

WANTED!

MAIL ROBBERS - - LIBERAL REWARD



Joseph Urbaytis,

aliases: Joseph Urbaitis, Joseph Urbytis.

BERTILLON: 79.2; 82.0; 96.8; 18.5; 16.0; 65; 26.5; 11.6; 9.2; 48.5.

FINGER PRINT CLASSIFICATION:

25 0 II
19 1

I Vert. cic. of 2.5 on 1st Jt. left little fgr.
I Irreg. cic. on 3rd pha. left index fgr.
Age 21; height 5 feet, 10½ inches; weight 154; complexion fair; slender build; dark chestnut hair.



Charles Schultz,

aliases: "Saginaw," "Split Lip", and Dutch Schultz.

BERTILLON: 73.3; 79.5; 88.7; 17.6; 15.8; 5.5; 26.0; 10.9; 8.7; 46.4.

FINGER PRINT CLASSIFICATION:

1 aAa Ref. 1 aAa
1 aAaa 1 aAafa

II Cir. cic. on 3rd pha. right inner front.
III Obl. cic. left temple.
III Tattoo blue dot right eyebrow center.
III Tat. two dots, left eyebrow inner.
III Cic. on rt. wing of nose.
III Cic. on upper lip, left corner.
Age 23; height 5 feet, 8¾ inches; weight 145; complexion fair; hair dark chestnut. (Recaptured Sept. 12.)



George L. Rogers,

aliases: George Lewis, George Harris, Joe Morris, Mike Cuttacaper, "Spaniard."

BERTILLON: 69.3; 80.0; —; 18.9; 15.7; 6.4; 25.8; 11.4; 9.2; 47.0.

FINGER PRINT CLASSIFICATION:

9 Roo o
31 I

I end first fgr. rt. hand mashed.
Age 32; height 5 feet, 6¾ inches; weight 140; complexion dark; eyes maroon.



James Colson,

aliases: James Calson, "Slim", "Dutch".

BERTILLON: 75.6; 87.0; 89.5; 19.0; 15.6; 6.7; 26.5; 19.9; 10.2; 50.7.

FINGER PRINT CLASSIFICATION:

27 MO O
32 MO

II Arm been broken at elbow; cir. scr. elbow rear.
Age 36; height 5 feet, 9¼ inches; weight 151; complexion sallow; eyes az. pale.

Edward O'Brien,

(Photo not available)

aliases: Eddie Jackson, Eddie Munson, Eddie Murdock, Eddie Johnson, Eddie Burke, Little Eddie, "Frisco" Eddie, and "Thick Lips."

Age about 25 years; height 5 feet, 5 inches; weight 130; complexion sallow; build slender; eyes blue; hair brown, thin on top. Clean shaven; teeth white and perfect; thick protruding lower lip; neat dresser.

Bertillon: 65.2; 66.0; 92.0; 19.3; 15.2; 12.9; 5.8; 25.8; 11.5; 8.9; 47.5
II Int American type, initials "E.O.B" & figures "0798" for name. Finger Print Classification I R 00 I U 00

Joseph Urbaytis, Charles Schultz and George L. Rogers, under conviction for robbery of mail truck at Toledo, Ohio, February 17, 1921, and awaiting trial on additional indictments, escaped from Lucas County Jail, Toledo, Ohio, September 5, 1921. James Colson and Edward O'Brien not previously apprehended for this offense.

Recently the following offer of reward was published by the Postmaster General:

\$5,000 REWARD.

"To any postal employee or other person (except post office inspectors) who brings in a mail robber, the Post Office Department will pay a reward of NOT EXCEEDING FIVE THOUSAND DOLLARS."

These men are desperate characters and caution should be exercised in attempting to apprehend them.

Any information regarding these men should be communicated to the undersigned by telephone or by telegraph, government rate collect.

T. M. MILLIGAN,
Post Office Inspector,
Toledo, Ohio.

G. F. H. BIRDSEYE,
Post Office Inspector in Charge,
Cincinnati, Ohio.

Some Crimes Stand Out In Pages Of The Blade

Through the years, several crimes stand out as being particularly memorable in the history of the Toledo area.

1. Joe Urbaytis and the Post Office Robbery, Feb. 17, 1921.
2. The Toledo Clubber, 1925-26.
3. The Licavoli Gang, 1930-34.
4. Pretty Boy Floyd and the shootout in Bowling Green, April, 13, 1931.
5. The Harry Campbell-Sheriff O'Reilly Scandal, May, 1936.
6. The Slaying of Patrolman William A. Miscannon, Sept. 18, 1970.
7. The Bell & Beckwith fraud, Feb. 4, 1983.

The post office robbery was sensational mostly because of the size of the loot, estimated at \$1.6 million in cash, stocks, and bonds. Catching the crooks was easy. One kept a handkerchief over his mouth. This had to be Charles (Split Lip) Schultz. The others were his friends.

The bandits kept the cash but passed the stocks and bonds out among friends and neighbors. These people basically were law-abiding citizens, and, when police caught them with the loot, they couldn't wait to tell where and how they got it.

Urbaytis escaped from the county jail here, was captured in Columbus in May, 1924, and served time until paroled from Alcatraz in 1943. He returned to Toledo something of a celebrity, but was shot to death on Nov. 5, 1946, as he entered the Bon-Aire Supper Club for reasons unknown. A 69-year-old ex-convict pleaded guilty to manslaughter in the case, but maintained he was doing it only because he was afraid of being framed for murder.

The Toledo Clubber roamed the streets of Toledo between May 24, 1925, and October 25, 1926, and during that time he was accused of clubbing four women to death and severely beating seven more.

Many arrests were made, but there never was enough evidence to bring anyone to trial. In May of 1928, Charles Hoppe admitted taking a 7-year-old girl from her home and killing her with blows to the head with his fists. He died in the electric chair. While there was little reason to believe he was the clubber, it seemed to give a lot of Toledoans comfort to think that he was.

The glamour criminals of the 20s and 30s were the bank raiders. They traveled the country armed with sub-machine guns and a willingness to

kill. They were the terrorists of their day.

Such operations required friendly urban areas in which criminals could sojourn between jobs. This meant places where there were people willing to rent rooms, buy cars, and find girls for them. Toledo was such a town.

Floyd, his associate, Billy-the-Killer Miller, and Alvin Karpis and his associate, Harry Campbell, spent a great deal of time here. As a matter of fact, Campbell even registered to vote here under the name Bob Miller.

Normally the bandits kept their peace in the Toledo area, but Floyd elected to ignore this. He hit a bank in Sylvania and another in Whitehouse. He was recognized at both places, and, when he and Miller showed up in Bowling Green with two girls on April 13, 1931, their presence was reported to Police Chief Carl (Shorty) Galliher by merchants.

The chief and Patrolman Ralph L. Castner trailed the foursome to a place where they believed the public would not be endangered, and then ordered them to halt. Miller and Floyd pulled pistols and started shooting. When it was all over, Miller was dead, one girl was wounded, and Patrolman Castner was fatally injured. Floyd escaped, and was killed on Oct. 22, 1934, by G-Men near East Liverpool, O..

Because of the inability of local police to handle the bank raiders, the FBI formed an elite organization to chase them down. In one of their first public appearances in Toledo, they moved in on Harry Campbell at 2132 Monroe St. and took him without a fight.

Karpis was captured in New Orleans on May 1, 1936, a week before Campbell was picked up. He pleaded guilty to the kidnapping of William Hamm, Jr., of St. Paul, and drew a 25-year sentence. He was paroled in January of 1969. Campbell drew a life sentence for his part in the kidnapping of Edward Bremer in St. Paul.

The real bomb as far as Toledo was concerned came when it was learned that Campbell and Sheriff James O'Reilly had been friends and drinking companions for the past five months, and that the sheriff, a dog fancier, had either given him or sold him two Scotties. The sheriff managed to ride out the storm that followed, but his life was never the same.

Illegal gambling had its day along Woodville Road strip

By J. Patrick Eaken
Press Staff Writer
news@presspublications.com

This area east of the Maumee River is no stranger to casino gambling — legal and illegal.

Las Vegas-style gambling came to East Toledo in 2012 in the form of the 290,000 square foot, \$200 million Hollywood Casino Toledo on the banks of the Maumee River, which opened just after the Memorial Day holiday last year.

Of course, that casino is legal with 33 percent of gross revenue going to taxes. Illegal gambling clubs here date back to Prohibition days and its unlikely any of the profits went toward taxes.

Author Terry Shaffer describes its history in his 146-page book, *Illegal Gambling Clubs of Toledo: The Chips, The Dice, The Places and Faces*.

In his research, Shaffer discovered Bon Aire Supper Club, Social Club 51, the El Rancho Ballroom, the Terminal Social Club, and Ted Stone's Café — all located along the Woodville Road strip from East Toledo to as far east as present-day Millbury.

His book goes city-wide in describing the culture surrounding Toledo's infamous mobsters and lists 72 different illegal gambling operations dating back to the turn of the century.

Included are detailed descriptions of the clubs from the dates of operation, the location, the owners and operators to the police raids that attempted to shut them down.

"A lot of this research, the pictures, mug shots that are in there, came from the Toledo Police Museum. They had discovered the long lost mob files. They had three cases of files from the Licavolis (headed by mobster Thomas "Yonnie" Licavoli) to everything else and they had been missing for years.

"They'd been subpoenaed a few times and no one knew where they were. They had been moved one time, and then another and they lost track of where they were," Shaffer continued.

"I just happened to stumble upon them when I went there to find out what I can for this book, and the director said, 'Well Terry, I've got the missing files.' I guess when they were putting the museum together they started digging into old places and gathering stuff together and the old files showed up, so I was the first researcher to have access to these."

Shaffer, a Toledo resident since 1966, is a graduate of the University of Toledo and a local business owner. He has spent the past 15 years researching and collecting vintage casino gambling chips and has become a popular luncheon speaker for civic organizations.

Shaffer explains that the opening of



Author Terry Shaffer with a Toledo police mug shot of infamous Toledo mobster Thomas "Yonnie" Licavoli. (Photo scan courtesy of Terry Shaffer and Happy Chipper Publishing)

the Hollywood Toledo Casino motivated him to get his book finished.

"It forced my personal deadline," Shaffer said. "I've been researching it out of a personal interest for a long time. It came out of a casino chip interest, and then I found a few illegal chips that belonged to a Toledo club and that really brought my interest forward and I started really collecting them."

"Because of my chip interest, I started researching the history and who the people were that were involved. From my own collection I wanted to find out the bottom line — who really ran these, when were they operating."

