

May 12, 1950 was the 1st Illinois State police raid on illegal casinos in 10 years. Ezra Brantley was on that raid. Five years later Captain Brantley and his raiders wrecked havoc on the Illinois illegal casinos 1955-1960. Today we will take a look at the 200 Club also at times called the Annex in Madison, Il. I feel very fortunate to have many of the actual chips confiscated in the raids in my collection.

Special "Thank You" to our "Friend Of the Hobby" on this one.

Enough of that:

This is the fifth in a series of mid and southern Illinois "illegal Of The Day" posts.

I am calling this series of posts "Raiders Of the Lost Illegal's" in honor of Captain Elza Brantley and the troopers that served with him.

"Raiders Of the Lost Illegal's" Part 5

The grandson of Captain Elza Brantley sent me 150 scans of raid pictures, notes on the raids, newspaper articles, official documents, and confiscated chips from 500 (300 in one month) raids on Illinois illegal's, conducted by his grandfather. Some of the chips we have never seen. Also raids on clubs we have never heard of.

Elza Brantley 1913-1999

Graduated from the first class at the Illinois State Police Academy.

1955-1960 Captain in Command Battery #6 Illinois State Police-District #13 East Saint Louis- 27 counties - 105 Troopers.

Actual chip taken in raid on The 200 Club/The Annex. This chip would have been taken in the first state police raid in 10 years, before Brantley became Captain In Command.



2001att2

Name				Address				Town		State		Per		SPECIAL MONOGRAM		200		My note		200 Club and The Annex	
C. M. Davis				205 The Annex				Madison		Ill		T. Davis									
Amount	Color	Initials Both Sides	Style Type	Initials One Side	Other Side	Style Type	Monogram Color	Date Shipped													
600	Green	200	Spec				Yellow	7-3-47													
5000	Red		"	200	and green	Spec	"	7-3-47													
1000	"		Spec	200	"	Spec	"	3-23-48													
There 1M were an adjustment for these broken																					

2002att2

Here's some stuff on the 200 T-mold chip which you said was part of the Illinois trooper's cache. It's sort of a companion chip to the JPC T-mold which was the subject of an IOTD Illinois 9, last year:

<http://www.thechipboard.com/archives/archives.pl/bid/321/md/read/id/1074985/sbj/illegal-of-the-day-illinois-9/>

The JPC and the 200 T-molds were used around the same time in two different places run by different people in Madison County, but both places were almost always mentioned in the same breath and both share the same fate.

## 200—T mold

The 200 chips were delivered in 1947 to Charles M. Davis, a well known gambling operator on the Illinois side of the St. Louis metropolitan area. In the early 1940's Davis was running a place in the city of Madison called the 205 Club, located at 205 Madison Ave. Very late in the evening of April 8th 1945 the fresh corpse of a St. Louis man was found at the bottom of a outdoor basement stairwell next door to the 205 Club. An investigation revealed that the man, who's skull was fractured, had been gambling earlier in the evening at the 205 Club where he reportedly was beaten and tossed from the place. The dead man's body never resulted in any charges but the stink of it resulted in the closing of the 205 before the summer of 1945.

A few months after the closing, Davis, with partners Harry Wrest and Robert Leu, opened a place around the corner from the 205 Club at 200 State Street and called it the 200 Club or sometimes the 200 Club Annex. It was here a few years later that the 200 T-molds were shipped to Davis. Here's a current street view:



During the late 1940's the 200 Club in Madison and the Hyde Park Club in Venice were the biggest gambling operations in Madison County, both places machines making dollars by the millions (the Chicago Tribune claimed at the time that the Hyde Park Club was "one of the largest gambling houses in the USA"). While Davis was operating the 200 Club he was sued numerous times by people who had played there and lost.

Here's one example from Feb. 1949; it gives a nice description of what was going on in the place:

# Sues to Recover Gambling Loss

Alleging that he lost \$1,956.76 by betting at the dice tables of Club 200 in Madison, a Pine Lawn Mo. man filed a suit in Madison county circuit court here today for recovery of that amount.

