

Captain Brantley and his raiders unlike other local law men and politicians did not play favorites with the Illinois illegal club operators. They took all of them down. \*vbg\* The Turf Club in Cairo, IL was no exception. Our "Friend Of The Hobby" contributed to this series of posts.

Enough of that:

This is the sixth 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 6

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.

Explanation of "500 (300 in one month) raids." Most of these raids consisted of one state trooper in full uniform walking through every room in a club, 3 times a day. It would be hard to start "Dem Bones" rolling with this going on. \*vbg\* Today it would be called harassment.

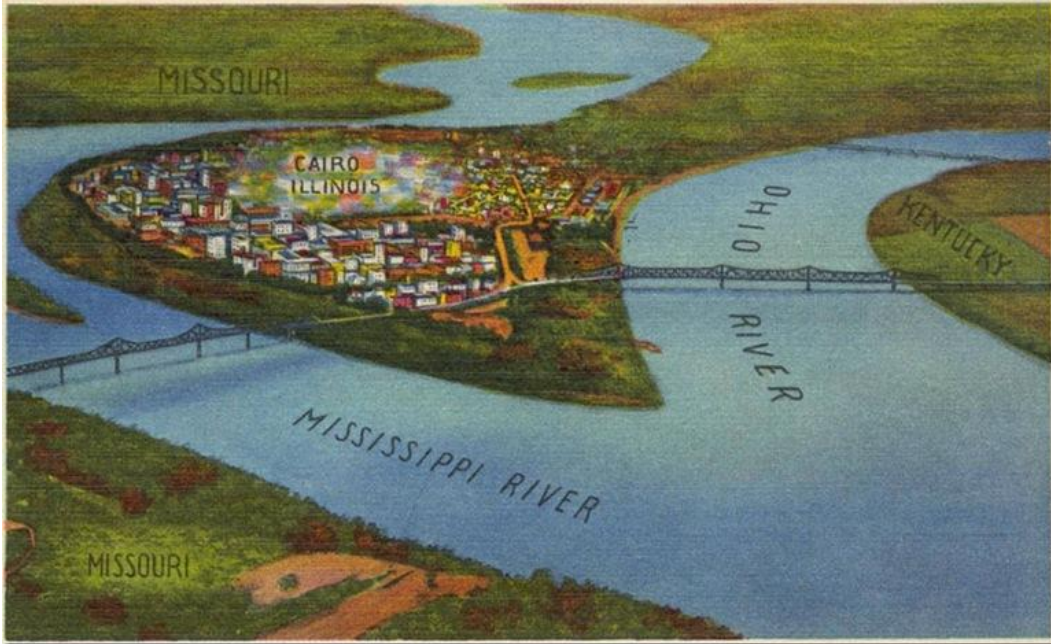


1 Brett TC info1

My note: Blue rect/heart mold is an actual chip taken in the 1955 raid on the Turf Club in Cairo, IL. I've had the dots and rectangle molds since 2006.

Enter "Our "Friend Of The Hobby:"

The Turf Club was in Cairo, IL. Cairo is the county seat of Alexander County and sits at the most southern point of Illinois:



1Brett TC

info2

My note. Great picture. It brings back fond memories of my first 40 years of life in the Ohio river valley. Cairo like Newport, KY was isolated on land at the point of two rivers. I bet Cairo like Newport can trace its illegal history back to 1800's river pirates. \*vbg\*

The Turf Club was on Commercial Avenue at the far southern tip of downtown Cairo (you could walk a couple of blocks east of the club and be standing at the Ohio River and looking into Kentucky). Here are a couple of Taylor orders:

Amount	Color	Initials Both Sides	Style Type	Initials One Side	Other Side	Style Type	Monogram Color	Date Shipped
400	BT. ORANGE	HOC	Black				Silver	11-21-41
400	LT. RED	"	"				Gold	" " "
300	Black	"	"				"	" " "
Returned (never seen for)								
Paid to Jurg Paw - 1/5/42								
CAIRO, ILL								

1Brett TC info3

My note: I need this chip. Cough it up if you have a trader. \*vbg\*

SPECIAL MONOGRAM								
Name <i>Art Garner of Turf Club</i>								
Address <i>204 Commercial Ave</i>								
Town <i>Cairo</i> State <i>Mo</i>		<i>JG</i>						
Per <i>Harp</i>								
Amount	Color	Initials Both Sides	Style Type	Initials One Side	Other Side	Style Type	Monogram Color	Date Shipped
<i>1000</i>	<i>Yellow</i>	<i>T.C.</i>	<i>script</i>				<i>Blue</i>	<i>7-11-46</i>
<i>1000</i>	<i>Gray</i>	<i>"</i>	<i>"</i>				<i>Blue</i>	<i>7-11-46</i>

1 Brett TC info4

My note: I need this chip. Cough it up if you have a trader. \*vbg\*

The building on Commercial Avenue which housed the Turf from at least as early as 1941 to as late as the mid 1980's, perhaps later, was demolished in 2011 (the whole block was torn down). Here's a pic when it was still standing; you can see the old Turf neon sign on the right:



1 Brett TC info5

Here's a close-up of the sign which was offered on eBay in 2011:





1Brett TC info6

Troopers raided the Turf in February 1955:

***State Police Raid  
Four Places in  
Alexander County***

DU QUOIN, Ill. 12—State Police Capt. Walter Eichen said he would sign informations today against holders of licenses for four night clubs involved in gambling raids in Alexander county.

