term of ten years for safe cracking. Such a sentence seems to have only whetted Tom's appetite for the "goody" within the steel shell.

Trial List for May Court.

Following is a list of the cases to be tried at the May term of court, which opens Monday, May 20, and continues two weeks:

FIRST WEEK.

- Mifflinburg Buggy Co. vs. David Bailey.
- Geo. R. Mock vs. J. E. Hedding, et. al.
- J. F. Guyer vs. Beaver Run Coal Co.
- E. F. Gardner vs. Paul Swartz.
- John Williamson vs. Edward Hughes.
- John Pritchard vs. J. W. Dunwiddie.
- Anna Frantzer vs. Henderson Bros.
- Joseph Brothers & Co. vs. W. C. Heinle.

SECOND WEEK.

- Louisa Bush vs. John G. Dubbs.
- James Kreps use of vs. J. L. Heaton.
- William Wiltner vs. Edward Sellers.
- Jas. B. Archey vs. W. F. Martin.
- E. C. Humes estate, et. al., vs. Michael Henmes, et. al.
- Frank Samuel vs. Bellefonte Furnace Co.
- A. W. Gardner vs. Burdine Butler.
- Citizens Building & Loan Association of Osceola Mills vs. Estate of Justin J. Pie.

Because a man has a handle to his name is no reason why you should pump him.

HOW ABOUT THE LETTER?

Did or Did Not From Write a Letter from the Jail? Was the Epistle Intercepted? What Did it Contain?

Numerous stories are afloat to the effect that Jacob From, who is incarcerated in the county jail charged with having murdered Josiah C. Dale, on Nittany Mountain, on the evening of November 12, wrote one or more letters since his confinement in the county bastille, and that the same had been intercepted by officials.

Upon inquiry officials have halfheartedly denied that letters, if written, had been intercepted. It appears, however, that the prisoner did make an effort by writing to communicate with outsiders, and that these letters were intercepted, and are now in the hands of officials.

The contents or rather the phraseology of these letters are not known but to the officers, yet enough of their substance has leaked out to indicate that the very communication supposed by the prisoner to aid him to escape conviction will be a very, very strong card for the prosecution at the time of the trial. In fact, an officer is quoted as having said, in commenting upon the unfortunate affair from the viewpoint of the defense, that "the first three lines would hang him without any other evidence."

It is also intimated that letters were written to a high official of the court, the contents of which are problematic.

Will Save Court Expenses.

By the provisions of a bill which has been approved by the governor, defendants in criminal cases can plead guilty and be sentenced without the formality of appearing before a grand jury. The law will result in largely reducing the expenses of quarter sessions courts.

Court expenses could still further be lessened by widening the jurisdiction of magistrates so that fewer trivial cases need be returned to court.

Water Company Legislation.

In the house at Harrisburg Tuesday of last week a bill passed finally authorizing the common pleass courts of the several counties to appoint appraisers to value municipal water systems and to authorize such municipalities to issue bonds secured by such systems for the purpose of improving, repairing or increasing such systems.

Has a Defunct Cat Nine Ghosts?

Ellis Parker Butler does not hesitate to raise new problems in animal psychology. The success of his story "Pigs is Pigs" has led him into new fields, and now we have the extraordinary tale "The Chromatic Ghosts of Thomas," which appears in the May Woman's Home Companion. The Thomas in question is a family cat which met with nine violent deaths.

Post Cards.

A new line of Souvenir Post Cards—all kinds and at all prices. The local views are the prettiest yet offered for sale at this office.

Transfer of Real Estate.

