

THE MOON-LIGHTERS.

Outlawry in the Old-Time Oil Regions of Pennsylvania

RECALLED BY W. ROBERTS' DEATH.

How His Famous Nitro-Glycerine Torpedo Was Duplicated

BY THE FEARLESS SCOUTS OF PITTSBURGH.

The death of Dr. W. B. Roberts at Titusville on Tuesday last, recalls to Pittsburgh people many interesting incidents of the oil craze. The doctor, together with his brother, Colonel E. A. L. Roberts, were the inventors and patentees of the torpedo for "shooting" and restoring oil wells, which was of great value to producers, and from the royalties resulting from its use the brothers accumulated a colossal fortune.

As their patents were merely on the method of exploding the charge and in no way prohibited the use of nitro-glycerine, the explosive of which the torpedoes were made, and as the royalty demanded for the use of the patents were so enormous, a number of infringers or "moonlighters" came into the field in opposition to the brothers, and offered to perform the same work for cash.

It is reported that many owners of wells also purchased explosives and did their own "shooting." Reports of these infringers reached the ears of the patentees and called forth the employment of the customary scouts or detectives, by whose evidence they were enabled to bring down in many cases secure infringers.

A VENDOR'S DEFLECTION. There is scarcely an operator in the country who has not had more or less trouble with the inventors, and the death of the doctor will recall to their minds many now forgotten controversies. Many and many were the tricks employed to avoid the payment of royalties, which were regulated according to amount of glycerine used in the "shot."

A favorite subterfuge of the oil men was to previously charge their wells with 50 or 60 pounds of the explosive purchased at one-quarter the price charged by the brothers and then employ the Roberts to "shoot" the well with about 20 pounds. Naturally the explosion of a small "shot" would discharge the larger. The vendors obtained the service for one-half the usual price and making the inventors their own infringers. The manufacture of the explosive under this condition of things by the "moonlighters" was a well-kept secret, and only the most reckless of men cared to enter into it.

In consequence the life of the "spotter" was not particularly happy, and many a violent and unprovoked beating and lynchings in the heart of the woods are related by the old-timers when one can catch them in the private conversation.

HOW WAS DONE. The method of "shooting" the well is by lowering can about eight feet long and about three inches in diameter, containing 30 pounds of glycerine, and exploding the same by striking with a hammer. In many parts of the oil country this is possible, as the ground is of a sandy nature, and a caving in would follow the "shot" and render the well useless. In other parts, however, the explosive to the wells the Roberts had a wagon constructed with delicately tempered springs, and packing frames, by which the danger of explosion was greatly reduced, while the "moonlighter" carried the material in buck-boarded wagons, and frequent fatalities were the result.

With the improved explosive, a change, whose gray fat is strangely at variance with his youthful face, once had a peculiar experience while "moonlighting." With a pack of dynamite he was carrying the wagon and its occupants with him. As they struck the bottom of the ravine, the wagon was blown to pieces every moment, but strange to say, no explosion occurred, although the wagon contained over 100 pounds of glycerine. The explosion reached home his hair was nearly white from the effect of the shock. One of the most daring devil "moonlighters" that ever shot a well was Dickenson, a better known as "Black Dick," from his hair and beard. He was a man who, his friends claim, was not only a good shot, but a good driver through Bradford, Captain Tom Murphy, who had received notice from a spotter that the carriage contained contraband explosive, attempted to arrest him. Dick grabbed a 20-pound can with an oath exactly as he would give the officer exactly 30 seconds to escape before he threw the can among them. He is known by reputation too well to doubt his word he had no occasion to waste the explosive.

WANTED ANOTHER LICENSE.

A Washington County Resident Wants to Represent the Dose in Allegheny.

Marriage License Clerk Heiber was somewhat puzzled by an application for a license to marry yesterday afternoon. A young man approached him with a request for a license and imparted the information that he (the young man) had been married recently in Washington county, but that friends were skeptical of the marriage and he wanted to have an Allegheny county knot tied to the same.

The applicant for a second dose of matrimony then went to Attorney W. B. Heiber, who shortly thereafter tried to convince Register Connor that it was all right to issue a second license. The union, however, preferred not to be united by the county courts settle the method of procedure. The point was whether a man married in one county could take out a license for a second marriage to the same party in a different county. Mr. Brennan said subsequently that he did not think the issuance of a second license, in such a case, a violation of law and that he might ask Orphans' Court for a rule on the points involved.

DEPRECIATIONS AT DUQUESNE.

The Firebugs Again Essay Their Lawless Operations and Escape.

The quiet town of Duquesne was again excited by the firebugs yesterday morning. The house of Elizabeth Smith, on Railroad street, was set on fire. The bucket brigade, and the fire department, were called out. John Riddon, watchman of Allegheny Bessemer Steel Works, discovered the fire about 4 o'clock. Seeing two men in the building, toward Germantown, he pulled out his revolver and shot at them, but without effect. The firebugs reported a quantity of carbon on the wooden floor, and the men set the building on fire. Mrs. Smith's office was that she refused to turn out some of the men working at the steel works. Her minor deprecatory at the neighborhood, and the end is not yet.

