



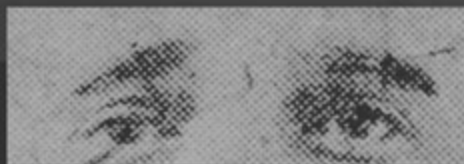
The Cowboy Hill Gang



In the days when automobiles looked like this, there was a gang of bandits based in Ohio, who used their automatic pistols to take what they wanted. They roamed all over the country but they often could be found in Toledo.

August 3, 1920, Moline, Illinois

On this date five men, using two cars, held up the Commercial Savings Bank. Although they were pursued by auto and by an airplane over four counties, they successfully avoided capture.



“Every one seems agreed that a dark, tall man was the leader of the gang, issuing orders and doing most of the shooting.”

August , 1920, Toledo, Ohio



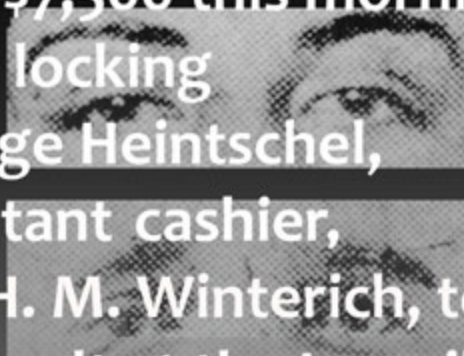
2220 Franklin Avenue, Toledo, Ohio



It was reported that residents in the area of Franklin Avenue - Bancroft Street saw Cowboy Hill and his cohorts in the early part of August in 1920.

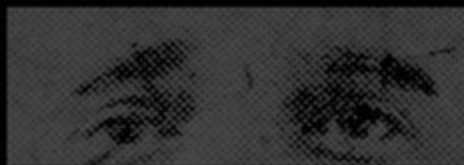
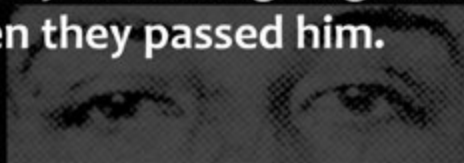
August 20, 1920, Toledo, Ohio

“Two masked men escaped with \$7,500 this morning after locking George Heintschel, assistant cashier, and H. M. Winterich, teller, in a vault at the Ironville branch of the People’s State Savings Bank.”



August 20, 1920, Toledo, Ohio

“...shortly afterward a machine with two men and two girls in it passed a Maumee motor policeman near the Maumee bridge. They were laughing and chatting gaily when they passed him.



The machine drove to a gasoline station at Wayne and Conant streets in Maumee. The tank was filled and when it came time to pay, the driver reached down into a bag of money at his feet and paid for it. The bag was just like the ones used in banks.”

September 3, 1920, Toledo, Ohio

**Officer Walter Kruse confronts four
members of The Cowboy Hill Gang.**



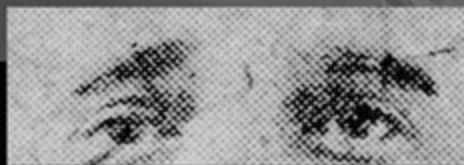
September 3, 1920, Toledo, Ohio

At approximately 3 a.m. on this date, a Toledo motorcycle patrolman by the name of Walter Kruse observed a parked touring car near 335 Vance Street, in an area of Toledo considered part of the red-light district. According to police records of the incident, this was soon after the robbery of a silk shop in the 500 block of Madison Avenue. Kruse watched as four occupants of the car entered the house and then decided to investigate. Officer Kruse knocked on the door and entered the house and subsequently came out with the four men in front of him. Eyewitness accounts seem to indicate he either had arrested them or was about to arrest them.

September 3, 1920, Toledo, Ohio

A gunfight then broke out among the group of men. Officer Kruse was obviously at a serious disadvantage and was severely wounded and nearly died as a result of injuries inflicted by one or more of the gangsters. Kruse was able to return fire and a blood trail at the scene of the shooting indicated that he had wounded at least one member of the gang. An investigation revealed that Archie Dennison was a possible suspect in the attempt to kill Patrolmen Kruse. The other three men were not identified but were probably Red McGahan, Cowboy Hill, and Joe Forrest.

**“a mob of
big-league gunners”**



September 14, 1920

Following the attack on Officer Kruse the police received reports from the residents in the Franklin Avenue area regarding suspicious activity.

The activity seemed to be focused on this particular apartment building.



2220 Franklin Avenue, Toledo, Ohio

There are contradictory stories about how this residence was identified as the headquarters for the Cowboy Hill gang. One story indicates that the police received a tip on September 14



that spoke of “ a mob of big-league gunners ” using one of the apartments in this house as a hideout.

A second story was the official version as told by Inspector of Detectives William Delehanty. Delehanty stated that no tip of any kind was received the day of the raid.

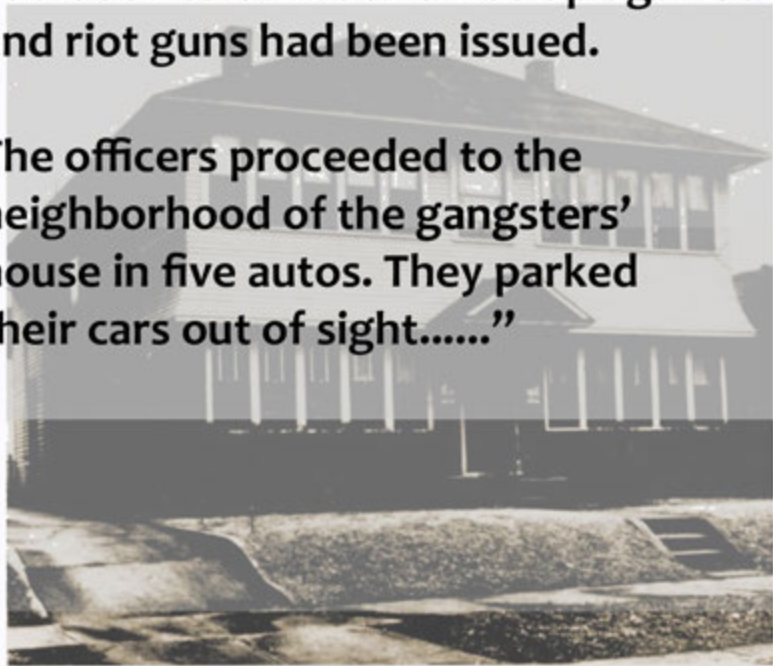


He talked about the details of an investigation that started in the spring and culminated in a search of 15 places before the actual hideout was identified.

“..... the entire day shift of the detective force and a number of picked patrolmen were mustered for the big raid.

‘We are in for some shooting,’ was the conclusion of each man after he had been told what he was up against and riot guns had been issued.

The officers proceeded to the neighborhood of the gangsters’ house in five autos. They parked their cars out of sight.....”



9:30 a. m.

September 14, 1920

15-20

There are conflicting reports as to how many policemen were involved in this raid.



Delehanty spoke of 20 men, but lists of the participating officers indicate only 15.

This group photo of Toledo police detectives, taken in 1922, includes several of the participants of the raid of September 14, 1920.



WHAT A difference in style, as well as personnel, a quarter of a century makes. Members of the Toledo detective bureau posed for this picture June 10, 1922. The cap for formal wear by well-dressed sleuth was on its way out, while the old bowler of the teen decade had disappeared. Left to right, in the top row, are Joseph Fruehoy, now head of the bureau; Roy Haven, retired; Michael Rowan, Ernest Raftis, Joseph Swiatecki, Capt. William Carroll (deceased), William Jubert (deceased), Fred Langhoff, Bernard Cummings, retired; James Ford, retired; John Mallen, Michael Daly (deceased). Center row, Capt. Fred Buck, retired; John Hodges (deceased), Edward Harris (deceased), William Culver (deceased), Dan Gavin (deceased), John Connor, retired; Stanley Kins, retired; Frank DeLora, Garnet Stevenson, Edward Eaton (deceased); Dick Martin (deceased); Capt. Ralph Van Vorst, retired. Seated,

John Henahan (deceased), William Herman (deceased), Capt. James O'Reilly, retired; Irving Brown (deceased), Albert Hassenzahl (deceased), John Hovey (deceased), Louis Kruse, retired; Stephen Quinn (deceased), Frank Peters (deceased), Charles Mavis, retired; Inspector William Dechanty, later chief of police (deceased); Bert Dobaszewski (deceased), and Fred Palicki (deceased). Such heroes stalwarts as Capts. Mose McCloskey, Emmet Cahrl, Edward Rock (deceased); Capts. Willard Rydman, retired, and George Timiney, now Lucas County sheriff; Inspector Louis Haas, former chief of police, and Arthur Laugenthal were not available on that day long ago when this picture was snapped in front of the old police headquarters on Superior St. Only 9 of the 44 men then comprising the bureau are still active in Toledo police work.

THE POLICEMEN

It isn't possible to be precise about the exact number of policemen involved in the September 14, 1920, raid on the gang's hideout. Newspaper reports contradict one another as to the exact number, and some of the names given in these articles don't correspond to known police personnel.

Recent research indicates that there were at least fourteen policemen involved. Ten of these fourteen were assigned the task of surrounding the house in order to assure that no one was able to escape.

These men were: Detectives Bob Bartley, John Hovey, Ed Rock, Albert Hassenzahl, Michael Daly, Ervin Brown, Fred Langhoff, Louis Kruse, John Connors, and Officer Herbert E. Crane.

The other four men received the most publicity because they were assigned the most dangerous task. Detectives James O'Reilly, Stephen Quinn, William Culver, and August Salhoff entered the house in order to arrest the gang members.

Robert Francis Bartley

Born: February 27, 1887, Toledo, Ohio

Died: March 14, 1975, Toledo, Ohio

1910: April 22, census record lists Bartley and his wife living in Toledo. Bartley was working as a glass cutter at that time.

1912: March 18, assigned a “beat”.

1917: June 5, registered for the military draft.

1918: April 1, promoted to Detective-Sergeant.

1920: On September 14, Bartley was one of the men assigned to protecting against escape attempts. As Cowboy Hill came out of the house firing his two automatics, Bartley was primarily responsible for stopping him.

1920: On November 10, Bartley was reassigned as a patrolman.

1922: Listed as a policeman in the Toledo City Directory

1923: Bartley was listed as an attorney in the Toledo City Directory. He resigned from the police force on March 1, after he had received his law degree from the University of Toledo.

1930-1940: Bartley and his wife were living on Willys Parkway in Toledo. During these years Bartley had a private practice as an attorney.



John Harry Hovey

Born: October 19, 1877, Toledo, Ohio

Died: September 4, 1944, Toledo, Ohio

1880: At the age of 2 John and his family were living on St Clair Street in Toledo

1903: John H. Hovey appeared in the Toledo City Directory as a brakeman living on Western Avenue.

1903: John H. Hovey appeared in the Toledo City Directory as a policeman living on Bloomfield.

1910: John and his wife are living with her parents on Erin Street in Toledo. His occupation is listed as "Policeman".

1918: Registered for the draft on September 12, 1918, (WWI).



1920: The census record indicates that John, his wife, and two sons were living on Erie Street in Toledo. John was one of the detectives designated to protect the exterior of the house on September 14.

1930: In 1930 John, his wife and son were living on South Avenue and he was still working as a detective on the Toledo police force.

1940: John was living with his son on South Street in Toledo, he was apparently retired at that time.

1942: Registered for the draft on April 27, 1942, (WWII). He was retired at that time.



Edwin Anthony Rock

Born: October 19, 1859, Ohio

Died: December 12, 1941, Toledo, Ohio

1860: Anthony Rock, Edwin's father, and his family are living in Stow Township, Summit County, Ohio.

1880: This census record, dated June 14, indicates Anthony Rock and his family living in Eagle (near Lansing), Clinton County, Michigan. Edwin Rock (20 years old) is a farmer at that time.

1900: On June 1, 1900, Edwin, his wife and four children were living in Toledo. Edwin's occupation is listed as "Policeman".



1910: By April 26, 1910, Edwin was designated as a “Detective”.

1920: On January 5, 1920, the family was living on Fernwood Avenue. Edwin was designated as a “Detective”.

1930: May 14, 1930, Edwin was living in Sylvania Township, Lucas County, Ohio, he was the proprietor of an ice cream parlor.

1940: April 19, 1940, Edwin was living in Sylvania Township, Lucas County, Ohio, with his wife and one of their sons.

Albert Paul Hassenzahl

Born: July 1, 1878, Ohio

Died: March 6, 1940, Toledo, Ohio

1880: The census record of 1880 shows Albert, at the age of one, and his parents living on Locust Street in Toledo.

1900: This census record shows Albert, at age 21, living with his parents on LaGrange Street. His occupation is shown as “Tinner”.

1910: Albert, at age 31, was living with his parents on North 12th Street. His occupation is shown as “Mounted Police”. He was married in Michigan on July 29, 1910.

1915-1920: Albert and his wife lived on Indiana Avenue and his occupation was listed as “Detective”.

Michael Francis Daly

Born: August 31, 1875, Monclova, Ohio

Died: September 7, 1939, Toledo, Ohio

1880: Michael Daly's family is shown in Monclova, Lucas County, Ohio in the census. Monclova was a small town in 1880. It is now primarily a part of suburban Toledo just south and west of Maumee.

1900: Michael is listed in the Toledo City Directory as a patrolman living on Wakeman Street.

1903: Listed in the Toledo City Directory as a patrolman living on Avondale Avenue.

1905: Listed in the Toledo City Directory as a policeman living on Segur Avenue.

1910-1920: Michael, his wife, and three children were living on Thayer Street in Toledo. In the 1910 census his occupation was listed as "Policeman" and by 1920 he was shown as a "Detective".

1930: Michael, his wife, and one son were living on Thayer Street in Toledo. He was retired at that time.

Ervin M. Brown

Born: February 3, 1877, Michigan

Died: February 4, 1947, Toledo, Ohio

1880: In this record from the census Brown's first name is spelled Irvin. He is shown with his parents in Branch County, Michigan.

1902: September 24, 1902, married in Toledo.

1910-1920: In both census records Ervin and his wife were living on Lorain Street in Toledo with his wife's parents. In 1910 he was designated as a "Policeman". By 1920 he was listed as a "Detective".

1930: Ervin was listed as "City Detective" on April 14.

1940: Ervin and his wife apparently lived in the same house on Lorain Street from the time of their marriage in 1902 to the time of his death in 1947. At the time of his death Ervin Brown was part owner of an orchard.

Fred Carl Langhoff

Born: October 30, 1890, Ohio

Died: January 4, 1951, Toledo, Ohio

1900: The census form, dated June 1, 1900, indicates Langhoff's family was living on Langdon Street in Toledo.

1910: At the age of 19 Langhoff was living on Langdon Street in Toledo in his parent's household. His occupation is listed as "Upholsterer".

1917: Langhoff joined the police department and was assigned a "beat" on April 12, 1917.

1920: Langhoff was a patrolmen in 1920 and was one of several patrolmen involved in the raid on Cowboy Hill's hideout in September.

1922: On February 16, 1922, Langhoff was promoted to Detective-Sergeant. He was a lifetime resident of Toledo and served on nearly every squad with the exception of the homicide squad.



