

# The Iron Pot—Still a Mystery

By a Former Secret Service Man

## Ex-Operative Tells of Cleverest of Counterfeiting Plots



"IT WAS THE VESSEL WHICH HAD HUNG OVER THE FIRE WHEN I VISITED THE COUNTERFEITERS."

HERE are few mysteries which are never cleared up," commenced Capt. Dickson, as he sat before the cheerful wood fire of his cozy study one night last winter, "although some of them slumber for years among the things forgotten, until the denouement is accidentally developed by some person who, perhaps, never heard of the original matter. Such was the case which I have come to remember as that of 'The Iron Pot.' It was a vessel of this humble character that finally cleared up a great mystery and brought the guilty to justice.

"A St. Louis gang had their plant in a cleverly constructed cave in a suburban district. It was an artificial cave, dug back in the face of a clay and gravel bluff. The entrance was through the shanty of a poor Irish family, a circumstance that diverted suspicion from it and one which is partly due to the long immunity the gang enjoyed.

"There was no scrap of metal, no coins, chemicals, or other thing used in the art. Only the machine and a few wrenches and similar tools. The gang had skipped out. The Irishman was half-witted, and his wife was too clever to be caught in the traps we laid for her. We had made a water-haul, except for the machine, which was destroyed. The cave was filled up. Acting under orders from Washington we maintained secrecy about the entire matter and nothing of it got into the newspapers.

"I found one thing in the shanty which might or might not offer a clue to the counterfeiters. It was an empty envelope bearing the postmark of an obscure railroad station in the sukkand district of northeastern Arkansas. I had long ago learned that it is the seemingly insignificant things that lead to the discovery of criminals, and while this envelope might mean nothing, on the other hand, it might be of the gravest importance. It had been found beneath the sheet of metal on which the cook stove stood, the tip of one corner, discolored and grimy, attracting my attention. I had secured it and pocketed it without attracting attention.

"If the gang had never existed it could not have disappeared more effectually. We were face to face with a blank wall. This made us the more anxious to capture the counterfeiters. As nothing better offered, the chief

Captain Dickson Relates Tale—He Tells of Encountering Desperado Gang and the Ultimate Consequences—Man with Bulldog Jaw and His Daring Escape from the Grip of the Law. ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

greatest confusion. Clothing and shells, guns and fishing-tackle were strewn about the floor, evidencing a precipitate departure. It was tantalizing to again allow the criminals to escape. I felt deeply chagrined, and resolved never again to put off a matter of this kind. The men had forestalled me by only a few hours, for I had intended arresting them that morning, and there had been nothing in their conduct during my visit to their cabin to indicate that they thought of flight.

"In one corner of the cabin, beneath the very bunk on which I had slept, there was an excavation three feet square and as many deep. The cover was down and dirt was strewn over it which gave it the same appearance as the dirt floor of the house. I discovered it by a hollow sound when I tapped over the spot. It was empty.

"I noticed the absence of the pot which had supplied my supper, but it was rather a subconscious notice of it. The fact really made no appreciable impression on me at the time, nor did it, in fact, until more than a year had passed. It was then recalled by a newspaper dispatch under date of the small village.

"Some of the boys in the village had appropriated the cabin as a sort of clubhouse, after the three men had fled. They would spend Saturdays there, fishing and swimming and hunting. Immediately in front of the cabin was a steep bank, and the river widened out into a broad, deep pool which afforded good fishing and swimming. The boys would throw white pebbles into this hole and dive for them from the bank. One of them had struck his head against something hard at the bottom of the river and had been pulled up a corpse, his skull having been fractured by the impact of the blow.

"The others investigated and found a large iron pot half buried in the soft mud. Its cover was sealed down and its weight had been so great the boys couldn't lift it from its oozy bed. The dispatch stated that the pot was to be raised and its contents examined.