FOR A DISORDERED LIVER TRY BECHMAN'S PILLS.

PEARS' Soap the Purest and Best Ever Made.

Yard Wide and Extra Fine Buttons. New 10 Cents.

And other big bargains in our busy wash goods department.

JOS. HORNE & CO.'S, Penn Avenue Stores.

FREE LUNCH.

To introduce our fine crayon work. 100 25x crayons will be given away by Hendricks & Co., No. 68 Federal st., Allegheny, beginning at 10 o'clock, to the workers of their family tickets. This is your chance for a portrait.

USE "DINA" flour—finest spring patent in the world. "Golden Wedding"—the best of bread flours. "Duquesne" has no equal as a pastry flour. Hornig's "Ivory" gem of all family flours.

FREE Iron City Beer.

Is pronounced by competent judges to be unexcelled for purity, excellent flavor and wholesomeness. Take no other. To be had at all first-class bars, or direct from the makers. FRAENKEL & YILACKO, Telephone 1188.

Marvin's the Best.

Marvin's extra soda crackers and royal fruit biscuit cannot be beaten. They are unsurpassed. Get them from your grocer.

JOS. HORNE & CO.'S, Penn Avenue Stores.

A BREEZE IN BELTZHOVER.

The Extension of a Street Railway Under Lively Discussion.

Rights of way through Beltzhoever borough streets will probably insure a lively meeting of the borough Council next Monday evening.

The Mt. Oliver Incline Plane Street Railway Company have presented a petition asking the borough Council to grant them permission to lay tracks in the borough streets.

The street railway already extends along Washington avenue to the edge of the Beltzhoever borough line, and desires to continue its tracks within the corporation limits.

The petition asks the permission of Council to lay tracks along Beltzhoever avenue to the southern end of the borough, thence down Third street to the borough line, thence to Myrtle avenue, to Seventh street and along Seventh street to Beltzhoever avenue again. Burgess James Barr had drawn up an ordinance covering the case. As it now stands the railway company agree to pave the streets they occupy between their tracks, the borough reserves the right to grant permission to other railway companies to cross the Mt. Oliver company's tracks, and the railway must be completed and in operation before the ordinance is passed. The railway company, it is said, desire to commence to lay its tracks immediately, and will try to have in operation by fall if they get the right of way.

The people of Beltzhoever are very anxious that the street cars run through their borough. The borough Council are said to be determined to let the company have things as little their own way as possible. Some of the members of Council are said to be looking already, and the ordinance will probably be modified considerably.

MONEY IN TRANSIT.

Report of the M. O. Department of the Pittsburgh Postoffice.

The business transacted at the Money Order Department of the Pittsburgh Postoffice during July aggregated \$163,826 93. The detailed report is appended:

Table with columns for Cash on hand June 30, Domestic money orders, Postal notes issued, Money orders issued, etc.

NEW ROADBED CONSTRUCTED.

The P. & L. E. R. R. Indulging in Important Improvements.

The Pittsburgh and Lake Erie Railroad is going right ahead fulfilling its promise of improvement on the line between Allegheny and Pittsburgh. A force of 500 men are at work upon a new roadbed between Beaver and College station, a distance of seven miles.

An accident to an airline in the locomotive drawing "The Flyer," the fastest train running between Allegheny and Youngstown, caused a delay of an hour and a half yesterday afternoon, and tied up all the trains on the road for a while. No serious damage was caused.

WANT THE GRADE CHANGED.

Mr. Oliver Proprietor Holds Protest Against Being Below Allen Street.

The residents of Allen street, Mt. Oliver, are getting up a petition to City Engineer Bigelow in regard to the grade of that thoroughfare. There is a portion of the street about 800 feet in length which the city has started to raise seven feet, and several property owners on the line between Youngstown and Pittsburgh are protesting against the change, whose gray fat is strangely at variance with his youthful face, once had a peculiar experience while "moonlighting."

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ALLEGHENY VALLEY R. R.

To Thomas and Alexandra, Alexandria Bay and return, \$12.

To Toronto, Canada, and return, \$8.

Niagara Falls and return, \$7.

Lake Champlain and return, \$5.

Tickets good for 14 days.

Passengers for Thousand Islands, Alexandria Bay and Toronto can stop at Niagara Falls and Lake Champlain on the return trip.

Train of Eastlake coaches and Pullman parlor buffet cars leave Union station at 8:45 A. M., Eastern standard time.

Short Jackets and Long Traveling Wraps

In our cloak department at very low prices—summer weights.

JOS. HORNE & CO.'S, Penn Avenue Stores.