Louis Frederick Kruse

Born: October 22, 1881, Toledo, Ohio

Died: March 9, 1951, Medina, Ohio

1900: Louis and his family were living on Havre Street in Toledo, his occupation is listed as "Apprentice Machinest"

1908: Appointed March 1.

1910: According to the Toledo City Directory, Louis F. Kruse, policeman, was living at 920 Walbridge Avenue.

1913: Promoted to Detective-Sergeant December 29.

1914: Demoted for drunkenness February 26.

1915: Promoted to Detective-Sergeant May 3.

1918: Promoted to Detective-Lieutenant August 1.



1920: The raid on Cowboy Hill's headquarters was particularly meaningful to Louis Kruse because his brother Walter was almost killed by the gang.

1925: Resigned on January 9, after being arrested on charges of interstate-shipment robbery. He went to Federal prison on a sentence of 3 to 20 years.

1930: Louis was working as a Machinist and living with his sister Augusta on Chapin Street in Toledo.

1940: Louis was working as a Machinist and living with his sister Bertha's family on Chapin Street.

1942: Registered for the draft on April 27, 1942, (WWII). He was living in Toledo and working for the Electric Auto Lite Company at the time of this registration.



John Stephen Connors

Born: December 26, 1871, Ireland

Died: March 11, 1953, Toledo, Ohio

1892: Arrived in New York on May 25.

1897: Became a naturalized citizen in Toledo.

1900: John, his wife, and two children lived on Missouri Street in Toledo. John was working as a streetcar conductor.

1904: Joined the police department.



1910: John, his wife and two children lived on Foster Avenue in Toledo. John was working as a policeman.

1920: John, his wife, and three children lived on Rosewood Avenue in Toledo. John's designated occupation was detective. John's assignment was as an exterior guard in the effort to surround the gang's hideout on September 14.

1930: John, his wife, and one of their children lived on Rosewood Avenue in Toledo.

1938: Left the police department.

1940: John and his wife lived on Rosewood Avenue in Toledo.

Herbert Earl Crane

Born: July 23, 1891, Toledo, Ohio

Died: December 18, 1960, Wisconsin

1900: Nine year old Herbert Crane was living with his parents and siblings on Dorr Street in Toledo.

1916: Married November 8, in Detroit, Michigan (first marriage).

1917: Registered for the draft on June 5, 1917, (WWI). At the time he lived on Cherry Street in Toledo.

1918-1919: Crane was a Sergeant in the Medical Corps during WWI.

1920: Crane and his first wife lived on Cherry Street in Toledo, on January 8, his occupation was designated as "Policeman".

1927: Married June 21, in Cuyahoga County (second marriage).

1930: Herbert E. Crane was living with his family on Broadway and was working as an electrical engineer in an ice plant.

1942: Registered for the draft on April 26, 1942, (WWII). Crane was unemployed and living in Canton, Ohio.

Arresting Officer



James Matthew O'Reilly

Born: May 26, 1879, Cleveland, Ohio

Died: June 4, 1955, Toledo, Ohio

1880: At the age of 1 James and his parents were in Cleveland.

1900: At the age of 21 O'Reilly was living with his parents in Toledo, on Peck Street, and working as a street car conductor.

1902: Joined the Toledo Police Department

1903: James was married on June 2, 1903.

1910: James and his wife and children were living with his mother on Peck Street.

1918: Registered for the draft (WWI).

1920: The census shows Captain O'Reilly living with his wife and two children on Willys Parkway. At the time of the raid on Cowboy Hill's hideout, O'Reilly was the Captain of Detectives.

1927: Resigned from the police department.

1930: O'Reilly and his family were living on Willys Parkway in Toledo, his occupation is listed as "Detective" with the "County police".

1934: Elected to the post of Sheriff of Lucas County.

1936: O'Reilly was re-elected to a four-year term, but was defeated in 1940 and again in 1944. He was working as an inspector for the state fire marshal's office at the time of his death.

Arresting Officer



Stephen Quinn

Born: January 11, 1871, Ireland

Died: September 25, 1927, Toledo, Ohio



1891: Arrived in the United States

1893: Moved to Toledo

1900: Quinn was living in Toledo, Ohio, working as a fireman, married with three children.

1903: Quinn appears in the Toledo, Ohio, City Directory as a patrolman.

1905: Quinn appears in the Toledo, Ohio, City Directory as a policeman.

1910: The 1910 census lists Quinn in Toledo, living on West Bancroft, listed as a "Patrolman".

1920: Quinn was living on Bancroft Street, listed as a Detective.

1927: An article about Quinn in the Toledo Blade of September 27, 1927, details his encounter with Archie Dennison on September 14, 1920.

Arresting Officer



William Charles Culver

Born: August 15, 1883, Ohio

Died: September 4, 1935, Toledo, Ohio

1900: William was living with his parents on Nevada Street.

1910: William was married and living with his aunt and uncle on Nevada Street. His occupation is listed as “engineer”. He was apparently a mechanical engineer prior to becoming a police detective.

1911: On July 10, William Culver joined the Toledo Police Department.

1912: Culver first appears in the Toledo, Ohio, City Directory as a policeman.

1914: On May 16, he gained the rank of detective.

1918: September 12, 1918, William Charles Culver was registered for the draft.

1920 to 1935: Culver lived with his wife at 20 Norwood Court, and stayed in the department as a detective until his death.

1921: William Culver identified Charles “Splitlip” Schulz as one of the members of the gang that perpetrated the 1.6 million dollar post office robbery in Toledo. This brought about the arrest of Schulz, other gang members, and the leader of the gang Joe Urbaytis.

Arresting Officer



August "Augie" Carl Salhoff

Born: May 10, 1872, Galenbeck, Germany

Died: July 1, 1958, Toledo, Ohio

1880: Arrived in the United States

1900: Salhoff was living in Toledo, Ohio, working as a plasterer, he was married and had a son 2 years old.

1903: Listed in the Toledo, Ohio, City Directory as a patrolman.

1906: Listed in the Toledo, Ohio, City Directory as a policeman.

1910: The 1910 census lists Salhoff in Toledo, living on Fernwood Avenue his occupation is "Policeman".

1920: Salhoff was living on Kress Street, listed as a "Detective".

1923: Salhoff's obituary in the Toledo Blade of July 2, 1958, indicates that he retired from the detective bureau in the year of 1923.



“James O’Reilly, captain of Detectives led detectives Quinn, William Culver and August Salhoff to the front door.”



**“The finest kind of people”
A quote from the iceman in
the neighborhood. He had
been given \$10 tips.**

Stephen Quinn knew better.

“I figured we’d have trouble there.”



**At first they didn't have any trouble.
One of the men they were chasing
was cooperative when he answered
the door.**






Joe Forrest
(aka J. F. Ford and Joseph Hill)

Who was Joe Forrester?

Born about 1881

In prison in Ohio in 1905

Married Grace Harley in
Toledo, February 4, 1913.




As Joseph Hill, he was in a
5-man gang that robbed a
jewelry store in Rochester,
New York, on February 14,
1913.

Arrested March 23, 1913, in
Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

In Auburn prison in 1915.

Released in 1919.

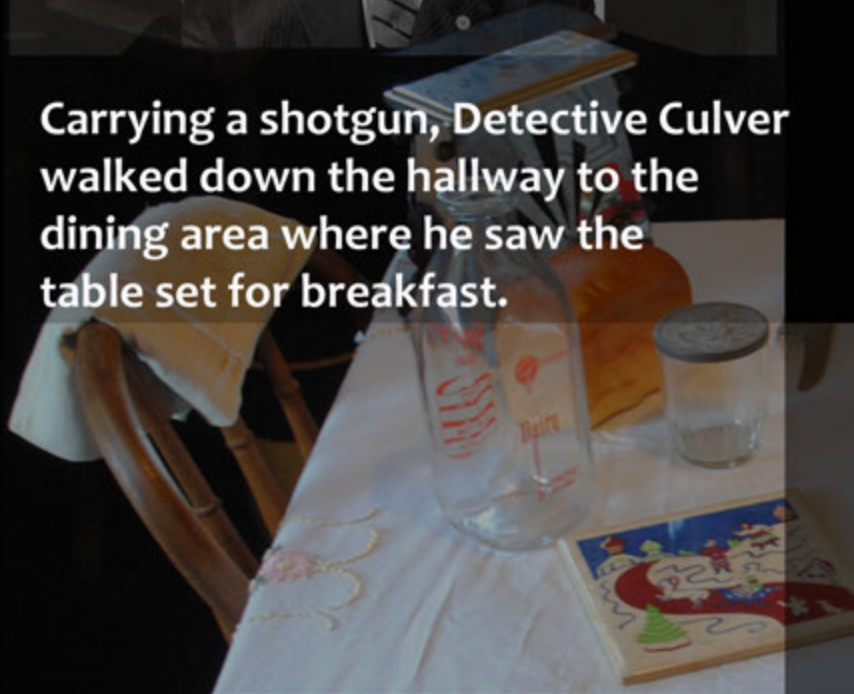


Forrest was unarmed and offered no resistance as he was arrested by O'Reilly.





Carrying a shotgun, Detective Culver walked down the hallway to the dining area where he saw the table set for breakfast.





Culver then encountered the second of the three gangsters.

Archie Dennison



**(aka Arthur Crowley, Archie Knerr,
Pete Foust, and Ed Burton)**



**“Come on Archie”
Culver said, as he pointed his
shotgun at Archie Dennison.**



“Never”

**Dennison replied as he pulled
out his automatic pistol.**



Dennison, directly confronted by Culver, and with Quinn close by, decided to try to shoot his way out of the trap. He was too late, Culver fired first, into Archie's face. Severely wounded and blinded by buckshot, Dennison fell into Quinn and fired one shot. Fortunately the shot was not fatal and Quinn wrestled Dennison to the floor.



**With Detective Quinn's life in jeopardy,
Chief of Detectives, James O'Reilly fired
a shot into Dennison's temple.**

Who was Archie Dennison?

1888: Born in Michigan

1900: Living with his mother and stepfather in Jackson, Michigan.

1901: Arrested for stealing watches.

1904: Arrested for the theft of a bicycle in Jackson, Michigan.

June 20, 1888-September 14, 1920

1908: Arrested for burglary (released)

1909: Arrested in Toledo

1910: Sent to Mansfield Reformatory and was later paroled.

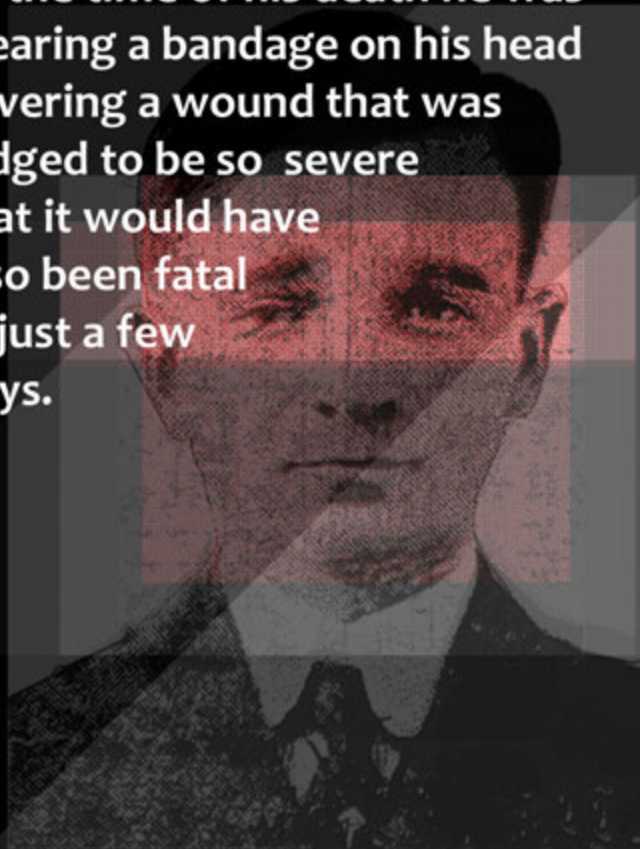
1911: Arrested for the robbery of a dry goods store.

1914: In prison in Mansfield

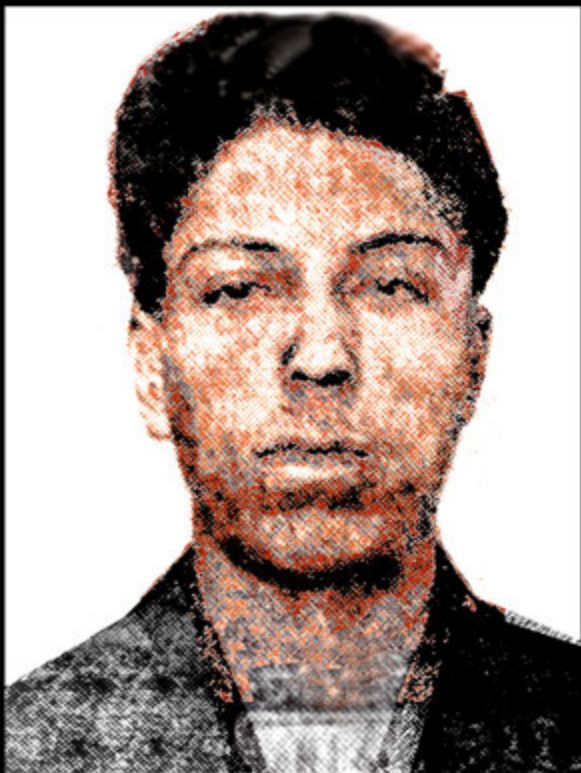
1915: Arrested for car theft

1919: Arrested in Toledo, but released

Archie Dennison had been wounded in the gunfight with Officer Kruse. At the time of his death he was wearing a bandage on his head covering a wound that was judged to be so severe that it would have also been fatal in just a few days.



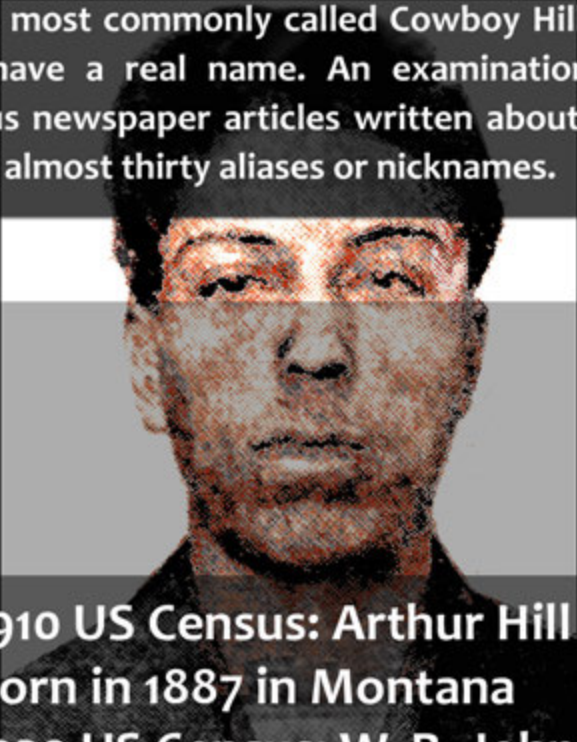
The gunfight continued with the man
most commonly known as:



Cowboy Hill
1887-1937

WHO WAS COWBOY HILL?

The man most commonly called Cowboy Hill seemed not to have a real name. An examination of the numerous newspaper articles written about him has revealed almost thirty aliases or nicknames.



