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Police Science Notes

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POLICE SCIENCE NOTES

Contributors

GUSTAV W. PIRK is a metallurgist in the research laboratories of the General Cable Corporation, and also consulting metallurgist for the Scientific Crime Detection Laboratory of the Utica, N. Y., Police Department. Mr. Pirk was formerly an assistant in the research laboratory of the General Electric Company, and he is the author of several articles in various scientific journals.

M. EDWIN O'NEILL is a member of the staff of the Chicago Police Scientific Crime Detection Laboratory. Prior to joining the Laboratory staff in 1934 (at which time the Laboratory was a part of Northwestern University School of Law) Mr. O'Neill was an instructor in the Biology Department of Tulane University, where he also carried on research in microanalysis as applied to criminal investigation. He is a graduate of Tulane University, with B.S., and M.S. degrees in Biology. Since 1935 Mr. O'Neill has been a frequent contributor to this Journal, and also an associate editor.

Announcement

The comment on the matching of the torn dollar note, appearing on this and the following page, is another example of the type of article we should like to receive from laboratory technicians. Such contributions would be published under the name of the person submitting the comment. (Technicians interested in contributions of this nature are referred to the comment which appeared on pages 768, 769, and 770 of the last issue of this Journal. It is an excellent example of the style and form in which the note or comment should be prepared.)

TECHNICAL ABSTRACTS

M. Edwin O'Neill

The Matching of a Torn One Dollar Note in a Robbery Case—Following the recent robbery of a grocery store in Kankakee, Illinois, one of the clerks and the manager recalled that among the currency seized in the robbery there was a one dollar note from which a small piece had been torn off accidentally as the money was being counted and wrapped for bank delivery. Since the torn fragment still lay on the floor of the store, the investigating authorities preserved it for possible future use in identifying the stolen money in the event it should be recovered while in the possession of the robbers.

Shortly thereafter two suspects were apprehended in this case, and in their possession the investigators discovered a large sum of money—among which was a dollar note with a piece torn off about the size of the fragment recovered in the grocery store. When the fragment was placed alongside the torn note, the two seemed to fit together perfectly.

There was other evidence in the case indicative of the guilt of the two suspects, but, realizing the possible importance of evidence furnished by a reconstruction of the torn dollar note, the state's attorney's office submitted the material for laboratory examination, which was to consist principally of the preparation of photographs of the evidence for court presentation. The results of careful matching of the irregular torn edges are shown in the accompanying illustration.

The trial of this case resulted in a conviction which would have been more difficult for the state to obtain in the absence of this convincing evidence.



A



A1

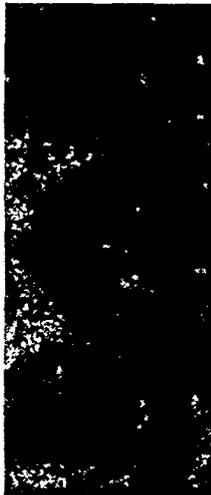
Portion of one dollar note involved in grocery store robbery.

A—Fragment at left recovered from store. Portion at right found in possession of suspects.

B—Reverse side of note showing torn pieces in juxtaposition.



B



B1

A1-B1—Front and reverse sides of note after fragments had been reconstructed.

(This note is reproduced by special permission of the Hon. Henry Morgenthau, Jr., Secretary of the Treasury of the United States.)

LEGAL DECISIONS AND COMMENTS

Fred E. Inbau

The Law of Arrest—In the January, 1940, number of the Iowa Law Review (Vol. 25, No. 2, pp. 201-290) there is an excellent article on "The Law of Arrest," written by Professor Rollin M. Perkins of the University of Iowa. It is a very comprehensive and interesting discussion of this subject, and we recommend it as valuable reading for police officers and lawyers alike. (The Iowa Law Review may be found in most law school libraries, and copies of this particular number may be purchased from the University of Iowa Law School, Iowa City, Iowa.)

Wire-Tapping Decisions—The United States Supreme Court's recent wire tapping decisions, which were referred to in the last issue of this Journal, are discussed at some length in the February, 1940, number of the Illinois Law Review (Vol. 34, No. 6, pp. 758-766). Readers of the Journal interested in this subject will find this Illinois Law Review comment a very valuable one. (The Review is available in most law school libraries, and a copy of this particular number may be purchased from Northwestern University School of Law, Chicago, Illinois.)

For a comment similar to that appearing in the Illinois Law Review turn to page 945 of this Journal.

POLICE SCIENCE BOOK REVIEWS

Edited by *Paul V. Trovillo*

Aids to Forensic Medicine and Toxicology. (11th Edition.) Edited by *J. H. Ryffel*. Bailliere, Tindall and Cox (London, 1939); Williams and Wilkins (Baltimore, 1939). Pp. X, 170. Price \$1.25.

This small volume of 170 pages is a type of book familiar to every medical student. It is not intended to be a comprehensive textbook. Its chief purpose is to serve as an "aid" in reviewing for examinations. Books of this type are numerous. The publishers of this volume have similar books in their "Students' Aids Series," begun in 1876, on 47 different subjects from "Aids to Analysis of Drugs" to "Aids to Zoology." That the present volume is popular and useful is evident because it has gone through eleven editions and Dr. Ryffel, Lecturer in Forensic Medicine, Guy's Hospital, London, is its third editor.

The editor has presented briefly but effectively the fundamental facts of forensic medicine and toxicology. Of necessity, however, in so small a volume, many details and much desirable discussion have been omitted. The literary style is most pleasing, as is so frequently the case in English scientific books. Such a book as this has very definite limitations, but within those limitations it may be useful. It cannot meet the requirements of experts on the subject of Legal Medicine and Toxicology. It will not be of value as a guide to legal procedure in the courts of the United States, but it may serve a useful purpose for at least four groups of readers. Medical students will find it helpful in a review of the principles of legal medicine and toxicology. *To law students and lawyers it*

will be helpful in gaining a comprehension of medico-legal problems. Police officers will find it an aid in understanding and perhaps in solving some of the medical problems connected with crime. Intelligent laymen interested in crime will find the author of this book an easy and safe guide.

In evaluating this book it must be remembered that it was written for English readers. The paragraphs dealing with such subjects as the jurisdiction of the various English courts, the certification of lunatics and the provisions of "the inebriates acts" will have little interest, perhaps little meaning, to most American readers. But these sections constitute only a small portion of the book itself, which, on the whole, is an excellent summary of the subjects expressed in the title.

The first section of 93 pages deals with Forensic Medicine, the remaining pages with Toxicology. In the first section there are 45 chapters, varying in length from less than half a page to approximately ten pages. One or more chapters devoted to such subjects as medical evidence, signs of death, wounds of various kinds (5 chapters), characteristics of death by different causes such as suffocation, drowning, etc., rape, feigned diseases and mental unsoundness, indicate the scope with which the subject is covered. The section on Toxicology contains 47 chapters with such titles as definition of poison, classification of poisons, evidence of poisoning, symptoms and post-mortem appearances of different classes of poisons, detection of poisons. Then follow chapters on the different types of poisons from aconite and arsenic, through oxalic acid and strychnine to zinc.

Although small, this volume has its value, and it will fill the needs of certain readers in an admirable way.

J. P. Simonds

Department of Pathology,
Northwestern University Medical School,
Chicago, Illinois.