

ST. JOHN, N. B., SATURDAY, APRIL 8, 1899.

ONE DETECTIVE'S SKILL.

TWO BANK ROBBERIES CLEARED UP BY JOHN JOURDAN.

Search for Langdon Moore, who stole \$306,000 in securities from a Massachusetts Bank—Compromise After Arrest—Price of a Child's Life.

Nowadays you hear a good deal about the sleuthing abilities of such and such a detective, said the retired Detective Sergeant, 'because the Hawksaws of the time are always making grand-stand plays and trying to get their names into print. In my time, in the sixties, newspaper reporters were not so numerous, and it wasn't the custom, anyway, to tell all you knew. But times have changed and so has the calibre of the detectives. The sleuths of the sixties had to deal with real crooks, not petit larceny thieves, but men who got away with thousands in one haul. Bank sneaks and safe crackers were then in their glory, but they have passed away.

To combat the cleverness of the crooks of those days New York city was blessed with a mighty clever detective in the person of John Jourdan, who was afterward Superintendent of Police. Jourdan was the Sherlock Holmes of his time, and, in my estimation, no other man has succeeded in filling his shoes, and I have known all his successors from Tim Irving down to George McClusky. I knew Jourdan well, worked under him, in fact, and probably enjoyed his confidence more than any other man in the department. That's why I speak authoritatively about him. The man has been forgotten, and the latter-day historians of crooks and crime never mentioned the great work he did, because they knew his cleverness would make their own work look mighty commonplace. I am familiar with the details of two big bank robberies in which Jourdan nabbed the thieves, and I am going to tell you about them.

Jourdan was the Captain of the Sixth precinct when he did his greatest detective work. The sixth precinct station house was situated then in the Sixth ward, at 9 and 11 Franklin street, between Bixter and Centre streets. The sixth precinct was known as the Bloody Sixth because of the numbers of murders committed there. Most of the crooks made the district their headquarters. There was a Detective Bureau then, as there is now, but when there was a big job to be unravelled Jourdan was the man called on. In 1865 the Concord National Bank of Massachusetts was entered in broad daylight while the cashier was at luncheon, and \$306,000 in bonds and money stolen. The thieves left no clue and the local police requested the assistance of the Boston police. Private detectives were set at work on the robbery, but the made no headway. Suspicion finally fell upon the cashier, but he was a man of such integrity that the directors of the bank refused to believe that he had any hand in the robbery. The detectives at work on the same case came to the conclusion evidently that the job was the work of New York crooks and Boston police asked the New York authorities to catch the thieves. John A. Kennedy was at that time Superintendent of Police in this city. He ignored the local Detective Bureau and called upon Jourdan to find the bank robbers.

Jourdan went to Concord to look the ground over. He learned that on the day of the robbery a strange horse and buggy were driven up in front of a hardware store directly opposite the bank, about the time of the robbery, and the driver entered the store and bought a pound of nails. The stranger talked with the proprietor of the store ten or fifteen minutes and drove away with his purchase. A few minutes before the buggy appeared in front of the hardware store the cashier of the bank across the way had locked up shop and started home for luncheon. A little girl of 11 years knocked at the bank door five minutes after the cashier left, having been sent with a message to the cashier. The bank door was opened by a stranger who asked the girl what she wanted. The child said she was looking for the cashier. 'Come back in an hour, little girl,' said the man inside the door. 'The cashier has gone home to get dinner.'

The child went away. She didn't pay any attention to the man's looks and probably couldn't have described him if she had. These were the only clues Jourdan had to work on. He was satisfied the bank was turned off by one man, and that the stranger in the buggy who waited across the way

to divert the store keeper's attention was his pal. The man who did the trick was clever. He opened several doors leading into the bank with duplicate keys and got to the safe. The cashier was in the habit of marking the combination of the safe on a piece of paper pasted on the side of the side of the safe every time he locked up. The thief had become familiar with this fact, and once inside his work was easy. After removing everything of value he locked the safe doors and went away, carefully locking the safe doors leading into the bank on his way out. When the cashier returned everything apparently was as he left it. When he opened the safe and found it empty he gave the alarm.

These were the facts as Jourdan gathered them. He was satisfied that the cashier was an honest man, and he came back to New York to look all the crooks over. Jourdan knew them all, and they were afraid of him. All the bank sneaks clever enough to turn off a job like the Concord Bank were accounted for but one. He was Langdon W. Moore, alias Charley Adams. Moore was one of the smartest crooks in the country. He had some education, had a good address and was an expert penman. He was rated as a bank sneak and forger. Jourdan knew that Moore owned a farm at Natick, Mass., and to the farm he went. He went in the front door of the farmhouse, and Moore made his exit by a rear door. Jourdan got a glimpse of him going across fields, and it was the last time he saw him for nine months.