1910 US Census: Arthur Hill
born in 1887 in Montana
1930 US Census: W. B. Johnson
born in 1887 in Montana

The earliest articles from the year 1904 use the name Arthur Hill, and by 1908 the nickname "Cowboy" had been added. Here are the other names that have been identified.



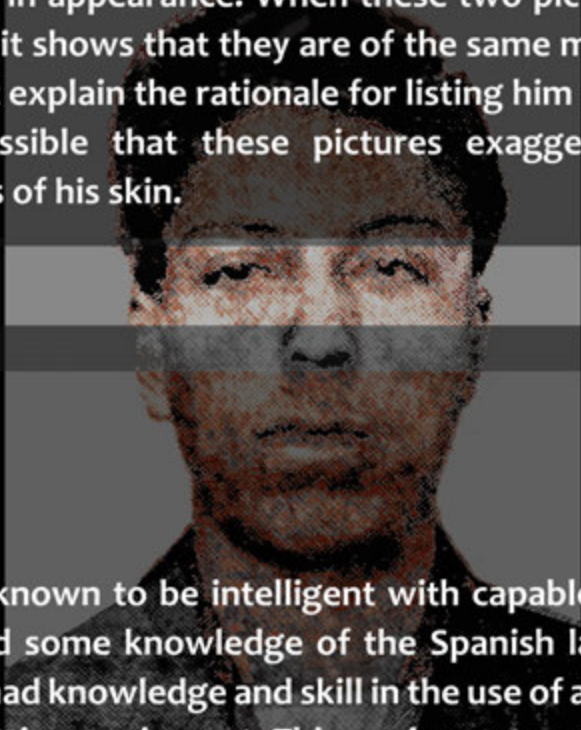
Other known aliases and referenced names: Joseph Rivers, Chief Bill Baker, William X. Baker, William J. Baker, William Baker Johnson, William Johnson, Indian Johnson, W. B. Johnson, "Gingerale" Johnson, "Gingerale" Jack, "Gingerale Chief", "The Spaniard", Louis Muzzio, Joseph Muzzio, James Muzzio, J. T. Muzzio, John Muzzio, J. L. Muzzio, J. P. Muzzio, Juan Armada or Armanda, W. B. Willets, Willut B. Meajus, Don Mareau or Meroo, Mars Jerras, Maris Jeras, Little Bull, Cowboy, Chief, Indian.

“...a dark tall man...”



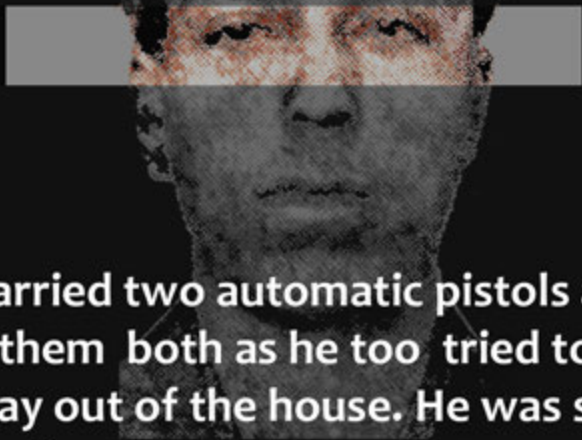
Cowboy Hill was described as having a dark complexion and was reported to be at least $\frac{1}{4}$ Native American. He himself reportedly used the term “half breed”. Some descriptions indicated that he may have been full-blooded, but this can’t be confirmed since he does not show up in the 1900 census in Montana as a Native American. There is some confusion about his actual racial heritage because in two census forms, 1910 and 1930 he is listed as white. An arrest record from April of 1908 in Toledo, Ohio, lists him as “colored”.

There are two known pictures of Cowboy Hill. In one picture he appears to be of African descent, but the other shows him to be more Native American or Mexican in appearance. When these two pictures are overlaid it shows that they are of the same man but it does not explain the rationale for listing him as white. It is possible that these pictures exaggerate the darkness of his skin.



He was known to be intelligent with capable writing skills and some knowledge of the Spanish language. He also had knowledge and skill in the use of acetylene torch cutting equipment. This equipment was used to cut open safes. He allegedly wrote an instruction manual on the use of this equipment.

In the early 1900s Hill came to Ohio and began to cause trouble in both Toledo and Cleveland. By 1920 he had been in and out of prison several times. At the time of the raid on September 14th he and Dennison had been implicated in a large number of bank robberies.



Hill carried two automatic pistols and he fired them both as he too tried to shoot his way out of the house. He was shot so many times that there are no accurate estimates of the number of wounds he accumulated, but somehow he lived.

When the shooting stopped two young women emerged from one of the bedrooms, where they had been hiding. Mrs. Billie Calhoun was Archie Dennison's girlfriend. 15-year-old Viola Cochran claimed that she was only the cook.



Mrs. Billie
Calhoun



Viola
Cochran

WHO WAS COWBOY HILL?



A NATIVE AMERICAN

“Indian in Police Court Again”

“Keokawho was in police court yesterday, charged with breaking into a laundry. Keokawho is a Kiowa Indian, seventeen years old. When he is at home, he stays in Montana, where he settled after completing his course at Sacred Heart college in San Francisco. He is registered at the central police station as Arthur Hill, in which unpicturesque name he was baptized. His case was continued.”

Toronto, Ohio

Joe Rivers



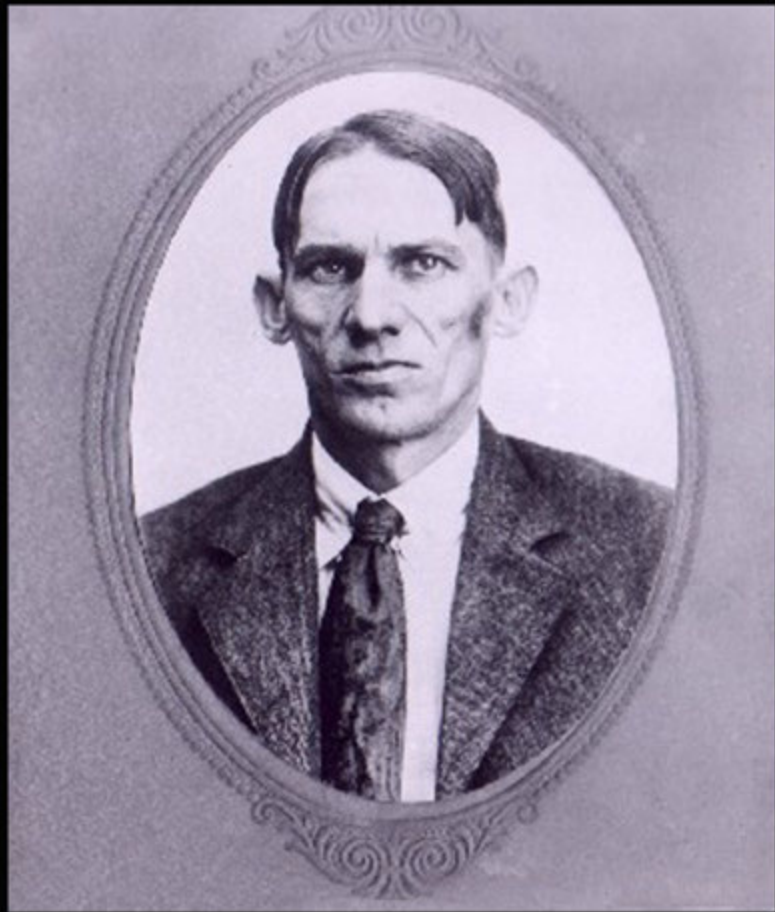
Pete Foust

Joe Muzzio

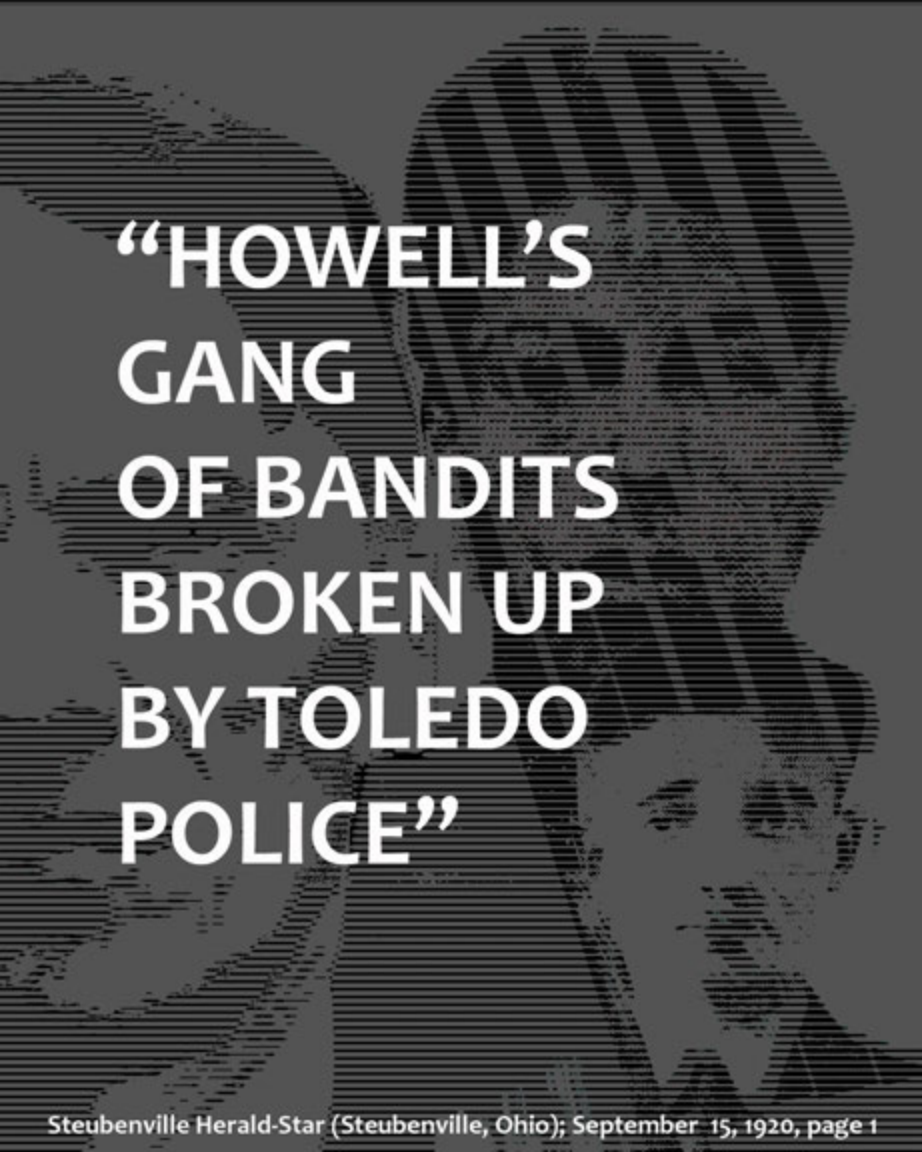


Edward Burton

Dick Howell



Photograph courtesy of The Ohio History Connection



**“HOWELL’S
GANG
OF BANDITS
BROKEN UP
BY TOLEDO
POLICE”**

**“FORMER TORONTO, O.,
BANDITS BATTLE
DETECTIVES”**

**“Archie Dennison Killed
but Cowboy Hill
Alias Joe Rivers
Expected to Recover
Same Gang Terrorized
This Section of State.”**

1918: Steubenville, Ohio

In the fall of 1918 a young widow met a man at an interurban station in Steubenville, he called himself Joseph Muzzio. In Cleveland and Toledo this man was known as Arthur “Cowboy” Hill. In Toronto, Ohio, he was known as Joe Rivers and by the fall of 1918 was a member of a gang of bandits led by Perry “Dick” Howell.

The young woman was Emma Howell Irons, the sister of Dick Howell. At the time she met Cowboy Hill she was just 21 and was trying to raise two young girls by herself.

The Howell family consisted of nine children and Emma, born in 1897, was 19 years younger than Dick. In 1900 the family was still living in in the same household, but soon after that Emma was sent to live with a foster family, and was just 16 when she married William Lloyd Irons. In October of 1917, Irons died.

“... Daddy Joe...”

Late in the year of 1918 and during the early part of 1919, the gang that used Toronto, Ohio, as a base of operations had committed several robberies within the Ohio River valley. Cowboy Hill, the man who would become known as “Daddy Joe” to Emma’s young daughters, was an integral part of this gang. Emma later would deny she knew that the man she married was a criminal.

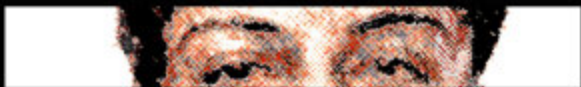
By the time Cowboy Hill (aka Joseph Muzzio and Joe Rivers) and Emma Howell Irons were married on January 19, 1919, police in three states were on the trail of the “Dick Howell Gang”. By mid-February of 1919 they had determined that Howell was certainly the gang’s leader and that his house in Toronto was their headquarters.



February
14, 1919,
Toronto,
Ohio

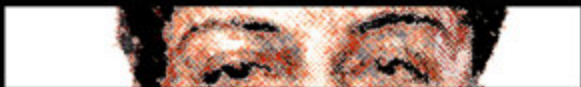
1918-1919

Dick Howell's original group of bandits started making raids on various small businesses and post offices in Ohio, West Virginia, and Pennsylvania in 1918 and by early 1919 they were notorious.



These raids were often clumsy and ham-handed hit-and-run robberies that usually led to shootouts with local constabulary. There also seemed to be very small amounts of money involved in these robberies. As a result of these crude and violent attempts at robbery the men involved were hunted by the county sheriffs and the police in nine separate places in Ohio and West Virginia.

On February 14, 1919, Dick Howell's residence was raided by the Toronto police and officers from Weirton, West Virginia. Dick Howell was captured along with his son-in-law, Harry Cottrell. Two other men, Edward Burton (Archie Dennison) and Joe Rivers (Cowboy Hill referred to as a Mexican), escaped, partially due to inaction by the officers from West Virginia.



Dick Howell and Harry Cottrell were put in jail in Toronto and Bob Howell, Dick's brother, was also arrested when he came to see Dick at the jail. These men were eventually taken to the Jefferson County jail in Steubenville. Dick Howell posted bail of \$1,000 and went into hiding, but may have been involved in a robbery in Bergholz, Ohio, in April of 1919. Bergholz is just 17 miles northwest of Steubenville, so Howell was not far away.

1919

In May of 1919 a piece of jewelry was discovered that connected the Howell gang with several more robberies of individual residences in Steubenville. As a result of this discovery Harry Cottrell was again placed in the county jail and asked if he knew where Howell was hiding. Cottrell stated that he had had no contact with Howell since he jumped bail.



Dick Howell was hiding out in a house near Canton, Ohio, and on November 29, 1919, he was spotted on a streetcar in Canton by Anthony Skotnickey, a Canton police detective. Skotnickey apprehended Howell but did not take him directly to a police station. Instead Skotnickey took Howell to his (Skotnickey's) home where they had dinner, along with Skotnickey's wife and child.