Woodville Road strip

In his research, Shaffer discovered **The Bon Aire Supper Club**, 2188 Woodville Road, which was owned by Joseph Urbaytis and Edward "Big Edge" Wojnarowski, alias Wagner, opening in 1943. We know the location today as the Woodville Army/Navy Surplus Store, but the Bon Aire building is gone.

Jimmy Dugan took over in 1946 and changed its name to **Terminal Social Club (aka Dugan's)**. The craps table attendant at

first was Stanley "Jerry" Marinski and then Dugan in 1946.

Games at the Bon Aire included craps and poker, but it all came to an end after a raid and murder in November, 1951.

Urbaytis (1900-46), best known as leader of the gang that pulled off the great million dollar Toledo Post Office robbery of 1921 at the age of 21, was murdered on November 5, 1946 by ex-con Frank Burns. The gun used by Burns was formerly owned by Detective Captain George Timiney and had been reported stolen in June 1946, five months before the Urbaytis shooting.

In the 1921 post office robbery, Urbaytis and 12 others were convicted of Toledo's largest and most historic heist, writes Shaffer. Urbaytis was sentenced to 60 years,

but escaped twice.

After his second escape, he was sent to Alcatraz. His sentence was reduced to 25 years after a successful appeal addressing the judge's excessive 60-year sentence. After his release in 1943, he opened the non-licensed Bon Aire club on Woodville Road just outside Toledo.

Social Club 51 was located at 221

Mary Avenue in the Northwood area, just off Woodville Road and was owned by Joseph Yappallo (alias Joe Yap) and William Kelly, and also involved in operations were Joseph Lerous and Herbert Tarsha.

It opened in 1964 with blackjack and poker tables, opening at 2:30 a.m. and closing between 7 and 8 a.m. Big money nights were Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, Shaffer writes.

Club 51 closed after a raid on January 23, 1965. According to Shaffer's book, the police chief knew about the club since October, 1964, but held off conducting the raid until he had enough evidence.

"There were approximately 60 gamblers playing poker and blackjack present at the time of the raid," Shaffer writes. "The entrance door was equipped with two-way glass for use by the door tender. On the night of the raid, the door tender was Joe Yap."

In Wood County

The El Rancho, 1460 Woodville Road, was located three miles east of the city limits near Millbury. The original gambling building was destroyed by fire.

After its gambling days, the location later became the Sun Oil Recreation Center and was outfitted with baseball diamonds, tennis courts, a swimming pool and camping and picnic areas.

Its short life as gambling club began on November 9, 1944 by owners Ed Warnke, R.E. Rhinehart and members of the Academy Club. It closed just four days later after being raided.

"They were pretty sharp out there. The sheriff's department didn't let them go too long," Shaffer said.

Games included craps, blackjack, and horse racing. The gambling house was to never close, including Sundays, and had free 10 minute taxi shuttle service every few minutes from two cigar stores on 210 and 625 St. Clair Street in downtown Toledo.

The tip-off to the Wood County Sheriff's Department came from a competing club called the Forest Park Club just three miles down the street.

"According to officials, the call for action came from rivals posing as newspaper men who complained about the El Rancho operating a gambling establishment," Shaffer wrote.

Another east side club mentioned in Shaffer's book is **Ted Stone's Café**, 2172 Woodville Road, owned by Ted Stone and operated by Benny Aronoff. Aronoff had moved his Buckeye Club operations out to the café for a short time in 1936 while the heat was on in downtown Toledo.

(Illegal Gambling Clubs of Toledo: The Chips, The Dice, The Places and Faces is published by Happy Chipper Publishing, Toledo, and can be purchased at the Toledo Police Museum, HappyChipper.com, and Amazon.com for \$22.95.)

“They were sharp out there. The sheriff's department didn't let them go too long.”

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For your copy of John Szozda's book, send \$15 to The Press, Box 169-J Millbury, OH 43447 or call 419-836-2221.

The PRESS
Metro Suburban Maumee Bay

New museum captures Toledo's criminal history

BY TAYLOR DUNGJEN
BLADE STAFF WRITER



The loading docks at the back of the post office where the robbery took place. The building at 1220 Jefferson now houses the Toledo Public Schools' Jefferson Center.

There's a simple message written in script on the outside of an aging, crumbling folder that holds dozens of fragile and yellowed documents — newspaper clippings, fingerprints, mugshots, and letters from police departments across the country.

“Shot and killed at Bon Air Supper Club, Woodville Rd., Toledo, Ohio. R.I.P.”

Joseph Urbaytis' felony file is impressive, the largest of more than a dozen that lined a shelf on the third floor of the Safety Building.

Some of the Urbaytis' criminal file and a video about a mail truck robbery he and his gang committed will soon be on display at the Toledo Police Museum, ready for its grand opening on Thursday. The Toledo Police Museum is in the former Nature Center at Ottawa Park, 2201 Kenwood Blvd. The museum will be open to the public for tours shortly after the grand opening, which is an invitation-only event.

If Urbaytis isn't Toledo's most notorious bad guy, he's certainly up there.

The then 21-year-old Urbaytis, with some of his closest pals, robbed a mail truck at the Central Post Office on Jefferson Street on Feb. 17, 1921. The gang got away with about \$1.6 million — worth more than \$17.8 million in 2010 — in nine sacks of mail. It's the largest robbery in the city's history.

The gang plotted the robbery at an Adams Street tavern after reading about a post office robbery in Illinois.

Before police and post office investigators started rounding up the involved crooks, money was stashed — Wanda Urbaytis, a sister, got away on a train to Chicago and was “believed to have carried considerable loot with her.” Police later found money hidden in the walls of a vacant home in North Toledo. Wanda was arrested on March 24, 1921.

A former Toledo priest, the Rev. Anthony Gorek, was given and concealed some of the Liberty bonds, telling authorities “he succumbed to a mighty temptation to thwart the government and use the bonds to buy food for his starving parishioners,” according to a May 13, 1921, Blade article. Father Gorek, who was the priest at St. Hedwig's Church prior to 1921, was assigned to a church in New Chicago, Ind., at the time of the robbery.

Father Gorek told police he cashed \$1,140 in coupons from the stolen bonds, which led officials to the father's parish home.

Money was found in Chicago, Detroit, Pittsburgh, and Toledo.

Throughout the course of the investigation and trial, which spanned several years, more than 30 people were arrested — tough guys with nicknames like “Split Lip,” “Two Gun,” and “Rat Face” — connected, in some way, to the crime

But Urbaytis was the mastermind.

Urbaytis grew up in Toledo's Polish neighborhood, in a home in the 2900 block of Lagrange Street that no longer exists.

In his police file he is described as a man with good teeth and dark chestnut-colored hair. He was just a few inches shy of 6 feet, weighing only 154 pounds.

He was no small-time crook — he started early with his first arrest on Sept. 4, 1917, for throwing pepper in a man's eyes and robbing him of \$150.

He was an impressive criminal. Urbaytis, Charles “Split Lip” Schultz, and George Lewis, all involved in the robbery, escaped from the Lucas County jail and remained at large for years. It wasn't until 1924 when Urbaytis was shot twice by a Columbus police officer and arrested again.

Toledo's bad man was shipped off to federal prison in Atlanta in 1928 where he would have served a 60-year sentence if he hadn't escaped again. Urbaytis was then sent to Alcatraz Island on Nov. 12, 1934. In 1943, Urbaytis was freed from the prison and headed back to Toledo.

6/29/13

Police & Fire - Toledo Blade

The ex-con opened a night club, Bon Air Supper Club, in the 2100 block of Woodville Road, but at 5:10 a.m. on Nov. 5, 1946, Urbaytis was shot and killed by Frank Burns, a 69-year-old ex-con. Burns reportedly confessed to the slaying.

Contact Taylor Dungjen at: tdungjen@theblade.com or 419-724-6054.

SEE MORE

[Toledo Police Museum receives finishing touches](#)

Unsettling Events: Prison Escapes

[Return to *Unsettling Events* index](#)

ROY GARDNER.

Hollis B. Fultz, "Roy Gardner, professor of escape," Famous Northwest Manhunts and Murder Mysteries. Elma, Washington: Fulco Publications, 1955 p. 217-229.

On the afternoon of April 16, 1920, the driver of a mail truck in the city of San Diego, California, found himself suddenly gazing into the muzzle of an automatic pistol, held in the hands of a smiling, curly-headed young man, who somehow seemed familiar through his mask. In a few minutes seventy-eight thousand dollars in cash and negotiable securities had been transferred to an old car standing nearby, and the robber sped away.

It was a smooth job, with little commotion. And yet, within three days the bandit was under arrest and nearly all the loot had been recovered. The robber had been recognized by the truck driver as a railroader with whom he had once worked.

The name of Roy Gardner, was rather a new one to the police, but before many months had passed it was almost as familiar as that of Harry Tracy or Jesse James.

Nevertheless it was the young man's second offense, and the judge gave him no mercy. He was sentenced to twentyfive years in McNeil's Island Federal Penitentiary, in Puget Sound, near Tacoma, Washington.

"I'll never serve it," Gardner muttered as sentence was pronounced and he was being led away.

"Nobody ever beat McNeils yet," responded the guard.

"No?" queried Gardner. "Then maybe I better not go there.

Despite his boast, by June 5, the mailbandit, in custody of deputy U. S. marshals, was on his way. Being docile and a pleasant conversationalist, the guards were soon disarmed of any suspicion that he intended to try an escape.

Just before the train rolled into East Portland, Oregon, Gardner and two Chinese dope peddlers, were being returned from the diner to their compartment. The five men, including guards, had just gotten inside the drawing room when the prisoner leaned forward and

grabbed a gun from the holster of an officer. ,

"Stick 'em- up," Gardner ordered. "Get their keys Ah Wing and handcuff them to their berths."

A few minutes later as the train slowed down for the stop at the station, Gardner and the Chinamen dropped off. Now he became a much sought fugitive; he was real newspaper copy; a celebrity.

He made good on his immediate getaway. But early in May, 1921, the railway detectives and the postal inspectors got a rumor that Gardner had contacted his family in Napa, northern California.

The officers tapped his telephone and heard him talk with his wife, who told him there was no hope for clemency, even if he surrendered. Gardner dearly, and that is the truth, loved his wife and family. She made a date to meet him in a canyon north of town.

The officers threw a cordon around the gulch, but the mail-bandit had become suspicious, and had phoned his wife after the tap was off. He met her elsewhere.

Gardner called his sentence a "bum rap"; he was particularly bitter about the length of his sentence. Now he conceived a plan whereby he thought he might make a deal for clemency. He telephoned the postal authorities and told them he would soon give them something to really want him for. He also wrote this same threat to a San Francisco newspaper; they thought he was kidding. What Gardner really meant to do was make himself such a pest in robbing the mails, that the authorities would be glad to make a deal with him for clemency.

