

PRISON MUSEUM POST

*The Official Newsletter of the Historic Burlington County Prison Museum Association
Incorporated in 1966*

Volume XVI, Issue III

June 5, 2017

PRISON MUSEUM OPEN FREE TO PUBLIC Friday, June 23, 2017 5 p.m. to 9 p.m.

The Museum will be open to the public for free from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. on Friday, June 23, 2017. Our audio tour, which is usually available at a cost of \$3 extra, will also be free to visitors that evening.

PLEASE JOIN THE PRISON MUSEUM ASSOCIATION

Please consider joining the Prison Museum Association. The Association was incorporated in 1966 by the same group of people who a decade earlier had convinced the Burlington County Freeholders not to demolish the Old Jail to make room for a parking lot. They knew that the building, which was eventually designated a National Historic Landmark, was a truly significant historic site. Fifty-one years later, the Freeholders continue to maintain the building and the PMA is still here, preserving the history of the Old Jail and promoting the site as a tourist destination. We do this through our website, social media, publications, souvenirs, events and exhibits, financed through admissions, gift shop proceeds, dues and donations. Please consider joining our worthy cause. For a mere \$15 per year (\$25 for a family), you get the Prison Museum Post (published four times per year), 10 % off gift shop items, free admission to the museum, invitations to members-only events and the satisfaction that you are helping to preserve the history of a national historic treasure. An application can be found on our website: www.prisonmuseum.net.



ELLIS PARKER DIARY AND NOTES PROVE FASCINATING

Ellis Parker's diary circa 1900 and his notes from 1927 are proving to be a treasure trove of information about the criminal justice system and life in general in Burlington County at that time. PMA member Andy Sahol, grandson of the famous Burlington County Detective, graciously donated copies of these items to us last year.

We attach some of our research to each issue, and this issue will feature excerpts from the diary and notes. PMA Vice-President Dave Kimball has been pouring over the material, and has edited it for this issue.

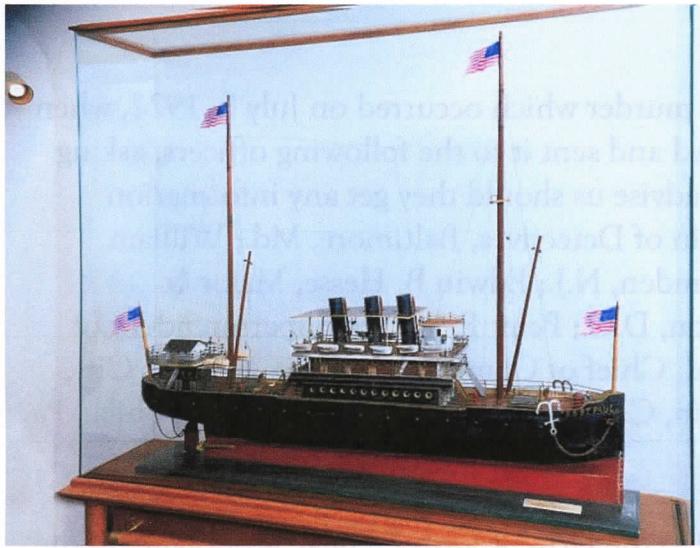
Here's a few things to know when you are reading the excerpts. First, while the diary is written by hand, the notes were typed by a secretary, probably Parker's long-time Girl Friday, Anna Bading. Clifford Cain, Arthur Carabine, George Griffin, Howard Mathis and Arthur Schulke were all detectives working under Parker. It appears that there were as many or perhaps even more county detectives in 1927 than there were in the 1950s, probably because of Prohibition. Prohibition was a constitutional ban on the production, importation, transportation and sale of alcoholic beverages that remained in place from 1920 to 1933. Enabling legislation, known as the Volstead Act, set down the rules for enforcing the federal ban and defined the types of alcoholic beverages that were prohibited. For example, religious uses of wine were allowed. The law was widely disregarded, as you can see from Parker's notes. One imagines that the criminal justice system lost a lot of business when Prohibition ended in 1933.

