

# Prison Ends Toll of Amazing Fraud

## Seven Years Meted Out to \$20,000,000 Swindler of Toronto Bankers.

Toronto, Ont.—Found guilty on 15 counts of forgery, Percy D. Ham, one of the socially elected of Toronto, was sentenced to seven years in the penitentiary. So closes one of the most amazing frauds in the history of finance in Canada.

Ham, a quiet, unassuming young gentleman of artistic tastes, was a junior clerk in a government office. With this modest background and with no financial capital, he launched a scheme of operations of staggering proportions. In a period of about two years he negotiated sales and purchases of bonds amounting, according to the court records, to more than \$20,000,000.

Ham, according to his counsel, came out of the maze of purchases and sales without a 5-cent piece for himself, although losses sustained by brokers and friends as far as they were traced, amounted to \$648,000.

Ham had been a precocious child. To satisfy an adventurous longing, counsel said, the young clerk had launched out in the hope of demonstrating that he was not the insignificant clerk he in reality was.

**Credulity of Victims Amazing.**  
The credulity with which his campaign was accepted by a hard-headed financial world was one of the most amazing features of the case. Bond purchases, running as they did into millions a month, must inevitably attract attention in a market as small as this one. Instead of being regarded with suspicion, Ham commanded respect. Pop-eyed fictions sprang up, crediting him with being the agent of governments and of financial syndicates planning far-reaching coups.

Ham began his operations on a small and evidently experimental basis. His first purchase was of only a few thousand dollars of government bonds—practically all his transactions were in government bonds. His capital did not exceed a few thousand cents, but he negotiated the purchase this way: Ham said he was acting for an out-of-town friend, and gave his personal check to be held by the brokers until the bonds were delivered to his friend, who would immediately advance payment. Though bonds are sold "cash on delivery," Ham's proposal was accepted. The credit of his check for the few days requested was accepted by brokers who knew him, or his father, or his friends. Ham covered the transaction within the time specified by reselling the bonds through another firm.

**Financial Pyramid Erected.**  
The operation was repeated over and over again on an ever-increasing scale. After each transaction Ham came to be regarded as an even more desirable client. But there was never any profit for Ham. Every transaction showed a loss of at least two commissions for buying and selling, and often a fractional loss in addition in the market price, the weight of the offerings being sufficient to depress the price on a narrow market. There is no evidence that Ham at any time attempted to use his credit or the securities which were temporarily in his possession for speculative purposes. Playing the market for an advance or a decline did not seem to fall within his scheme of things. Neither is there any evidence that he planned at any time to abscond, although in the later phases of his adventure he must have been in possession at times of enormous quantities of negotiable securities.

Difficulties developed for Ham as his operations pyramided and the total of his losses mounted. The credit of his personal checks was no longer sufficient to finance his hare-brained strategy.

**Resorts to Forgery.**  
These difficulties he met by forgery, selecting two prominent citizens—one John Gleason, an Ottawa capitalist, and Rev. William Beattie, a London clergyman with wealthy relatives—and attaching their names to a series of notes, which he used as collateral.

He stated that these gentlemen had selected him as their confidential agent. Beattie, he said, was under special obligation to him for having saved his young son from drowning. He insisted that the nature of their plans was such that the men must remain in the background and that they could not be communicated with directly. In one case, under pressure, he produced a letter, with Gleason's name forged, to substantiate the note.

Five notes, totaling \$500,000, purporting to have been signed by Gleason and Beattie, were produced and used by Ham. These he used in two ways. He deposited them with brokers as collateral. But the cruelest feature of his operations was when he used these notes to secure advances of cash and securities from private individuals. The individuals were friends of his or of his family. In case of one lady, a widow, he secured advances amounting to \$200,000, which represented most of her capital.

**Exposure of the Fraud.**  
Exposure came when one broker communicated directly with Gleason, the supposed backer of huge transactions. Like a bombshell it developed that Gleason knew nothing of Ham and had signed no note.

Ham was summoned to the office of one of the largest bond houses in Toronto and given the third degree. He still insisted that he could make good his commitments and was given a few hours to do so. That afternoon he was discovered in the kitchen of his home, with the gas turned on and suffering from asphyxiation, which a short sojourn in the hospital cleared up.

Where the \$648,000 that was lost went to was not satisfactorily divulged by the trial. A substantial sum went to brokers as commissions.

## 382 New Rural Mail Routes Serving 635,000

Washington—More than 635,000 persons in rural districts received their mail at their front doors for the first time during the last year. They were served, the Post-Office department announced, by the 382 new rural mail routes established during 1928. The department reported that 45,318 rural routes, supplying 6,616,000 families, estimated at 30,435,500 persons, and covering 1,249,978 miles, were in operation during the year. The rural carriers covered 377,045,703 miles in their deliveries.