Eichen conferred with the state's attorney and said he would go to Cairo this afternoon to sign the gambling charges against the clubs.

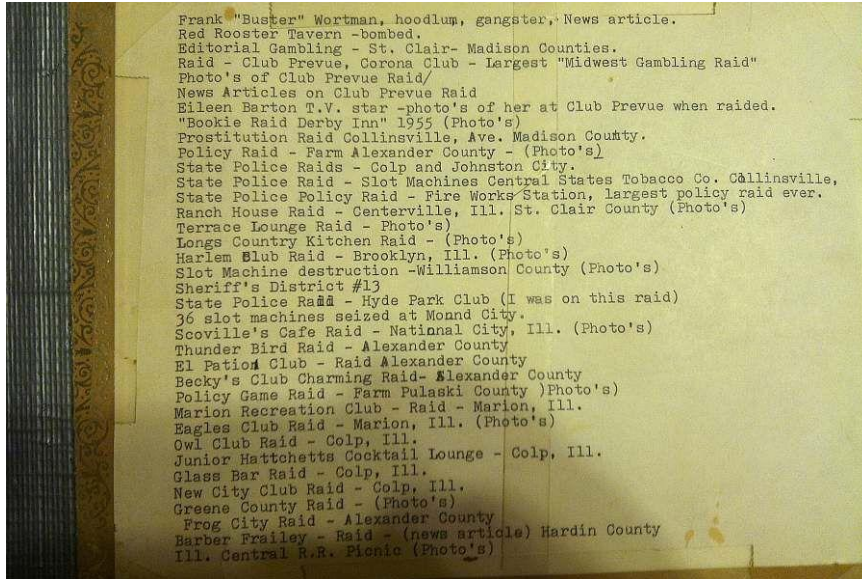
Eichen said he and 12 officers seized gambling equipment and cash in raids Sunday against the Purple Grackle, on Ill. 46; Becky's Club Charming, on U. S. 51 north of Cairo; El Patio, also north of Cairo at the juncture of U. S. 51 and Ill. 3; and Cairo's Turf Club.

He said other spots had been checked on the countrywide tour, but had been found not to have gambling equipment.

1 Brett TC info7

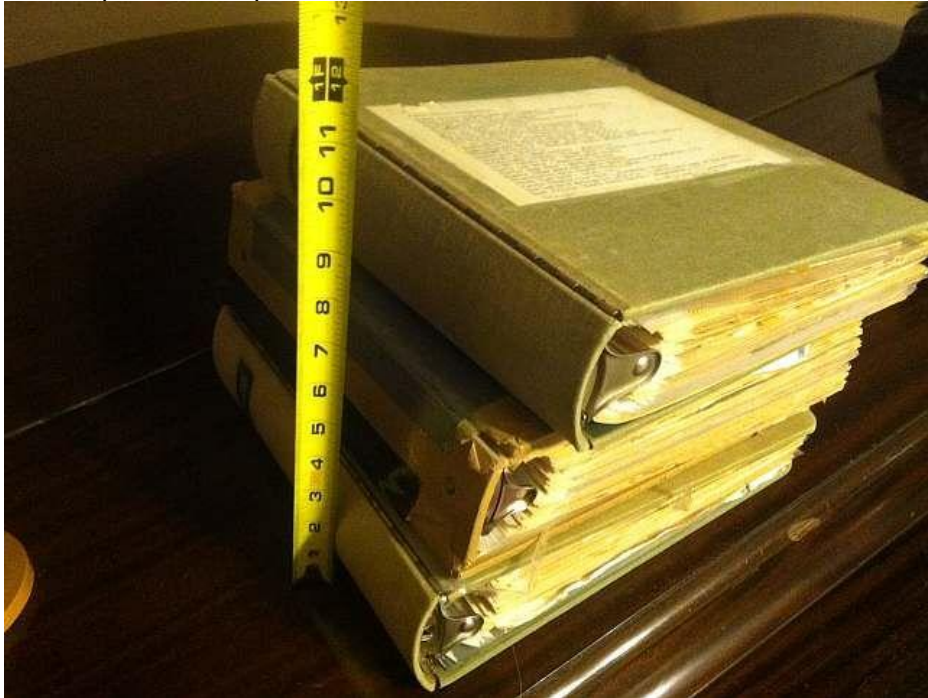
My note:

Example of Captain Brantley's notes.



1 Brett TC info8

All of Captain Brantley's notes.



1 Brett TC info9

I was willing to pay for a complete copy of the notes. It was looked into but never happened.

Special thanks to Captain Brantley, his raiders, and his grandson, for an epic adventure through the Illinois illegals. Best part is, "it's not over yet." I think I can squeeze out a couple more posts from his scans and notes. \*vbg\*

Captain Brantley's grandson just put me in touch with the son of Shot Winchester owner of Club Winchester in Pulaski county. He has chips. It was a big joint with entertainment including Louis Armstrong. "Illegal Of The Day" and Club Winchester chips are on the way to me. \*vbg\*