Moore's unwillingness to be seen convinced Jourdan that he was on the right trail. The Captain came back to this city and reported to Superintendent Kennedy. The Super told Jourdan to keep after Moore until he landed him. Jourdan said he would need several men to help him, and Kennedy told him he could have all the help he wanted. Jourdan selected George Elder, now dead, and Pat Dolan who is on the retired list, both of whom were doing detective work in the headquarters Bureau, John Dunn, who was afterward broke and is now cowpunching in the West and Mark Haggerty, the present doorman in the Tenderloin station, were both patrolmen in the Sixth precinct and Jourdan detailed them to help. The four picked men, with Jourdan himself, knew every crook in the country.

They worked for several months trying to get some trace of Moore, but he seemed to have fallen into a hole and pulled it in after him. They watched his former friends closely, but learned nothing of value. A crook named Bouton, who palled with counterfeiters and was known as a shaver of the queer, was watched closely. Jourdan waited, and when he thought it was about time for Moore to begin to get rid of the stolen bonds he concluded to arrest Bouton. Bouton was pinched one night and taken to the sixth precinct station house. When he was searched he had on his person \$1,000 worth of 25-cent counterfeit stamps, better known as shill-plasters.

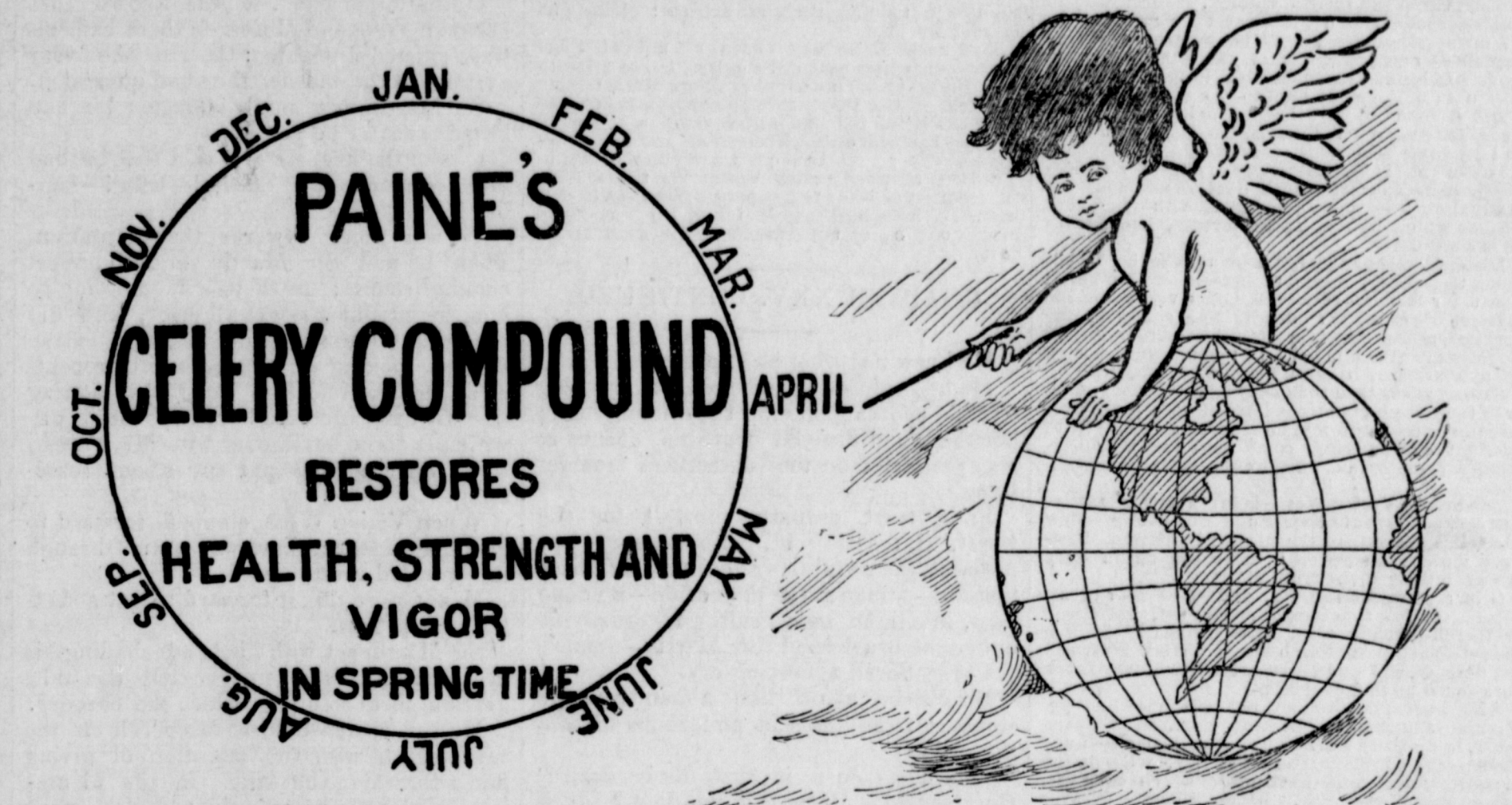
Jourdan told Bouton that he wanted to buy some bonds and asked him if he could get them for him. Bouton said he knew a man who had some to sell and he would buy them if Jourdan would promise not to prosecute him for having counterfeit money in his possession. Jourdan was an honest man, and as counterfeiting was a United States offence he could make no such promise. Bob Murray was then United States Marshal. He was consulted, and he agreed to let Bouton go free if he would tell where the shill-plasters were made. Bouton squealed and Murray raided the plant. Then Bouton was turned loose and Jourdan gave him money to buy a couple of bonds.