## Girl, 3, Tries Suicide to Join Grandfather

Vienna.—Even children have been affected by the suicide epidemic in Austria. Three-year-old Helll Hamp was found behind the cupboard the other day choking. She had wrapped a rope around her neck and was seemingly about to die when discovered. Revived, her explanation was that she wanted to go to heaven to "dear grandfather."

"Dear grandfather" had committed suicide a few weeks previously, distressed because he could not aid little Helll's poverty-stricken parents.

## Hunter Uses Bow and Arrow After Big Game

Corvallis, Ore.—Prof. R. G. Thompson of the Oregon Agricultural college started his archery hunting on squirrels, rabbits and other small game, but now he is looking for the largest game to be found in the state, and if there were lions and tigers here he would probably set out to get one of them.

This year's bag includes a bear and a deer. He wanted to get a deer last year, he said, but was afraid he would fail, so he took along a rifle. He used the rifle and brought in two bucks. This year, however, he left his gun at home, determined to bag a buck with an arrow.

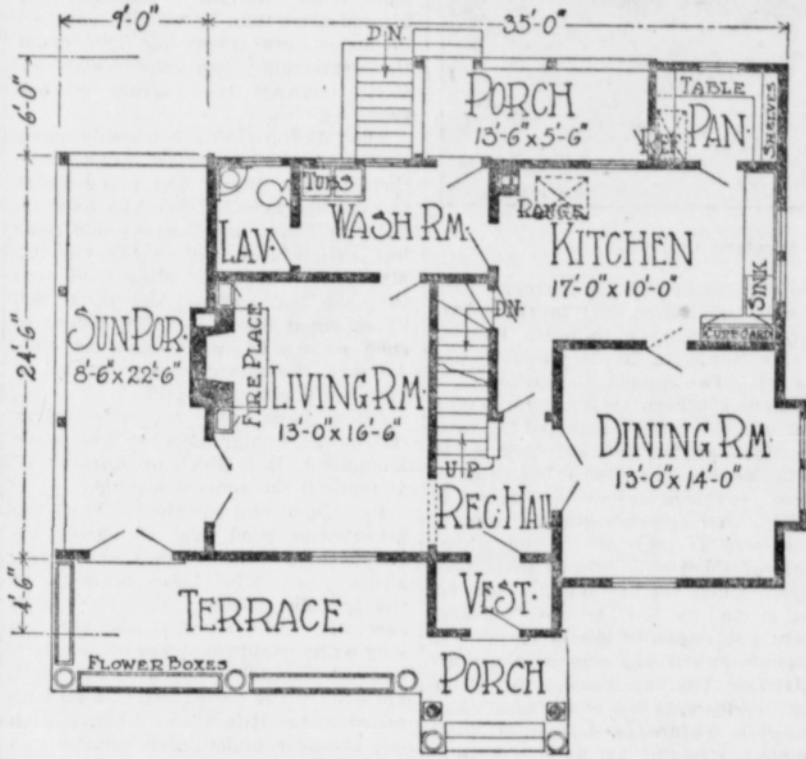
He shot at two, then brought down his third at 65 yards with his six-foot English longbow. The arrow, 28 inches long, feathered with turkey feathers and tipped with a two-inch steel blade, struck the deer's knee and glanced into its stomach, penetrating several inches. The big buck ran about 50 feet and dropped dead. The bow requires about 75 pounds pull.

The bear was even easier to bag than the deer, Thompson said, because not as active.

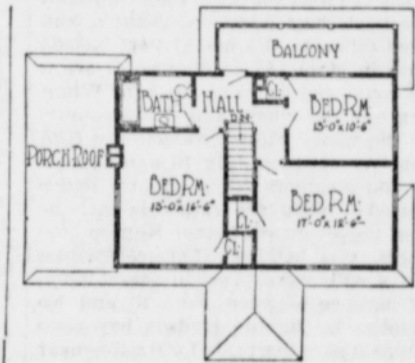
Thompson declares that if everybody used arrows in their hunting there would be plenty of game in the state.

**Origin of Candy**  
Over 200 years ago an English doctor was moved to pity for a little girl who had to take nasty medicine, so he made a mixture of sugar, water and flavoring extract. This he gave to the little girl with her medicine and she liked it so well that the doctor was persuaded after her recovery to prepare more of the delightful concoction with the medicine omitted. He called the preparation "candy." And that's how the popular confection originated.—Thrift Magazine.

## Six-Room Modern House in Style Reminiscent of Days Long Ago



First Floor Plan.



Second Floor Plan.

By W. A. RADFORD  
Mr. William A. Radford will answer questions and give advice FREE OF COST on all problems pertaining to the subject of building, for the readers of this paper. On account of his wide experience as editor, author and manufacturer, he is, without doubt, the highest authority on the subject. Address all inquiries to William A. Radford, No. 1827 Prairie Avenue, Chicago, for reply.

