BAS 282 Thanksgiving in Butte 1892 Welcome to Butte, America’s Story. I’m your host, Dick Gibson.

News notes from the Anaconda Standard for Thanksgiving, Thursday November 24, 1892.

John J. Garrity, “an intelligent looking man about 38 years old” who lived in South Butte, was arrested for mail theft on the Northern Pacific main line through Butte. In his job as baggage man he began robbing the mails the previous April, taking thousands of dollars in goods, much of which was jewelry and women’s undergarments. When arrested, he was “tending bar in South Butte and living off the harvest gathered while on the mail run, and basking in the smiles and favors of his lady friends to whom he had made the presents of underwear and other female unmentionables.” Garrity confessed the crimes.

City Council’s police committee recommended the appointments of three men as policemen, a seemingly routine action, but following the committee’s report, “the committee flew off on a tangent and nearly everybody nominated some one for the police force.” Six more men were nominated, and “a general slaughter of the innocents then ensued and the heads of several excellent men were chopped off.” Only Charles Anderson, one of the original three, was approved by Council majority, leaving two more vacancies. Four new nominees were put forth, and John Nichols was elected; at that point further balloting for policemen was postponed until the next meeting.

It was reported that “Mrs. Chris Nissler, wife of the brewer, died yesterday at Old Silver Bow.”

And “Tom Lamb paid $1 and costs for getting drunk and going to bed on the sidewalk.”

“The amusing and interesting little monkey who has made a host of friends around the Standard office in the last three months by upsetting ink bottles and tearing up letters and ‘copy’ is missing, and it is thought that he has been abducted. A liberal reward is offered for Jocko’s return, either with or without his tail.”

Three members of the “fighting branch of the Austrian colony in Meaderville” were brought up to Judge McMurphey to answer a charge by John Schwab that the other two fired shots at him. One of the others in turn accused Schwab of assault with a knife. The cases were to go forward a week from next Thursday.

The drilling tournament was in progress, with Joe Freethy and Tom Tallon ultimately the “unquestioned champions of the world with the great record of 38 and 13/16 inches.” This would have been a double jacking drilling contest.

On that day W.A. Clark sold a portion of the Steward Lode Claim to T.P. Maloney, for $221.40.

The Theater Comique (present-day location of the southern part of Metals Bank building, on Main Street) held a “good-natured, surging mass of people” who saw the opening of an acrobatic performance by the Gillette Family, together with a performance by raconteur Professor Oofty Goofty. Godfrey the dare-devil gymnast “displayed marvelous skill and nerve,” and the La Rose sisters “sang themselves into public favor at once.” Other performers included Fenton the pedo-manualist, who made a semblance of music by squeezing his feet together, Ollie Leonard the pleasing balladist, Lillie Haines vocalist, and Professor McKenzie and his drama. “Big Bertha” was the manager of the successful program, in her first managerial experience in Butte. All that was for probably 15¢, or maybe 25¢ for good seats.

As writer Edwin Dobb has said, "Like Concord, Gettysburg, and Wounded Knee, Butte is one of the places America came from." Join us next time for more of Butte, America’s Story.