- D. B. Bitner, et. ux., to Chas. E. Aley, March 23, 1907; in Jacksonville, \$1,000.
- Thos. Foster, et. al., to Jas. I. Yarnell, April 9, 1907; lot in State College, \$300.
- A. O. Hosterman, et. ux., to Mary M. Haines, March 19, 1907; lot in Haines twp. \$325.
- T. V. Stevens to Floyd Sanderson, April 13, 1907; 150 acres in Union twp. \$2100.
- J. J. Thompson, et. ux., to Sarah J. Williams, April 12, 1907; 104 1/2, 70p, in Worth twp. \$1000.
- Wm. H. Thomas, et. ux., to Elijah Weston, Dec. 18, 1886; 140 acres in Taylor twp. \$1650.
- Elijah Weston, et. ux., to Samuel Hoover, March 29, 1899; 140 acres in Taylor twp. \$1650.
- Geo. W. Kessler, et. ux., to Samuel B. Beyer, Feb. 23, 1907; 235 acres in Ferguson twp. \$100.
- Mary Simler, et. bar., to Esther Hind, April 10, 1907; premises in Philipsburg. \$1900.
- Chas. E. Hassinger, et. ux., to R. A. Beck, April 10, 1907; lot in Spring twp. \$115.
- Samuel H. Wasson to W. O. Dougherty, April 8, 1907; lot in Lemont. \$1,350.
- Martha Moshbarger, et. baron., to W. D. Zerby, April 11, 1907; premises in Bellefonte. \$3000.
- Henry Gilbert, et. ux., to W. D. Breen, April 1, 1899; 21 acres 88 perches, in Miles twp. \$225.
- Johnathan Sheets, et. ux., to John Mining, Oct. 4, 1906; land in Miles twp. \$210.
- Luther Guisewite, et. ux., to Samuel B. Weaver, April 11, 1907; 70 acres in Miles twp.

BURNING ASHES.

Opinions Vary As to the Possibility of Burning the Refuse with Profit.

Much has been said of the discovery of John Ellmore by which he contends it is possible to obtain a great deal of heat by mixing a solution with coal ashes, and this with coal.

The formula is said to be: Common salt one pound.

Water, one gallon.

Mix thoroughly, and then moisten a mixture containing one part of coal and three parts of ashes.

Chemists throughout the United States are almost a unit in saying that the secret is no secret at all; that the formula is an old one, and has not been of service in the past, and will prove a failure in actual test. Individuals have made up the mixture and succeeded in "burning ashes," but are not certain as to the cost—whether the cost of preparation and mixture would warrant the saving in fuel.

EXPERIMENT IN BELLEFONTE.

Mr. Ellmore made an experiment in Bellefonte Friday, during a period of five hours, at the electric light works. The results, according to the best calculations by Superintendent F. R. Bussler, was a saving of 12 1/2 per cent fuel.

CHEMISTS DECLARE IT A HUMBUG.

Dr. Henry Leffmann, of Philadelphia, the well-known chemist, shares the general belief of chemists throughout the country, when he declared that the mixture was old and unpractical.

"The whole scheme is a humbug," he said. "Over 25 years ago similar formulas were advanced as adding to the economy of burning fuel. They amounted to nothing then—they do not now. The problem of consuming all the carbon in coal may be solved by mechanical means but not by chemical ones. If coal is burned properly there ought to be little carbon left in it; but the trouble is that very few burn their coal properly. If after burning coal there is more than 5 per cent of carbon left in the ashes do not fire those ashes, but fire the engine. Adding salt to fuel will increase the vividness of the flame, and this seems to be the thing that tricks so many into believing that they have found a great fuel-saver. Oxalic acid in such small quantities would in no case render better heat-giving value."

LOCALS.

The first pleasant April days were Sunday and Monday.

The mother of J. S. McCargar, of Bellefonte, died at her home in Groton, New York, at the age of seventy-nine years.

Capt. G. M. and Mrs. Bond Saturday went to Sunbury where they were the guests of their daughter, Mrs. W. E. Park. They returned home Monday.

In the May American Magazine Ray Stinson Baker goes on reporting the facts about the increasing antagonism between whites and blacks in this country. Some of the stories Mr. Baker tells are extraordinary.

After being at his home at Potlatch Mills for several weeks to recuperate his health, J. E. Harshbarger, of Philadelphia, will return to that city this week. Mr. Harshbarger is employed with the commission hosiery firm of John M. Cromie, and holds a position which he highly appreciates.

In order to pay a visit to his sisters, one of whom he has not seen in many years, Lumberman B. D. Brisbin Monday went to Winnebago, Illinois. His sisters are Miss Mary Brisbin and Mrs. Belle Lindly. Before returning Mr. Brisbin will visit other points along the line. He will be absent ten or more days.