1919

1919

Canton, Ohio

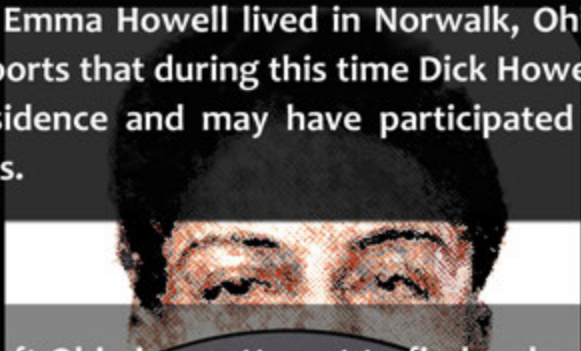


From this point on the story varies based on who tells it, but Howell claimed that Skotnickey was open to a bribe in exchange for Howell's release. There was a dispute about the amount of the bribe; allegedly Skotnickey wanted more than Howell was willing to offer, so the detective was in the process of transporting Howell to police headquarters when Howell tried to take a gun from Skotnickey. This resulted in the gun firing and fatally wounding the policeman.

1920

During the first three months of 1920, Cowboy Hill and his wife Emma Howell lived in Norwalk, Ohio. There were reports that during this time Dick Howell visited their residence and may have participated in some robberies.

Howell left Ohio in an attempt to find a place to hide, but was eventually caught in Kentucky in May of 1920. He was tried and convicted of murder in June of 1920 and was executed on June 2, 1921.



The Friends of Cowboy Hill



1919

It didn't take long for a very large gang to form around Cowboy Hill. Whether or not Dick Howell was an active member of the gang after he jumped bail in Steubenville is a matter of debate. Whether or not the existence of this gang was the result of improvisation or the result of some idea conceived by Cowboy Hill, Archie Dennison, and others is still not clearly recorded. In retrospect, there seems as if there was a plan to organize and create a sustainable business (a syndicate) based primarily on crime. It is certain that these men extended their criminal activities beyond just the Detroit/Toledo region.

There is some circumstantial evidence to indicate that this gang's activities also extended beyond robbery of banks, post offices, and retail merchants. The gang may have also been involved in large-scale car theft, bootlegging, and drug smuggling. Since these types of crimes were ubiquitous and particularly clandestine this theory is impossible to prove.

Two members of the gang, Dutch Anderson and Gerald Chapman, specifically admitted that they had been involved in bootlegging of whiskey during the time period of 1919 to 1921. This admission was made in court in 1922.

Within a few weeks, a number of hardened criminals began to descend on the Detroit/Toledo area. It looks like a meeting was arranged.

Four of the gang members came out of Auburn Prison in New York in early 1919. This was soon after Cowboy Hill and Archie Dennison's escape from the trap in Toronto, Ohio, in February.

These four men were Joe Forrest, Leo Mitchell, George "Dutch" Anderson, and Gerald Chapman.



Leo Mitchell



Singer, songwriter, poet, and thief

Leo Mitchell

49

Height	1 m. <i>69.4</i>	Rem.	H'd lgth	<i>18.9</i>	Rem.	L. Foot	<i>23.0</i>	Rem.	Color of L. Eye	Circle	Age	<i>25</i> yrs
Eng. H't	<i>63.4</i>	"	" width	<i>13.8</i>	"	L. Mid F	<i>11.4.4</i>	"	Pepiph.	<i>14</i>		
Outs. A.	1 m. <i>73.4</i>		Ck width	<i>14.3</i>		L. Lt. F	<i>8.8</i>			<i>Dark</i>	Born in	<i>Mich</i>
Trunk	<i>40.3</i>		R. Ear.	<i>6.4</i>		L. Fore A	<i>45.0</i>					

Remarks incident to Measurements



DESCRIPTIVE

FOREHEAD.	Incl.	<i>Le. Post</i>	NOSE.	Profile	<i>Le. bow</i>	RIGHT EAR.		Bd.	<i>Le. Ch.</i>	
	Hght.	<i>m</i>		Ridge	<i>Post</i>			Complexion	<i>m. Fr.</i>	
	Width	<i>m</i>		Base	<i>m. 2 p.</i>			Weight	<i>152</i>	
	Pecul.			Root				Build	<i>m.</i>	
DIMENSIONS.										
	Length.	<i>m</i>	Projection.	<i>m</i>	Breadth.	<i>m</i>				
	Pecul.					Chin	<i>Cray</i>			

Measured at O. P. Columbus, Ohio,

April 13th 190... John H. Davis.

Leo Mitchell

397-861

OHIO STATE PENITENTIARY.

NAME *Leo Mitchell* Reg. No. *36184*
 Alias *L. C. Poppy*
 County *Sulton* Crime *Burglary and Larceny* Sentence *16 Yrs.*
 Occupation *Painter* Known or Admitted Former Imprisonment

Own in Kingston Canada Printing

MARKS, SCARS AND MOLES.

Numerical
Order

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<i>Scar at 3" long on forehead L. F.</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>" " " " " " " " on " index finger.</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>" " " " " " " " on " 3rd "</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>" " " " " " " " on " 3rd ab. brow little finger</i>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<i>Scar on L. ear notched.</i>

7951

*Dis by Commutation Jan 8th 1913.
by Hon. Harmon.*

③
 13 10 17
 17 000 11



Leo Mitchell 1879-1947: Although he was most commonly known as Leo Mitchell, this man's real name was Leon E. Osowski (also spelled Ososki and Ososke). He was born in Bay City, Michigan, but moved to Toledo, Ohio, in the early part of the 20th century.

One news report indicates that he was first in trouble with the law at the age of 12. In 1893, Leo's father Frank Ososki caught him stealing money from his meat market and turned him over to the police.

By 1901 Leo was living in Toledo and was arrested there, but no record can be found indicating if he was jailed for this offense. An examination of Mitchell's Bertillon card reveals that he was sent to prison in Canada, and a news report states that this was in the year 1902.

In 1905, using the name L. E. Pope, he and two other men blew open a safe in a post office at a little town in Fulton County, Ohio, called Oakshade. This resulted in a 14-year sentence in the Ohio State Penitentiary, and Mitchell shows up as a prisoner in Columbus in the 1910 United States census.

Also noted on his Bertillon card is the pardon Mitchell received from Governor Harmon on January 8, 1913. This was a result of the fact that Mitchell wrote a poem that asked for mercy. This poem, named "Another Chance", so moved the governor's wife that she showed it to her husband and begged him to pardon Mitchell.

On February 14, 1913, Mitchell with Joseph Hill (aka Joe Forrest), Bert Donaldson, James Cordano, and George "Dutch" Anderson, robbed the Philip Present jewelry store in Rochester, New York. They attempted to blow a safe containing about \$300,000 in diamonds. They were able to open an outer door of the safe but were unable to reach the large cache of diamonds because the safe was protected by a heavy inner door.

They escaped with about \$3,000 in jewelry, but most of this was later recovered. The five men were chased across the country and two of the men, Bert Donaldson and Joseph Hill, were caught in Milwaukee in March of 1913. Mitchell was caught in Michigan on July 2, 1913, and was sent to prison there. He wasn't prosecuted for the Present robbery until 1917. On December 19, 1917, he was sent to Auburn prison in New York. Mitchell, Joseph Hill, Dutch Anderson, and Gerald Chapman were all in Auburn prison from 1917 until 1919, and all went to Toledo in that year.

All four of these men apparently joined the Cowboy Hill gang in the year 1919. There is no specific record as to when this occurred, but there is strong circumstantial evidence to support this theory.

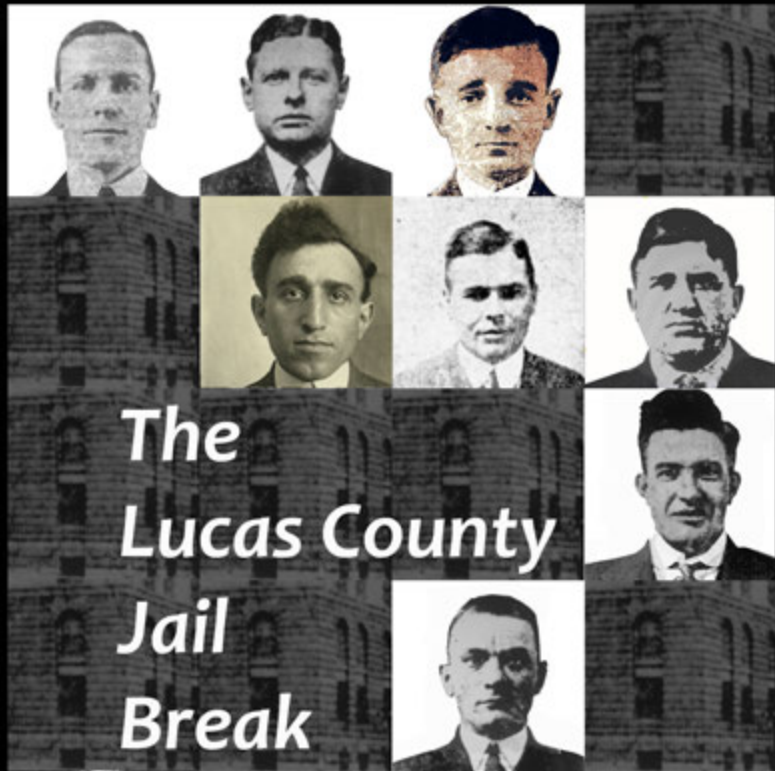
Some reports indicate that Mitchell was seen in Norwalk, Ohio, in 1920 when Cowboy Hill was living there in January, February, and March. These reports can't be confirmed, and there is no specific record of Mitchell being involved in any of the numerous robberies that were perpetrated by this gang.

Mitchell managed to avoid arrest until November of 1921 when he was again caught in Toledo. It can be assumed that he was sent back to prison, but this can't be verified. Information about him is minimal after this point in time. A Sing Sing admission record dated May 19, 1928, indicates that he was sent there from Auburn.

Sing Sing was often used for temporary imprisonment of inmates being transferred to other prisons. This might explain why a man named Leo Mitchell is shown incarcerated in Great Meadow State Prison in New York in the 1930 census. Since his place of birth is Michigan and his age is approximately correct, it is likely that this is Leon Osowski alias Leo Mitchell.

In 1931 Mitchell was arrested in Canada, and apparently again served time in the Kingston penitentiary. There is no record as to how long Mitchell was imprisoned, but by 1943 he had moved back to Detroit where he was living with his sister. His WWII draft registration card (showing the name Leo Ososke) indicates that he was born on June 25, 1879. His death record of January 28, 1947, indicates the place of death as Eloise, Wayne County, Michigan. At that time Eloise was the location of a state mental hospital.

The Friends of Cowboy Hill



The Lucas County Jail break
was preceded by:



*A Night on
The Town*



November 19, 1919

Late on the night of November 19, 1919, Albert Johnson (using the alias Frank Howard), Archie Dennison, Joe Snyder, and Joe Murphy were in a celebratory mood and were out on the town in Toledo. In all there were six men and five women involved in a wild party that ended in the death of one of the women, Dolly Angus (actual name Mary Ruede) and the wounding of Joe Snyder.

The other two men, in the group, were Charles Warren and a former policeman by the name of Dan Loveland. Neither of these two can be directly linked to the Cowboy Hill gang, but because of what happened about month later, Johnson, Snyder, and Murphy can.

The party became raucous and unmanageable at Goldstein's cabaret and several shots were fired into the ceiling before the group mercifully left the premises. The next stop was at another cabaret called Herman's and once again their behavior warranted eviction, and at that point the police were called.



Lucas County Jail

The group was intercepted at a place known as a brothel but was officially considered a rooming house, operated by a woman named Alice Walsh. Two detectives, Frank DeLora and William Herman, apprehended Joe Murphy on the porch, but as soon as they entered the house they were threatened by someone inside. The resulting gunfire exchange left Dolly Angus mortally wounded and Joe Snyder severally injured.

Responsibility for the death of Dolly Angus was never placed on any individual, although it was reported that the bullet that struck her came from one of the policeman's guns. It is also likely that she saved the life of Archie Dennison, because she was sitting on his lap at the time of the shooting.

Although nine people were arrested, only Albert Johnson was held for further possible prosecution and he was transferred to the Lucas County jail on November 28, 1919. At that time there were three other associates of Cowboy Hill in the county jail, Leo Mitchell, Eddie Meehan (aka D. W. West), and Albert Loesch.

Mitchell was there as a parole violator, from Auburn Prison in New York, Loesch had recently been arrested for the theft of a large quantity of silk, and Meehan was being held on a murder charge.

Jail Break



“Release Of Men From Jail Well Planned By Gunmen”



Lucas County Jail in Toledo, Ohio, December 25, 1919

Will Fisher, Joe Snyder, and Joe Murphy, along with a man identified as Al Conway, invaded the jail early in the morning of December 25, 1919, to rescue Albert Johnson, Leo Mitchell, Albert Loesch, and Eddie Meehan.



Both Snyder and Murphy were apprehended later in the day but the other six men escaped. Reports indicate that they first drove to Point Place, at that time a suburb north of Toledo and not yet officially in the jurisdiction of Toledo authorities. From there they abandoned their original car and escaped via another car across frozen portions of Maumee Bay into Michigan. It was speculated in the articles about this escape that their ultimate destination was Monroe, Michigan.

William Fisher aka “Little Willie”, James Allison, Fred Manifeck or Manifex: On November 17, 1919, Fisher was a participant in the Randolph, Massachusetts, bank robbery. The group that committed this robbery consisted of Fisher, Red McGahan, Gerald Chapman, and a man named Frank Adams (aka Frank or Charles Appleby), who was killed during an attempt to hold up a card game in Toledo on February 29, 1920.

William “Little Willie” Fisher was the apparent leader of the four gunmen involved in the raid of the Lucas County jail on Christmas Day 1919. He also served a term in the Indiana State Prison at Michigan City under the name of James Allison. The last piece of information about Fisher comes from The Detroit Free Press in February of 1925. He and three other men were arrested in northern Indiana after a bank robbery in Michigan.

William Fisher

PAROLED

DISCHARGED

Height	57-5	Rem.	H'd Lenth	18-2	Rem.	L. Foot	24-9	Rem.	Color of L. Eye Circle <i>br. Pg.</i> Ago <i>23</i> yrs Periph <i>Z. Chis.</i> <i>Ir. Ag.</i> Born in <i>Ohio.</i>
Eng. Ht	5-2		" Width	15-4		L. Mid F.	10-7		
Outs. A.	64+		Ck Width	13-8+		L. Lit. F.	8-3		
Trunk	85-0		R. Ear	6-7+		L. Fore A	43-9+		

Remarks Incident /
to Men



DESCRIPTIVE

FOREHEAD	Incl	<i>Rec.</i>	Profile	Ridge	<i>low-lex.</i>	RIGHT EAR	Reg.	<i>Ir. - Chis.</i>
	Height	<i>3m.</i>		Base	<i>Hor. Root</i>		<i>Pull.</i>	Complexion
	Width	<i>3m.</i>	DIMENSIONS			Build	<i>Med.</i>	
	Pecul		Length	<i>L.</i>	Projection		<i>P.</i>	Weight
			Breadth	<i>Max.</i>				
			Pecul			Chin	<i>vert.</i>	

Measured at O. P., Columbus, Ohio *Jan. 21* at. 1916. By *Milao*

William Fisher

OHIO STATE PENITENTIARY

NAME *William Fisher.*

Reg. No. *44260*

Alias

Alias

County *Lucas.*

Crime *B. and L. and Gov. Weapons. Indt.*

Occupation *Pipe Fitter.*

Known or Admitted Former Imprisonment

MARKS, SCARS AND MOLES

Numerical
Order

- I. *Obb. sc. 78" lg. 3rd. H: L: 3rd. Ant.*
- II. *Pat. Lg. Red Rose, and Bud; Red and Green, R. for eye*
- III. *Mole L: chh, 2° from cor: mouth.*
Obb. sc. 78" lg: fhb: 3 1/2" to L: 2 1/2" ab: brow.