The plaintiff, John W. Carpenter of 7109 Woodrow avenue, names as defendant Charles Davis, doing business as Club 200 at 200 State street, Madison.

According to the suit, Carpenter incurred the loss between Aug. 25, 1948, and Feb. 15, 1949, when he "visited the defendant's establishment for the purpose of betting at the dice tables."

Describing the place as a gambling casino, Carpenter states in the suit that Davis "placed and accepted bets on horses, operating what is commonly known as a 'book shop,' operated tables for the playing of poker for money or other valuable things, and operated several tables for the playing of that certain game known as 'dice' or 'craps'."

Carpenter seeks recovery of his loss on the grounds that Illinois statutes make it "illegal and unlawful for any person to own or operate a gambling casino" and that under the law he is entitled to recover from the defendant.

Such cases usually are settled before being brought to trial.

My note: I am always amazed at these types of lawsuits. They still happen today in legal casinos. You gambled-you lost. Live with it dummy!!!! \*vbg\*

By the summer of 1949 Davis appears to have sold his interest in the 200 to his associate Harry Wrest. During that summer the heat began pouring in upon the gamblers of Madison County. Several Madison County newspapers continually lamented the wide open gambling there. In August an editor who had been particularly vocal about the 200 Club was threatened over the phone. This incident, along with other factors, led to the temporary closing of the club by the sheriff.

## 200 Club Closes After Threat to C. Townsend

(Granite City Press-Record)

"You will print no more stories about the 200 Club (Madison's notorious gambling joint at 200 State street!) if you know what's good for you," an anonymous telephone caller warned C. E. Townsend, editor of the Press-Record, last Monday night.

The call, which was received at 10:35 p.m., at the editor's home shortly after he arrived there from the office, was made from a local telephone and could not be traced. The man's voice was well-modulated and clear.

"You're connected with the Press-Record, editor or something?" were his first words. On receiving an affirmative reply, he issued his threat.

"Just what do you mean?" Townsend asked.

"I mean that you'd better not print any more stories about the 200 Club," the anonymous caller repeated.

"Who is this?" the editor cut in.

"Never mind who this is. You will see. You'd just better not print any more stories about the 200 Club."

"Are you threatening me?" was Townsend's next question.

"Take it any way you want, but you'll print no more stories about the 200 club if you know what's good for you," the caller warned again.

After a brief pause, he said goodbye and hung up.

2005att2

My note: This type of threat to a newspaper is a terrible move and always back fires. \*vbg\*

The work of editor Townsend and another small Madison County newspaper editor, Paul Simon, was praised by their big brother on the other side of the Mississippi, the St Louis Post-Dispatch. Simon, who was only 20 at the time, would go on to become a US Senator from Illinois and make an unsuccessful bid to be the Democrat Party candidate for President in 1988 (he lost to Dukakis; Simon was the horn-rim glasses and bow-tie wearing candidate—his activities against gambling in Madison County launched his career).

My note: One more time we see a future presidential candidate involved with either closing or keeping illegal joints open.\*vbg\*

### Two Editors In Madison County

(St. Louis Post-Dispatch)

Chalk up some scores for a couple of Madison county editors who are doing something about the lawlessness that has marred their county's good name.

For weeks Paul Simon, editor of the weekly Troy Tribune, has been blasting State's Attorney Lewis with front page open letters which denounce gambling conditions. Last week, C. E. Townsend, publisher of the semi-weekly Granite City Press-Record, was threatened over the phone and told to quit printing exposes of the 200 Club, ornate gambling joint in Madison. Editor Townsend met the threat in his next issue with a warning that if it were not closed citizens may "move the joint out and the officials with it."

Over the weekend, the 200 Club was closed. Sheriff Herrall told the town's Chief of Police that he was acting because of a "breakdown in local law enforcement." He may also have noted that last week 125 Madison county taverns, or almost one out of every four in the county, were denied liquor license renewals, pending hearings, by the State Liquor Control because of reports of gambling on the premises.