REAL ESTATE SAVINGS BANK, LHM.

401 Smithfield Street, cor. Fourth Avenue.

Capital, \$100,000. Surplus, \$45,000.

Deposits of \$1 and upward received and interest allowed at 4 per cent.

FREE LUNCH.

To introduce our fine crayon work. 100 25x crayons will be given away by Hendricks & Co., No. 68 Federal st., Allegheny, beginning at 10 o'clock, to the workers of their family tickets. This is your chance for a portrait.

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Marvin's extra soda crackers and royal fruit biscuit cannot be beaten. They are unsurpassed. Get them from your grocer.

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FULLY 600 HOUSES

On Which Building Operations Will be Suddenly Stopped Monday, UNLESS LATHERS ARE DISCHARGED.

The Serious Delay That Would Follow a Strike of Plasterers, AS SHOWN BY BUILDING INSPECTORS.

At a meeting of the Pittsburgh and Allegheny Plasterers' Union last night, the lathing question was discussed and members were reminded that the time limit given contractors, beyond which the plasterers would not cover lathers' work, will expire on the next Monday. The plasterers are determined in their resolution not to cover lathers' work after the appointed date.

A leading member of the union working on the third floor of the Monongahela House building yesterday said: "It's all nonsense to talk about a strike. Our wages are good enough, and a skilled plasterer will always be one-quarter behind the lather. The carpenters are not so, but the lathers are not, because they don't want to be considered. The plasterers' strike is as all object to the calculator. Selfishness is at the bottom of the entire trouble—nothing else."

In May the Building Inspector of Pittsburgh issued permits for 351 houses, which required the work of plasterers. In June 240 permits were issued. The report for July is not ready but will reach contractors by the 10th of the month. It is estimated that one-half this number, at least, is a good estimate of the number of buildings in the course of construction in Allegheny. The Building Inspector's clerk said yesterday that it was a very poor building that one of the plasterers had, and estimated that fully two-thirds of the number of buildings for which permits had been secured since June were not yet completed.

GENERAL DELAY WILL FOLLOW.

From these facts some idea can be gained of the delay and damage to building operations which would result if the plasterers would cause. July is generally the busiest month of the year when all building operations are at their height, and it seems a pity that an one of the most important and favorable for the contractors could not have been chosen.

The estimated cost of the buildings for which permits were issued in May and June is \$1,237,694 and the July permits will increase the sum more than one-third.

At the Building Inspector's office yesterday the permit for the erection of a \$200,000 granite and iron building at the corner of Sixth and Duquesne streets, Captain J. J. Vandergrift took permit for three residences, to be erected on Shady avenue, Twentieth ward, one a three-story brick building, one of two of brick and stone to cost \$8,000 each.

AN UNPROVOKED ASSAULT.

A Gang of Hoodlums Attack an Allegheny Pedestrian With Missiles.

On Tuesday night at 11:30 on Lee Donnelly was passing up Rebecca street, Allegheny, he met eight young fellows talking and laughing, each armed with a stone. As he came abreast of the party one of them threw a stone at him on the shoulder. He turned quickly around, and instantly the party rushed at him with an open knife, and stabbed him behind the ear. The blow inflicted a severe wound, and was followed by another stab which cut Donnelly's clothes at the shoulder. Another stab was in his back, made for the residence of his brother, Donnelly, a detective, whom he wakened up. The two men then sallied forth and chased the hoodlums up Rebecca street into South avenue. Here they overtook them and succeeded in capturing the one who had committed the outrage. He came to the station, and the hoodlums were arrested on the scene. Hearing the facts of the case the officer arrested the young ruffian, who gave the name of Evans, and locked him up.

NEARLY \$800,000 CONTRIBUTED.

Chicago Citizens Send For of Money, Honoring Johnstown Recipients.

All rumors about dissatisfaction at Chicago with the conduct of financial affairs at Johnstown vanished into thin air yesterday consequent upon an additional contribution of \$25,000 sent to Treasurer Thompson by the Citizens' Committee, accompanied by a resolution that more money be sent immediately. The Citizens' Committee has done doubly well, for the City has done doubly, \$100,000 having been sent by citizens, \$16,000 by the Board of Trade, \$7,700 by the Bankers and Bank Clerks' Association, making a grand total of \$129,700.

WANTED—AGENTS TO HANDLE THE GREAT OILY VESSEL.

Wanted—Agents to handle the Great Oily Vessel, a new patent chemical ink. Residing in Pennsylvania, New York, Ohio, and other States. One cent per copy. Send for prospectus to J. M. O'Connell, 100 N. 10th St., Philadelphia, Pa.

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THE PITTSBURGH DISPATCH

For the accommodation of the public Branch Offices have been established at the following places, where Want, To Let, and other transient advertisements will be received up to 9 P. M. for insertion next morning.

Advertisements are to be prepaid except where advertisers already have accounts with THE DISPATCH.

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