"I was in Little Rock when I read this dispatch and, without waiting for instructions from headquarters, I boarded the first train and set out for the village. I was in a state of feverish excitement, fearing I would arrive there after the pot had been secured. I wanted to be the first to view its contents. I felt sure I knew what was in it.

"After a journey that seemed interminable I arrived at the village and inquired about the pot. My fears had been groundless. With the indifference so characteristic in country people the villagers had forgotten, after the funeral of the unfortunate young man, the incident of the pot. While there had been some talk of raising it, no one had taken the lead, and there the matter had rested.

"Securing a team of mules and some strong ropes and chains, I drove out to the cabin. By dint of much diving I succeeded in fastening the chains about the pot and had my assistant drag it out upon the bank. It was the vessel which had hung over the fire when I had visited the counterfeiters in their lair. Then I remembered its absence, when I had searched the hut after their departure. It was sealed with paraffin and sealed wax, and not a drop of water had passed the lid.

"I contained a complete set of engravers' tools, several bottles of powerful acids, glass stopped and sealed, a number of bars of silver, some three hundred odd counterfeit silver dollars, and the dies with which they had been stamped out. The dies were thickly coated with wax and were as bright and fresh as when they beat out the false coins in the secret cave.

"After swearing my assistant to secrecy, I returned to headquarters with my booty.

"Not many weeks later two of the men were captured. I had given the department a minute description of them, after their unceremonious departure, and their vast machinery had been set in motion for their apprehension. It is a maxim of the service that a man once a counterfeiter is always a counterfeiter. This rule held good with reference to two of the men, at least, for they were captured and convicted of another job. The incidents I have just related were not introduced in evidence against them and consequently escaped the press. The man with the bulldog jaw escaped completely at that time, but I met with him, years after, under circumstances neither of us will forget so long as we live."

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ggers; whatever you do, continue to stare wide-eyed into the darkness, and most important of all, think of that one question only. In about five minutes you will be so sleepy that no power on earth could keep you awake. The one cure for fatigue is rest, and after prolonged physical effort, the paramount issue is to get to sleep immediately, and to sleep as long as possible.

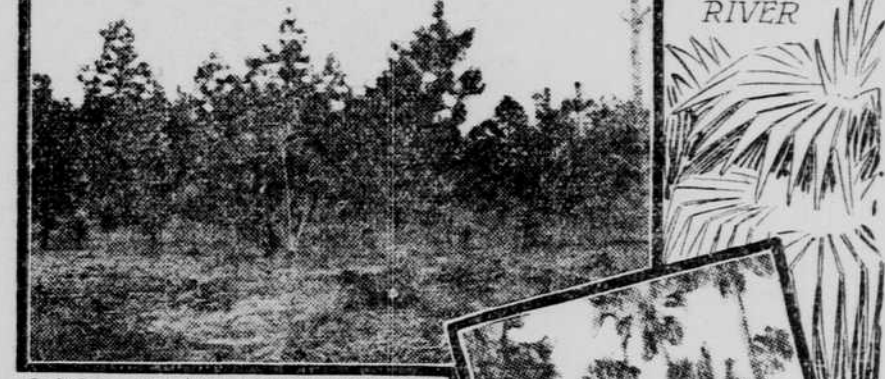
Streets With Queer Names. Edinburgh has some queerly named

# NATIONAL FOREST FOR FLORIDA

FIRST RESERVATION TO BE CREATED EAST OF THE MISSISSIPPI.



LIVE OAK TREE WITH SPANISH MOSS. CABBAGE PALMETTO, SABAL PALMETTO, BANK OF KISSIMMEE RIVER.



GOOD REPRODUCTION OF LONGLEAF PINE.

To Florida goes the distinction of getting the first national forest east of the Mississippi river. President Roosevelt has just signed a proclamation setting aside and naming the Ocala national forest in Marion county in eastern Florida and another proclamation creating the Dakota national forest in Billings county, North Dakota. Inasmuch as the last named national forest is the first in North Dakota, the two proclamations add two more states to the list of those wherein land will be put under scientific forest administration. There are now 19 states, and Alaska, having national forests.