On the evening of May 19, 1921, Gardner boarded the mail car of a Southern Pacific train when it stopped at Newcastle, California. He tied up the clerk, Ralph Becker, and alighted from the car at Roseville, California, with one hundred and eighty-seven thousand dollars in cash and securities, in two hand bags.

Two days later Gardner was taken into custody while playing a game of cards in a Roseville, California pool-hall. He made no attempt to resist arrest; as a matter of fact he acted as though he rather expected it. He told the postal inspectors he had robbed the mail in the hope that he would now have something with which to dicker for his freedom.

"If you ever expect to see that money again you'll have to help me get that excessive sentence reduced," he said, and offered, for certain guarantees of assistance, to lead the officers to the

cache. However, he must have decided he did not have a clemency offer from sufficiently high authority. After leading the officers on a circuitous drive over the surrounding hills, he announced, "I guess I have forgotten where I buried that money."

Roy Gardner again pled guilty to robbing the U. S. 'Mails and was given an additional twenty-five years at McNeill's Island. On June 10, Deputy Marshals Mulhall and Rinckell set out from San Francisco with their prisoner.

"You fellows will never get me to McNeil's," Gardner contemptuously remarked. "I don't like that place and the sentence is too long. I'll be leaving you somewhere along the line between here and Tacoma."

The marshals' turn to smile now. One escape was enough; they wouldn't be caught napping again.

On the evening of June 12, the train having just crossed the Columbia River from Portland, Oregon, the scene of his previous escape, the guards were returning Gardner and an old-time convict, Norris H. Pyron, from the dining car to the sleeping compartment.

During the meal Gardner had been in a jovial mood. Next to him in the diner sat a pretty young lady he had been informed was a movie actress on her way to make some "shots" in the Northwest forests.

"Keep your eyes open," said Gardner, without any attempt to keep the guards from hearing, "and you may get some real color for your next picture-if you want something sensational. I'm leaving the train shortly. These dicks don't believe me, but you watch; you won't be disappointed."

The guards got a great kick out of the manner in which Gardner was kidding the showgirl.

"Well, Roy" asked Mulhall, when they reached the compartment, "when does it come off?"

"It won't be long now," replied Gardner. "Are you in a hurry?"

You'll have to wait until I get back from the lavatory."

"Going out the window?" asked the marshal. "Better not try it; I know that old trick."

Mulhall and Gardner had entered the compartment somewhat ahead of

Rincker and Pyron; the old convict had purposely made an excuse which detained the second guard. Thus Mulhall and Gardner were alone as they stepped into the lavatory. The convict bent over the wash basin; he was handcuffed but in such a position as he stood he could reach a weapon hidden beneath his clothing without attracting the marshal's attention. As he straightened up Gardner stuck a gun against Mulhall's ribs.

"Put 'em up, Mulhall!" he commanded. "This is it!"

"Quit your kidding, Gardner," answered the officer, without raising his arms. "This isn't going to get you anywhere."

"Put 'em," Gardner repeated forcefully. "I mean it; I'm not fooling. I was just waiting until we got across the Columbia River."

Gardner, although handcuffed, disarmed the marshal and herded him into the compartment and waited for Rinckell; as he stepped through the door Gardner covered him. Pyron took the deputies' keys and both convicts were soon free of their shackles; these were placed on Mulhall and Rinckell.

The train had reached the yards in Vancouver, Washington. Pyron was getting nervous. Gardner bade him go through the window first. Then following him over the ledge, he dropped to the ground. There he paused to remove the cartridges from a pistol which he threw into the compartment.

"There's a souvenir for you, Mulhall," called the bandit, "and give my regards to the movie star."

Roy Gardner had done it again! The newspaper's had his name across the top of the page in big letters that day. The marshals had made the fatal error of taking the word of local officers in San Francisco that the bandit had been carefully searched. It looked as though McNeil's, the impregnable, was never to hold the slippery mail robber.

Pyron was captured two days after the escape, at Kelso, fifty miles north of Vancouver. He claimed he had helped Gardner make the break because Gardner had told him he had a gun, and would shoot him if he would not assist.

Within the next few days rumors came in from many points that Gardner had been sighted, but it remained for a

city patrolman Louis Sonny, to gather the authentic information of the escaped

man's whereabouts. This came to the officer through the keen-eyed vigilance of Mrs. Myron Howell, proprietress of the Oxford Hotel in the railroad town of Centralia, Washington, a hundred miles north of Portland, Oregon.

Mrs. Howell mued Patrolman Sonny's attention to a roomer who remained in quarters most of the day, and who had his head and arms swathed in bandages. The man claimed he had been severely burned, but when Mrs. Howell purposely bumped against the severely injured arm and noted there was no cry of pain, she became more than ever suspicious. The roomer was about the mm height and build of Gardner, about whom she had been reading much in the newspapers.

Sonny sent for Marshal Mulhall; together the two men went to the hotel. A man stood in the hallway as they came up the stairs; he had plenty of time to prepare a defense as the marshal approached him, if he cared to do so. Instead he walked into his room and sat down on the edge of the bed. Mulhall followed him and accused him of being Gardner. The swathed man tried to convince Mulhall that he was mistaken, but it was of no use. Mulhall knew his man, so again the mail robber was in custody.

This time there was no escape. Heavily ironed, wearing an Oregon-boot, Roy Gardner reached Tacoma, Washington, on June 17, 1921, and just as the sun was setting over Puget Sound he stepped onto the Federal launch which was to convey him to McNeill's, that island prison surrounded by an expanse of icy water and swift tidal currents which made escape seemingly impossible. Up to this date McNeill's Island had never been beaten by a prisoner.

"I'll never serve it," Gardner grimly reiterated to Mulhall, as he was turning him over to Warden Maloney's care. "I have never so much as fired at a man in my life, and if the government had played square with me I would not be here now."

A few days later Gardner's wife arrived in the Northwest and began a campaign to get sympathy for the lessening of her husband's time. He was an enigma, she said, even to her, and really needed hospitalization. People were amazed when they learned the curious pattern of his life.

Roy Gardner, was born the son of a prosperous Detroit merchant-capitalist. He had a college education and his youth had been spent in training for a career as a college professor.

Drifting away from home he went to Mexico, and was sentenced to death as a revolutionist. He escaped from prison and made his way to the west coast.

Under the name "Young Fitzsimmons" he fought in the prize ring in

Oregon, Washington, Nevada and California. As "Ben Lomond" he was one of the sparring partners of James J. Jeffries while the ex-champion prepared for his battle with Jack Johnson, at Reno, Nevada, in July of 1910.

Not long after this chapter in his life had closed, he was convicted of robbing a jewelry store in California, and under the name Sam Cox, sentenced to five years in San Quentin. Toward the end of the first year of his incarceration a riot occurred, and while defending a prison guard, he was severely stabbed. When he recovered he was released as a reward for his services in the disturbance.

Now he married and was doing fairly well when he got a letter from a sister who was badly in need of assistance. He had saved some money, according to his wife, and he sent her two hundred dollars by registered mail, but when she got the letter the money was gone. Gardner tried to recover from the government, but, because he was an ex-convict, he said, he received scant sympathy; the authorities didn't believe his story.

It was while angered over the rejection of his claim, according to his wife, that he stole the mailpouch in San Diego. Following his escape at East Portland, Oregon, he returned to the East, and under the name C. E. Patterson

He took up the vocation for which he had been trained, becoming a professor in a college at Davenport, Iowa. When a train at Centerville, in that state was robbed of \$54,000, whether guilty or not, Professor Patterson disappeared.

He never admitted his guilt in this robbery, but authorities say he robbed the train, and escaped from the scene in an airplane.

A month later Roy Gardner was back in California. Then came the Newcastle robbery, the capture in Roseville, and his escape at Vancouver, the recapture at Centralia, and his final incarceration at McNeils.

"Will McNeil's hold Gardner?" was a question asked by many after he began his sentence. "No," said civilians, "Yes," said officers. The answer was not long in coming.

On the afternoon of Labor Day, September 5, 1921, Gardner sat in the back row of the bleachers at the prison athletic field watching a baseball game between two prison teams. On one side sat Lawardus Bogart, and on the other Everett Impyn, soldiers from nearby Fort Lewis, who had been sentenced for a criminal assault on an army nurse.

It was three-thirty o'clock. The score was six to four. Two men were on bases and two were out. A heavy hitter was at the bat; if he hit it meant at least a tie and possibly a one-run lead for the team behind. But it meant far more than that to Roy Gardner and the two desperate lifers who sat beside him-it could mean freedom.

"Strike one," called the umpire, and the crowd yelled. Gardner, having dropped to the ground behind his comrades, snipped away with a pair of stolen pliers at the strands of the barbed-wire fence.

"Strike two," was called, and again the convicts cheered. This time Gardner completed his snipping.

The pitcher delivered the ball, and the batter connected; far out into center field the sphere soared-everyone was screaming madly. The guards in the towers had their eyes on the ball and the runners.

"Now," said Gardner and the three men crawled through the hole in the fence; they were on the other side before a guard in a tower spotted them.

Gardner's plan of escape was as simple as it was daring; if he could make a nearby pasture lot he could mingle with the livestock and use them for shelter as he ran for the timber, five hundred yards away. Before any of the trio could reach the prison herd bullets were kicking up the dirt about their heels.

Following the fence until they reached the southwestern corner of the field, the trio made a dash across the

pasture lot toward the timber. Before they had gone twenty steps Impyn fell. Gardner returned and knelt beside the fallen lad. He was dead.

Gardner arose, and in a veritable rain of lead, raced for the cows. Once among them he placed a hand on the back of a gentle bony, and urged her toward the timber.

He had almost reached his coveted goal when a bullet from a Springfield tore through his left leg and he went down. At almost the same time he saw Bogart fall, waving weakly for him to go on.

Gardner, with blood streaming down his pants leg, found he could stand. One last dash and he was in the woods;

where he fell on his face as the fire of the guards raked the timber above him. Darkness fell and still no one had found his

hiding place.

Within ten minutes after the break prison launches carrying guards scoured the beaches and confiscated every boat on the shoreline; there seemed no hope for escape by water. When daybreak came, Gardner was still at liberty.

Warden Maloney believed Gardner was still on the island, but as September 6-7 passed, and not a single trace of the escapee had been found, he began to doubt his conclusions.

McNeil's Island is not large four miles long and two miles wide. Pitts Passage on the west was the narrowest body of water, but there the tide flowed like a millrace, and was icy cold. Drayton Pass on the south was wide and commanded by a view from the prison towers, and if the bandit should negotiate that point he would still be on Anderson Island, some distance from the mainland.