Bouton returned in a few days with two bonds. Jourdan sent after the Concord Bank officials and asked them to identify them. They couldn't. The bank people were positive that the bonds were part of the stolen lot, but the numbers had been changed so cleverly that they couldn't positively identify either bond. This was as Jourdan expected, and he wasn't one bit discouraged. He summoned Bouton and ordered him to begin negotiations with Moore's supposed emissary for the purchase of \$40,000 worth of bonds. It took Bouton some time to make the connection but he finally reported that the bonds would be delivered on a certain night at the corner of Third avenue and Twentieth eighty street. The go-between was to deliver the goods to Bouton, who had agreed

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to buy them. Jourdan dismissed Bouton and told him to return to get the money to buy the bonds on the day of appointment.

When Bouton appeared next at the station house Jourdan ordered him locked up, much to his surprise. That night Jourdan and his men kept the appointment with the man who had bonds to sell. They arrested him, threw him into a cab and hustled him down to Franklin street. There he was searched and a lot of the stolen paper was found on him.

'Where's Moore?' asked Jourdan. 'I don't know,' said the go-between. 'Well, I'll give you five minutes to find out,' said Jourdan. 'You're in a bad fix. This stuff found on you was stolen from a bank and you're liable to go up for twenty years.'

Bouton was brought in, and at sight of him the go-between threw up his hands. He agreed to tell where Moore was located if he was not prosecuted for having the paper in his possession. Jourdan made this promise and the go-between told where Moore was and exactly how to reach him. Then he was locked in a dark cell, as was Bouton. Neither man was allowed to communicate with his friends on the outside.

The next night at dusk, Jourdan with his four picked aides started for Moore's hiding place. Moore lived in New Jersey, eighteen miles from Camden, in the village of Paulsboro. He lived in a pretty little cottage off the main road. His house could not be seen from the main road, as a growth of woods obscured it. The house fronted on the Delaware River.

To the people of Paulsboro Moore was known as a retired business man named Sherman. He lived there alone with his wife, who was known to the police as Becky Moore. She was the widow of Dan Cunningham, a noted bad man of his day, and the daughter of Bill Sturges, an old English sneak thief and burglar. The couple lived in some style. They had a team of fast horses and employed one male servant, who acted as coachman or cook as the occasion demanded. Jourdan had arranged to arrive at Moore's hiding place at daylight. He got there at dawn and instructed his men just what he wanted them to do. To Policeman Haggerty he gave the job of going into the house and nabbing Moore. The Haggerty of those days was a big muscular chap who would rather fight than eat. He was to enter the house by the rear door. Dunn and Dolan were assigned to cover the rear of the house and Jourdan and Elder went to the front.

'Be careful, Haggerty,' said the Captain. 'You're up against a tough man who'll kill you if he thinks there is a chance of escape.'

Haggerty rapped on the rear door. There wasn't any answer to the first rap and he knocked again. A window in the upper part of the house was opened and the owner of a musical voice said softly:

'Gentlemen, I know the object of your visit. I'll be with you in a minute.'

Haggerty banged on the door again. It was opened by the male servant. Haggerty shoved a revolver against the man's head and ordered him to show the way to his employer's room. The servant was frightened and started to do as he was ordered. He led the way through a kitchen and dining room into the hallway. As Haggerty stepped into the hall, watching intently the servant, he was commanded to halt. Standing on the stairs near the top was Moore, with a revolver in each hand and both guns pointed at the policeman.