F. P. C.

Archie Dennison

1/4

BERTILLON

Height 1m <i>71.09</i>	H'd lath. <i>18.8</i>	L. Foot <i>26.7</i>	Eye-Class. <i>2</i>	Age <i>24</i>
Eng. Ht. <i>5. ft. 7. 1/8</i>	" Width <i>15.2</i>	L. Mid. F. <i>12.0</i>	Circle.....	Apparent Age.....
Outs. A. 1m <i>75.0</i>	Chk. " <i>13.6</i>	L. Lit. F. <i>9.4</i>	Periph. Z.....	Born in 18. <i>99</i>
Trunk <i>91.8</i>	Lgth. R. Ear <i>6.1</i>	L. Fore A. <i>47.1</i>	Pupil <i>Greenish slate</i>	Nativity <i>Irish</i>

Remarks Incident to measurement



DESCRIPTIVE

FOREHEAD	Incl. <i>nc</i>	NOSE	Profile	Ridge <i>sin</i>	RIGHT EAR	Border.....	Beard <i>well cut</i>	
	H'ght <i>ms.</i>		Base <i>chr</i>	Rostr. <i>me</i>		Hair.....		
	Width <i>m</i>		DIMENSIONS			Inter- <i>m</i>	Complex. <i>fair</i>	
	Pecul.....		Length <i>me</i>	Projection <i>m</i>		Breadth <i>m</i>	Lobe.....	Weight <i>131</i>
			Pecul.....		Chin. <i>nc</i>	Builld. <i>Slender</i>		

Examined at Mansfield, O. DATE *Apr 14 1914* BY *A. J. Spiller*

Archie Dennison

OHIO STATE REFORMATORY

NAME Archie Knerr Owt. 578.
REG. No. 6672
ALIAS Archie Dennison COLOR. White
COUNTY Lucas CRIME Robbery RECEIVED 4/12/14
OCCUPATION Vin. Photographer DESCENT Irish
KNOWN CRIMINAL RECORD 1910 arb. at Toledo. for Robbery and
Arrested and in June 1911 at Toledo and taken
to Jackson Mich and tried for Larceny and was
sentenced to 5 yrs state Prison at Jackson and
on Apr 9-1914 was admitted to Prison Jail.

MARKS, SCARS, ETC.

- I obl cic on l Oha Med. Post-Int.
- III Small hair mole on left side of face
near ear 6" from l cor of eye.
- V 2 large Knife wounds on right
side of abdomen @ 12 to right of
navel.

Released

BERTILLON

Height Im <i>11.6 3/8</i>	H'd Lgth. <i>10.8</i>	L. Foot <i>26.1</i>	Eye—Class. <i>Grey</i>	Age <i>29</i>
Eng. Ht. <i>5. ft 7 3/8</i>	" Width <i>15.2</i>	L. Mid. F. <i>12.0</i>	Circum.	Apparent Age
Outs. A. Im <i>75.0</i>	Chk. " <i>13.6</i>	L. Lat. F. <i>9.4</i>	Periph. Z.	Born in 18. <i>99</i>
Trunk <i>91.8</i>	Lgth. R. Ear <i>6.1</i>	L. Fore A. <i>4.7</i>	Color <i>Greenish</i>	Nativity <i>Irish</i>

Remarks Incident to measurement



DESCRIPTIVE

FOREHEAD	Incl. <i>nc</i>	NOSE	Profile	Ridge <i>gn</i>	RIGHT EAR	Border	Beard	
	H'ght <i>nc s.</i>		Base <i>chr</i>	Room <i>nc</i>		Hair <i>well cut</i>		
	Width <i>m</i>		DIMENSIONS			Inter- <i>m</i>	Complex <i>fair</i>	
	Pecul		Length <i>me</i>	Projection <i>m</i>			Breadth <i>m</i>	Weight <i>131</i>
Pecul			Chin <i>nc</i>	Built <i>Slender</i>				

Examined at Mansfield, O. DATE *Apr 14* 19*14* BY *A. J. Fisher*

Bertillon Cards and Criminal Identification

Even though Cowboy Hill was able to hide his actual identity and pose as a businessman in Norwalk, Ohio, and Algonac, Michigan; most of his friends were criminals. His criminal cohorts left behind a legacy of chaos, destruction, despair, and even death, just as he did.

They also left behind criminal records which enable historians to track their activities. Obviously criminals do not voluntarily provide much information, and in fact most of the men in this gang do not appear in the census or other public records once they reach adulthood. In particular the 1920 census is vacant of information on the gang members.

If they appear in a census it's usually because they were in prison; there are exceptions to this, but only a few. Prison records are a great help in discovering the life stories of these men, since they spent most of their lives incarcerated. By the early 1900s prisons in the United States and in many other Western countries were using a standardized, scientifically based identification system. It was a system that improved the reliability of criminal identification.

This system was created about 1879 by a French policeman by the name of Alphonse Bertillon. By the late 19th century, photography in a studio type of environment had become quite common. Bertillon's system exploited this method by using high-resolution photographs of the front and profile of the face of each criminal, what is commonly referred to as a "mugshot".

His system also included detailed descriptions of each prisoner (height, weight, hair color, eye color, tattoos, scars, etc.). All of this detail was helpful in the identification process. Mistaken identity was a huge problem, and criminals counted on this when they used aliases. Even with the obvious improvements as a result of the utilization of Bertillon's system, mistakes were still made.

Eventually most of the men involved in the Cowboy Hill gang's activities were tracked down, primarily because they were identified from their photographs. After the raid on September 14, 1920, the photos of Cowboy Hill, Archie Dennison, and Joe Forrest were sent to several distant locations where robberies had occurred. This resulted in the men being identified as the perpetrators of several crimes, including the robbery in Moline.

Fortunately many of these original Bertillon cards have been preserved in the Ohio State Archives. Several of the gang member's photographs and descriptions are shown in this exhibit.

Arthur “Cowboy” Hill

as he appeared in 1912

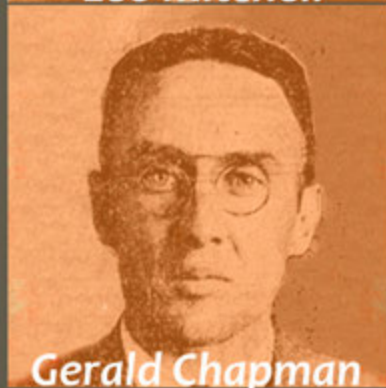
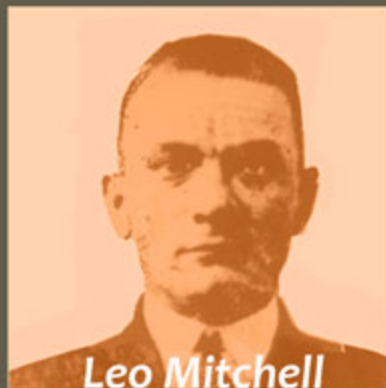


Bertillon Card courtesy of The Ohio History Connection

The Friends of Cowboy Hill



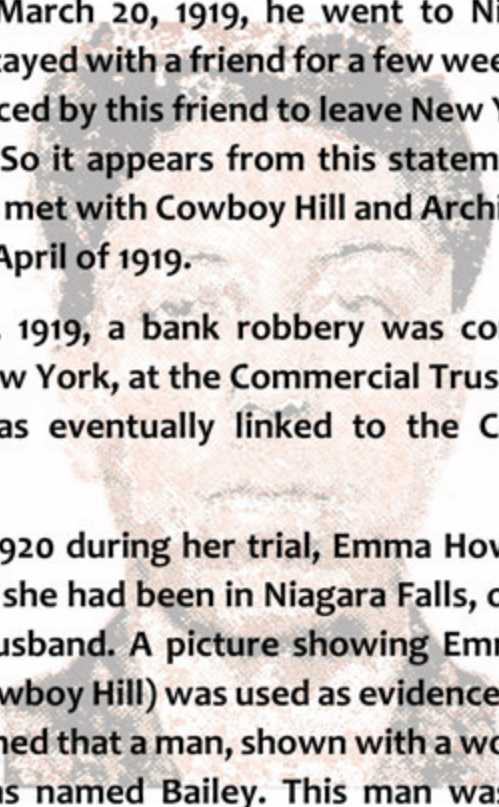
The Four From Auburn



Although these men were released from prison in the state of New York, they all had ties to Cowboy Hill or to Toledo. Dutch Anderson, Leo Mitchell, and Joe Forrest (as Joseph Hill) had been involved in a robbery in Rochester, New York, in 1913. They had planned and initiated their actions in Toledo, and returned to a hideout there within a few days after the robbery.

In the 1910 census, Cowboy Hill (listed as Arthur Hill) is shown in Auburn prison in New York. Gerald Chapman was also incarcerated in Auburn at that time. So it is possible that the two met in prison in 1910.

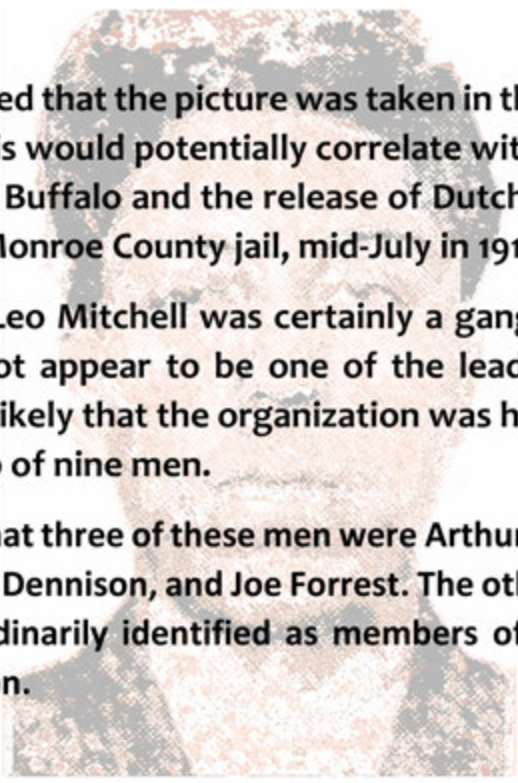
The actual timing of a meeting of this group of men is not possible to pinpoint. The exact date when Mitchell and Forrest were released is unknown. Anderson was released on March 13, 1919, but had to face other charges and was placed in the Monroe County (New York) jail until July of 1919.



Chapman stated in court in 1922 that when he left prison on March 20, 1919, he went to Niagara Falls where he stayed with a friend for a few weeks. He then was convinced by this friend to leave New York and go to Detroit. So it appears from this statement that he might have met with Cowboy Hill and Archie Dennison as early as April of 1919.

On July 10, 1919, a bank robbery was committed in Buffalo, New York, at the Commercial Trust bank. This robbery was eventually linked to the Cowboy Hill gang.

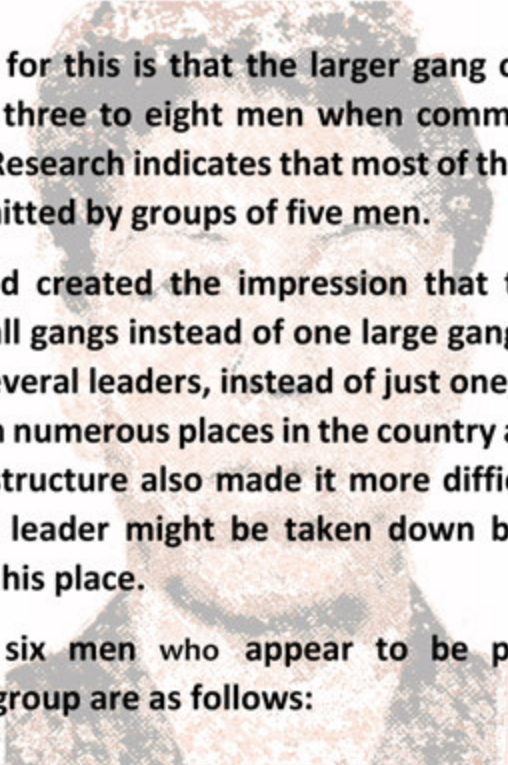
In May of 1920 during her trial, Emma Howell Muzzio stated that she had been in Niagara Falls, on vacation with her husband. A picture showing Emma and Joe Muzzio (Cowboy Hill) was used as evidence at the trial. Emma claimed that a man, shown with a woman in this picture, was named Bailey. This man was identified during the trial as Archie Dennison.



Emma stated that the picture was taken in the summer of 1919. This would potentially correlate with the bank robbery in Buffalo and the release of Dutch Anderson from the Monroe County jail, mid-July in 1919.

Although Leo Mitchell was certainly a gang member, he does not appear to be one of the leaders of the gang. It is likely that the organization was headed by a core group of nine men.

It is clear that three of these men were Arthur “Cowboy” Hill, Archie Dennison, and Joe Forrest. The other six men are not ordinarily identified as members of this same organization.



The reason for this is that the larger gang operated in “teams” of three to eight men when committing bank robberies. Research indicates that most of the robberies were committed by groups of five men.

This method created the impression that there were several small gangs instead of one large gang. Since the gang had several leaders, instead of just one, they were operating in numerous places in the country at the same time. This structure also made it more difficult for the police; one leader might be taken down but another would take his place.

The other six men who appear to be part of the leadership group are as follows:



George "Red" McGahan: aka James Carleton, Thomas Bliss, Larry Kurz, Ed Williams, and Milton Brion: involved in perhaps half of the robberies committed by this gang and was able to avoid being captured and incarcerated until December of 1923.

Because of his notoriety the gang is often referred to as the "Red McGahan gang" as opposed to the "Cowboy Hill gang". Until September 14, 1920, Red McGahan was considered a member of the "Cowboy Hill gang".

Like most of these men, McGahan had a long criminal record, which began when he was a teenager. In 1906 he was sent to the Mansfield Reformatory, and in 1912 he was sent to the Ohio State Penitentiary in Columbus. He was released in 1917 and for the next six years managed to stay out of prison. Although he was arrested several times during this time period he managed to avoid any long period of incarceration. Because he slipped through the fingers of several law enforcement entities he was called "The Eel".

1906: George McGahan

BERTILLON.

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1906: George McGahan

OHIO STATE REFORMATORY.

F.P. 2/22/06

NAME Geo. McGahan REG. NO. 2676
ALIAS _____ COLOR white
COUNTY Franklin - CRIME Burglary RECEIVED Feb 26-06
OCCUPATION Teamster DESCENT Irish American
KNOWN OR ADMITTED FORMER IMPRISONMENT Leicester, W. Va. Burg.

Numerical
Order.

MARKS, SCARS, ETC.

- III Cic red 6 ex at head left brow.
- Cic rd small under nit end at brow.
- V Cic rd on front cor at shoulder blade.

NOTE.—Please follow strictly Book of Instructions, not only as to measurements and general description, but also particularly as to Marks, Scars, etc. See pages 65 to 81. Use abbreviations as given in instructions.

