

Nat Felder, Jr., Slain on Main Street Sunday by T. Curtis Hutto

A most deplorable tragedy occurred in the early hours of Sunday morning last on Bamberg's Main street, in front of the barber shop of F. B. Hooks, which resulted in the death a few hours later of Nat Z. Felder, Jr., a well known young man of this city and a member of one of the community's most prominent families. T. Curtis Hutto, night policeman, is formally charged with the homicide.

It has been many years since there has been an incident in Bamberg so widely discussed as the Sunday morning tragedy. Mr. Felder was a young man who enjoyed the friendship of a wide circle of friends and acquaintances who deplore the untimely end he met. The remains were interred Sunday afternoon at the Zeigler burial ground a few miles from Bamberg in the presence of a large concourse of friends and relatives. The funeral service was conducted by Rev. S. O. Cantey. Mr. Felder was a member of the local Baptist church.

The tragedy occurred between 12:30 and 1:00 o'clock Sunday morning in a pistol duel between Mr. Felder and Mr. Hutto, the latter escaping unhurt. Mr. Felder was carried into the barber shop and given first aid by a hastily summoned physician, afterward being taken to Mack's Drug Store. The physician pronounced his condition very critical with little hope for his recovery and relatives were summoned to his side.

Upon the arrival of the five o'clock train for Charleston, the injured man was placed on it an attempt to get him to a Charleston hospital for an operation with the possible hope of saving his life. As the train neared Branchville the physician saw that he was in a dying condition, and at his request the train was delayed a few minutes in Branchville. Mr. Felder breathing his last on the train about 6:00 o'clock Sunday morning. The body was brought back to Bamberg on the same train, reaching here about 6:30 o'clock.

Occurred on Street.
As usual on Saturday nights, the barber shop had remained open until a late hour. The business in the shop had been concluded and preparations were being made to close up. Mr. Felder and the three barbers, F. B. Hooks, J. B. Scarborough, and L. O. Lee, were the only persons in the shop at the time. As Mr. Felder came out, Mr. Hutto was sitting, according to the witnesses, on the garbage can in front of the shop. He accused Mr. Felder of having discharged his pistol in the rear of the barber shop, and demanded a \$10 bond for the alleged offense. Mr. Felder, it was testified, demanded to know who the officer's informant was, and an argument ensued, in which both parties are alleged to have used strong language.

All the witnesses agreed that Mr. Felder proposed shooting it out, and that Mr. Hutto agreed to the proposition, some of the witnesses saying that he tried to reason it out with Mr. Felder before doing so; that Mr. Hutto had his gun in his hand, and that Mr. Felder had his hand in his right coat pocket. The shooting began suddenly and continued rapidly until some six or eight shots were fired, the witnesses agreeing that appearances indicated Mr. Felder fired the first shot, though both first shots were very close together.

Bullets Enter Stores.
Two of the bullets fired entered the store of A. Kirsch and the barber shop, respectively; the barber shop door being penetrated and the bullet being stopped against the hot water tank in the rear. The other went through the show window of Kirsch's store.

During the firing both parties appeared to clinch, and fell from the sidewalk to the street; Mr. Hutto getting up, and Mr. Felder trying to do so, falling to the sidewalk mortally wounded. Mr. Hutto was placed in the custody of Sheriff Ray, and at the inquest Sunday afternoon at 3:00 o'clock was formally charged with the homicide by the coroner's jury.

Three shots struck Mr. Felder, one between the third and fourth ribs; another between the fourth and fifth ribs, and another striking the left thumb. One bullet came through

War Follows Move To Operate Cars

Columbia, March 20.—When the Columbia Railway, Gas and Electric company today attempted to operate three of its street cars, idle since February 15, because of a strike of motormen and conductors, it resulted in open warfare. Four men, engaged in operating the cars, received minor injuries from two separate attacks on cars and four men, three of them strikers and one a sympathizer of the strikers, were placed under arrest for assault and battery with intent to kill, and warrants have been sworn out for at least three other strikers, all alleged to have been implicated in the attacks.