Before the creation of the Ocala, in Florida, the two forests in Arkansas, the Ozark and the Arkansas, were the easternmost national forests. Practically all the other national forests are in the Rocky mountain and the Pacific coast states. The Florida forest has an area of 201,480 acres, of which about one-fourth has been taken up under various land laws. It covers a plateau between the St. John's and Ochlawaha rivers and at no point is an elevation exceeding 150 feet above sea level obtained. The area is by nature better fitted for the production of forest growth than for any other purpose. Nearly all of the area, however, seems particularly well adapted to the growth of sand pine, which is even now replacing the less valuable species, and with protection from fire almost the entire area will in time undoubtedly be covered with a dense stand of this species. The longleaf pine, a much more valuable commercial tree than the sand pine, appears rather sparsely on this forest and is confined principally to the lower flat lands along the streams on the borders of the forest.

In addition to the pines and scrub growths, bald cypress, cabbage palmetto and tupelo gum, gradually changing to water oak, ash, elm, magnolia, hickory and maple are found bordering the numerous ponds and lakes which are scattered abundantly throughout the confines of this forest.

Fire has played a very important part in bringing about the present poorly forested condition of the Ocala, as year after year large fires have burned uninterruptedly over this tract, killing all vegetation and consuming the humus of the soil. Naturally protected portions which have not been subject to the flames prove positively, however, that the soil will rapidly respond to a little care taking and that the prevention of fires would eventually mean the reforestation of practically the entire area.

No sawmill operations have been conducted on the area included in the Ocala national forest. Turpentine by boxing is carried on over contiguous areas and through the careless and antiquated methods used the future pine crop of the adjoining region is greatly jeopardized. The soil is of little value for agricultural purposes and about the only crop which can be produced that will be of lasting value is sand pine, and with proper care and attention there should in time be a valuable forest of this species.

The new Dakota national forest consists of 14,080 acres in the Bad Lands region. It is located in Billings county and lies an equal distance between the Northern Pacific railroad on the

French Ingenuity Triumphant. All the women prisoners at the Clarkenwell sessions recently appeared in the dock wearing their hats. The rule of "no hatpins" was strictly enforced, but their absence in no way troubled the women. Indeed, one balanced a hat more than six feet in circumference without the slightest trace of anxiety. How she did it only a woman could tell.—London Chronicle.

SISTER WAS A FIRECRACKER. After-Christmas Amusement Devised by Clever Youngsters.

"Oh," he said, "I'm not hurting her at all, mamma. I'm playing my little sister is a firecracker and I'm just setting her off."

Jewish Immigration. According to a table published in the current number of the Federation Review, 5,225 immigrant Jews entered the port of New York in September, 1908. Of these, 2,433 were women, 2,901 men and 1,791 children. Russia contributed 4,607; Austria-Hungary, 1,234; Roumania, 273; England, 56; Germany, 29; Turkey, 19; Sweden and Spain, two each; and Holland, three. The record also shows that 1,566 of the immigrants went to homes outside of the metropolis. In the corresponding month last year the number of Jewish immigrants was 3,033 greater.

Many Women Stenographers. Women as stenographers have been greatly increased in number in New York city during the last year and there are now about 11,200 of them.

# VISITS WITH UNCLE BY



There was a time when buxom girls Preferred to learn to cook and brew. But now their choice is something else. More ladylike, they say to you. They much prefer to be a clerk And wrap up packages all day. Or glue the backs on trashy books For very little daily pay.

They live at home and spend their wage On street cars going to and fro. And some of them have honored names While others are—well, not so slow. Alas, the times seem out of joint. For when you want a maid for home, You cannot catch a single one By hunting with a fine-tooth comb!

You offer everything that's good, A dandy room and evenings out. But nothing comes of it at all And all your ads. are put to rout. And as you sit and think it o'er, You wonder, as you catch your breath, How long 'twill be before this world Will simply all be starved to death?