1912: George McGahan

PAROLED

DISCHARGED

Height	69.5	Rep.	18.44	Rep.	25.4	Rep.	90	Age	90	vrs
Eng. Ht	51 3/4	Wd Lgth	15.4	L. Foot	11. -	Color of L. Eye	Gray	Birth		
Outs. A.	67. +	Wdth	13.9	L. Mid F.	8.6	Complexion	Gray	Place of Birth		
Trunk	81.5	Ck Wdth	5.94	L. Lit. F.	45.1	Color of Hair	Gray	Place of Birth		
		R. Ear		L. Fore A		Pecul		Place of Birth		

Remarks Incident to Measurements:



DESCRIPTIVE

FOREHEAD	Int	Profile	Ridge	Base	Root	RIGHT EAR	Bd	Hair	
	Hght	} Cava	} mch	} mch	} mch		} mch	Complexion	mch
	Width							Complexion	mch
	Pecul	DIMENSIONS					Weight	119	
		Length	Projection	Breadth			Build	Slight	
		Pecul							

Measured at O. P., Columbus, Ohio

Jaw 20.17 By Robt Miles

1912: George McGahan

OHIO STATE PENITENTIARY

NAME

Geo McGahan

Reg. No.

40971

Alias

Alias

County

Franklin

Crime

Robbery

Sentence

8 years

Occupation

Tailor

Known or Admitted Former Imprisonment

Quee Mansfield # 7676

MARKS, SCARS AND MOLES

Numerical
Order

- | | |
|-----|---|
| III | Male $\frac{1}{2}$ c front L tragus |
| " | " 2c at R ear |
| " | Indt sc on chin 5c to L of m. |
| IV | Male 12c to R of m - $4\frac{1}{2}$ 0 at nipple |
| " | " $5\frac{1}{2}$ c " " " " 11c bel " |
| VI | " 2nd tow L. foot. |



George “Dutch” Anderson: Anderson’s real name was Ivan Dahl von Teller, and was believed to have been born in Denmark. There is some contradictory information that may indicate that he was actually from Germany. He came to the United States in about 1900 and became known as a criminal soon after that. He had many aliases and was involved in numerous con games and robberies. He was most famous around St Louis, but operated throughout the eastern half of the country, including several places in Ohio.

In 1913 he was using the name George Brown when he and four other men attempted to rob a diamond merchant by the name of Philip Present in Rochester, New York. The robbery was primarily unsuccessful because they failed to open a safe containing about \$300,000 in diamonds. They only managed to steal about \$3,000 worth of jewelry.



Dutch managed to avoid capture until December of 1914 when he was arrested in Illinois. After serving a term in Joliet prison in Illinois, Dutch was taken to Rochester where he faced charges relating to the Philip Present robbery. He was sent to Auburn Prison in New York on April 25, 1917, where he met Gerald Chapman.

Anderson was killed in a gunfight with a policeman on October 31, 1925, in Muskegon, Michigan. The policeman, Charles Hammond, was also fatally wounded in the confrontation as he and Anderson fought over Anderson's gun. At the time Anderson was being sought for the murders of Ben and Mary Hance (August 14, 1925) near Muncie, Indiana.



Gerald Chapman: Chapman was from New York City and spent most of the first 31 years of his life in the state of New York. His real name was George Chartres and he did not adopt the name Gerald Chapman until about 1911. While in prison in Auburn, New York his name appears as George Chartres in the 1910 census.

Like many of the men in this gang he spent much of his life behind bars. At the time he was released from prison in 1919 he had spent 11 of the last 12 years incarcerated.



Although publicity about Chapman was extensive between 1922 and 1926, his link to this Ohio gang was not widely publicized. The notoriety he and Anderson received for other criminal acts overshadowed this 1919-1921 time period, most notably their \$2,400,000 mail robbery in New York City on October 24, 1921. For this offense both he and Anderson received 25 year sentences in 1922, and in 1923 both men escaped from the Federal Penitentiary in Atlanta, Georgia. Chapman disappeared after April 6, 1923, and Anderson escaped on December 30, 1923. Their whereabouts are generally unknown until April 5, 1924, when Chapman showed up at a car dealership in Steubenville, Ohio. Subsequently the two men stole a car from this dealership and drove to the farm of Ben and Mary Hance in Eaton, Indiana, in early April of 1924.



They used this farm as a hideout during the spring and summer of 1924, but moved to Massachusetts in the fall of that year. On October 12, 1924, during a failed robbery attempt of a department store, Chapman shot and fatally wounded a New Britain, Connecticut, policeman, James Skelly.

Chapman escaped, but was soon identified as the killer. He headed back to Indiana where he thought his hideout was unknown. He hid in several places around Fort Wayne and possibly Chicago, but returned to Muncie to the home of a doctor by the name of Harry Spickermon. Spickermon's address had been staked out and on January 18, 1925, Chapman was spotted leaving this residence.

He was captured a few minutes later. Eventually Chapman was sent to Connecticut for trial, and in April of 1925 he was convicted of murder. After a year of legal wrangling he was executed by hanging on April 6, 1926.

George "Jiggs" Losteiner



George "Jiggs" Losteiner: Losteiner was another of the gang members who was primarily wanted in Cleveland. He had been involved in the murder of the police officer Patrick Gaffney in December of 1918 and had been at large since that time. In July of 1920, also in Cleveland, Losteiner was suspected of being involved in the killing of a New York Central Police detective by the name of David Barnes.

Losteiner, born in November of 1885, is one of the few members of the gang to appear on three census forms; 1900, 1910, and 1930. In both 1900 and 1910 he was living with his parents in Cleveland. In 1930 he was in prison in Columbus along with Cowboy Hill.

It is not clear why he was not in prison in 1910, because in May of 1906 Losteiner was given a life sentence for burglary and larceny. Since he was not yet 21 when sentenced a quirk in the law caused him to be sent to the Reformatory at Mansfield, not the Penitentiary in Columbus, which must have enabled him to get a parole.

George does not appear to completely fit the pattern of the other gang members. It appears that for a few years between 1910 and 1918 he had a legitimate job as a carpenter. It also appears that he lived with his parents and siblings during this time period.

As a fugitive between December of 1918 and October of 1920 he participated in several robberies with the Cowboy Hill gang. On October 21, 1920, Losteiner and 6 other men attempted to rob a bank in Bedford, Ohio. An alarm was set off which alerted the people in the town. Several men took up arms and began a gunfight.

Four of the bandits escaped but Losteiner was wounded and captured. He was placed on trial and convicted of murder in the Gaffney case. He was sent to prison, again on a life sentence. This time he stayed, and died in prison on July 27, 1937, exactly 17 years after the death of David Barnes, the railroad detective Losteiner was suspected of killing.

George "Jiggs" Losteiner

BERTILLON.

Height, m	86.7	H'd Lgth	19.9	L. Foot	27.6	Eye-Class	4	Age	21
Eng. Ht.	6 ft 1 3/4 in	Wdth	16.1	L. Mid. F	11.84	Circle	r. ch. m	Apparent Age	years
Ovts. A.	94.0	Chk "	14.1	L. L.R. F	9.11	Periph Z	or. v. m	Born in	1867
Trunk.	96.0	Lgth R. Ear	6.3	L. Fore A	51.0	Pecul.	Gray	Nativity	Ohio

Remarks incident to measurements }



DESCRIPTIVE.

FOREHEAD.	Incl.	nced	NOSE.	Profile	Ridge	rect	RIGHT EAR.	Border	3/4 x	Beard		
	Hght.	low		Base	ele	Root		7	open	ch blond		
	Width	m		DIMENSIONS				Length.	Projection.	Strength.	Complexion	fair
	Pecul.			long	gt.	m				Weight	180	
			Pecul.				Lobe	quiefed.	Build	slender		
							Chin	not simple				

MEASURED AT } DATE
MANSFIELD, O. }

May 28 - 1906 BY R. Hastings

George "Jiggs" Losteiner

F.P. 57
106
OHIO STATE REFORMATORY. 285-474

NAME

Geo Losteiner

REG. NO.

2783

ALIAS

COUNTY

Cuyahoga

CRIME

Burglary

COLOR

White

RECEIVED

May 25, 06

OCCUPATION

House Painter

DESCENT

German American

KNOWN OR ADMITTED FORMER IMPRISONMENT

Cler N. N. - Larceny - -

Numerical
Order.

MARKS, SCARS, ETC.

I

Cic Aug lge carving 1 jt I ft ex.
Vac 25 from cut of eye.
Mole 1 over vac left arm.

II

Cic ~~over~~ Curve carving 2 jt I ft ant.
Cic curved carving 2 phd I ft ant.
Cic curved carving 3 jt I ft ant.

III

Cic curved carving 1/2 ft left lower lip at mod.

NOTE.—Please follow strictly Book of Instructions, not only as to measurements and general description, but also particularly as to Marks, Scars, etc. See pages 65 to 87. Use abbreviations as given in instructions.



Albert Edward Johnson: Johnson was described by Edward Sherlock, a Massachusetts police detective, as being polite and well-spoken but cold as ice. In an effort to run down the perpetrators of the Randolph, Massachusetts, robbery, Sherlock visited Toledo in December of 1919, while Johnson was being held in the Lucas County Jail because of the fracas that caused the death of Dolly Angus. Sherlock interviewed Johnson, but gained no information from him. He left the interview with the feeling that Johnson was a cold-blooded killer, which in fact he was.

Johnson was born in New Jersey in 1889, and as a teenager was first arrested in New York City he then ran away from home to California. Albert Johnson aka Albert "Whitey" Johnson, Frank "Whitey" Howard, or Albert Joyce, got into trouble in California and eventually ended up in San Quentin.



Johnson was first arrested in New York City in 1905 for petty larceny and placed on probation. Soon after this incident he went to California without permission. By September of 1906 he was being tried for an attempted robbery in a jewelry store in Berkeley. Even though his mother had traveled all the way from New York to Oakland, California, to plead his case, Albert was sent to the Preston School of Industry, the reformatory in Lone, California, a place now remembered as Preston Castle.

Johnson was incarcerated there for 4½ months, and released in early 1907, but was soon in trouble again. On February 23, 1907, he was placed in San Quentin to serve a sentence of 2 years for grand larceny. Johnson was discharged from San Quentin on October 23, 1908, and apparently headed back east, because the news about him shifts back to New York City in 1909.



In May of 1909 Johnson was convicted of stealing a watch and sentenced to four years and eight months in Sing Sing. In the 1910 census, Johnson appears as a prisoner in the Clinton County Prison in Dannemora, New York, and prison records show Johnson was sent to Holmesburg Prison (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania) in June of 1914 for the assault and attempted robbery of a jeweler.

By 1917 Johnson was in Cleveland, Ohio, and on March 14, during the course of a robbery, he shot and killed Cuyler Mowrey, paymaster at the N. J. Rich Company. He fled to New York City and proceeded to hold up a high-profile crap game in the Hotel St Francis on May 16, 1917.

The robbery netted some \$60,000, but he was soon apprehended, and while being held in the Tombs in New York City, Johnson was identified by a coworker of Cuyler Mowrey as the man who committed the murder in March. Johnson was not extradited to Ohio for the murder charge, but instead he was prosecuted in New York for the robbery.



On August 28, 1917, Johnson received a 19-year sentence in Sing Sing. Why Johnson was not extradited to Ohio and prosecuted for the murder of Mowrey was not explained, but somehow the New York case was given a higher priority. The crap game that Johnson robbed was being run by Arnold Rothstein, who was also one of the victims. At that time there was a lot of intrigue surrounding the influence of high-profile criminals, such as Arnold Rothstein, on law enforcement officials. This may have been the reason for Johnson staying in New York — it was Rothstein's revenge.

On August 26, 1919, Johnson, along with forty-three other prisoners, was on a train transferring him from Sing Sing to Dannemora (Clinton County). Someone obtained a master key to the locks securing the prisoners. At a point near Albany, New York, two prisoners were observed jumping from the slowly moving train. The train was stopped and guards proceeded to search for and subsequently recapture the two escapees. When the train arrived at Dannemora it was discovered that a third prisoner had also escaped, and that third man was Albert Johnson.



There was no explanation as to where the master key was obtained or how Johnson got away after he left the train, but two months later there was a robbery in which Johnson was alleged to have participated. This robbery took place on October 31, 1919, in Kenmore, New York, just a few miles from Niagara Falls and about 300 miles west of where Johnson escaped from the prison train.

On November 19, 1919, Johnson was in Toledo, and as noted earlier he was arrested and placed in the Lucas County Jail. After the Christmas jail break, Johnson worked primarily with Jiggs Losteiner. The two men committed several robberies and appear to be the leaders of one of the robbery teams that developed during the year 1920. In the melee that ensued during the robbery at Bedford, Ohio, on October 21, 1920, Johnson was killed.



Eddie Meehan: As mentioned previously this gang was populated with men who should be considered hardened criminals, in other words people who were automatically labeled “armed and dangerous”. Eddie Meehan was no exception to this rule. Meehan was also known by several aliases. In connection with the jail break at the Lucas County Jail in 1919 he is called D. W., D. H. or D. E. West in various news articles. When arrested in Wisconsin in September of 1920 he used the name Edward Rogers, and the name Eddie Grant is also referenced as another alias for Meehan in news articles.



Meehan was reported to be 30 years old in 1919, and therefore was approximately the same age as Chapman, McGahan, Albert Johnson, and Cowboy Hill. At the time of his arrest in 1919, news reports stated that police records indicated Meehan's first arrest was in 1911 when he was apprehended for blowing a safe in a Paulding, Ohio, post office. At that time he used the name Thomas Mehan. For this offense he received a sentence of 11 ½ years in federal prison. Meehan was sent to Leavenworth and in 1913 President Taft commuted this sentence to three years. Shortly after his release he was arrested in St Louis as a pickpocket.

At the time of the Lucas County Jail raid on December 25, 1919, Meehan was awaiting a decision on his manslaughter sentence regarding the shooting death of James Manion in September of 1919. Meehan had originally been arrested on a charge of murder, but this charge was apparently reduced to manslaughter nevertheless he was sentenced to 20 years imprisonment.



During the late summer and early fall of 1920, Meehan and his group were conducting robberies in Wisconsin. There are even reports that this group ventured into Minnesota and that they went as far west as Nebraska. After being apprehended in Wisconsin in late September, they were imprisoned in that state.

The trial of the three men in the group, Edward Rogers (Meehan), James King, and Charles Turner, took place in Milwaukee, in January of 1921. All three men received 30-year sentences. News reports indicate that by 1931 Meehan (referred to as Edward Rogers), was seeking a pardon after serving 11 years in prison. A newspaper editorial indicates that there was strong opposition to this action. The editorial references threats by the prisoner against law enforcement officials as a good reason for not granting a pardon.



Meehan was not granted a pardon in 1931 but was released on May 7, 1937, after 16 years of imprisonment in Wisconsin. No reason was given for his release at that time, but it was merely a technicality because Meehan was immediately taken into custody by two deputies from James O'Reilly's office in Toledo. In 1937 O'Reilly was the Lucas County Sheriff and may have arranged the release of Meehan so that he could be brought back to Ohio to serve out his 20-year sentence for the killing of James Manion in September of 1919.

Beyond this transfer there is no information that indicates exactly what happened to Eddie Meehan. There is, however, a man by the name of J. D. West in the Ohio State Penitentiary in 1940. The best clue as to this man's true identity is the fact that in 1935 he was living in Waupun, Wisconsin, the site of the Wisconsin State Penitentiary.