North and east, Fox Island was two and one-half miles from McNeil's, but about halfway across was a solitary rock known as Mosquito; here a man might pause. It seemed improbable a wounded convict would choose that long route. And, in any event all these passages were patrolled and guarded every minute of the day and night.

Two more frantic days of search slipped by. On the third night, a Guard Charles McLean fired six shots at a hen-house robber at the ranch of Bert Hammer. The next day a blood soaked piece of prison cloth was found.

"He's still on the Island," Warden Maloney declared. "He couldn't have made it to the mainland." Yet it seemed impossible for one man on such a small island to have so long eluded the pursuing forces. The theory that he had escaped was strengthened when on September 14 a Seattle newspaper received a letter, which read:

"I am in Seattle today; Yakimama tomorrow, then East. Come and get me you sleepy dicks. I paid for my getaway. Charge it to Maloney.-Roy Gardner.

There was evidence to support the authenticity of this letter. A week before Gardner's escape Federal officers had been called in to investigate the cashing of certain bonds stolen in the Newcastle robbery which were showing up in Olympia. These bonds, they learned were being disposed of through a certain Olympia, Washington, bank, (now defunct).

Trailing the source of the bonds, a few of them were found buried beneath the "Log Cabin," a bootlegging joint, five miles north of Olympia. The cabin was but a short ways from the shores of the

Sound, and less than fifteen miles from the Federal penitentiary on McNeil's.

These bonds were supposed to have been brought to the "Log Cabin" by a confederate of Gardner's who had recently arrived from California. Despite a different story of his escape, which Gardner later told, officers believe the bonds were given in return for a midnight boat ride and automobile ride which the mail bandit took about the time of his escape.

Two more weeks passed and the authorities had to admit the Gardner had probably gotten off the Island.

Remembering Gardner's preference for small cities, police of towns in Washington, were very vigilant.

Particularly so was Chief of Police George Shumway, of Raymond, a saw-mill port, one hundred and fifty miles south of Tacoma.

Living in Raymond was a man known to have worked with Gardner when he was a railroader; this information was relayed to Chief Shumway, but, although he immediately began to check, by the time he had definite information of where Gardner was hid out in Raymond, the bandit had disappeared.

In the room where Gardner had been secreted by his friend, Chief Shumway found a pad of paper on which a letter had been written. Imprints of the words remained on the top sheet of the pad; a pencil had been used with considerable pressure. This letter was addressed to the San Francisco Examiner, and a copy of it appeared on the next day.

The letter, from Gardner, addressed to President Harding, appealed for clemency, if he would give himself up and return the money he had stolen from the mails.

Gardner claimed he had hidden in the brush until night on the first day of his escape, and had then sneaked into the prison barn. The bullet had drilled cleanly through the bone of his left leg, but had not broken it. The wound was painful, but he could walk. He slept in the barn loft and milked the cows for sustenance.

On the night of Thursday, September 8, he sneaked out of the barn, and made his way half across the island by crawling more than walking. The next day he lay motionless in one spot; that night he reached the northeastern shore of McNeill's opposite Fox Island.

"I swam from McNeill's to Fox Island that night, drifting part of the time with the tide. It took me a long while to make that two

and one-half miles, but the cold water felt good on my wounded leg, and I held out," Gardner said in the letter. It appeared that by performing the seemingly impossible Gardner had left the Island at the most unlikely and least guarded point.

The next night Gardner swam from Fox Island to the mainland. Then he made his way to Raymond, just how, none will ever know. He left that city in a stolen automobile, and intimated he was on his way to Mexico.

Nothing more was heard from Gardner until November 3, 1921, when a lone bandit held up the Southern Pacific train at Maricopa, Arizona. Was it Gardner? The mail clerk thought so, judging from appearances and action.

No loot was taken in this attempt.

The night of November 15 rolled around. Mail Clerk Herman F. Inderlied stepped off the train at Phoenix, Arizona, to post a letter. As he crawled back into his **car** he faced a man with a gun, and was told to back against the wall. The bandit ordered Inderlied to raise his hands, but the clerk dived head-first. In the struggle which ensued he got a good hold on the bandit's wrist, and although the gun was discharged no one was hit.

Inderlied was a powerful man; he disarmed the robber and held him for the police. He had captured Roy Gardner, whose gun had been loaded with wooden bullets.

This time there was no escape. Another twenty-five years was added to Gardner's sentence and he was taken to Leavenworth (Kansas) Federal Penitentiary. Later he was removed to Atlanta Federal Prison, persisting that pressure at the base of his brain was driving him mad.

No one seemed to believe his statement and the prison surgeons did not operate. Gardner once again decided to take matters into his own hands. With Joe Urbaytis, serving life for mail robbery, each man carrying a .25 caliber automatic pistol, they tried to place a wooden ladder against the prison wall, using unarmed Captain John Parker for a shield.

The ladder was too short, and the men decided to go through the gates. They demanded the keys of the guard who pulled them from his pocket and threw them on the opposite side of the iron bars.

Urbaytis fired, or tried to fire, but the pin clicked on a defective cartridge and the guard's life was spared. Captain Parker continued to talk to Gardner, urging him to give up the attempted escape. Finally, seeing the uselessness of the thing,

Gardner tossed the gun to the pleading captain.

"You win," said the smiling bandit, as he surrendered.

Roy Gardner spent twenty months in solitary confinement for that frustrated attempt to escape. He came out of the "hole" a living skeleton, and almost a maniac, still babbling about a pain in the back of his head.

"Professor" Gardner was for sometime confined in the government's St. Elizabeth Hospital for the Insane, at Washington, D. C. and was then removed to Alcatraz to complete his sentence.

Thus ended a criminal career which has no counterpart in American bandit history. And somewhere, probably, approximately \$250,000 of his loot still lies hidden. Certainly he disposed of only **a** small part of it himself, for he had neither the time nor the opportunity to do **so**, and he had no partners to share it with; none, except in his sensational escapes, where **he** had to have help.

He made many futile appeals for clemency, but was not released until 1939. He ended his own life in a **small** hotel room in San Francisco, executing himself with cyanide gas, dropping the pellets into the wash basin in a tightly closed bathroom. He left **a** letter in which he explained his act:

"All men who have to serve more than five years in prison are doomed, but they don't realize it There **is** a barrier between the ex-convict and society that cannot be leveled.

"Please let me down as light as possible, boys. I have played ball with you all the way, and now you should pitch me a slow one and let me hit it.

"I am checking out simply because I am old and tired, and don't care to continue the struggle.

"I hold no malice toward any human being, and I hope those whom I have wronged will forgive me for it."

"Good-bye."

Hollis B. Fultz, "Roy Gardner, professor of escape," Famous Northwest Manhunts and Murder Mysteries. Elma, Washington: Fulco Publications, 1955 p. 217-229.

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"McNeil Island escapees evade police search," The Seattle Times. May 20, 1990 p B-2.

Two inmates who piloted a prison boat to escape from McNeil Island Corrections Center Friday remained at large yesterday, a corrections-department spokesman said.

John Carter, 31, and Wallace Krahn, 35, were discovered missing

Friday, said prison spokesman Veltry Johnson. Corrections Department officials contacted police agencies to assist with a search after Tacoma police reported at 7 p.m. that a prison boat had been found near the eastern side of the Tacoma Narrows Bridge.

Carter was convicted of forgery in Lewis County and of auto theft in King County. Krahn was convicted of assault in Clark County.

Both should be considered dangerous because they are fleeing,

Johnson said.

"McNeil Island escapees evade police search," The Seattle Times. May 20, 1990 p. B-2.

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"McNeil Island Officials hunt missing inmates," The Seattle Times. May 19, 1990 p. A-8.

Two McNeil Island Prison inmates escaped last night and were still at large early this morning, police said.

John Allen Carter, 31, serving time for forgery, and Wallace Krohn, imprisoned for second-degree assault, escaped in a stolen prison boat, Tacoma police Sgt. Bill Parkhurst said.

Parkhurst said the men were last seen about 7:30 p.m. on the island. The boat, a prison personnel transport craft, was found adrift about 7:50 p.m. under the Tacoma Narrows Bridge.

Police dogs were used in an attempt to find the men, but no scent was found, Parkhurst said.

"McNeil Island Officials hunt missing inmates," The Seattle Times. May 19, 1990 p. A-8.

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"McNeil Island prison escapee called dangerous," The Seattle Times. October 16, 1992. p. C-1.

TACOMA - A convicted rapist apparently slipped into a semi-trailer loaded with furniture, was carried on a barge bound from McNeil Island Corrections Center to the mainland, then squeezed through a 14-inch hole in the floorboard.

After crawling from the truck when it stopped south of Tacoma, Timothy Webb apparently made his way onto the campus of Steilacoom High School, where he found an unlocked school van with the keys in the ignition and a purse with cash inside, said prison officials who were still piecing together the Wednesday escape.

Webb, 34, was serving a 54-year sentence for rape and other crimes and is considered extremely dangerous, the state Department of Corrections said.

"He's not a nice guy based on his record. He's exactly the kind of guy we don't want escaping," said Corrections Secretary Chase Riveland.

The escape marked the fourth time Webb has broken free of custody in Washington state:

-- In 1977 Webb escaped from the Spokane County Jail, where he was being held in connection with a car theft. He was recaptured and sentenced to 2 to 10 years in prison for auto theft and jail break.

-- He was convicted in Benton County in 1982 of theft, possession of stolen property and attempting to elude police. He was sentenced to 3 3/4 to 10 years.

While serving that term, he escaped on Jan. 3, 1987, from the Tacoma pre-release center near Western State Hospital. He was recaptured just 24 hours later, but not before he went on a violent crime spree that led to charges including the rape of a 24-year-old Kirkland woman, attempted kidnapping, possession of stolen property and burglary.

-- While awaiting trial for those crimes, Webb escaped from the King County Jail. He was recaptured in Pierce County, convicted and sent to McNeil Island in November 1987 to serve a 54-year sentence.

He was held in medium security at the island west of Tacoma, prison officials said.

Webb was discovered missing from the prison at a 4 p.m.

Wednesday head count. He is believed to have left the island several hours earlier, on the 11:30 barge, said McNeil Superintendent Eldon

Vail.

The boat arrived at the mainland shortly after noon, and the truck drove to a Corrections warehouse south of Tacoma where furniture manufactured by convicts is held for shipment. The school district van was stolen at about the same time.

A man matching Webb's description was seen driving the van at about 12:45 p.m. Wednesday. Pierce County sheriff's deputies found the vehicle abandoned at about 5 p.m. in the Tacoma suburb of Lakewood.