Following a conference in the office of Governor Cooper tonight, participated in between the executive, city and county authorities, and the management of the company, it was decided to put three cars in operation tomorrow under complete police protection.

"The public can rest assured," said Governor Cooper tonight following the conference, "that the company and the public will be protected in the company's lawful efforts to operate its cars, even though the entire law enforcement forces of this state, including the National Guard, be necessary to guarantee this protection. The public may be assured that mob rule will not supplant the orderly process of law."

The governor further stated that he would not take sides in the industrial dispute, but that he did intend to see that the company should operate its cars unmolested as it had a legal right to do, particularly as operation had been ordered by the state railroad commission.

below the neck, and the other lodged just under the skin under the shoulder and was extracted by the physician. Internal hemorrhage was the immediate cause of death.

Well Known Citizen.
Mr. Felder was the son of Mr. and Mrs. N. Z. Felder, Sr., of Bamberg, and was 36 years of age. He was born and reared in this community, and had been engaged in various business enterprises in the vicinity. He is survived by his mother and father, and the following brothers and sisters: D. G. Felder, of Asheville, N. C.; Mrs. W. J. Heffin, of Birmingham, Ala.; Mrs. Carrie Boyd, of Spartanburg; Mrs. Clint Hooton, of Denmark; and R. T. Felder and Tom Felder, of Bamberg.

Mr. Felder was a brother of Henry Felder, known to his associates as "Punch," who was a member of the ill-fated crew of the Cyclops, which disappeared so mysteriously during the world war, and of which not the slightest trace has ever been discovered since it left a South American port for America; the presumption being that it was either blown up by the Germans or sank in the Atlantic from other causes.

The Testimony.
The following is the testimony of the coroner's inquest, conducted in the illness of Coroner Zeigler, by Magistrate E. Dickinson, E. L. Price, Sr., transcribing the evidence:

J. B. Scarborough, duly sworn, said: "As we closed Hutto was sitting on garbage can—Mr. Lee and myself first. When Mr. Felder got to sidewalk, Hutto asked Felder for \$10 bond. Felder asked for what, and reply, for shooting in rear barber shop."

"Felder says, 'lock me up.' Hutto says, 'No.' Felder says, 'I am not afraid of you,' and Hutto answered that he was not afraid of Felder. After considerable cursing between the two, Mr. Hutto took his gun from his pocket and told Felder that he didn't want to hurt him, but if he had to he would. Felder drew his gun and both commenced firing. Think Felder shot first, but both first shots were almost together."

F. B. Hooks, duly sworn, said: "As Nat and I came from door, Hutto requested \$10 bond. After some argument Hutto got up; Nat facing Hutto and advancing. Hutto pushed him back and said he did (not) want any trouble."

"Nat proposed to shoot it out and

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Reformed Burglar Tells of Attempt on Denmark Bank

(Reprinted from the January issue of The National Brain Power by special permission.)

For more than two years what has been termed a "Crime Wave" has been flooding the country. Banks, held up in daylight by organized bandits, have lost millions. Transportation companies have suffered as great. Even the mails have been looted of stupendous sums.

We read of these robberies almost daily, but we seldom read of the capture and punishment of the robbers. Why?

What has caused the "Crime Wave"? "War and unemployment" is the invariable answer from the police, the newspapers and the people, generally. But is this the right answer?

To the editor of the Brain Power recently a most interesting individual: A reformed bank burglar who had been pardoned by the governors of three states, and by the president of the United States. In the past he had stolen millions of dollars from nearly a hundred banks. He was interested in our magazine, and told a most amazing story of the brain-power of the cracksman pitted against the brain-power of the safe-builder.

He was asked if he would put his remarks into writing. He stated that he was no writer—but he agreed to make the attempt. Here is his story, almost word for word as he wrote it. In a style so readable that it might be evinced by many authors, he has told the story of the bank robber from the days of the old key-lock safe until the recent achievement that has caused three times as many day light hold-ups of banks as there were night-time robberies in the past.

There was a heavy sense of excitement at Baltimore's police headquarters one night during the winter of 1916. A raiding squad waited for the word "Go."

