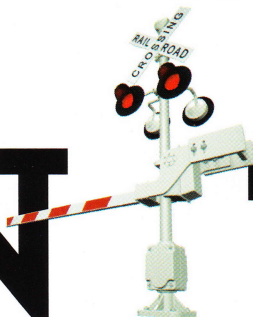


2013 - 2014

special crime scene edition

ON-TRAC



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Allegheny County Mortuary, Fredrick Osterling; Built 1902; Moved in 1929; 604 Fourth Avenue, Pittsburgh

A Fortress-Like Enclave of Government

At the turn of the 20th century, Pittsburgh had a problem. As industry in Pittsburgh grew, the city was having great difficulty caring for the deaths and injuries resulting from the lack of safety standards in the steel mills and from accidents occurring during the construction of skyscrapers. The city needed a morgue.

Architect Fredrick Osterling was hired to design the Allegheny County Mortuary. Osterling designed this impressive stone building to mimic the Allegheny County Jail and Court-house, both designed by famed architect H.H. Richardson, as it was "the intention of the County planners to form a fortress-like enclave of government".

Originally the buildings were located together on Forbes Avenue but the mortuary, just 27 years after it was built, was moved approximately 297 feet to its current address on Fourth Avenue to make room for the County Office Building.

This grand engineering feat was powered by 100 Balkan men, trained in their homeland to move very large structures. The men moved the building by turning large jacks one-quarter

turn at a time in unison to lift the building 20 feet off its foundation. The morgue was raised $\frac{1}{2}$ inch by each quarter turn of the jacks. Teams of horses walking in circles turned the winch that pulled the morgue along steel rails atop the massive cribbing. Amazingly, work continued inside the building throughout the three-week move.

The construction of the morgue was just one of the first steps in improving public health and safety in the city. The same medical professionals who lobbied for the morgue's construction went on to campaign successfully for better safety laws, including the law establishing fire escapes.

The position of coroner was first established by Anglo-Saxon Common Law in 925 A.D. Historically, the coroner had jurisdiction and investigatory powers over most crimes. The cutting-edge investigative work that happened in our mortuary building is world-renowned. But the Allegheny County Mortuary is also known for a quirkier position in our region's pop-culture. During the 1950s and 1960s it was the place for teens to take a date, especially on prom night!

The staff of the Miniature Railroad & Village handcrafts our new additions each year. We have come up with a number of imaginative solutions to architectural challenges, including the use of angel hair pasta to replicate intricately carved trim. This year we broke new ground using a 3D printer to replicate the capitals you see atop many of the decorative columns on our mortuary model. ■

The Miniature Railroad & Village® would like to thank Allegheny County for providing multiple blueprints and historic photographs for this exhibit.



Welcome to the Elite Miniature Railroad & Village CSI Team

ASSIGNMENT:

Review each "Case History" in the Miniature Railroad *On Track* Guide to help us find this clue on the layout!

CASE FILE I

WHEN: April 1901 – January 1902

WHERE: Western PA
Between Pittsburgh and Butler.

WHO: Jack and Ed Biddle; Mrs. Kate Soffel

BACKGROUND:

The story of the Biddle brothers and their notorious gang is still a popular subject of Pittsburgh lore. Ed and Jack Biddle, two handsome Canadians who relocated to Pittsburgh in the early 20th century, were the founders of the notorious "Chloroform Gang." The gang targeted innocent people by incapacitating them and then stealing their belongings. After being charged with murder in a robbery turned ugly, the Biddle brothers were sentenced and held in the Allegheny County Jail in downtown Pittsburgh. Mrs. Kate Soffel was the unhappy wife of the jail warden. Kate fell in love with Ed Biddle and helped the two brothers escape. The men set out to Canada on foot January 30, 1902. After stealing a horse and sleigh, they were on their way north when the police caught up with them. The result was a shootout that left the brothers mortally wounded. Pittsburgh women grieved at their passing, because many of them were attracted to the young men and could sympathize with the "true love" of Kate Soffel and Ed Biddle. More than 4,000 Pittsburghers came to pay their respects to the brothers.

Mrs. Kate Soffel was charged with aiding the brothers and was sentenced to two years in the Allegheny County Jail.

CHALLENGE 1:

The Biddle Brothers and Mrs. Soffel have just left for Canada. Can you spot their escape sleigh?

CASE FILE II

WHEN: 1906

WHERE: Pittsburgh; New York City

WHO: Evelyn Nesbit; H. K. Thaw;
Stanford White

BACKGROUND:

Mr. H. K. Thaw was the son of a wealthy Pittsburgh industrialist and regarded as an eccentric. He grew up a few blocks away from the Science Center's present location on Pittsburgh's North Side, known at the time as Allegheny City. He fell in love with New York City showgirl and western PA native Evelyn Nesbit. Thaw was very jealous of a previous relationship of Evelyn's with a man named Stanford White. White was a gifted architect and member of the accomplished firm of McKim, Mead, and White, designers of countless buildings of distinction. Although Thaw and Nesbit were married, Thaw remained jealous of White. On June 25, 1906, Thaw murdered White in front of New York society at Madison Square Garden's rooftop garden restaurant, one of the buildings White designed.

Thaw was arrested, and the trial was widely publicized as the "Trial of the Century." Pleading insanity, Thaw was sentenced after two trials to an asylum in upstate New York. He was freed in 1915.

CHALLENGE 2:

H. K. Thaw and his wife Evelyn Nesbit are leaving for New York City. Can you spot them as they load their trunks for their trip?

CASE FILE III

WHEN: March 1927 – January 1929

WHERE: Bethel Park, PA; Detroit; Cleveland

WHO: Paul Jaworski; Sam Jaworski;
Flathead Gang

BACKGROUND:

Paul Jaworski and his gang of notorious outlaws called the "Flathead Gang" committed the first robbery of an armored car in our nation's history. Blowing up the car with a homemade landmine, the outlaw and his gang stole \$104,000 intended for the payroll of the workers of the Coverdale mine, owned by the Pittsburgh Terminal Coal Company. The outlaws got away to Washington County, where they were discovered hiding on a local farm. Paul was tried and sentenced to 36 years in prison. In addition to this crime, Paul Jaworski was tried for the robbery of the Christmas payroll of the Mollenauer Mine, which resulted in the theft of \$48,000 and the death of a guard. Convicted of the crime, Paul was sentenced to death. He was in the Allegheny County Jail in downtown Pittsburgh when his brother Sam, guns blazing, broke him out. The gang made it to Detroit, but Sam was captured and returned to Pittsburgh to await trial. Paul and his gang resumed their work, moving to Cleveland in 1928.

In September of 1928, Paul and his gang had plans to storm the Allegheny County Jail in Pittsburgh to rescue Sam. A day before they were to leave, Paul was spotted and apprehended by police after a neighborhood chase and shootout. Paul was returned to Allegheny County, and in January 1929 his death sentence was carried out.

CHALLENGE 3:

Paul and his gang are about to intercept an armored car. Can you spot this outlaw and warn the guards?