You might be interested, as we were, to the entry in which Detective Carabine expresses satisfaction with the "identiscope". Twenty years ago, we would have put the word out to our members asking if any of them knew what the heck an "identiscope" was. It is so much easier today - all we have to do is click Google. In any event, here is a picture of a New York City detective using an identiscope in the 1920s. It was an optical instrument which compared photographs or daguerrotypes* of persons done many years apart, making it possible to know whether or not the image was of the same person.



The identiscope was invented in 1873 by an Englishman named William Matthew. Apparently identity theft was as much a problem a hundred years ago as it is today. In 1874, following a case in which the identiscope was first used, Parliament

made fraudulently obtaining land by way of false impersonation a crime punishable by life imprisonment.



in Philadelphia in 1895? We know that an inmate built the model sometime between 1895 and 1903 and presented it to the warden. On the left is a photo of the restored ship taken by our Museum Attendant, Dennis McDonald. The model is displayed in the Museum.

This will be the last Post until the Fall. Again, please consider joining the PMA. Please visit the museum over the summer... and bring your friends! And don't forget to try out our audio tour.

Have a great summer!

**What is a Dauguerrotype? First successful photographic process (1839-1860) in which the image is captured on a silvered copper plate. Named for the inventor, Louis Daugerre.*

We hope to fill future issues of the Post with many more interesting stories and information to come out of Parker's notes and diary.

We also hope to get back to trying to solve one of our biggest mysteries: Who built the model of the S.S. St. Paul, 12,000-ton passenger liner built

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Please help us preserve and promote the Prison Museum by joining the PMA. Our annual dues are only \$15(individual)/\$25 (family). Membership benefits include a quarterly newsletter, event updates, 10% off gift shop purchases, and free admission to the museum. Go on the website for an application.

BURLINGTON COUNTY DETECTIVE REPORT

Aug. 3, 1927

Wrote an account of the Burlington murder which occurred on July 8, 1927, when Charles Alexander was shot and killed and sent it to the following officers, asking that they make an investigation and advise us should they get any information whatever - Charles H. Burns, Captain of Detectives, Baltimore, Md.; William Schregler, Captain of Detectives, Camden, N.J.; Edwin B. Hesse, Major & Superintendent of Police, Washington, D.C.; Peter F. Walsh, Superintendent of Police, Pittsburgh, Pa.; Frank Harrel, Chief of County Detectives, Atlantic City, N.J.; and Theodore F. Wood, Captain, Commanding Detective Division, Phila., Pa.

...

Clifford Cain and Mrs. Bading went to the farm of John F., near Woodlane on the Burlington Road and took the statement of Harvey J. concerning Frank Riley and Alex C. Alex C. is the man who stabbed Riley with a pitch fork.

Aug. 3

Clifford Cain, Arthur Carabine, Lieut. Goldy, George Griffith, Arthur Sculke and Officer Schultz raided the following places in Florence Township....

Mary H., 62 Norman Ave., Roebling, found a 10 gallon still; 5 gallon keg; 2 gallon stone jug; 2-1 gal. glass jugs; 2 qt. mason jar containing liquor and 50 gallons of mash destroyed. To be given a hearing before Frank S. Absalom, this afternoon.

Victor A., of Roebling, found 5 gal. can containing liquor; quart bottle containing liquor and a case of beer. To be given a hearing before Frank A. Absalom, this afternoon.

Jack R., who runs the Fieldsboro Hotel, found 5 quarts of liquor. To be given a hearing before Clifford Powell, tomorrow morning.