It was to be a big night, one that would cover the police department with glory and the morning newspapers with headlines. Early in the evening a department "stool-pigeon" had sent in the tip that a gang of bank burglars were in the city to talk things over.

When the meeting was in full swing a signal was flashed to headquarters. In a back room of a saloon, fifteen of the cleverest bank robbers of the country were in session—for bank robbing is as much of a business as banking or advertising. The police swept in and took them all, without a scrap, for the cops were carrying drawn guns and the burglars were genuinely surprised.

That was in Baltimore in 1916.

In Toledo, in 1921, a police squad left headquarters to make another raid. Shrewd detective work had gained information as to the whereabouts of a gang that had looted the post office of \$1,000,000. But this time the cops didn't go to the back room of a saloon for their men. They turned up one of the best residential streets in the city and found them in an apartment house known to be the residence of people of wealth and culture.

These contrasting incidents show at a glance what has happened in the Underworld; how, in the past five years, it has literally stepped from the gutter to the middle of the best sidewalk the community provides.

"Hold-up men," says a recent statement issued by the American Bankers' Association, "obtained approximately \$1,250,000 from the banks of the country during 1920." A statement by the National Surety Company shows that the burglary losses paid by big insurance companies in the United States in 1920 was \$10,189,853.

Never in the history of American crime have there been such stupendous hold-ups as were committed in the past two years against the United States mails. Glance at the figures represented by these three mail hold-ups:

Pullman, Illinois\$ 200,000

Dr. S. P. Rentz Meets Death; Neck Broken by Overturned Car

Robbery of Stores Brings Fatal Result

Trenton, March 20.—J. C. Moore, alleged safecracker and escaped convict from the Georgia penitentiary, where he was serving a sentence of 20 years, was shot and killed early this morning by Ernest Crouch while the former was in the act of opening a safe in the store of Mathis & Whitlock here, and L. K. Rawls, of Columbia, alleged to have been an accomplice in the robbery, was later apprehended on the highway to Aiken and has been lodged in the Edgefield jail.

Mr. Crouch has rooms above the store and was awakened by a noise in the store underneath. Taking his gun, he went out and Moore emerged from the store with a pistol and a flashlight. Mr. Crouch fired twice, the first load of buckshot taking effect in the left leg. The second shot proved fatal, Moore falling dead with the flashlight gripped in one hand and a pistol in the other.

The safe in the store was ready for blowing, the dial having been pried out, soap spread over the load and the fuse attached.

Prior to entrance into the Mathis & Whitlock store, the store of G. W. Wise had been entered and the safe blown open. A knife and \$50 were taken from the Wise store. The knife was found on Rawls.

Residents, awakened by the shots, gathered hurriedly and G. W. Wise, L. C. Edison, Lewis Harrison, Hilton Duncan and J. D. Mathis, Jr., followed the track of the automobile in which a second man disappeared when Moore was shot. A heavy rain had fallen about midnight and the track was easily followed. Near Aiken and about daylight the posse came upon Rawls, his car having stuck and negroes were assisting him in his efforts to extricate the car. When arrested Rawls was armed with a large pistol and had on his person a knife later identified as having been taken from the Wise store, \$20 and a letter from a woman asking that he desist from doing certain things. Rawls claimed that he was from Augusta and denied any knowledge of the robbery at Trenton. A conductor on one of the Southern trains through here says he saw Rawls and Moore in Columbia Sunday afternoon and in Batesburg Sunday night.

While in Wise's store time was taken to eat some apples. Moore had in his pockets a jar of fuses and also a map of the surrounding country.

Mrs. Moore came to Trenton from Columbia and identified Moore. She said Moore and Rawls left Columbia together. She did not ask for the body, which will be buried by the county authorities.

Until a few months ago Rawls is said to have operated a store in Batesburg, and since that time to have been making his home in Columbia.

That the safe-makers decided it was time they devoted their energies to the designing of a safe that locked otherwise than with a key. The result of Moore's battle of wits with them produced what was then known as the "front-lock" safe, in which the lock and combination were placed behind the first sheeting in the door.

