

CHESTER TIMES – February 12, 1908

ALLEGED CROOKS CAPTURED NEAR CLIFTON HEIGHTS – One of Them, Simeon Kimball of Chester, Shot by Officer Lungen in Self Defense and Is Not Expected to Live at the University Hospital – Defective Trigger Prevented a Murder

After flashing a revolver in the face of Officer James Lungen of Clifton Heights, and attempting to explode it, Simeon Kimball of Eddystone, was last night shot by the official and is in the University of Pennsylvania Hospital, where he was taken after the occurrence and is in such a critical condition that the physicians say that he cannot recover. Kimball made every attempt to shoot the officer, but his weapon refused to explode when the trigger was pulled.

According to Officer Lungen he saw four suspicious looking men going through the town last night at 11:45 o'clock. They were going out Baltimore Avenue toward Media and the policeman, jumping a trolley car, followed them. He got off at Primos switch and saw the men just ahead of him. They discovered that he was coming their way and made an attempt to hide behind a telegraph pole, but seeing that it afforded no place of concealment, decided to face the music.

Lungen, when he got up to the men, asked them where they were going, and they responded to Baltimore. The officer then told them that it was rather late and asked where they were going to spend the night, and they replied, in Media. He then ordered the men to get on a trolley car that was approaching and to go with him when one of them said that he would not and started across the field at break-neck speed and succeeded in making his escape.

The other three men were told to board the car, when Kimball with the oath, pulled a revolver from his pocket and put the barrel of the weapon in the face of Officer Lungen to shoot. Several times he pulled the trigger but the weapon refused to work. Quick as a flash, Lungen pulled his revolver out and shot Kimball, the ball entering the body near the heart. He fell to the ground and the weapon with which he tried to kill the officer also dropped. Several times, while lying in the snow, Kimball tried to reach the gun and shoot the officer.

Lungen picked up the man and placed him on a car. He turned over the other two men to Constable John Smith, who was at the controller of the trolley car. They were taken to the lockup and gave their names as William Thomas, 804 Wall Street, New York, and Charles Kelly, 31000 Sheridan Street, Philadelphia. The injured man was taken to Angora and from there sent to the University of Pennsylvania Hospital for treatment.

The gun which Kimball tried to do the shooting with was a new one and had never been used and no cause can be assigned for its failure to explode. It was a 38 caliber, American bulldog, and was picked up near where Kimball lay after having been shot, by James Beaumont, the conductor of the car.

When the two men were taken to the lockup, on one was found a new grubbing how. The police say that this is used for prying open doors and takes the place of a jimmy. The two prisoners stated that they did not know the fourth man, who made his escape. County Detective Thomas H. Berry started for Clifton Heights early this morning and will make an investigation. Philadelphia detectives will also look over the two prisoners in an attempt to identify them.

It is believed that the men are noted house breakers and that they were about to do a job when they were discovered by Officer Lungen.

Kimbal is well-known to the police in this city and several times has been arrested on various charges and has done time in jail. His brother is now in the Eastern Penitentiary.

KEITH LOCKHART COLLECTION