Rev. J. W. Beckley, of Lebanon, was in Centre Hall over Sunday, the guest of the family of A. P. Luse. Rev. Beckley is the pastor of a Congregational church, and occasionally makes trips through this section. Friday and Saturday he was at Pennsylvania State College which institution he thinks a grand one.

Mr. and Mrs. John H. Weber, of Centre Hall, went to Philadelphia Thursday of last week. Mr. Weber, it will be remembered, underwent one or more very serious operations on account of ulcers of the bowels, and while he has been gradually growing better, the operating surgeons are anxious to keep informed as to the actual conditions at the various stages. At the time the operation was performed on Mr. Weber, in February of 1906, at the University of Pennsylvania Hospital, few people had an idea of the seriousness of the case. For almost a year Mr. Weber has been able to give most of his time to business, although suffering greatly at times. His many friends in Penna Valley are hoping that the present treatment he is taking will better enable him to give his extensive milling business personal attention.

LETTER FROM KANSAS.

Farmer Strunk Complains of Car Shortage—Fine March and bad April Weather.

Farmer John A. Strunk, formerly of Potter township, but now a resident of Vernon, Woodson county, Kansas, writes the Reporter under date of April 15:

We are greatly hampered in Kansas for want of cars. A lot of baled hay in my barn that would have sold for \$250, four months ago since which time I have been unable to secure a car, is now worth but \$150. The car arrangement should be looked into by the people of Kansas. Our governor is credited with being a railroad pet, which fact makes us suffer.

One of my neighbors, while burning his pasture, set fire to a hay stack which caused me a loss of \$35.

Farmers are considering the matter of breaking up hay land and raising more grain. The wheat looks fine, and the prospects are that the yield will be from eighteen to twenty bushels on uplands, and thirty to thirty-five bushels per acre in river bottom lands. We can excel Western Kansas in growing wheat. Oats do not yield very good, and is not a paying crop, but if the proper kind of drill is used in sowing it the yield might be increased. I want to find where the Farmer's Favorite grain drill is made as I believe that drill would be used more successfully here.

We are through plowing for corn, and if the weather it favorable we will plant this week. Corn is planted with a double-row check machine, the dropper being operated by spuds on a wire which is stretched across the field.

March was a beautiful month, and much of the time it was warm enough to be indoors without having fire. April has been rough and cold, and the result is that much fruit has been ruined.

The Pay of Legislators.

The House of Representatives naturally became hilarious over the passage of the increase in salary bill. If it becomes a law the Pennsylvania Legislature will be the best paid per member of any in the country. New York pays its legislators \$1500 per annum, but they have annual sessions, and a Representative's term is one year. The Pennsylvania Representative, if the bill becomes a law, will receive \$3000 for a term which covers two years in time, but means usually a single session of less than five months. An extra session will not add to this income, but extra or special sessions in this state are infrequent, there having been but two since the biennial session became a fixture in 1879.

Anti-Vaccinationists Defeated.

The Pfaff anti-vaccination bill was defeated in the house by a vote of 65 to 39. The bill prohibited the compulsory vaccination of both adults and minor children without the consent of the parents.

Earlier in the day the house passed the Wickersham bill providing for the admission to schools of children not vaccinated on presentation of physician's certificate setting forth that vaccination would be dangerous to the health of such pupils.

Porter F. Cope, of Philadelphia, secretary of the Anti-Vaccination League, was driven from the floor of the house by a resolution calling for "all lobbyists to be excluded from the floor of the house."

Child Discharges Revolver.

What might have resulted in a serious affair happened the other day in the home of Byron Garis, in Centre Hall. Mr. Garis came home from Lewistown a few days previous to this event, and left his grip containing a revolver set on the floor. Two of his children—little girls—opened the satchel, took the revolver out, and one playfully held the weapon up when it was discharged. The bullet lodged in a bureau, and luckily missed the human mark. The mother was attracted, and found the child holding the revolver quite composed, and the one that narrowly made the escape of its life completely frightened.

Surveying State Lands.

The State Forestry Department is having its holdings on Nittany Mountain, north of Centre Hall, surveyed. Among the tracts owned by the state is the Gordon tract, which less than two years ago was burned over, the fire originating from burning a small bunch of leaves and brush by Jacob From. The surveyors engaged in the work are Charles Wetzel, Beavertown; C. E. Kline, Granville; S. J. Bingham, James Freed, Charles Felker, P. J. Herbstler, Beavertown.