Algonac, Michigan, September 6, 1920

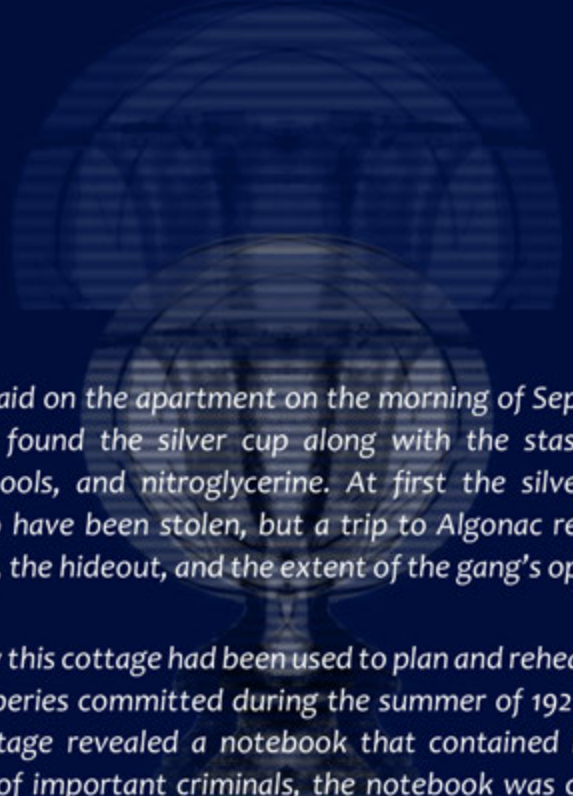
Algonac, Michigan, is located across Lake St. Clair from Detroit, and is close to the United States border with Canada.

Between July 15, 1920, and mid-September, Cowboy Hill, Red McGahan, Archie Dennison, Joe Forrest, and Albert Johnson lived in a resort area known as the Flats near Algonac. They posed as successful businessmen from New York, and hosted elaborate parties as they socialized with the rich inhabitants of the area.

The cottage that Cowboy Hill and the gang rented and used as a headquarters in 1920 was on an island, so they purchased a custom-made speedboat for access. They had this boat built for them by local craftsmen and mechanics and they powered the boat with a twenty-four cylinder engine. Presumably it was intended as a getaway vehicle to provide them with the means for a fast escape to Canada, if needed.

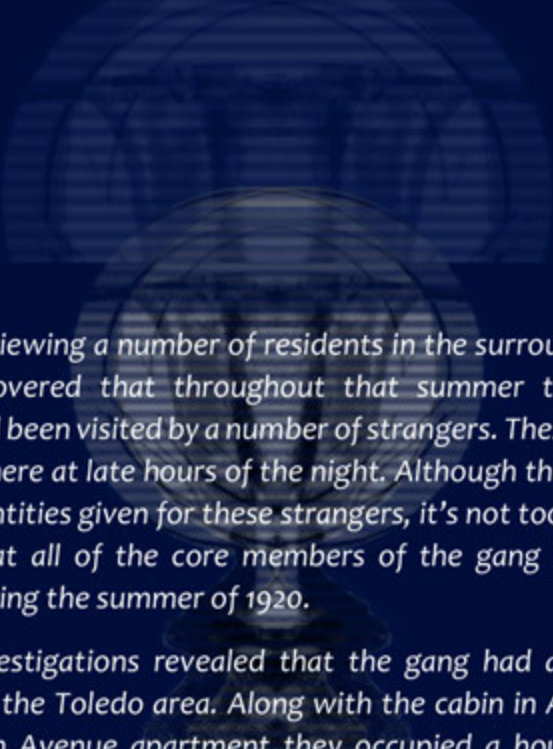
Coincidentally this boat might have been used to smuggle liquor and morphine from Canada. In order not to arouse suspicion about the purpose of the boat, Hill, Dennison, and Forrest entered "Emma" (named for Cowboy Hill's wife Emma), in a Labor Day speedboat regatta on September 6, 1920, with one of the men who had constructed the boat acting as pilot. He won the race and the gang of bandits won a silver cup as a prize.

Between September 3 and September 14, 1920, the police in Toledo were looking for Archie Dennison, but he and the other gang members were at the hideout in Algonac, Michigan, having fled Toledo right after the shootout with Officer Kruse. At some point between September 6, 1920, and September 14, Cowboy Hill, Archie Dennison, Joe Forrest, Gerald Chapman, and possibly Red McGahan, returned to Toledo and set up shop in the Toledo hideout at 2220 Franklin Avenue.




After the raid on the apartment on the morning of September 14, the police found the silver cup along with the stash of guns, burglar's tools, and nitroglycerine. At first the silver cup was thought to have been stolen, but a trip to Algonac revealed the speedboat, the hideout, and the extent of the gang's operations in the area.

Apparently this cottage had been used to plan and rehearse several of the robberies committed during the summer of 1920. A search of the cottage revealed a notebook that contained names and addresses of important criminals, the notebook was comparable to the Yellow Pages. It listed skilled criminal specialists in numerous places throughout the country, presumably these additional criminals were hired for robberies outside of the Detroit/Toledo region. The police also discovered a rented garage on the mainland containing three of the gang's cars.



After interviewing a number of residents in the surrounding area, police discovered that throughout that summer the Algonac cottage had been visited by a number of strangers. These strangers had been there at late hours of the night. Although there were no specific identities given for these strangers, it's not too difficult to imagine that all of the core members of the gang visited that hideout during the summer of 1920.

Further investigations revealed that the gang had at least five hideouts in the Toledo area. Along with the cabin in Algonac and the Franklin Avenue apartment they occupied a house on Dorr Street, one in Point Place, and a soft drink parlor on Bancroft Street. At that time the police believed there were a total of 20 men in the gang and they would split up into teams of bandits and move from place to place in order to avoid the police.



By the end of October in 1920 Dick Howell was in prison awaiting execution, Cowboy Hill was in the hospital fighting to stay alive, and Archie Dennison was dead. Joe Forrest aka Joseph Hill was alive and uninjured, but he too was in jail. Albert Johnson had been killed, Jiggs Losteiner was wounded and imprisoned, and Eddie Meehan was in jail awaiting trial in Wisconsin.

Red McGahan, Gerald Chapman, and Dutch Anderson were still loose and about to cause more problems. The organization they had created, however, was fundamentally destroyed.

Ridgeville, Indiana, December 3, 1920



Ridgeville, Indiana, bank interior about 1910

Ridgeville, Indiana, December 3, 1920



Ridgeville, Indiana, bank exterior about 1910

Ridgeville, Indiana



On December 3, 1920, two bank robberies occurred at about 10:30 a. m. One was in Ridgeville, Indiana, and the other was in Grove City, Ohio. The two banks were approximately 120 miles apart. Red McGahan was implicated in both of these robberies.

Obviously this would have been impossible, nevertheless these two robberies appear to have been perpetrated by the remnants of Cowboy Hill's organization. Later this organization would be labeled "The Red McGahan Gang", and occasionally there were news articles that referred to it as "The Gerald Chapman Gang".

Eventually a November robbery in Kingston, Ohio, and the Grove City robbery would be credited to McGahan, but the leader of the group that robbed the Ridgeville, Indiana, bank, was never identified or apprehended.

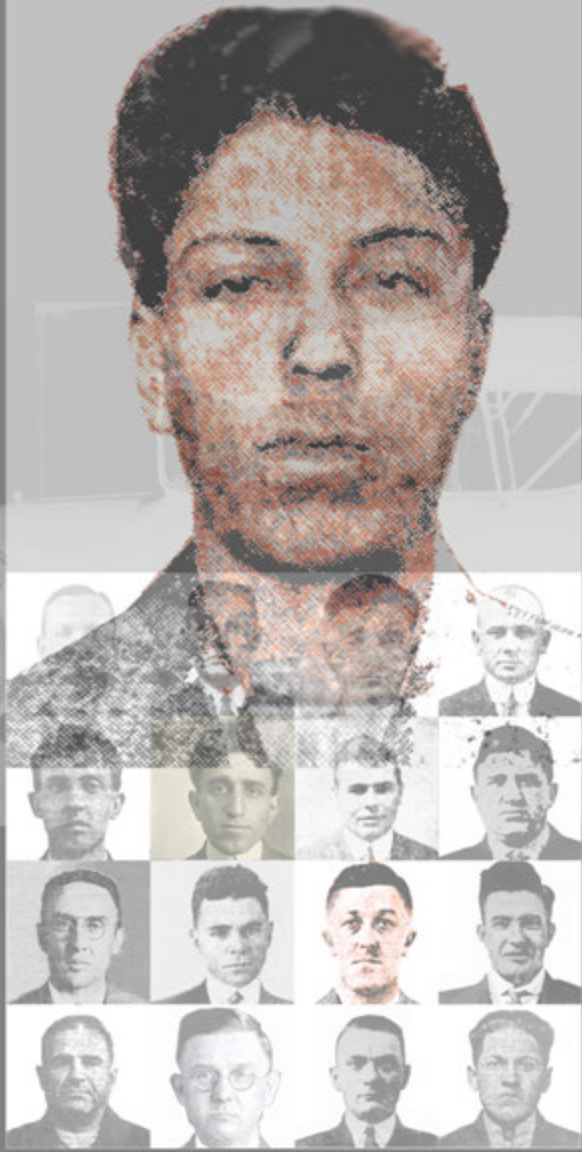
One of the men who escaped the ill-fated Bedford, Ohio, robbery in October of 1920, Eddie Kelly, was arrested, tried, and found guilty in the Ridgeville robbery. There were four or five other men (depending on which article you read) involved in the robbery in Ridgeville, but they were never found. Eddie Kelly never revealed who else was involved, at least not publicly, and denied his own involvement. Based on the actions of Gerald Chapman and Dutch Anderson in early 1921, they look like prime suspects.

Chapman and Anderson can't be specifically tied to this robbery, but by Dutch Anderson's own admission the pair left Ohio and went to New York City in late March or early April of 1921. This coincided with the beginning of the trial of Eddie Kelly in Randolph County, Indiana.

Red McGahan was still trying to rob banks, and in May of 1921 his gang raided another one in Indiana, this one was located in Huntertown, just north of Fort Wayne. This robbery led to a shootout in Lima, Ohio, when the group of four men returned to their hideout in a Lima hotel.

The shootout involved McGahan, but the reports of the robbery don't necessarily implicate McGahan, only four men known to be part of his gang. Wounded in the gunfight, McGahan forced a young man driving a truck take him to Findlay, where he eventually made his way back to Toledo.

As noted earlier Red McGahan managed to avoid arrest until December of 1923. In 1924 he was placed on trial in Dayton for a bank robbery in West Carrollton, Ohio, on April 10, 1920. He was convicted and sentenced to 25 years in the Ohio State Penitentiary. Red served 15 years and was released in April of 1939. He managed nine years of freedom but was arrested again in 1948 for his role in a nightclub robbery in Columbus, Ohio. Red McGahan died in prison on June 27, 1963, the last member of a forgotten gang.



Current research indicates that there were at least 33 men associated with the Dick Howell/Cowboy Hill/Red McGahan Gang during the time period of October 1918 through May 1921. Of those 33 only two men were able to reform and live a normal life for a significant portion of their adulthood. Many of the men spent a high percentage of their short lives incarcerated. Many disappeared into prison and no record of their death can be found. Some of these men may have changed their names and reformed, but it is unlikely. There are also several men who do not show up in the public record except for one arrest. This potentially indicates that they did not continue in a life of crime.

All the known career criminals are listed using the names by which they were most commonly known. In most cases they had multiple aliases, some of which are also listed.

Perry “Dick” Howell: born in 1878, was executed for the murder of Anthony Skotnicky in 1921 (see previous biographical outline).

Arthur “Cowboy” Hill: born in 1887, died in 1937 (see previous biographical outline).

George “Jiggs” Losteiner: born in 1885, died in 1937 (see previous biographical outline).

It should be noted that in the early 1900s Jiggs was associated with a gang known as the “Berry Brothers gang”. This consisted of three boys from the Berry Family, Frank, Edgar, and William. This gang specialized in raiding railroad cars. It is documented that Cowboy Hill was associated with the Berry brothers in the 1904-1905 time period, so it is possible that Losteiner knew Cowboy Hill as early as 1904.

Albert Edward Johnson: born in 1889, died in 1920 (see previous biographical outline).

Eddie Meehan: born about 1885, death unknown, last known record is the 1940 United States Census showing him in the Ohio State Penitentiary in Columbus, Ohio (see previous biographical outline).

Gerald Chapman: born in 1887, died by hanging in 1926 (see previous biographical outline).

Dutch Anderson: born in 1880 or 1881, died from a gunshot wound on Halloween night in 1925 (see previous biographical outline).

George “Red” McGahan: born in 1890, died in prison in 1963 (see previous biographical outlines).

Archie Dennison: born in 1888, died in 1920 (see previous biographical outline).

Joe Forrest: born about 1881, there seems to be no information about Forrest beyond his arrest in 1920. There was a news article that reported a rumor that he died in Arizona in the 1930s, but this appears to be pure speculation.

James King: age unknown and whereabouts beyond 1921 are unknown. King was incarcerated in Waupun, Wisconsin, at the same time as Eddie Meehan.

Charles Turner: age unknown and whereabouts beyond 1921 are unknown. Turner was incarcerated in Waupun, Wisconsin, at the same time as Eddie Meehan. Both Turner and King were sentenced to 30 years and these two men were transferred to the prison ward for the criminally insane.

Bob Howell: brother of Dick Howell and an early member of the gang, born in 1880, died 1937. Bob Howell did not follow in his brother's footsteps and seems to have reformed after his brother was executed. He was married and employed in East Liverpool, Ohio.

Harry Cottrell: son-in-law of Dick Howell involved in the 1918 and early 1919 robberies in and around Steubenville, Ohio. Information about Harry Cottrell is limited to a series of newspaper articles about the early exploits of the gang and no other biographical information is available.

John Grogan: an early member of the gang who was sentenced to life in prison in 1919 for the shooting of a policeman in Cleveland in 1918. He was an associate of George Losteiner and therefore probably knew Cowboy Hill.

Frank Adams: aka Charles or Frank Appleby, from Brockton, Massachusetts, identified as a participant in the Randolph, Massachusetts, robbery in November of 1919. He was shot and killed in Toledo, Ohio, on February 29, 1920. His age at the time of death is unknown.

Will “Little Willie” Fisher: aka James Allison, Fred Manifeck or Manifex, identified as a participant in the Randolph, Massachusetts, robbery in November of 1919, was one of 4 gunmen involved in the raid of the Lucas County jail on December 25, 1919. Little Willie served a term in the Indiana State Prison at Michigan City under the name of James Allison. The last credible documentation on Fisher is in 1925 as a result of an arrest in Michigan.

Leo Mitchell: born in 1879, died in a Michigan State Hospital in 1947 (see previous biographical outline).

Albert Loach or Loesch: one of the four gang members released from the Lucas County jail on December 25, 1919, murdered in Indiana in April of 1920, possibly as a result of having given information to the police about a robbery. His body was discovered on April 22, 1920, near Wanatah, Indiana, which is in LaPorte County. His death certificate indicates that he was born in Ohio in 1881.