Getting an attractive new home at a comparatively low cost is not such a difficult matter. Proper selection of a home-building design and of materials that are good but not in the most expensive class will bring to prospective home builders a comfortable house and one that is a delight to the eye as well.

An excellent example of what may be obtained in this manner is shown in the illustration. Here is a two-story frame home, the kind that was popular a few generations ago because of its low cost. But added to it are a sun parlor, a terrace and an overhanging roof, which transform the house into a most pleasing modern home.

As will be seen by the floor plans that accompany the exterior view, the house contains six rooms, the sun parlor and a washroom and lavatory on the first floor and bedroom on the second. The central entrance leads into a reception hall, to the left of which is the large living room, and to the right the dining room. Both of these rooms are of good size. French doors from the living room at the side of the fireplace lead to the sun parlor which extends the depth of the house. Note also that there are two doors in each room giving entrance to all parts of the house with a minimum of travel. The hall leads directly to the kitchen as well as to the living room and dining room. The kitchen is connected with dining room and washroom as well. A door to the rear of the living room leads to the kitchen through the washroom. This is good home planning. The bedrooms upstairs all are corner rooms and large. They open off a central hall, with the bath at one side.

The house is 35 feet wide and 24 feet 6 inches deep.

**Farm Houses Now Have All Modern Conveniences**  
Development of home equipment has made it possible to place every modern convenience of the city residence in the farmhouse.

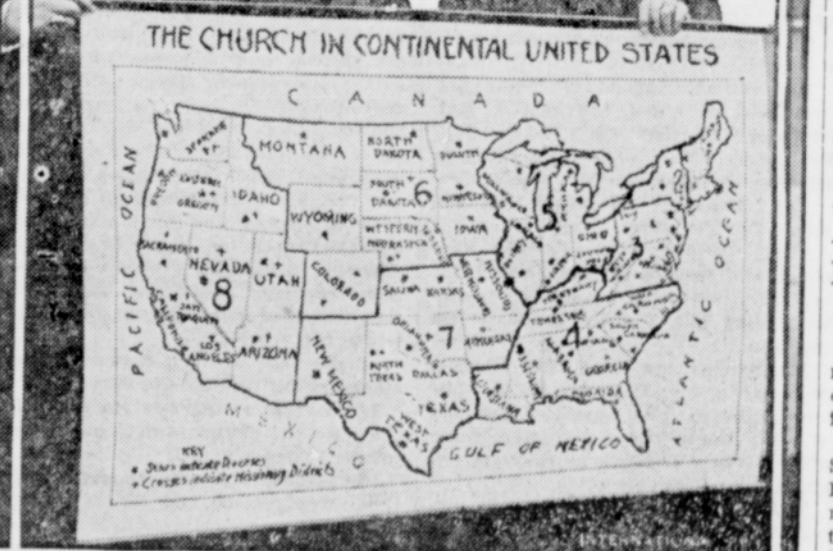
**Good Lumber Necessary for Good Construction**  
If lumber is worked on the "job" it takes additional time for the carpenter and additional money from the builder. The best workmen cannot build a good-looking home with a poorly manufactured product.

For that reason it is only good business when building a home to rely upon some known lumber that is manufactured by a reliable firm. And the best security is in a trade-marked brand of lumber, for here the manufacturer must depend upon his lumber to make his easily distinguishable product acceptable to the building world.

**When Floors Shrink**  
It frequently happens that floor boards shrink badly, particularly on pine floors, showing wide and unsightly cracks which should be filled in before refinishing. Of course, they are always filled with dirt which must be carefully removed and the cracks dusted out.

**Watch These**  
There are a number of features to be sure of in building your home. One is heating, another plumbing, a third fire safety, a fourth is durable wall construction, and still another is lighting.

## Planning an Evangelistic Crusade



Bishop J. E. Freeman, Leon C. Palmer, secretary of the National Commission of Evangelism of the Protestant Episcopal church, and Bishop Thomas C. Darst, holding the chart of the United States, showing districts in which an Evangelistic crusade will be held early in 1927.

## AMERICANS PAY MILLIONS FOR RARE ART TREASURES

**Celebrated Portrait, "Pinkie," Painted by Lawrence in 1795, Brings \$370,000 at Auction.**

New York.—More than a million dollars' worth of British art treasures, knocked down under the hammer in two days, is destined to hang in American homes and museums.

The celebrated portrait known as "Pinkie," painted by Sir Thomas Lawrence in 1795, has been bought by Joseph Duven of New York for about \$370,000 at the auction of the Miehlem collection in London.

**Kodiak Bear Weighs Ton**  
The Kodiak brown bear attains the greatest weight of all bears, often weighing almost a ton, according to the Dearborn Independent.

## Stamp Lickers Need Not Fear Ill Effects

Washington.—Regardless of the sanitary question of licking of postage stamps as it might affect others, the licker has no need to fear harmful effects from the operation.

A wrist watch made into a cuff link is a recent innovation.