

ON THIS DAY IN WEST VIRGINIA HISTORY
SEPTEMBER 22**Long Sentences
For Counterfeiters**

On September 22, 1911, jail sentences for a gang of counterfeiters from Mercer County were announced in a federal court sitting in Huntington.

CSO: SS.8.7**Investigate the Document:** (*Huntington Herald-Dispatch, September 23, 1911*)

1. What was the name of the “gray-haired woman” who was the only one to escape a prison sentence?
2. “Little Jim Leonard” was only _____ years old but was described as “shrewd” and sentenced to two years at the National Training School for Boys in Washington.

Think Critically: How can counterfeiting operations influence West Virginia’s economic conditions and what could be the effects on its citizens? Does it devalue currency? Does it impact crime levels?

Huntington Herald-Dispatch

HUNTINGTON, WEST VIRGINIA. SATURDAY MORNING, SEPTEMBER 23, 1911.

Long Sentences For Counterfeiters

Gray-haired Mother Only One in
Whole Gang That Escaped
Sentence

**LEADER IS GIVEN TEN
YEARS AT LEAVENWORTH**

Woman Who Was Alleged Insti-
gator in Plot Gets Two-years
Sentence.

COUNTERFEITERS' SENTENCES

John Wilson, alias Jack Wilson, plea of guilty to three counts, 5 years on each count, or a total of ten years. The last five years served are to count for 10 years, in the Federal prison at Leavenworth, Kansas.

Mercer M. Leonard, sentenced to five years at Leavenworth, a sentence of three years having been imposed on one count and two years on another. One sentence will be served as soon as the other has expired.

Mrs. Ester Folden sentenced to two years in the state penitentiary at Moundsville, one year having been imposed in each of the two counts.

Riley Folden, husband of Esther, 4 years at Leavenworth, one having been imposed in each of two counts.

Isabelle Leonard, an aged woman, indicted three times, was discharged from custody, District Attorney Ritz stating to the court that under the circumstances the government did not care to prosecute her. Every count against her was nollied.

John Cooper Leonard, a sixteen years old boy, two years in the National Training School for Boys at Washington.

James Leonard, two years in the National Training School for Boys at Washington. This youngster is but 11 years old but is very shrewd.

There came to an end in Federal court yesterday, the most interesting series of counterfeiting cases ever tried in the southern district of West Virginia, resulting in six persons indicted for that offense being given sentences aggregating 30 years in confinement. Embodied in the cases, were men of mature years and mere children; women, young in years but old in experience and one woman old and gray-haired and the mother of a large family. Fortunately for the latter District Attorney Ritz was lenient and she was sent home, the shame and disgrace of the prison shadows being kept from her.

Jack Wilson is an old and hardened criminal, his very talk betokening long years in the under world of crime. His punishment comes to him as nothing new for he has served time before for the same wrong doing. When Judge Keller imposed upon him the penalty of the law, yesterday, his gray, lined face expressed no emotion—not the least. He had known all along what was coming and was not surprised.

Mercer M. Leonard, just budding into young manhood, strong, well built and with a long life before him will spend five years of it back of prison bars. His case is rather sad when it is considered that his downfall may practically be attributed to the evil influences of one man and that one an old and hardened criminal.

Mrs. Esther Folden, daughter of a prominent Mercer county family, who

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LONG SENTENCES

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was sent to Moundsville for two years. is still a young woman, strong and healthy and yet alleged to have been one of the strongest supports of Jack Wilson in the making of spurious coin, selling her poultry to secure the money with which to purchase the machine used in plating the "queer," and aiding him in making bogus \$5 gold pieces and silver dollars, a large number of both of which were exhibited in court.

Riley Folden, husband of Esther, who was sentenced to four years at Leavenworth, is a middle-aged man never before engaged in criminal calling so far as could be learned. He too had fallen under the spell of promised wealth held out by Wilson and will soon begin the payment of the penalty.

Little Jim Leonard, about three feet tall, red haired and eleven years old, but with plenty of shrewdness, was sentenced to two years in the National Training School for Boys. It may be that the training there will help him if the guesses of those who heard him talk and saw the shrewd little face with outcropping ears and knobby head, are anywhere near right it will take more than two years' training to change him, child though he is.

John Cooper Leonard, soft of eye, unshingled and quiet spoken, was given the same sentence as his brother Jim—two years in the National Training School.

All of these out of one little country community in Mercer county, sent to prison because they took into their midst a hardened criminal who led them on and on until the gates of the penitentiary swung open before them. There's something pitiful about the weakness of human nature and the fact couldn't well be more clearly shown than here.

When the case of Mrs. Isabelle Leonard was called, Judge Ritz addressed the court in regard to her. A little bit of a woman, gray haired and lonely, she sat through it all, a pathetic figure. The district attorney said that circumstances surrounding her particular case, called for the leniency of the court and that the government did not feel like going further into the prosecution of her. He said she had unquestionably tried to raise her children right, from all he could learn, and that she had been dragged into this affair through those children who had disregarded her teachings. After Judge Ritz had closed, each count on which Mrs. Leonard had been indicated was nollled by Judge Keller.

The government found it very easy to secure convictions against those members of the alleged gang that had entered pleas of not guilty to the indictments found against them. The trials were taken up yesterday morning at the opening of the court and in every case the jury quickly returned a verdict of guilty.

The evidence against the accused besides that of the secret service officers, who rounded up the gang, also included the confession made by Jack Wilson, the self-confessed chief of the band of counterfeiters. Wilson recited the story of the whole affair and indicated by his testimony that one of the instigators of the plot was Mrs.

ster Folden. The trials of the defendants took up only a brief time, the evidence in each one being practically the same.

Sizemore Plead Guilty.
Harrison Sizemore arrested for the robbery of a postoffice and who made a sensational escape from a train on the N. & W. railroad several weeks ago while being brought to this city by a United States deputy marshal, pleaded guilty before Judge Keller yesterday afternoon and was sen-

tenced to one year and one day in the Federal prison at Leavenworth.

S. Pierce of Kanawha county pleaded guilty yesterday morning to stealing a U. S. Army tent but sentence has not yet been passed by Judge Keller. It is stated that Pierce is wanted by the state authorities on several different charges.

The case of Tom Menfee charged with stealing mail at the C. & O. depot was called late yesterday but passed until this morning.