Charles O'Malley: associated with Albert "Whitey" Johnson in a robbery in Chicago. There is no further information about O'Malley.

James B. McCauley aka William Cartwright, Doc Cartwright, James Monroe, N. M. Horton, Robert D. Welch, implicated in several of the gang's robberies. McCauley had a bad right eye and apparently had multiple glass eyes and would switch colors in an attempt to confuse pursuing police. He may have been involved in the Randolph, Massachusetts, robbery as the fifth participant who was never identified. One of the witnesses stated that one of the men was "cross-eyed".

Joe Murphy: one of the gunmen involved in the raid of the Lucas County jail on December 25, 1919.

Joe Snyder: also involved in the raid of the Lucas County jail on December 25, 1919. Both Snyder and Murphy were sent to prison for their roles in the jail break.

Orville Taylor: implicated in two robberies in New York in 1919 and was captured in Bedford, Ohio.

Eddie “Marion Eddie” Kelly: was tried and convicted in Winchester, Indiana, for the Ridgeville, Indiana, bank robbery. At the time of his arrest for the Ridgeville robbery he was being pursued for the robbery at Bedford, Ohio, on October 21, 1920. Kelly was sent to prison in Michigan City, Indiana, and was still there in 1930. Because of his previous convictions he was given a life sentence. He was born in Ohio (supposedly Marion, Ohio) in 1879, but there is no record of his death.

Raleigh Ross Townsend: associated with Red McGahan and killed in a shootout with the police in Lima, Ohio, on May 21, 1921. Townsend, John Mason, George Donovan, and Joe Willis were implicated in the Hometown, Indiana, bank robbery that day. Townsend was a soldier in WWI and had lived in Toledo for a number of years before joining Red McGahan’s group of robbers. He was born in Missouri in 1895.

John Mason: Mason was associated with Red McGahan and was captured in Lima, Ohio, on May 21, 1921.

George Donovan: Donovan was associated with Red McGahan and was captured in Lima, Ohio, on May 21, 1921. Donovan also used the alias Edward O'Neill, but should not be confused with the other man of the same name listed below.

Joe Willis: Willis was associated with Red McGahan and was captured in Lima, Ohio, on May 21, 1921.

Edward O'Neill: O'Neill was identified by witnesses as a gang member, and tried and convicted for participation in the Delta, Ohio, bank robbery of May 20, 1920.

Harry Wulle: aka Harry Stone, had a long criminal record and had just been released from Leavenworth prison when he joined the Cowboy Hill gang. He was captured in Bedford, Ohio, on October 21, 1920. Stone was associated with John Brennan and Sam Sylvester in robbing a post office in 1912. It is likely that Stone was a permanent member of Losteiner's group during 1920.

Sam Sylvester: aka Sam Ross, associated with Harry Stone, John "Turk" Brennan and Will "Little Willie" Fisher.

John “Big Turk” Brennan: aka John Horn, was a known associate of Harry Wulle (aka Harry Stone), and also accompanied Gerald Chapman and Dutch Anderson to Indiana in 1924.

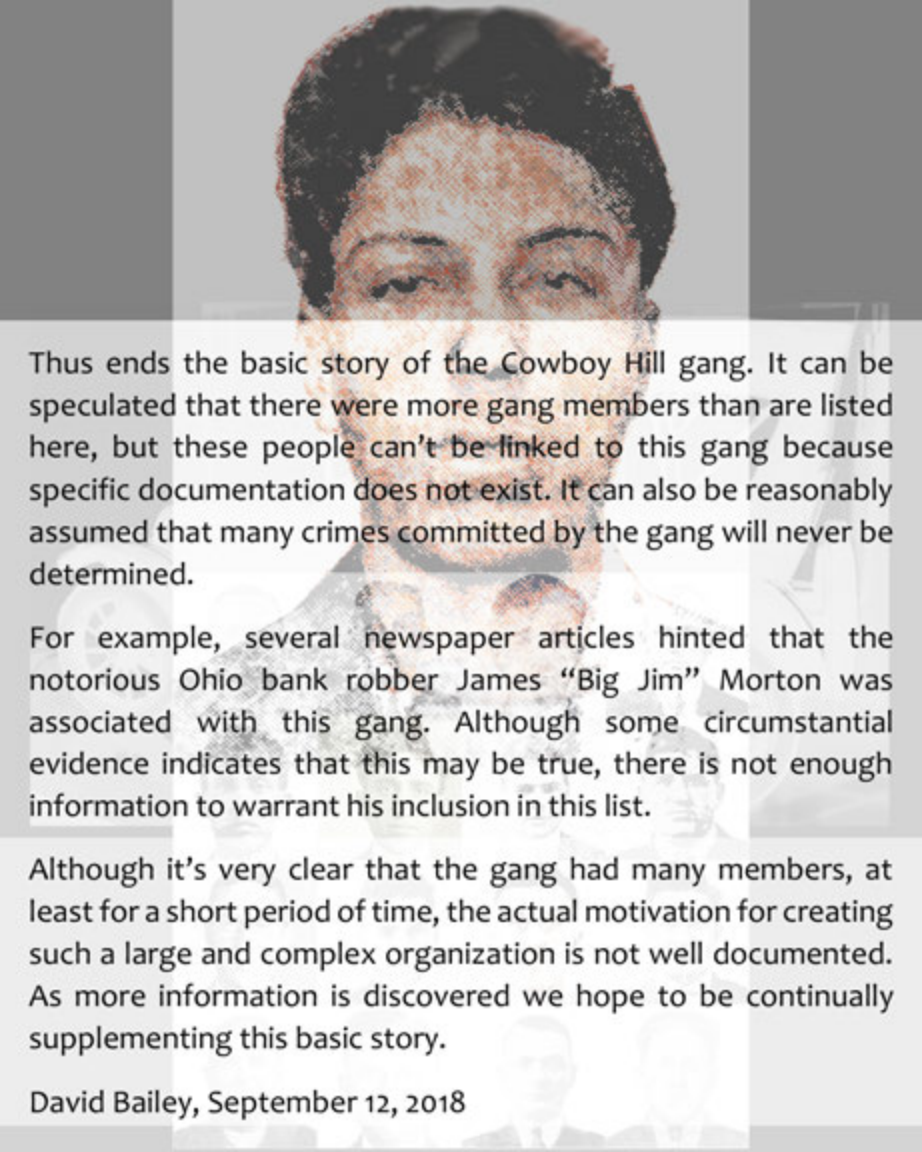
John Brennan was a much sought criminal because he, Harry Wulle (alias Stone), Sam Sylvester, William Brandt (a friend of Cowboy Hill), and a man named John Murphy blew a safe at the post office in Mt. Blanchard, Ohio. This occurred on July 5, 1912. Four of these men were captured soon after the robbery, but Brennan was not caught until 1915.

After escaping captivity in 1916 he remained a fugitive until 1920 when he was arrested for another post office robbery. While being held in a county jail in Kentucky awaiting trial in federal court, he again escaped. His whereabouts were unknown, but it is now possible to determine that in April of 1924 he was a companion of Gerald Chapman and Dutch Anderson when they came to Indiana. It appears that Brennan was involved in the theft of an automobile in Steubenville, Ohio, (April 6, 1924) that became evidence in the murder trial of Gerald Chapman in 1925.

Although there were rumors that Brennan was collaborating with Chapman and Anderson during the year 1924 and with Anderson in 1925, there is no credible documentation that supports this idea. Based on information in an obituary of one of Brennan's sisters in 1925, he was living in Canada at that time. This means that he successfully avoided arrest after Chapman was captured and was nowhere to be found after Anderson was killed.

Brennan was thought to have been killed in 1928 and remained hidden from 1925 until 1937 when he was discovered working as a poultry farmer in New Jersey. Although he was still wanted for the post office robbery in Kentucky in 1920, he was not held accountable for his other misdeeds. Even though there was a nationwide manhunt for him in 1925 relative to his association with Chapman and Anderson, this was not even mentioned after he was discovered in 1937.

He did serve 18 months imprisonment for the Kentucky robbery, but was considered a reformed criminal and released after that. Brennan and his wife moved back to East Liverpool where he worked at various jobs. John Brennan was born in 1874 in West Virginia and died in East Liverpool, Ohio, in 1954.



Thus ends the basic story of the Cowboy Hill gang. It can be speculated that there were more gang members than are listed here, but these people can't be linked to this gang because specific documentation does not exist. It can also be reasonably assumed that many crimes committed by the gang will never be determined.

For example, several newspaper articles hinted that the notorious Ohio bank robber James "Big Jim" Morton was associated with this gang. Although some circumstantial evidence indicates that this may be true, there is not enough information to warrant his inclusion in this list.

Although it's very clear that the gang had many members, at least for a short period of time, the actual motivation for creating such a large and complex organization is not well documented. As more information is discovered we hope to be continually supplementing this basic story.

David Bailey, September 12, 2018

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The Saginaw News (Saginaw, Michigan)

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The Daily Journal (Vineland, New Jersey)

The Auburn Citizen (Auburn, New York)

Press and Sun-Bulletin (Binghamton, New York)

The Brooklyn Daily Eagle (Brooklyn, New York)

The Buffalo Commercial (Buffalo, New York)

The Illustrated Buffalo Express (Buffalo, New York)

The Buffalo Courier (Buffalo, New York)

Buffalo Evening News (Buffalo, New York)

Star-Gazette (Elmira, New York)

The Kingston Daily Freeman (Kingston, New York)

The Evening World (New York, New York)

The New York Herald (New York, New York)

The New York Times (New York, New York)

The New York Tribune (New York, New York)

The Niagara Falls Gazette (Niagara Falls, New York)

The Sun (New York, New York)

The Ogdensburg Republican-Journal (Ogdensburg, New York)

Times Herald (Olean, New York)

The Oneonta Star (Oneonta, New York)

Poughkeepsie Eagle-News (Poughkeepsie, New York)

Rome Daily Sentinel (Rome, New York)

The Rochester Democrat and Chronicle (Rochester, New York)

Rochester Journal and The Post Express (Rochester, New York)

CREDITS

NEWSPAPERS:

The Akron Beacon Journal (Akron, Ohio)
The Akron Evening Times (Akron, Ohio)
The Athens Messenger (Athens, Ohio)
The Evening Repository (Canton, Ohio)
The Canton Daily News (Canton, Ohio)
Cincinnati Enquirer (Cincinnati, Ohio)
Chillicothe Gazette (Chillicothe, Ohio)
Cleveland Plain Dealer (Cleveland, Ohio)
Coshocton Daily Times (Coshocton, Ohio)
Dayton Daily News (Dayton, Ohio)
Dayton Herald (Dayton, Ohio)
Defiance Crescent-News (Defiance, Ohio)
The Evening Review (East Liverpool, Ohio)
The News-Messenger (Fremont, Ohio)
Hamilton Evening Journal (Hamilton, Ohio)
Lancaster Eagle-Gazette (Lancaster, Ohio)
Lima Daily News (Lima, Ohio)

CREDITS

NEWSPAPERS:

The Mansfield News (Mansfield, Ohio)

News-Journal (Mansfield, Ohio)

The Marion Star (Marion, Ohio)

The Evening Tribune (Marysville, Ohio)

The Union County Journal (Marysville, Ohio)

The Evening Independent (Massilon, Ohio)

Newark Advocate (Newark, Ohio)

Norwalk Reflector-Herald (Norwalk, Ohio)

Portsmouth Daily Times (Portsmouth, Ohio)

Sandusky Register (Sandusky, Ohio)

The Sandusky Star-Journal (Sandusky, Ohio)

Steubenville Herald (Steubenville, Ohio)

Steubenville Herald-Star (Steubenville, Ohio)

The Steubenville Weekly Herald (Steubenville, Ohio)

Toledo Blade (Toledo, Ohio)

Toledo News-Bee (Toledo, Ohio)

Toledo Times (Toledo, Ohio)

Times Recorder (Zanesville, Ohio)

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New Castle News (New Castle, Pennsylvania)

Evening Public Ledger (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania)

The Philadelphia Inquirer (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania)

Pittsburgh Daily Post (Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania)

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette (Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania)

The Pittsburgh Press (Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania)

The Tennessean (Nashville, Tennessee)

The Bee (Danville, Virginia)

The Post-Crescent (Appleton, Wisconsin)

The Chippewa Herald (Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin)

Green Bay Press-Gazette (Green Bay, Wisconsin)

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The Sheboygan Press (Sheboygan, Wisconsin)

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CENSUS RECORDS:

UNITED STATES FEDERAL CENSUS; SCHEDULE No. 1-Inhabitants;
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TWELFTH CENSUS OF THE UNITED STATES; SCHEDULE No. 1-
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CENSUS; THIRTEENTH CENSUS OF THE UNITED STATES: 1910-
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FIFTEENTH CENSUS OF THE UNITED STATES: 1930-POPULATION
SCHEDULE

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE-BUREAU OF THE CENSUS;
SIXTEENTH CENSUS OF THE UNITED STATES: 1940-POPULATION
SCHEDULE

CENSUS OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK; JUNE 1, 1915

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MISCELLANEAOUS INFORMATION SOURCES:

WWI DRAFT REGISTRATION CARDS 1917/1918

WWII DRAFT REGISTRATION CARDS 1942

SING SING PRISON ADMISSION CARDS

AUBURN PRISON ADMISSION CARD

(Gerald Chapman)

OHIO DEATH INDEX

(George "Red" McGahan)

OHIO DEATH CERTIFICATE

(Archie Dennison)

OHIO MARRIAGE RECORDS

(Joseph Hill aka Joe Forrest)

INDIANA DEATH CERTIFICATE

(Albert Loach)

MICHIGAN DEATH RECORD

(Leo Mitchell)

CREDITS

ORGANIZATIONS:

TOLEDO POLICE DEPARTMENT/ TOLEDO POLICE MUSEUM; TOLEDO, OHIO

1. Biographical information about the policemen involved in the September 14, 1920, raid on the Franklin Avenue apartment building,
2. Blotters indicating date and time of arrests of numerous gang members.
3. News clippings and written histories not available through other sources.
4. Voluntary research by individuals.

OHIO HISTORY CONNECTION/OHIO HISTORY CENTRAL; COLUMBUS, OHIO

1. Bertillon Cards and photographs.
2. Internet access to various Ohio prison records.
3. Information provided by staff members through email communications.

CREDITS

ORGANIZATIONS:

TOLEDO LUCAS COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY;
TOLEDO, OHIO

1. Numerous newspaper clippings not available through Internet sources.
2. Voluntary research by library staff members.

RIDGEVILLE PUBLIC LIBRARY; RIDGEVILLE, INDIANA

AUBURN CORD DUESENBERG AUTOMOBILE MUSEUM;
AUBURN, INDIANA

CULTURAL EDUCATION CENTER; ALBANY, NEW YORK

1. Auburn prison records of Gerald Chapman.

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SPECIFIC INTERNET WEBSITES:

Ancestry.com (census records, death records, and Sing Sing prison records)

Newspapers.com (newspaper articles)

Genealogybank.com (newspaper articles)

NewspaperArchive.com (newspaper articles)

news.google.com (Google newspaper archive)

nyhistoricnewspapers.org (NYS Historic Newspapers)

fultonhistory.com (Fulton County, New York, access to newspapers and other documents)

Indiana Digital Archives (prison records for offenses committed in Indiana by gang members William Fisher and Eddie Kelly)