Authorities are urging citizens to call police immediately if they spot Webb. He is about 5 feet 11, 141 pounds. He also has a two-inch scar on the left side of his face and a tattoo on his back that reads "Mouse."

Webb's escape was the third at McNeil Island since June. A violent offender was at large for several weeks after escaping in June, and a convicted drug dealer was plucked by corrections officers from Puget Sound within five hours of his escape July 15.

Johnson said security procedures were changed at the prison after the first two escapes, but he declined to give specifics.

"McNeil Island prison escapee called dangerous," The Seattle Times. October 16, 1992 p. C-1.

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"McNeil Island escapee has violent record," The Seattle Times. October 15, 1992 p. B-2.

Authorities are on the lookout for an inmate with a record of violence who escaped yesterday afternoon from McNeil Island Penitentiary.

The inmate was identified as Timothy Webb, 34, who was not scheduled to be released until 2026, according to Nedra Reed, a penitentiary administrator.

Webb was sent to prison in 1982 after convictions for rape, burglary, assault and attempted kidnapping in Benton County, Reed said. He had been at McNeil since 1987. He may have escaped by hiding in a freight van, Reed said.

Webb was discovered missing at 4 p.m. yesterday, He has brown hair and brown eyes and was wearing a khaki shirt and pants. Anyone with information should call 911.

"McNeil Island escapee has violent record," The Seattle Times. October 15, 1992, p. B-2.

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Tacoma Public Library

DEAD GUNMAN WAS SOUGHT IN HOLDUP

Identified as John Stephens,
Wanted in \$1,000,000
Robbery.

(Plain Dealer Special)

CANTON, O., May 11.—With the identification here today of the unknown dead gunman as John Hager Stephens of Glenwood, W. Va., one of the last puzzles confronting police in connection with the gun battle between a posse and gangsters last Thursday has been solved.

Police also have learned that Norman Warden, alias John Hager Stephens, and "Oklahoma Slim," who is now in the Stark county workhouse and the bandit identified as being Stephens traveled together for some time, and both have used the aliases of Stephens and "Oklahoma Slim."

Stephens was identified by his mother, Mrs. Mary Stephens, a brother, William Stephens, and two sisters, all of Glenwood, W. Va.

Police now say it has been established that there were three men traveling under the alias of "Oklahoma Slim."

Tommy Saxon, one of the wounded gangsters at Aultman hospital, admitted today that he was implicated in the robbery of the First National bank at Crafton, Pa., on Jan. 29, police say. He told them, police say, he stood at the door of the bank while the holdup was being staged.

With Saxon's confession all four who participated in the gun battle have been connected with the Crafton bank. A fifth man, Anthony Joyce of Pittsburg, was arrested this morning by authorities there on strength of statements by Kapler implicating Joyce.

Kapler, in a confession, admitted that he had shot and killed the cashier during the robbery, and that Saxon had been in it. Both of the dead bandits, Eddie Stephenson and Stephens, had previously been identified by Pittsburg authorities as members of the gang.

"We never knew what he was doing, but we always thought he was a good boy," said William Stephens after he had identified the body of the dead gunman as that of his brother.

"Until John was 20, he was just like any other boy.

"He then left home, but continued to return several times a year. The family never knew exactly what he was doing, but we never suspected that he had become a bandit."

"He was home the last time about six weeks ago. He never talked about his work and would stay only a few weeks and then leave."

Authorities say that Stephens was wanted in connection with the cracking of a safe in the postoffice at Nicolette, W. Va., and the million-dollar post-office robbery at Toledo last year as well as the Crafton bank robbery. He never had been arrested.

Authorities say that police departments throughout the east and the government authorities were searching for him, but were handicapped as they did not have his picture or Bertillon measurements. He had been traced to Canton several months ago, but government and city authorities were not able to locate him here.

A public testimonial meeting for Ralph Hoffee, local contractor, who was killed in the gun battle, will be held Saturday evening under the auspices of the Elks.

11 GUILTY IN TOLEDO POSTAL CONSPIRACY

Further Indictments to Defer Sentences Till August in \$1,000,000 Thefts.

JURY LETS TWO OTHERS GO

Several of Those Held on Many Counts May Get Twelve Years and Possible \$60,000 Fine.

Special to The New York Times.

TOLEDO, Ohio, June 25.—"Guilty" was the verdict returned against eleven defendants charged with conspiracy in the Toledo \$1,000,000 Post Office robbery when the jury in the Federal Court reported today.

Only two of the thirteen on trial escaped conviction. They are Charles Furrier, who was characterized by the jurors in their deliberation as a "poor boob, a meal ticket for his wife Helen, who ran the house," and John J. Epps, a Chicago broker.

Those convicted were Joseph Urbaytis, on six counts; Charles ("Splitlip") Schultz, on six counts; Mike Scolla, alias James Sansome, on six counts; George Rogers, alias Lewis, on six counts; Wanda Urbaytis, on four counts; Harry Thrush, on four counts; Pearl Sommers, on four counts; Walter Foote, on four counts; Edwin Zellish, on one count; Emma Marvin, on four counts, and Helen Furrier, on four counts.

As the maximum penalty for each count is two years and \$10,000 fine, Judge Killits, if he sees fit, can sentence Joe Urbaytis, Schultz, Rogers and Scolla to prison for twelve years and fine each \$60,000. Zellish would get two years and \$10,000 fine, and the rest eight years and \$40,000 fine, were the maximum imposed.

Judge Killits complimented the jury on what he termed "very fine work." He said the discretionary ability of the jurors was manifested in acquitting Charles Furrier. He said the Epps case was also peculiar.

"You are entitled to the compliments of all good citizens for the fine manner in which you have conducted your work," the Court said. "Pearl Sommers probably doesn't know why she has been convicted. You used good judgment in naming her."

The jurymen had said they hesitated in the Sommers case and then decided that some punishment "might put her on the straight and narrow path."

Judge Killits announced that the trial of the defendants on the robbery indictments will start on Aug. 2.

The prisoners who were convicted today will not be sentenced until after the August trials. All prisoners named in the conspiracy indictments are also accused in the robbery indictments.

The jury was charged by Judge Killits late Friday. The case of Epps was first considered, and, finding it a stumbling block, the jurors passed on to Charles Furrier.

Failing to agree at once on this defendant, the others were considered, and, with slight hesitation except as to the Sommers girl and Wanda Urbaytis, the defendants were found guilty.

When the trial started on June 6 there were eighteen defendants. But when the Government's testimony was all in the court concurred in a motion to dismiss Joe Culbert and Stella Kaefer.

Then Albert Murzyn of Whiting, Ind., and Stanley Barntikowski and John Paulek of Indiana Harbor, Ind., pleaded guilty and were sentenced by the court to thirty days each in Canton Workhouse. They were implicated through sale of bonds held by the Rev. Anthony Gorek, the New Chicago, Ind., priest, who is also under indictment.

It is possible that Gorek and James Feese, Harry Lowe and Clement (Whitey) Wasserman, also indicted but not yet placed on trial, will plead guilty. All testified for the Government.

The Court, in its instructions to the jury, denied the suggestion that there had been a deal with these defendants. He said that no deal could be made without the sanction of the Court, and that no deal had been sanctioned.

"But it would be natural for the Court to make a difference in final punishment where one pleads guilty and saves the expense of trial," the Court added. "Those who are convicted will receive adequate punishment."

Harry Fisher, former owner of the Metropolitan Cabaret, has pleaded guilty to disposing of \$280,000 worth of stolen bonds.

The robbery took place at 1:50 o'clock at the Toledo main Post Office on the morning of Feb. 17. Four days later Joe Urbaytis and Joe Culbert were arrested at Elkhart, Ind., on their way to Chicago.

Developments, however, did not come until the arrest of James Feese, whose confession involved the others now held. Feese's confession and the statements of Rogers and Scolla, made to Secret Service agents and Detroit detectives, practically made the Government's case complete.

Approximately \$846,000 worth of Liberty bonds and \$26,000 in cash were stolen by the bandits.

It was the attempt to dispose of the new money and the Liberty bonds, the serial numbers of which were in the hands of the Federal authorities, that led to the downfall of the defendants.

THREE MAIL BANDITS BREAK TOLEDO JAIL

Members of Gang Convicted of
\$1,000,000 Robbery Plot Slug
Guards and Escape.

FLEE IN LARGE GREEN AUTO

Believe Confederates Smuggled Arms
to Men in Cells, Then Waited
Outside Walls for Them.

TOLEDO, Ohio, Sept. 5.—Three men, convicted of conspiracy in the \$1,000,000 Post Office robbery here last Feb. 17, and awaiting trial for alleged robbery in the same case, escaped from the Lucas County Jail early this afternoon without firing a shot.

The men are Joe Urbaytis, George Lewis, alias George Rogers and Charles Schultz. All three are declared by Post Office authorities to have been actual participants in the robbery and were to have gone on trial early next month.

The escape was effected by overpowering two deputy sheriffs who were left in charge of a jail full of prisoners, including eight more convicted in the post office robbery, while Sheriff Jack Taylor was attending the county fair.

Sam Zimmerman and George Szmekko, the two deputies, were slugged by Urbaytis, who used a buckle and strap from a jail cot. Dr. William Shapiro, jail physician, escaped harm by locking himself in the cell.

The fugitives walked out of the jail unmolested after seizing four large revolvers from the Sheriff's desk. No trace of the convicts had been found late tonight, despite a thorough search made by practically every available police officer in the city.

All three of the convicts have long police records, according to the authorities. Lewis is said to have been identified during his period of incarceration by California authorities as an escaped lifer from San Quentin prison, where he was serving for murder. Schultz and Urbaytis have been connected by the police with a long list of holdups and robberies during the last three or four years. Urbaytis is a brother of Wanda Urbaytis, who was sought for nearly a month as the woman with the black bag who disappeared from a train at Elkhart, Ind. Joe Urbaytis was arrested on the same train. The girl was taken in Chicago several days later and was convicted with her brother on the conspiracy charge. None of the eleven convicts had been sentenced.

It was learned shortly after the escape that a large green automobile had circled the jail buildings several times before the escape took place and it is believed the men were taken away in it by confederates.

It is also reported that arms had been smuggled into the prison to the members of the post office robber gang. This is based on a declaration that the prisoners were seen to have two revolvers or pistols each as they climbed the jail yard fence, an iron stockade more than seven feet high.

The green auto which is alleged to have carried the men away is said to have contained six or seven passengers before the escaped prisoners boarded it.

