

Science Helps Army's Criminal Sleuths Protect Innocent from Unjust Accusations

CAMP GORDON, Ga. — The Criminal Investigation Laboratory of the Provost Marshal General Center here is a neutral zone of justice where only scientific fact can tip the scales.

"We get the same sense of achievement out of proving innocence as guilt," says Major Leonard Bell, Torrance, Calif., laboratory chief.

"We don't even want to know de-

tails of a case we are working on. Unconsciously, our testimony as expert witnesses in court might be colored if we knew more than that a piece of glass could not have come from a certain headlight or that a bullet was fired from a particular gun."

The laboratory, which serves Army installations and soldier-defendants all over the United States, receives approximately 70 cases a month, which are divided among five sections, according to type: chemical, photographic, firearms, documents, and fingerprints.

Each section has its stories of achievement, many of these, happily, illustrate how science can repudiate the most damning circumstantial evidence and set free an innocent man.

Take the case of a private who was caught sleeping on his guard-house tower post. His case seemed hopeless until the defense counsel came up with an idea: he insisted that a sample of the air from the tower be sent here for testing.

Technicians in the chemical section bubbled the air through a test solution and came up with evidence that acquitted the soldier. The air sample was filled with fumes that would cause drowsiness and eventually sleep—however strong the sense of duty prompting a soldier to wakefulness.

The firearms section, headed by Captain Richard F. Burns of Detroit, Mich., has known its share of drama. Recently, a soldier found in the vicinity when a taxicab driver was shot was held because he was carrying a .45 caliber revolver—and the bullet in the victim's body was from such a weapon.

The slug from the body and the soldier's revolver were both sent to the firearms section. However, a bullet fired from the revolver was so dissimilar from the lethal one that the laboratory technicians were able to give evidence that freed the soldier.

The laboratory chief himself had a part in another firearms case. Bell, who worked for 17 years in the Akron, O., police department before becoming an Army MP, was instrumental in having a murder charge changed to the lesser one of homicide.

The soldier had fired a weapon and killed the victim who was in a small building. The prosecution claimed the suspect had fired from within the building and deliberately.

Bell inspected the hole made by the ricochet of the bullet. The direction the fibers of wood had been bent indicated a line of fire that would have had its source out of the building; from that point it would have been impossible for the suspect to see the person he shot.

Bell's evidence was accepted and the murder charge was dropped. So the 17 men in the only Army criminal investigation laboratory

in the United States—others are located in Germany and Japan—go about their daily business.

Chief Warrant Officer George R. Bird of Augusta, Ga., head of the documents section, examines such questioned papers as checks, notes and birth certificates, using various types of magnifiers to sort out the forgeries.

MSgt. Roy C. Fite, Elizabethtown, Ky., and Sic Stirling N. Davis, Hilton Village, Va., are the laboratory's fingerprint experts. This section is responsible also for making molds of fingerprints, tire-marks, broken glass and similar objects that help identify the real offender.

Here, as in all activities of the Provost Marshal General's Office, the emphasis is on truth, hand- maiden of justice. The only distinction between the technicians here and other MPs is that they search for the truth that sets men free—or convicts them, as the case may be—in test-tubes, retorts and ultra-violet light.

Approximately \$200,000 worth of instruments help them as they search. By any standards—human or material—the U. S. Army figures it a sound investment.



LOTS OF "PLUCK"—Cathy McCartney, 4, of Des Plaines, Ill., plucks a tune on a huge banjo at a music industry trade show in Chicago, where news of national revival of interest in the banjo made sweet music to the instrument makers' ears.

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TV SALES AND SERVICE — See Sylvania's famous "Halo Light"



PIPE THIS—Farmer prepares to lay plastic pipe with this automatic device on a plot of land near Franklin, Pa., where the labor-saving mechanism is manufactured. Disposable reels holding up to 600 feet of piping are attached to the machine, which is constructed for a three-point hitch, but which is adaptable to any farm tractor, according to the manufacturer. Operating at tractor speed, it is designed to uncover a trench, lay pipe 14 to 20 inches deep and back-fill after itself, at the rate of 100 feet per minute.

HINTS TO Homemakers

BY RUTH CURRIENT
FIRST HOME DEMONSTRATION AGENT

WHY A GOOD CONTAINER?

Miss Nita Orr, specialist in food conservation, frozen food department, says milk cartons are for milk, not to freeze food in, and they are not satisfactory for that purpose. This is true when they are clean and new before they have been used for milk. It is doubly true after milk has been in the container, for then there is no way to get it clean. It follows that even if it could be cleaned, it still would not be good to use for frozen foods. It's not made out of the proper material—cardboard cartons made for frozen foods have special treatment to protect the food when it is stored at low temperatures. This carton is fine for fresh milk—convenient, inexpensive, easily disposable—so leave it to milk! It has no re-use value as a food container and no value as a frozen food container.