If citizens will back up the Granite City Press-Record and the Troy Tribune, they can either force a local cleanup or intervention of the long, strong arm of Springfield.

2006att2

"...intervention of the long, strong arm of Springfield" of course meant this guy:



AT HIS DESK GOVERNOR STEVENSON COMPLAINS SADLY, "GAMBLING HAS BEEN MY NO. 1 HEADACHE"

2007att2

My note: One more time we see a future presidential candidate involved with either closing or keeping illegal joints open. Two different in the same story,\*vbg\*

On May 12th 1950 the "strong arm" was put in motion when Illinois Governor Adlai Stevenson ordered the state police to raid both the 200 Club and the Hyde Park Club. It was reported that this was the first time state police had been used in gambling raids in over a decade and the move made headlines:





# Chicago Daily Tribune

THE WORLD'S GREATEST NEWSPAPER

36 PAGES  
★ ★ ★ SPORTS  
FINAL

VOLUME CIX—NO. 114

1840, U. S. PAT. OFFICE, COPYRIGHT 1900  
BY THE CHICAGO TRIBUNE

SATURDAY, MAY 13, 1939

THIS PAPER CIRCULATES IN  
THE UNITED STATES—SECTION ONE

FOUR CENTS—PAY NO MORE

## STEVENSON RAIDS GAMBLING

### 5 COPS CALLED IN NEAR NORTH SIDE VICE QUIZ

#### Jury Will Question 3 Captains

**CAN'T GET BET DOWN**  
"Heat" on gambling forces  
boulders and "runners" in 1st  
ward to lay low. Story on  
page 5.

Indignees were issued yesterday  
for three police captains and two  
pairdowns to appear before the  
grand jury Monday. They are to  
be questioned about graft and law-  
lessness on the near north side.  
The grand jury also indicated  
that it would call Chief Raymond  
Crane of the uniformed force,  
Crane's deputy, Capt. Philip  
Bevilacqua, and Deputy Commissioner

### Flyer Falls 28,000 Feet from Bomber

Fort Worth, Tex., May 12 (AP)—  
An air force lieutenant fell from  
the nose section of a B-26 late this  
afternoon over Salome, Ariz., 8th  
air force headquarters announced  
tonight.  
The plane was flying at 28,000  
feet and an explosive decompression  
is believed to have occurred.  
A break in a window of the plane  
at that height would suck a man  
from his seat. It was explained.  
Name of the lieutenant was not  
announced. Fighter planes in the  
area were searching for the missing  
flyer.

The plane was on a training  
flight to Fairfield-Suisun air base,  
Cal., when the accident occurred.  
The Carwell air base here said  
the plane was returning to Fort  
Worth.

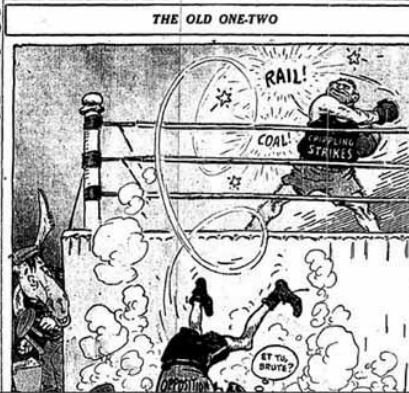
### BLAST, 4-11 FIRE KILLS WORKER IN YARDS PLANT

(Picture on back page)  
One man was killed, and two in-  
jured, in a fire last night in the

### 2 LAVISH DENS DOWNSTATE HIT BY GOVERNOR

#### Nab 58 Employees, Grab Equipment

Madison, Ill., May 12 (Special)  
—A picked detail of state police,  
acting under the  
direct orders of  
Gov. Stevenson,  
today began a  
state-wide  
raid on  
gambling by  
raiding two of  
Illinois' most  
lavish layouts,  
the Hyde Park  
club at nearby  
Venice and the 200 Club here in  
Madison. The club drew a heavy  
trade from St. Louis, just across  
the Mississippi river.