The New York Times

Published: September 6, 1921

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NABBED

\$500.00 REWARD

Escaped Postoffice Robbers



Joseph Urbaytis, alias Joseph Urbaytis, alias Joseph Urbaytis, of age, 5 feet 10 1/2 inches tall, weight 154 pounds, dark chestnut hair, fair complexion, gray eyes.

Bertillon Measurements

Height	72.7	Head Length	18.5	Left Foot	26.5
Outs. A.	32.9	Head Width	16.0	L. M. Finger	11.4
Trunk	96.8	Right Ear	6.5	L. L. Finger	9.2
		Forearm	48.5		



Charles Schultz, alias "Saginaw," alias "Split Lip" (Toledo Police Dept. No. 8724), is 24 years of age, 5 feet 8 3/4 inches tall, weight 145 pounds, fair complexion, dark chestnut hair, blue eyes.

Bertillon Measurements

Height	72.7	Head Length	17.6	Left Foot	26.0
Outs. A.	29.5	Head Width	15.0	L. M. Finger	11.4
		Right Ear	6.4	L. L. Finger	9.2
		Forearm	47.0		

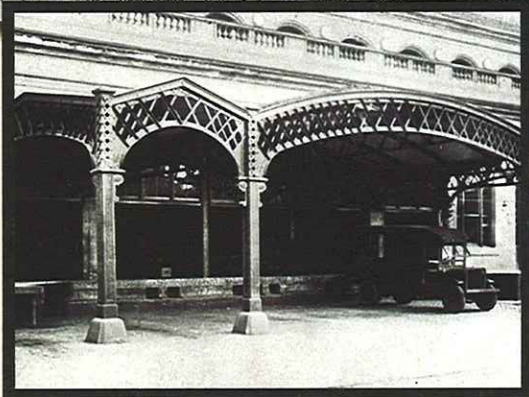


George Lewis, alias George Rogers, alias George Davis, is 32 years of age, weight 140 pounds, 5 feet 6 3/4 inches tall, has black hair, dark complexion, maroon eyes.

Bertillon Measurements

Length	18.9	Left Foot	25.8
Width	15.7	L. M. Finger	11.4
Ear	6.4	L. L. Finger	9.2
		Forearm	47.0

Museum captures Toledo's criminal history



The loading docks at the back of the post office where the robbery took place. The building at 1220 Jefferson now houses the Toledo Public Schools' Jefferson Center.

By **TAYLOR DUNGEN**
BLADE STAFF WRITER

There's a simple message written in script on the outside of an aging, crumbling folder that holds dozens of fragile and yellowed documents — newspaper clippings, fingerprints, mugshots, and letters from police departments across the country.

"Shot and killed at Bon Air Supper Club, Woodville Rd., Toledo, Ohio. R.I.P."

Joseph Urbaytis' felony file is impressive, the largest of more than a dozen that lined a shelf on the third floor of the Safety Building.

Some of the Urbaytis' criminal file and a video about a mail truck robbery he and his gang committed will soon be on display at the Toledo Police Museum, ready for its grand opening on Thursday. The Toledo Police Museum is in the former Nature Center at Ottawa Park, 2201 Kenwood Blvd. The museum will be open to the public for tours shortly after the grand opening, which is an invitation-only event.

If Urbaytis isn't Toledo's most notorious bad guy, he's certainly up there.

The then 21-year-old Urbaytis, with some of his closest pals, robbed a mail truck at the Central Post Office on Jefferson Street on Feb. 17, 1921. The gang got away with about \$1.6 million — worth more than \$17.8 million in 2010 — in nine sacks of mail. It's the largest robbery in the city's history.

The gang plotted the robbery at an Adams Street tavern after reading about a post office robbery in Illinois.

Before police and post office investigators started rounding up the involved crooks, money was stashed — Wanda Urbaytis, a sister, got away on a train to Chicago and was "believed to have carried considerable loot with her." Police later found money hidden in the walls of a vacant home in North Toledo. Wanda was arrested on March 24, 1921.

A former Toledo priest, the Rev. Anthony Gorek, was given and concealed some of the Liberty bonds, telling authorities "he succumbed to a mighty temptation to thwart the government and use the bonds to buy food for his starving parishioners,"

according to a May 13, 1921, Blade article. Father Gorek, who was the priest at St. Hedwig's Church prior to 1921, was assigned to a church in New Chicago, Ind., at the time of the robbery.

Father Gorek told police he cashed \$1,140 in coupons from the stolen bonds, which led officials to the father's parish home.

Money was found in Chicago, Detroit, Pittsburgh, and Toledo.

Throughout the course of the investigation and trial, which spanned several years, more than 30 people were arrested — tough guys with nicknames like "Split Lip," "Two Gun," and "Rat Face" — connected, in some way, to the crime.

But Urbaytis was the mastermind. Urbaytis grew up in Toledo's Polish neighborhood, in a home in the 2900 block of Lagrange Street that no longer exists.

In his police file he is described as a man with good teeth and dark chestnut-colored hair. He was just a few inches shy of 6 feet, weighing only 154 pounds.

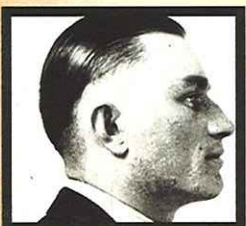
He was no small-time crook — he started early with his first arrest on Sept. 4, 1917, for throwing pepper in a man's eyes and robbing him of \$150.

He was an impressive criminal. Urbaytis, Charles "Split Lip" Schultz, and George Lewis, all involved in the robbery, escaped from the Lucas County jail and remained at large for years. It wasn't until 1924 when Urbaytis was shot twice by a Columbus police officer and arrested again.

Toledo's bad man was shipped off to federal prison in Atlanta in 1928 where he would have served a 60-year sentence if he hadn't escaped again. Urbaytis was then sent to Alcatraz Island on Nov. 12, 1934. In 1943, Urbaytis was freed from the prison and headed back to Toledo.

The ex-con opened a night club, Bon Air Supper Club, in the 2100 block of Woodville Road, but at 5:10 a.m. on Nov. 5, 1946, Urbaytis was shot and killed by Frank Burns, a 69-year-old ex-con. Burns reportedly confessed to the slaying.

Contact Taylor Dungen at: tdungen@theblade.com or 419-724-6054.



Joseph Urbaytis, the brains behind the heist.



George Lewis



Charles ('Split Lip') Schultz



Wanda Urbaytis, Joseph's sister, who was arrested in 1921 for her involvement.



James ('Rat Face') Treese



The Central Post Office, Aug. 1, 1953.

FRANK BURNS



From top: Frank Burns, who shot and killed Joseph Urbaytis at the Bon Air Supper Club, center, on Nov. 5, 1946, and a Blade report on the incident.

\$500.00 REWARD

Escaped Postoffice Robbers



Joseph Urbaitis, alias Joseph Urbaytis, alias Joseph Urbytis, alias Joseph Urbaetes (Toledo Police Dept. No. 7488), is 22 years of age, 5 feet 10 1/4 inches tall, weight 154 pounds; dark chestnut hair, fair complexion, gray eyes.

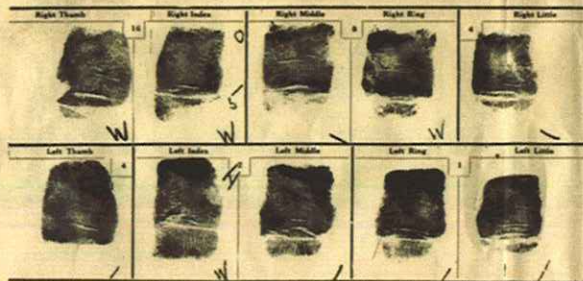
Bertillon Measurements

Height	70.7	Head Length	18.5	Left Foot	26.5
Outs A.	82.0	Head Width	16.0	L. M. Finger	11.6
Trunk	96.8	Right Ear	6.5	L. L. Finger	9.2
		Forearm	48.5		

Marks and Scars

1. Vert. cic. of 2.5 at 1st jt. left little finger rear.
1. Irreg. cic. at 3rd phalanx left index finger front.

Finger Prints of Urbaitis



Finger Print Classification: 25 0 11
19 I



Charles Schultz, alias "Saginaw," alias "Split Lip" (Toledo Police Dept. No. 8724), is 24 years of age, 5 feet 8 3/4 inches tall, weight 145 pounds, fair complexion, dark chestnut hair, blue eyes.

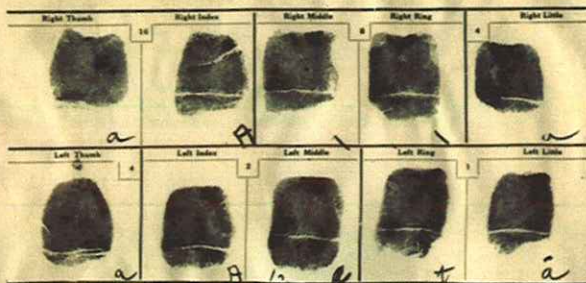
Bertillon Measurements

Height	73.7	Head Length	17.6	Left Foot	26.0
Outs A.	79.5	Head Width	15.8	L. M. Finger	10.9
Trunk	88.7	Right Ear	5.5	L. L. Finger	8.7
		Forearm	46.4		

Marks and Scars

1. Clean.
2. Circ. cic. at 3rd pha. right index finger front.
3. Obl. cic. left temple.
3. Tat blue dot right eyebrow center.
3. Two tat dots left eyebrow inner.
3. Cic. on right wing of nose.
3. Cic on upper left corner.

Finger Prints of Schultz



Finger Print Classification: 1 aAa Ref. 1 aAa
1 aAaa 1 aAata

Address all information to the undersigned.

JOHN T. TAYLOR,
Sheriff, Lucas County,
Toledo, Ohio.



George Lewis, alias George Rogers, alias George Davis, is 32 years of age, weight 140 pounds, 5 feet 6 3/4 inches tall, has black hair, dark complexion, maroon eyes.

Bertillon Measurements

Height	69.3	Head Length	18.9	Left Foot	25.8
Outs A.	80.0	Head Width	15.7	L. M. Finger	11.4
		Right Ear	6.4	L. L. Finger	9.2
		Forearm	47.0		

Finger Prints of Lewis



Finger Print Classification: 9 R 00
31 IM

Lewis has a record in Detroit, Mich., as No. 15816, and is also wanted by the Sheriff of San Francisco, Calif., having been convicted there on charge of murder and sentenced to life imprisonment but escaped jail while his case was being appealed.

Urbaitis, Schultz and Lewis escaped from the Lucas County Jail, Toledo, Ohio, at 1:00 p. m., Monday, September 5th, 1921. All three had been convicted of participating in the Toledo Post Office Robbery on February 17th, 1921, and were being held in the County Jail awaiting further trial.