You ask: "Why isn't the milk carton, the fresh oyster cup, the ice cream carton, all right to use for my frozen peas, beans, strawberries and sausage? Why is butcher paper or household aluminum foil all right to use for wrapping pork chops, beef roasts and lamb patties?"

The packaging expert gives answers such as: "Material used for wrapping pork must be an oxygen barrier. It is necessary that frozen food containers and packaging materials have low moisture-vapor transmission..." To us that means using containers and packaging materials that will keep all the freshness inside the package while it's being frozen and throughout storage in the freezer locker.

HEEDS DAD: TAKES \$32,000

New York — Although he is 55 years old, Gino Prato takes his father's advice. Prato, destined to receive \$32,000 on a radio-TV giveaway program, could have taken the chance of answering just one more question and, if answered correctly, received \$64,000, received a cable from his father in Italy, which advised: "Stop where you are. That's enough this way. Regards Daddy." So, Prato took a check for the \$32,000 he had won, saying, "Because I take my daddy's advice all my life, I accept."

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WANTED — Supervisor for kindergarten and nursery school at colored community center. Apply in person to Y. H. Musgrave. tfe

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STOLEN FROM beside Skipper's Grocery Friday p.m., a boy's red and white Western Flyer bicycle with basket. Anyone having information concerning this bicycle is asked to contact H. J. Skipper. 9-2p

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FOR RENT — two-bedroom house. See Paul Garrison at W. R. Jennette Furniture Co., Mount Olive.

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ABOUT YOUR HOME

By FRANCES DELL

Color is one of the most important considerations in decorating a child's room. Bright, clear colors are preferred. It seems children are not inhibited about color as adults.

Parents have made pink and blue popular for babies. However, if a baby is given a choice between pink or red he will choose red every time. It has long been known that primary colors appeal to youngsters.

The seven and eight-year-olds will have very definite ideas concerning colors. It is wise for parents to encourage these ideas. It is only natural that as they grow older, approaching high school and college, they will begin to like more sophisticated color combinations. These colors usually have a much grayer tone than their former choices.

When choosing furniture for the children's room try to find a versatile type that will be interchangeable and not limited to any one room. It should be able to continue its usefulness as the family grows. Beds that can later double as sofas are good.

Be as practical as possible in the choice of rugs and fabrics. The do-it-yourself ideas are perfect for a child's room. Pictures he can paint or a piece of furniture he can help build will encourage a child's individuality.

Frame some of the child's original paintings for the walls if the idea takes him. Encourage him to take an interest in decorating his room and it will follow that his pride in the room will cause him to take care of the furnishings.

Highest Cotton Support Price In Nation Paid N.C. Farmers

The highest Commodity Credit Corporation cotton support prices in America are available to North Carolina's farmers due to their close proximity to mills, according to W. Glenn Tussey, extension farm management and marketing specialist.

Tussey emphasizes, however, that to receive the highest dollar for their cotton, farmers should exert every effort to harvest, handle, and gin quality cotton.

A sample from each bale should be submitted for government classification to the Raleigh Classing office. This unbiased grade and staple report, coupled with use of market news information, will then enable the farmer to make the wisest marketing decision, to sell, to hold, or to receive CCC support prices by securing a government loan.

The support price for the predominating N. C. grade and staple length (middling, 1 1/32 inches) is 36.15 cents per pound in the Piedmont and 36.05 in Eastern Carolina, according to Tussey.

The Farm Question Box

QUESTION: What precautions should I take when friends want to visit my chicken houses?

ANSWER: If visitors must come in, be sure they wear rubber footwear and wash them clean of yard dirt before leaving. However, take as few people as possible into your poultry house.

QUESTION: What is the best way to keep land from eroding?

ANSWER: When it comes to holding the soil, controlling erosion, and checking run-off, a good sod is hard to beat. Consider this when planning conservation practices to be carried out this fall.

QUESTION: What does it cost to keep a "cull" chicken?

ANSWER: R. S. Dearnstyne of the State college poultry science department says that when birds reach sexual maturity, the poultryman has about \$1.75 in each bird. Since it's doubtful that he can net over \$1.00 each on his culls, he loses 75 cents on each cull he raises.

RATTLER IN JEEP ROUTS TWO

Portsmouth, Va.—Capt. John F. West and Capt. George N. Sanders were riding along the highway at 40-miles-per-hour clip when a rattlesnake reared its head between them. Saunders took one look and jumped—into a ditch, head first. West stuck it out a few moments and deciding discretion was the better part of valor, jumped too. The jeep jumped, too, into a ditch, but was unscathed. The snake slithered off into the grass.

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Glendale, Calif.—Susan Ball, the beautiful actress who recently died of cancer, just a year after her marriage to Actor Richard Long, was buried in her wedding dress. Dr. Louis H. Evans, Presbyterian minister, who conducted the services, later said, "On the stage of life she won an Oscar for courage by the help of God. She taught us what it was like to wear the body like a loose garment. It never constricted her soul nor strangled her spirit."

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