Moore then resorted to drills and gun-powder. He was the first safe burglar to use explosives. Again the safe maker was beaten by the burglar.

About 1885 the safe maker came out with the back-lock safe, the combination lock and tumblers being located behind the last sheeting in the door. The burglar easily mastered this by having his drills made longer. Once more the safe-maker was defeated. Bank robbing then became so common that the bankers and safe builders lay awake nights wondering how the ingenuity of the burglar could be combated. The burglar was having a comparatively easy time. The matter of getting into a bank offered not much more resistance than getting into a can of tomatoes. But the safe makers were not asleep. Out of every defeat they met at the hands of the burglars

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Coming as a climax to a week of tragedies in Bamberg county was the sad news Tuesday afternoon of the death of Dr. S. P. Rentz, who met an untimely end on the Hunter's Chapel road as he was returning home from Bamberg when his Ford automobile overturned in a ditch by the roadside about 4 o'clock in the afternoon. When the news first reached Bamberg, it was thought Dr. Rentz had been pinned under his car in several feet of water and drowned, but examination by hastily summoned physicians revealed the fact that his neck had been broken and death was, therefore, instantaneous.

Dr. Rentz was in Bamberg about 2 o'clock in the afternoon and left here going to his home, perhaps making some professional calls on his way, as was his custom in his extensive practice. Supervisor W. B. Smoak, his son and a salesman were in an automobile a short distance behind Dr. Rentz, and were witnesses to the sad tragedy. As Dr. Rentz's car reached a point about one mile north of Hunter's Chapel Baptist church, Mr. Smoak's party saw the machine go into the ditch and turn completely over. They hurried to the spot and attempted to remove the car and extricate Dr. Rentz, but it was found that the three men were unable to get it out and help had to be secured.

Some twenty minutes had elapsed before the car was lifted out, and the limp form of the beloved physician removed. In the meantime one of the party had been dispatched to Bamberg for physicians, and Drs. A. S. Weekley and H. J. Stuckey made a record run thinking that perhaps his life might be saved from drowning, but the examination showed that drowning was not the cause of death, but a broken neck. The body had been caught in some way under the car when it overturned. No other bruises were found on the body, and the lungs were not filled with water.

The body was removed to the doctor's home a short distance beyond, and the funeral and interment occurred at Zion Methodist church nearby. Ornan lodge, No. 38, A. F. M., was in charge of the burial, Dr. Rentz being a most faithful and devoted member of this lodge, of which he was the treasurer for many years. In addition to his connection with the Masonic lodge, Dr. Rentz was a member of the Scottish Rite, the Knights Templar and the Shriners, all of which he took a deep interest in.

Simon Peter Rentz was born 54 years ago a short distance from his late home, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Rentz, who preceded him to the grave last year, his mother being buried one year ago from the date of his death. He received his boyhood schooling in the neighborhood, and then entered the South Carolina Medical college, Charleston, completing his professional education at the University of Maryland, Baltimore. On completing his medical training, Dr. Rentz located in Cottageville, where he was physician for the Horse Shoe Mining company, a thriving industry at that time. After remaining in Cottageville for four or five years, he decided to return to his old home for the practice of his profession, and since that time has lived at Hunter's Chapel.

He was married to Miss Hattie Rhoad, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. N. B. Rhoad, of Hunter's Chapel, the former of whom survives him. Two children survive him, Horace and Ralph Rentz, the former residing with his parents and the latter residing a short distance from the old home place. The following brothers and sisters survive him: C. W. Rentz, Sr., Bamberg; D. P. Rentz, Lakeland, Fla.; Mrs. J. L. Herndon, Hunter's Chapel; Mrs. Doccia Blocker, Charleston; Mrs. E. F. McMillan, Hahnira, Ga.; Mrs. Annie E. Jones, Numatilla, Fla. and Mrs. Frances Folk, Bamberg.

Not a person in Bamberg will be more sorely missed from his community than Dr. Rentz. Electing to serve his own people in his professional career, he had deeply entrenched himself in the hearts of his constituents. His disposition was one of geniality, and the occasion was rare indeed that he did not have

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