John Taylor, Sheriff of Lucas County, Toledo, Ohio, offers a reward of \$500.00 for the arrest and delivery to him, or his authorized representative, of the above named persons, or a proportionate amount for each man apprehended.

These men will no doubt be well armed and every precaution should be taken in arresting them.

POST OFFICE CAPER

The \$1.6 million robbery may have looked well-planned, but it was more like a crime carried out by Laurel and Hardy

SUN FEB 8 1981

By
SEYMOUR ROTHMAN

SIXTY YEARS ago, in the early morning hours of Feb. 17, 1921, Joe Urbaytis and his gang of five set a Wide World of Crime record for mail holdups by hitting Toledo's main post office dock and making off with loot estimated at \$1.6 million.

The heist itself was over in a matter of minutes, but the exciting aftermath, and it spread out over a 27-year period, would have been a television viewer's dream. It had everything but commercials.

The figure \$1.6 million is the official estimate, but the true amount was never determined. Eventually the robbery was referred to merely as "the million-dollar post office holdup in Toledo." Considering that it took place in a day when first-class mail and newspapers cost 2 cents and a nickel would buy a cup of coffee, it was an impressive haul.

It also is well to remember that the robbery occurred at a time when the states were ratifying a constitutional amendment that would make beer and booze unobtainable except from one's friendly neighborhood criminal. For many Americans, the Drys were the enemy, and the criminal who defied their law enjoyed a certain amount of adoration.

This was particularly true of well-groomed, personable types like Joe Urbaytis. As a matter of fact, after Joe U. gained national notoriety for

the post office robbery and an escape from jail, a Toledo newspaper, now extinct, ran a photo of him under the caption, "Our Joe."

In 1920, the names of Joe Urbaytis, his brother Frank, and Charles "Split

Lip" Schultz were showing up in connection with Toledo payroll and safe robberies so often that when other names were mentioned, the average citizen merely assumed they were aliases for the busy three.



TWO DAYS before Christmas of 1920, a fellow named George L. Rogers, one of his many aliases, appeared on the scene with Joe U. Rogers had recently escaped from a seventh-floor cell in San Francisco where he was awaiting a decision on his appeal of a murder conviction. He and his 19-year-old girl friend, Pearl Sommers, moved into an apartment on Delaware Avenue, and it soon became a clearing house for underworld trafficking.

One evening, a bunch of the boys were in the living room reading the newspaper when one of them spotted a story about a post office that had been robbed in Mount Vernon, Ill., with impressive success. The possibility of staging such a robbery in Toledo was discussed, and eventually one Walter Foote was consulted on the matter. He was familiar with the operation.

Mr. Foote pointed out that a post office truck left Union Station about 1:40 each morning with a lot of big-city mail which it delivered to the main post office at Madison Avenue and 13th Street. It sounded easy, and the least that could be said for it was that it would be a heck of a good way to start a stamp collection.

Split Lip and Joe U. spent several nights casing the job. The truck went directly to the post office each time and backed up to the 14th Street dock. The driver unlocked the rear doors while the rider got out a hand truck. The two then threw the mail pouches

WANTED!

MAIL ROBBERS

LIBERAL REWARD



Joseph Urbaytis,
aliases: Joseph Urbaytis, Joseph Urbaytis
BERTILLON: 79.4; 82.0; 96.8; 14.5; 11.0; 65; 28.5;
11.6; 8.2; 48.5
FINGER PRINT CLASSIFICATION:
25 0 II
29 1
I Vert. cic. of 2.5 on 1st Jt. left little fgr.
I Imp. cic. on 2nd pha. left index fgr.
Age 21; height 5 feet, 10 1/2 inches; weight 154; complexion
fair; slender build; dark chestnut hair.

Charles Schultz,
aliases: "Boginow," "Split Lip," and Dutch Schultz.
BERTILLON: 76.8; 79.5; 88.7; 17.0; 15.8; 5.5; 28.0;
10.0; 8.7; 46.4
FINGER PRINT CLASSIFICATION:
I nAs Ref. I nAs
I nAs I nAs
II Cir. cic. on 2nd pha. right inner foot.
III Obl. cic. left temple.
III Tattoo blue dot right eyebrow center.
III Tot. two dots, left eyebrow inner.
III Cic. on rt. wing of nose.
III Cic. on upper lip, left corner
Age 24; height 5 feet, 8 1/2 inches; weight 145; complexion
fair; hair dark chestnut. (Discolored Print. 12.)

A "liberal reward" was offered by the post office on this Wanted poster for Urbaytis and Schultz.

Robbery

on the truck and took them inside. No one else appeared on the dock.

Split Lip and Joe U. made a most favorable report to the boys at the apartment. This job was even easier than being honest. Now started the planning period.

WHILE LEGEND has it that the great post office robbery was masterfully executed by a group of masterful robbers with a great master plan, as the truth unfolded it was more like a crime planned by Stan Laurel and carried out by Oliver Hardy.

James Sansone, Eddie O'Brien, and Joe Culbert were brought into the scheme with Split Lip, Joe U., and Rogers. They worked out the details, but then things got out of hand.

To get weapons, the group called on Two-Gun James Feese, a cab driver who apparently dealt in armament. He reported that he had just what they were looking for in pawn at Surtman's Pawnshop. He needed money to get them out.

They gave him several pounds in rolls of dimes, and told him to get the stuff. The Strand Theater safe had been hit a few days earlier, and \$1,000, mostly in packaged dimes, was taken. Urbaytis was one of the suspects. Anyone who didn't know where those dimes came from just didn't read the newspapers.

Four known criminals, members of the Urbaytis six, went along with Feese when he redeemed his weapons. He also bought some shotguns and boxes of shells, paying off in the packaged dimes. Then he took the shotguns to a nearby locksmith and had the barrel sawed down. Even Greyhound busses don't leave trails like that.

Late on the night of Feb. 15, 1921, the Urbaytis gang moved in on the

Collingwood Garage, bound the employees, and climbed into a high-powered Marmon which they'd planned to steal for the job. They couldn't get the car started, but they kept trying and trying. Finally they were forced to find another car, settling for a Studebaker.

By the time they got out of the garage it was too late to pull the job. The post office truck had already arrived at the post office and was unloaded. They hid the stolen car in the Feese garage and planned the job for early the next morning.

This actually was what made it look like a master plan. On Thursday morning, unknown to the robbers, the Government was sending in some \$30,000 in new currency and \$900,000 in Liberty bonds. Had they hit the post office when scheduled, the loot would have been considerably less than a million dollars. The timing was just a matter of luck.

AT ABOUT 1:30 a.m. on the 17th, five of the Urbaytis gang concealed themselves near the post office while Joe U., in the stolen Studebaker, trailed the post office truck. As the truck backed into the dock, the five approached. Joe drove the car into position near the truck and opened the trunk.

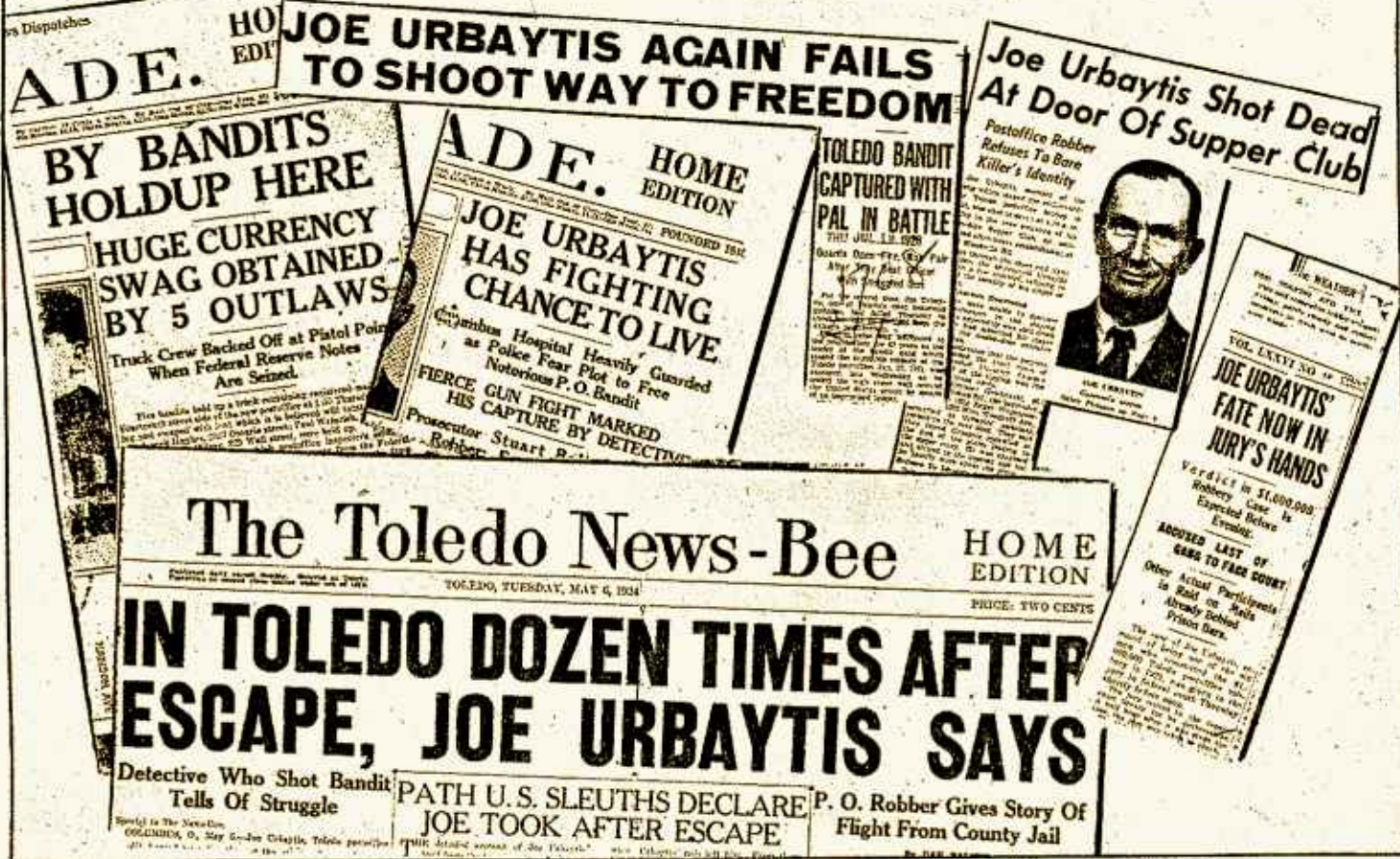
The driver and rider were accosted by an armed bandit and ordered to lie on the floor. A third man who happened to wander along also came under the gun. The others quickly unloaded 10 mail pouches, threw them into the car, climbed in, and soon were speeding west on Madison Avenue.