Six-Inch Snow Fall.

Friday, April 19th, six inches of snow fell. At night it froze up. Saturday evening much of the snow could be seen in places hidden from the sun.

TOWN AND COUNTY NEWS.

HAPPENINGS OF LOCAL INTEREST FROM ALL PARTS.

President Roosevelt will start the machinery at the Jamestown Exposition, tomorrow (Friday).

Herman Royer, who is employed at the Burnham works, was in Centre Hall the latter part of last week.

Mrs. E. M. Huyett and daughters, Misses Leila and Miriam, Thursday of last week spent a day in Bellefonte.

Bellefonte has a curfew law. Boys and girls under sixteen years of age must be off the streets after nine o'clock.

Since moving to Centre Hall D. W. Bradford has taken the agency for the De Laval cream separator, and has been meeting with success.

Mrs. John M. Dale and two children, of Bellefonte, are in Havana, Cuba, where they are the guests of Col. Teller, formerly of the Bush House.

Prof. J. P. Smithgall, who so successfully taught the Centre Hall High School, and is now teaching in Millheim, was in town over Sunday. He is very much pleased with his new school, Millheim and its people.

Dr. Gentzel, the Spring Mills veterinary surgeon, made a professional call at Centre Hall Saturday afternoon. There are about two hundred pounds to the doctor, but he's out all hours of the day and night without suffering much.

Morton Smith, one of the Bellefonte post office clerks, became ill last week and later diphtheria developed. By permission of the government the post office was closed for a few days until the office and mail were thoroughly fumigated.

The pastoral relationship between Rev. L. F. Brown and the Nittany and Bald Eagle charge of the Presbyterian church at Mill Hall and Beech Creek, was dissolved by the presbytery at Newberry. Rev. Brown will go to Montoursville and become pastor of the Presbyterian church.

The first of the three graduates of the Reedsville High School is Miss Louella Reynolds, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Daniel W. Reynolds, formerly residents of Centre Hall. Miss Louella is kindly remembered here by her former associates who believe that she will do justice to the subject (Character) of her oration.

Rev. Foster Fetterolf and wife, of Selinsgrove, Sunday were the guests of the former's sister, Mrs. P. H. Meyer, in Centre Hall. Rev. Fetterolf is not serving a charge, having retired temporarily on account of poor health. While in Centre Hall Sunday, Rev. Fetterolf assisted Rev. J. M. Rearick to hold communion services in the Lutheran church.

The county commissioners—Messrs. Dunlap, Weaver and Bailey—Thursday of last week held the appeal for Centre Hall borough and Potter township. In order that they might reach Bellefonte to transact some accumulated business, Clerk James Cori and Boyd W. Musser drove to the Old Fort, where the appeal was held, and conveyed them to the county seat.

The other evening the house occupied by T. W. Butler and family at Mt. Eagle, took fire and burned to the ground. The fire started on the roof and the entire upper story was on fire when discovered. Nothing from the upper story was saved, but the goods on the lower floor were taken out. The loss is estimated at about \$1000, partly covered by insurance.

News of sports of all kinds is given in extremely comprehensive fashion in the Philadelphia Press, both daily and Sunday. The baseball season has now opened and the detailed stories of national and minor leagues will be given as completely as ever. If you order the Press served to your home seven days in the week you are sure to get the best there is, both as to news and other features.

Monday Miss Anna Shoop, who for the past two months had been at Beaverdale, will accompany B. D. Brisbin to Chicago, where she will be met by Mrs. Fred Wideman and go with her to Lagrange, Illinois. Miss Shoop may remain at the latter place, which is near Chicago, for an indefinite period. Mrs. Wideman, nee Miss Belle Pennington, is formerly from Potlatch Mills. She and her husband are engaged in the restaurant business.

J. H. Fishburn and wife, of near Bellefonte, are on an extended visit through the west and expect to be absent for several months, during which time they will visit their children and other relatives and friends in Illinois, Kansas, Missouri and other states. Mr. and Mrs. Fishburn have known little else than hard work all their lives, and this trip will be much enjoyed by them as well as by those whom they visit. Mr. Fishburn is eighty-two years of age.