### Allies to Tie German Zones to W. Europe

LONDON, May 12 (AP)—Foreign  
ministers of Britain and France,  
and State Secretary Acheson  
agreed today on joining Western  
Germany economically and politi-  
cally to the rest of a united west-  
ern Europe.  
They also emphasized the deci-  
sion of the three nations to con-  
tinues to uphold the western rights  
in Berlin and accused Russia of  
"a grave disregard of human  
rights" in failing to return the  
rest of her German and Japanese  
prisoners of war.

Robert Schuman, French for-  
eign minister, laid his plan for  
uniting French, German, and pos-  
sibly other European coal and  
steel industries before Acheson  
and Ernest Bevin, British foreign  
secretary. His discussion of the  
plan included a declaration that it  
will not be a cartel. He empha-  
sized that his idea of international  
control of such basic industries is  
to expand them and keep markets  
open.  
Talks Seven Hours

### 3 DAY JUBILEE OF DEMOCRATS OPENS TODAY

#### Bigwigs Arrive for Jefferson Fete

**JUBILEE PROGRAM**  
Program of events for three  
day Jefferson Jubilee in an  
page 5.

**BY GEORGE TAGGE**  
The nation's Democratic hier-  
archy will converge on Chicago to-  
day for three days of political  
whoopie described as the Jeff-  
erson jubilee.

Civilian Washington, D. C., is  
being stripped of its top brass to  
add lustre to the events here.  
President Truman will speak in  
the Chicago Stadium at 10:30  
p. m. Monday, after all stops have

2008att2

here's the full story from the paper:



## 2 LAVISH DENS DOWNSTATE HIT BY GOVERNOR

### Nab 58 Employees, Grab Equipment



Madison, Ill., May 12 [Special]—A picked detail of state police, acting under the direct orders of Gov. Stevenson, today began a state-wide crackdown on gambling by raiding two of Illinois' most lavish layouts, the Hyde Park club at nearby Venice and the 200 Club here in Madison. The clubs draw a heavy trade from St. Louis, just across the Mississippi river.

The detail of 35 troopers from Springfield, most of them recent recruits, burst into the two clubs simultaneously at 3:20 p. m., barricaded the doors with squad cars, and trapped inside an estimated 800 customers and 58 employees.

At the Hyde Park club the police seized \$16,663 in the cashier's cage, but word of the raid apparently had preceded them to the 200 Club, where Harry Wrest, the operator, had locked the cash in the safe. Wrest, who refused to open the safe, said it contained about \$5,000.

#### Handbook and Games

In both places handbook operations for all races in the country were in full swing, while blackjack games were operating for those who wished to gamble between races.

Late today police removed a moving van load of gambling equipment from the Hyde Park club and took it to Alton, presumably for use as evidence. A smaller quantity of gaming devices was removed from the 200 club, after which the police wielded shiny new axes on the remaining equipment and the interior, including the large blackboards where race results were posted.

Arrested as the operator of the Hyde Park club was Gregory Moore, a former deputy to ex-Sheriff John Dougherty of St. Louis, a Democrat.

#### Employees Seized

Some 40 employees of the Hyde Park club were seized, and another 18 at the 200 club. All were taken to Alton for booking on gambling charges.

In Springfield, meanwhile, Gov. Stevenson announced that he and Atty. Gen. Elliott had ordered today's raids after more than a year of attempting to halt organized gambling thru appeals to local authorities to suppress it.

#### Governor's Statement

The governor's statement follows:

"I have today, in association with Atty. Gen. Elliott, used the state police against commercialized gambling in Madison county.

"For more than a year Atty. Gen. Elliott and I have attempted to stop commercialized gambling

[Continued on page 2, column 5]

## TWO RAIDS OPEN STATE DRIVE ON GAMBLING DENS

[Continued from first page]

by several methods. We have found our direct talks with local officials of offending counties the most effective method.