A security officer commandeered a car and ordered the driver to pursue the thieves, but their getaway was clean. No one was hurt, the truck was emptied, and the escape was good. No runs, no hits, but — oops — one error.

Of the five men seen by the post office employees, only one concealed his face. He held a handkerchief over the lower part. Now why would someone do that? Maybe he had a distinguishing mark he wanted to conceal? Maybe he had a split lip? That's how long it took the police to decide that the post office job was the work of Split Lip and probably his buddy, Joe U. The search was on.

The Blade reported that Mayor Cornell Schreiber was under suspicion for a while when a mail pouch was seen under a ledge in his office. It turned out, however, that the pouch contained seeds from his congressman in Washington. The Woolworth Co. announced a policy of leaving its safe in the aisle in front of the store overnight where it could be better observed by passing patrolmen.

THE DAY after the robbery, the gang split up the loot and each of them went in his own direction. The division was never accurately recorded, but each of the principals took at least \$145,000 in bonds. Some got cash. Others got additional bonds. Jewelry was



The local papers covered the robbery, and especially the escapades of Joe U., in scores of stories over the years.

Robbery

passed off to some of the helpers. The crooks could afford to be generous.

The nightmare in this dream robbery became apparent when the thieves realized that practically all of their booty was registered, recorded, and recognizable. The Liberty bonds and brand new money were in successive serial numbers, and it was no problem getting the numbers out to banks which were watching for them.

There were some industrial and water bonds from Adrian, Mich., that also were difficult to fence. All the stuff was hot to the touch. Yet, in the euphoria that followed the job, these men of new wealth were treating the loot more like war trophies, showing it off to practically anyone who didn't display a police badge.

As an example, several of the principals passed on \$140,000 in bonds to Party No. 1 for safekeeping. She took them to her sister's house to store, but the sister would have nothing to do with it. She was not about to become Party No. 2. Party No. 1 then asked Parties No. 3 and 4 what she should do. They took the bonds over to Party No. 5's house.

Party No. 1 later retrieved the bonds, hid them in the bottom of a basket of fruit, and gave them to Party No. 6 who passed them on to Party No. 7 who on an appointed day handed them back to the original thieves — with \$50,000 missing. Parties No. 1 and 4, it seems, took the bonds and gave them to Party No. 8 to be delivered to Party No. 9 to a Party No. 10 to be sold in New York.

All these parties eventually were

gathered into one big party before the grand jury. They all either pleaded guilty or were found guilty, and were sentenced according to the help they provided in convicting the robbers.

Joe U., Joe Culbert, and Joe's sister, Wanda Urbaytis, were seen in Union Station four days after the robbery with tickets to Chicago. They were permitted to board the train, and at Elkhart, Ind., officers appeared to arrest them. They got the two Joes, but Wanda and some bonds she was carrying managed to elude them.

THIS MARKED the beginning of a long series of arrests or surrenders. By April 29, 1921, the government had arrested some 32 first-rate suspects and asked for and received indictments against 25 of them. Only two of the six principals, Eddie O'Brien and James Colson, were still at large.

Stuart Bolin was named special prosecutor to try the case before Federal District Judge John M. Killits in Toledo. He divided the wrongdoing into two charges, conspiracy and robbery. He divided the conspiracy charge into seven counts and the robbery charge into 11. The first trial was concerned with the charge of conspiracy in which there were 21 defendants, four of which pleaded guilty.

In their rush to escape the wrath of the Government, many of the defendants told Bolin even more than he wanted to know, and in his opening statement to the jury he described the planning and commission of the crime in such great detail that part of it was even news to the robbers.

Two minor defendants were found not guilty. The rest were returned to

their cells to await sentencing. Judge Killits planned to pronounce sentence after the robbery charges were heard.

On Labor Day of 1921, Mrs. Anna Urbaytis, Joe's mother, sent a large pail of soup into the Lucas County Jail to brighten her Joe's holiday lunch. One story has it that Joe called the deputy to take the soup pail, and when the deputy opened the cell door to get it, bingo! Joe U., Shultz, and Rogers were off and running.

The newspapers ran extras on the escape, and folks who were downtown for the holiday flocked to the jail. By the time the day was over the people who claimed to have seen the trio fleeing or hiding rivaled the attendance at Super Bowl XV. Whether the escape was planned or just an impromptu break has never really been determined.

In any event, Schultz was captured in a Crissey Road farmhouse shortly after the escape, and Rogers was taken near Chicago just before Christmas. Joe U. was still at large. The trial went on without him.

For the robbery, Schultz was sentenced to 40 years in Leavenworth; Sansone got 39 years; Two-Gun Feese, who was very cooperative with the authorities, and the Rev. Anthony Gorek, who had received \$87,000 in bonds from Wanda Urbaytis, were sentenced to one hour in the custody of the marshal. They already had spent some nine months in jail awaiting trial and sentencing.

When the law eventually caught up with Colson and O'Brien, they received sentences of 50 years each in Atlanta.

Also sentenced to federal penitentiaries were Helen Furrier, 7 years;

Emma Marvin, 5 years; Pearl Sommers, 4 years; Walter Foote, 5 years and 3 days; Harry Thrush, 6 years, 6 months; Edwin Zellick, 18 months, and Wanda Urbaytis, 7 years and 6 months. Several others involved in the crime were extradited to cities where they were wanted for serious crimes.

Only Urbaytis was left to be dealt with.

STORIES KEPT cropping up about his being seen in Toledo, New York, Detroit, the Orient, and Alaska.

He definitely was in New York. The late Doc Holst, veteran Toledo newspaperman, was in New York one winter day in 1923. It was snowing hard, and suddenly he looked at the person next to him waiting to cross the street. It was Joe U. He had covered many stories involving the escapee. He knew he could not be mistaken.

Doc was about to say something to Urbaytis when he thought better of it. If Joe were to be captured right after Doc saw him, Doc would have to stay off dark streets for a long time, he thought. He pretended that he hadn't seen him.

When Joe eventually was caught and returned to Toledo, his first words to Doc were, "Boy, you sure missed a good story. I was standing right next to you in a snowstorm in New York and you didn't even see me."

When Urbaytis was captured in Columbus in May of 1924 he told police that after fleeing from the county jail he hid on a back porch on Ontario Street. He then walked out Cherry Street to West Toledo where he caught a freight. He didn't know where it was going, but he wound up in Jackson, Mich. From then on he roamed around the country.

BOTH FRANK and Joe were captured in Columbus on May 5, after a shootout with detectives. One of the two detectives opened the outside door of the apartment and ran directly into Joe U. waiting at the top of an outdoor staircase. Joe grabbed the detective. The detective struck out at Joe. Joe fell over the banister to the pavement 15 feet below. He was stunned momentarily, and the detective almost was on him when he regained his feet.

"He pulled his pistol and fired at me," the detective reported. "The bullet went wide. I shot back and hit him. He tried to shoot again, but the gun jammed. We clinched and he knocked the gun out of my hand. He tried to fire his gun again, but it wouldn't fire."

"We went down, and Joe dropped his gun. I grabbed it and, using it as a club, I struck him over the head. He fell and got up again. I knocked him down again. By then my partner appeared with Frank in tow and the fight was over."

Joe's comment about the fight later: "He hit me while I was down. I wouldn't have done that to him."

The bullet had passed through Joe's bladder. He was kept in a Columbus hospital under very heavy and very

nervous guard. That he lived surprised everyone, including the medical authorities.

Joe U. loved newspapermen, loved publicity, doted on attention, and basically was eager to provide the media with material that would look good in print.

When Joe was fighting for his life in the hospital, Blade reporter Ralph Phelps went to see him.

"I can't give you no story, Ralph," he whispered. "I'm too sick." Then he added, "Why don't you get a pistol and do a heavy job?" suggesting that Ralph go out and commit a holdup. "That would be a good story."

JOE WAS returned to the Lucas County Jail on July 21, 1924, on a stretcher. A large crowd was at Union Station to welcome him home. So was a large squad of federal agents who weren't about to let him escape again. The transfer from car to ambulance was made in a train shed, and the ambulance was heavily escorted to the jail by police cars.

At the jail another large crowd was on hand to greet him. Joe tried to walk into the jail but couldn't. Finally someone picked up both his legs from behind and he was carried in. It was not a graceful entrance.

In January of 1925, having failed to prove that he was at home when the post office robbery was going on, Joe was sentenced to a total of 274 years in Atlanta Prison.

Joe tried to escape several times. In his most desperate attempt, he tried to win his way out with weapons smuggled into him and another notorious mail bandit, Roy Gardner. Using a guard as a human shield, they exchanged shots with other guards, but all it gained them was more bad time.

Joe was shipped off to Alcatraz where he settled down to doing the time the state had coming. Later he was transferred to Leavenworth, and finally was granted a reduction of sentence and a parole. He was freed on Feb. 13, 1943.

JOE CAME home, paid his respects to his newspaper friends, and remained a colorful character with a sensational past.

Then at 5:10 a.m. on Nov. 5, 1946, he was in the news again — as a murder victim.

He'd been shot through the chest at the rear door of the Bon-Aire Supper Club, an after-hours place which he owned with one James Patrick "Pete" Dugan. Joe lived for several minutes after the shooting but refused to divulge in his dying breath just who did the shooting.

Eventually the crime was attributed to Frank Burns, a 69-year-old ex-con and pickpocket with a gimp leg. The two men had known each other since Joe was 18 and hanging around a speakeasy run by Burns.

was sentenced to 1 to 20 years in the Ohio Pen.

As the story came out, he and Joe had been drinking heavily when they got into a quarrel. They were standing close together when Urbaytis flung his topcoat open. Burns reportedly saw the pistol in Joe's belt, snatched it out, took two steps back, and fired. He then dropped the gun and ran.

Burns maintained later that he pleaded guilty to manslaughter to avoid being framed for murder. He claimed he was on the telephone at the time of the shooting.

After he served his time, Burns returned to Toledo. He died at age 79 of natural causes in the Waldorf Hotel on March 3, 1962. Said the obituary, "He gave his occupation as stock buyer."

As to the loot that was recovered from the post office robbery, there is no report on it. Judge Killits, in writing a history of the Toledo area in 1923, pointed out that the loss to the Government was minimized primarily by the fact that the stolen bonds were not collectible. ©

Seymour Rothman is a staff writer and columnist for The Blade.