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Rag Time. It is almost as hard to get a hired girl as it is to get into Taff's cabinet. Somehow the kitchen cabinet does not appeal to the misses of the land.

Some fellows who call themselves sportsmen will lug a gun all day, break the laws of every suburb they invade, beat a dog into abject submission and go home at night with one



mangled meadowlark and a pet squirrel—rewards of prowess. The desire to kill is so strong in some men that even a robin is not safe within the range of their powder and shot.

An Editor's Dictionary. Poet—A man whose breast throbs while he writes things that are supposed to rhyme. Example—The poet (wounded a mournful lyre: His brain with anguish was on fire— He piled his "copy" ten sheets higher. And sighed!)

Fiercely he puffed his pipe of cob; His breast it heaved with fervent "throb!" He wrote of verses a great gob, And sighed!

Mystery—What the sausage link was made of. Ex.—"It was a 'mystery' in the community what became of Jones' dog."

Editor—One who is supposed to take cordwood on subscription. Ex.—"Ye editor is in need of fuel for his domicile. Will some back subscriber please bring us in some stumps and receive our blessing. It takes money to run a newspaper!"

Muzzle—A political contraption. Ex.—"He put a muzzle on his friends and was elected by the back country."

Potatoes—Taters. Ex.—He plowed up ten acres And planted "taters." Says he: "I'll just eat To wealth and estate—er My name's not Boggs!"

\*This was last spring. He is now known as the Honorable Horatio de Bogges of Boggsville, Oklahoma. Moral—Know when to plant potatoes.

Insolent—One who wears insolence. Ex.—"Get up and build your own fire," she said with "insolence."

Newspaper Reporter—A reporter of news. Ex.—"The reporter unbridled his imagination and 'smoked up.'"

Rubber—To peek, to crane one's neck. Ex.—Little Johnny "rubbered" At his sister May's. Until her beau blew out the light And settled down to stay.

Divorce—An antidote for matrimony. Ex.—"He was cold and cruel and she hit him with a custard pie. Then they tried to beat each other to the 'divorce' court."

Love—What calves have. Ex.—"The calves in the cow-lot chewed each others' ears in 'love.'"

Clubman—One who smokes stogies except at the club, where he buys "two for 50c." Ex.—"The policeman saw his 'club' hanging on a peg and he went to it. Did you think it would come to him?"

Sausage. (Sometimes pronounced "skissage")—A guy around town. Ex.—"The 'skissage' is a lobster."

Bloomers—A word used in the bicycle era to designate a pair of ex-husbands. Ex.—"His breath came and went in short pants."

A Sharp Answer. "I am not happy with my husband. Can I get a separation?" asked a lady of a lawyer. "His life is insured in your favor, isn't it?" "Yes; I made him do that before we married." "Well, don't separate. He'll live longer away from you!"

Daily Thought. The human heart concerns us more than poring into microscopes, and is larger than can be measured by the pompous figures of the astronomer.—Emerson.

# Cure for Muscular Fatigue.

Best Method of Obtaining Sound and Refreshing Sleep.

Real fatigue may be divided into the mental and muscular varieties. The latter is decidedly the simpler of the two. Where one has so overworked physically that one cannot sleep, the first thing to do is to learn to relax. In such a case the first thing to do is

to take a warm bath, into which a little rock salt has been dropped to counteract the weakening effect of hot water. Then shut out every ray of light from your bedroom and lie flat on your back. Do not close your eyes and think desperately of going to sleep. Instead, devote yourself entirely to the subject of keeping your eyes open. If they close, open them; if necessary, even prop them open with your fin-

gert; whatever you do, continue to stare wide-eyed into the darkness, and most important of all, think of that one question only. In about five minutes you will be so sleepy that no power on earth could keep you awake. The one cure for fatigue is rest, and after prolonged physical effort, the paramount issue is to get to sleep immediately, and to sleep as long as possible.