"Because it is a local responsibility, commercialized gambling should be suppressed locally. Local authorities have cooperated with us in many cases. In others we have been successful only temporarily, or in part, or not at all.

"On the whole, the results have been gratifying. Commercialized gambling is at the lowest ebb in Illinois in many years.

#### MAY STRIKE AGAIN

"I have stated repeatedly that the state would intervene if necessary in cases where commercialized gambling persists in spite of all of our efforts. Hence today's raids. The evidence is being turned over to the state's attorney of Madison county.

"State police will be used again if need be to stop persistent, defiant violation, altho the force is still in process of reorganization and has all it can do to patrol the highways, enforce the truck weight laws, and discharge its regular duties.

"But Illinois is not and must not be 'a gambling state.' The local citizenry and their elected officials can stop commercialized gambling with its attendant corruption and lawlessness. I hope they will and that Illinois will not contribute further to the abdication of local government and local responsibility."

Baird Helfrich, assistant attorney general who was in charge of the raids, said that if Madison county's Democratic state's attorney, Austin Lewis, does not want to prosecute, the attorney general's office will.

Heretofore Lewis has followed the policy of his Democratic predecessor, C. W. Burton. This consists of filing informations against gamblers every three or four months. Usually they plead guilty, pay a fine of \$100 or so, and immediately reopen for business.

Police took the names and addresses of the 500 customers at the Hyde Park club and the 300 at the 200 club, and then released them after searching them.

#### "First Of A Series"

"This is the first of a series of raids to clean up commercialized gambling in Illinois," said one of the raiders, William Flanagan, head of the division of department reports.

For several months state police have been investigating gambling on orders of the governor, who last January at the end of his first year in office termed gambling his "biggest headache."



**BIG BOSS** of the 200 Club, Harry Wrest, looks on as a state trooper counts out the \$922.78 he had in his pocket.

20010att2

My note: Looks like the troopers made a big mess in the 200 Club. \*vbg\* This article was in Captain Brantley's files.

## Scenes and Figures in State Police Raids on 200 Club



G. E. (RED) MOORE, one of the Hyde Park Club owners, was arrested.

Neither place reopened after the raids. The "van loads" of gambling equipment taken in the raids would be destroyed two years later:

# Seized Gaming Equipment Goes Up in Smoke

EDWARDSVILLE. — Gambling paraphernalia confiscated by state highway police in raids two years ago at the Hyde Park casino at Venice and 200 Club in Madison went up in smoke Thursday afternoon at the rear of the county jail.

The equipment, seized in simultaneous raids May 12, 1950, was burned under final orders entered recently by County Judge Michael Kinney in the Hyde Park and 200 Club cases.

Horse race wallboards, betting tabs, "scratch sheets," dice and blackjack tables, and other gambling paraphernalia were removed from storage in the county jail garage by jail trustees under supervision of Sheriff James T. Callahan and County Judge Michael Kinney, and piled in a vacant area.


Shortly before 2:24 p. m., after five gallons of oil had been poured over the inflammable equipment, Deputy Sheriff Joseph F. Kellerman touched a match to the litter and a crowd of spectators witnessed the fiery ending of a two-year legal controversy over disposition of the seized articles.

20011att2


(fortunately some chips from both places managed to escape the inferno)


Ten years after the raid politicians were still making hay out of the 200 Club and Hyde Park Club. Here's a political ad from 1960:

**KEEP MADISON COUNTY CLEAN!**

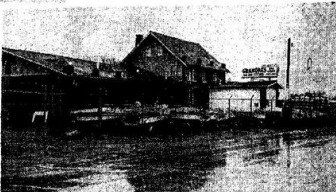
 **FORMERLY**  
THE 200 CLUB  
GAMBLING CASINO  
**LATER**  
A TRUCKING COMPANY  
OFFICE  
**NOW**  
FOR RENT TO  
LEGITIMATE BUSINESS