'What are you doing in my house?' asked Moore coolly.

'I came here to see you,' replied the policeman, who had his nerve with him.

'Well, I don't know you,' said Moore, 'and I'll give you five minutes to get out.'

'Maybe you know these two men,' said Haggerty, pointing to Dunn and Dolan, who were trailing Haggerty and had just stepped into the hall.

'No, I don't,' said the crook, covering the three men with his guns.

'Well, Capt. Jourdan and Elder are out in the front of the house,' said Haggerty; 'probably you know them.'

'If that is the case,' said Moore, pocketing his revolvers, 'I'll come down.'

Moore opened the front door himself and in walked Jourdan and Elder. To Jourdan Moore handed his revolvers.

'I knew I had a fighting chance, Captain,' he said in his quiet way, 'until I learned you were out here. Then I knew the game was up. I got away from you once and I knew I couldn't do it again.'

Moore was handcuffed, and Jourdan left Elder, Dunn and Dolan to take care of him. The Captain and Haggerty went through the house. In Moore's room they found a cylinder stove. The stove was red hot. Moore's wife was in the room fully dressed. She greeted the Captain cheerfully. Jourdan looked at the red-hot stove. There was nothing inside but ashes. Moore and his wife had burned every bit of evidence of crookedness. The house was searched from cellar to garret, but nothing was found. Becky Moore got breakfast for her husband's captors, and then Jourdan, Haggerty and Dolan started away with their prisoner. Elder and Dunn were left behind to search for the remainder of the stolen bones. Nowadays it is necessary to have extradition papers to get a crook from one State into another, but Moore was hustled into New York without this formality. On the way he offered Jourdan \$100,000 for his liberty, Jourdan couldn't be bought. Moore admitted his guilt in a confidential talk with Jourdan and said his partner in the bank robbery was 'English' Harry Howard, a notorious crook with a reputation on two continents. After the robbery Howard shipped to Canada, taking with him that part of the spoils that was in cash. Moore kept all the stolen paper.

Moore's arrest didn't cause him to lose his nerve. The bank people were sent for, and after parleying for two weeks with Moore they finally agreed to give him \$20,000 in cash and not prosecute him if he returned what bonds he still retained. To this proposition Moore agreed. Three weeks after his arrest he was taken from the dark cell in which he had been confined since his capture to his home at Paulsboro, N. J. In the presence of Jourdan and his men he unearthed stolen bonds of the value of \$199,000. He had divided the bonds into two lots and placed them in metal jars. One of the jars he buried six feet deep on the bank of the Delaware River right in front of his house. The other jar was dug from the earth in his barn. He turned the \$199,000 worth of paper over to the bank people and got his liberty and \$20,000 in return.

The second bank robbery to which I referred was the looting of the Bowdoinham National Bank of Maine. This occurred a short time after the Concord Bank affair. Three men took part in this job. To the police they were known as Rory Simms, 'Fairy' McGuire and Dave Barlett. They got into the bank late one night, but couldn't force the safe. They knew where the cashier lived, and they went to his house. The cashier, his wife and the infant child were in bed. The trio of crooks noiselessly entered the house and went to the sleeping room of the cashier. The infant child was lying asleep between the parents. One of the ruffians lifted the child out of the bed and put a dagger to its head. The child's parents were ordered to keep quiet if they valued the life of their offspring. The cashier was forced to get up and dress. Then two of the fellows took him to the bank. They ordered him to open the safe. The penalty for refusing was the death of his child. He opened the safe and the two thieves looted it. They gagged and bound the cashier and left him in the bank. Then they went back to the cashier's house, where the third member of the gang was on duty with a knife at the infant's head.

The child's mother was almost insane from fright. She kept her eyes constantly on her child and the knife poised ready to take its life. The child was finally given back to its mother and she was informed that her husband was safe. If the wife made an outcry her husband was to be murdered. The thieves got away and came to New York.

After vainly working for months to try and capture the thieves the local and State authorities asked the aid of the New York department. The job was intrusted to Jourdan. He brought the cashier on to New York, disguised him and showed him every crook in town. In two weeks Jourdan had captured the three men and had them on the way to Maine. When Jourdan's men went to arrest McGuire he pulled a knife on the officers. That knife was afterward identified by the bank cashier's wife as the weapon that was to send her child to eternity and was the means of sending the trio to jail for fifteen years.

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Better So.

'Why do the roses fade slowly away?' she inquired poetically.

'Well,' replied the bald-headed young man with wide ears, 'when you think it over it's all for the best. It's more comfortable to have them fade slowly away than to go off all of a sudden like a torpedo.'

Politics may make strange bedfellows, but they are always willing to lie on their own side.