Aug. 13

At 1:15 a.m. this date, a Tri-State Bus, driven by Wallace M., 21 years old, who lives at the present time on Green Street, in one of the bungalows along the creek ... driver's license no. 51321, driving no. 11 Tri-State Bus, had as a passenger Oliver B., of Oakdale, R.F.D. #2. A Ford Coupe, owned and driven by Donald W., Camden license no. 3388, was stopped at the side of the road, at the public service cut-off from the main railroad track in front of Bert Wells' home on the Marne Highway. Donald W. got out, he was running out of gas, and Boyden Bell, who was a passenger with Donald W., moved over to the driver's seat while Donald W. looked under the seat to see how much gas he had. The bus was coming down the grade about 45 to 50 miles an hour, crashed into the back of the Ford sedan and carried same along 21 paces ahead of it, wound it around a telegraph pole and the bus continued up to the railroad track. Bell was taken out of the car by John E. Kelly ... Kelly took Bell to the hospital where it was found he had a fractured leg and the 6th vertebrae in his neck was broken. I preferred a charge against Wallace M., of aggravated assault and battery by automobile and committed him to jail at 3:15 this a.m. On call from the hospital at 5 a.m. this morning, I learned that Bell had died, so the charge will be changed to manslaughter.

Aug. 17

Elizabeth J., who will be at 196 Washington St., Mt. Holly came to this office and stated that she is 18 years old and that she has been going with William F. for two years and that she is now pregnant and William F. refuses to marry her. William F. works for the Pennsylvania Railroad, at 33rd St., Phila., Pa. Mr. Carabine stated that he would take care of this and have some news for her on Monday afternoon.

Aug. 24

Wrote letter to Research Engineering Corp for Mr. Carabine advising them that the identiscope is giving perfect satisfaction.

Aug. 26

Mr. Parker received a telephone call from Mrs. Dubre of Burlington, complaining that drunken men were continually coming out of Ham Ghoul's place, using profane language to the extent that she is unable to allow her children on the street.

Sept 13

Elizabeth Adams, a teacher at the High School, came to this office with Caroline C., one of the grade teachers, and reported that this morning, William A. ...was being corrected by Miss C. and he resented this, struck her with his fist, breaking her nose and then ran away from school... the boy stated that Miss C. accused him of not saluting the flag, which he says he did, called him out into the hall, pulled him by the collar, scratching his neck and tearing a button off his shirt, then pulled his hair and he struck her.

Sept 16

Arthur Carabine, Clifford Cain and Howard Mathis, Jr., raided the saw mill owned by John M., of Wading River, this p.m. and confiscated the following: - 3 -1000 gal steel stills, 6000 gallons of mash; 5 tons of corn sugar, 10 cases of yeast and 25 gal of liquor; also, there were many five-gallon cans around the place.

Sept 26

Mrs. Z,... came to this office with Mrs. D., of Riverside, and stated that Mrs. D. would be unable to be in court on Thursday to plead to the indictment, as she had to meet a sister at Ellis Island.

Sept 29

The following pleas were taken to indictments which have been found by the Grand Jury of the present term...

[A detailed listing of indictments follows, and include:

- 52 for prohibition violations
- 12 for assault and battery
- 8 for desertion and non-support
- 6 for disorderly house (prostitution)
- 4 for manslaughter
- 4 for larceny
- 3 for rape
- 2 each for carrying weapons and breaking and entering

1 each for possessing gambling machines, rape and fornication, forgery, larceny, malicious mischief and embezzlement.

52 of those accused of liquor laws violations pleaded not guilty. Sixteen either pleaded of were found not guilty and were fined a total of \$4,025.]

Excerpt from Parker Diary, June 5, 1900:

Went to Baltimore. Left Mt. Holly at 6 o'clock. Left Phila. 7:20. Arrived at Baltimore 9:10. Left 1:18. Arrived Phila 3:40. Left Phila 4 and arrived at Mt. Holly 4:47. Car fare \$4.00. Dinner \$1.50.

Note to our readers: Isn't it interesting that in 1900 someone could go from Mt. Holly to Baltimore on business and get back in the same day? Apparently, there was train service all the way through. Wouldn't it be great to know exactly where Ellis boarded the train in Mt. Holly? Where and how he crossed the Delaware into Philadelphia? How he got from the river to the train station in Philadelphia? And finally, where and what did he have for supper?

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