

ing where and how they slipped up. Safe blowers do their harvesting at the same time farmers do theirs, in the autumn, but the past year has seen an appreciable decrease in the number of successful offences of this sort in the middle West. This is not to say that safe blowing has receded permanently from the high place it has held among crimes on the prairie, for economic and other factors may well bear on that question, but it does reflect creditably on the law-enforcement methods that meantime have brought about the comparative inactivity in this type of crime.

Of course such a plan of action as the one now in use presupposes the existence of sufficient personnel to execute it. Post-war recruiting has partially removed the handicap in this regard under which the Force has been for most of the last decade, and as the new members become fully trained there is every reason to believe that efforts to stamp out safe blowing will become more effective. The new R.C.M.P. radio system, described elsewhere in this issue of *The Quarterly*, and other aids are bound to encroach on such immunity as the safe blower still enjoys.

A good example of how the present plan works is afforded by the investigation into a series of safe blowings that occurred recently within a 25-mile radius of one another. No time was lost and every shred of evidence was gathered in quickly, so that before long the investigators were fairly certain their quarry was within the net they had spread. Subsequent events proved them right, though at the time there may have been some doubts on that score due to a lack of clues and direct evidence.

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At approximately 2 o'clock in the morning of May 4, 1947, the Saskatchewan Pool Elevator at Dahinda, Sask., a hamlet some 65 miles south-east of Moose Jaw, Sask., and 61 miles west of Weyburn, Sask., on a C.P.R. branch line,

was broken into, the safe blown, and \$376.58 stolen from the office safe.

Immediate investigation was set in motion, inquiries throughout the district were carried out, and a wide-spread search for the perpetrators was undertaken. At the scene of the crime, a storm window had been removed and the lower portion of the inner window lifted up. Jemmy marks on the bottom window frame corresponded with others on the ledge below, revealing that the window had been pried up; the locking device on the inside of the window at the top was broken and a piece of it was on the floor.

The safe handle and dial had been knocked off with a heavy hammer-like tool, after which the safe was blown open by the "outside shot" method—nitro-glycerine being used for the purpose. The lower left-hand corner of the safe door was open and buckled, and the metal on the left side had peeled. A section of burned fuse about six inches long with a bit of putty adhering to it was found in the debris, indicating that putty had been used to attach the fuse and detonator ("rope and knocker") before ignition. Torn and shredded pieces of white adhesive tape and more chips of putty were in the rubble; obviously the tape had been used to seal the safe door before inserting the explosive, as no trace of soap was evident.

The charge had apparently been too strong. Apart from evidence of this on the safe itself, some 17 window panes were shattered, and dust that had accumulated through the years on the rafters had settled on everything. A thick layer of grime on the inside window sill had not been disturbed, and it was clear that the guilty parties must have left the premises by the door which locked automatically when shut after them. No attempt had been made to force the door, and no tools which might have been used in committing the crime were found. Several residents of the hamlet heard