**FORMERLY**  
FORKEYVILLE,  
A GAMING HOUSE  
**NOW**  
A LEGITIMATE BUSINESS



 **FORMERLY**  
A LATE HOUR  
HOODLUM HANGOUT  
**NOW**  
A CHURCH

**FORMERLY**  
THE NOTORIOUS  
CLUB PREVUE  
**NOW**  
A STORE



 **FORMERLY**  
HYDE PARK  
GAMBLING CASINO  
**NOW**  
THE MCKINLEY BRIDGE  
OFFICE

**HONEST GOVERNMENT NEEDS  
YOUR SUPPORT!**

HELP  
NOMINATE **Dick H. Mudge Jr.**  
CANDIDATE FOR STATE'S ATTORNEY  
DEMOCRATIC PRIMARY -- TUESDAY, APRIL 12TH

My note. "Honest Government" There is one of the most dishonest ads I have ever seen. \*vbg\* Many of the Illinois illegals were still running in 1960.

From Captain Brantley's notes 1955-1960.

About 2/3rds down.

"search warrants almost impossible to obtain as the "State's Attorney's" were usually paid off by the gamblers."

Could the candidate for State Attorney that ran the above ad be warning the operators to pay up or suffer the same results as the joints depicted in the ad? \*vbg\* Just wondering! \*vbg\*

A BRIEF SUMMARY OF MY DUTIES 1955-1960 AS CAPTAIN IN COMMAND OF BATT. #6 ILLINOIS STATE POLICE DISTRICTS, DISTRICT #13 DUQUOIN, DISTRICT #11 E.ST. LOUIS THE SOUTHERN 27 COUNTIES IN ILLINOIS, STARTING SOUTH OF SPRINGFIELD TO CAIRO ON SOUTH, WEST TO ST. LOUIS, EAST TO SHAWNEETOWN, ILL. (The E.St. Louis District headquarters then was in the Department of Transportation Building at French Village, on State Route 50) I had 105 Troopers.

The Captain then was responsible for not only traffic but for controlling gambling and prostitution in those 27 counties, there was no little F.B.I. D.C.I. (Dept. of Criminal Investigation) in the State Police at that time. The Frank "Buster" Wortman, hoodlu, gangster, syndicate operations were prevalent in several counties Madison and St.Clair counties in the E.St.Louis District took three days or nights of my time each week making gambling or prostitution raids, Club Prevue, Corona Club, Ranch House, Long's Tavern, Red Roster, etc. were some of the Clubs I raided. plus several Houses of Ill Fame on Collinsville Avenue which seperated St. Clair and Madison Counties, these raids were made mostly without search warrants, search warrants were almost impossible to obtain as the States Attorney's and Sheriff's were usually paid off by the gamblers, Justice of Peace also were afraid to issue search warrants on account of threats by the gamblers. I also had to spend lots of time on gambling and prostitution in District, DuQuoin, mainly in Alexander, Pulaski, Williamson, and Johnson Counties. we raided five night Clubs in Alexander County 90 straight nights, three times a night with search warrants that I made using only one Trooper at each Night Club - Purple Club - Colony Club - Buddy Buddy Lounge - Club 51 -

I also made the largest "Policy Game " raid in Fireworks Station, E.St. Louis District which was taking in \$200,00 per week and the Club Prevue, Corona Club raid was the biggest Midwest Gambling Raid. with 52 patrons gambling and "Buster Wortman" at the Club when we

20014att2

Stay tuned. Still more from Captain Brantley's files on the Illinois illegal casino raids to come. What I call the "Era Of The Illegals" comes to an end in 1961. One year after Captain Brantley left the Illinois State Police. Bobby Kennedy finished them off in late 1961 when he forced the closure of Newport, KY illegals after close to a 100 year run. River pirates and bootleggers had started illegal gambling in Newport in the last half of the 1800's.

Do you have any illegal casino chips in your collection? If not, IMO you are missing out on one of the best parts of our hobby. Little pieces of clay and history.

