

# "COAL OIL JOHNNY;" KING OF SPENDTHRIFTS

## CAREER OF YOUNG MAN WHO SQUANDERED MILLIONS WITH- IN SEVEN MONTHS.

### A RECORD THAT HAS NEVER BEEN BEATEN

**John W. Steele, Who Acquired a World-Wide Reputation by Throwing Money to the Winds, Dies in Poverty in Pennsylvania Near Scene of the Source of His Wealth.**

Philadelphia.—In an unpretentious house on a little farm near Franklin, in the northwestern part of Pennsylvania, there died the other day a man who some 40 years ago acquired a most unique and remarkable distinction. This person was John W. Steele, better known as "Coal Oil Johnny," king of all the spendthrifts the world has ever known.

It is several years now since this once famous character had passed out of sight of the general public, but the record he established in the few short months that he was rolling in wealth will long be remembered.

Has Wealth Untold. Inside of 12 months, beginning at the close of 1863, John Steele did perhaps more to advertise the wealth of the Pennsylvania oil region than any other ten men. He advertised its wealth by spending it. A heedless boy, he woke one morning to find himself possessed of untold wealth in bulk and an income from oil royalties of \$1,750 per day, Sundays included. He did not know the value of money, has not to this day any idea of how much money he had and spent, but it has been estimated at from \$1,500,000 to \$4,000,000.

Be the amount the first or last named, the fact remains that in seven months' time from his coming into possession of this immense wealth he went through it and was broken. Inside of a year from the time he became a Croesus, he was back at the little railroad station at Rouseville, Venango county, bustling trunks at \$10 a month. He has been hustling ever since to keep up with the grocer's bill. Never was there a man who made it rain money in such showers as did "Coal Oil Johnny" during his brief transit across the horizon. It is claimed that the newly-rich Pittsburgh millionaire would look like a piker in his spendings when lined up alongside the Rouseville, Pa., wagon driver who was in a slight elevated to the millionaire class. The entire cost of the widely-heralded "Scotty" special last summer would not have furnished "Coal Oil Johnny's" cigar lighters in those days of '64. Steele simply couldn't spend his money fast enough until he

remembered in Oil City. It was not yet dark when young Steele borrowed a few thousands to continue the day's spending. To Steele, with his new millions, borrowing was the easiest of things. In his later years he would have had trouble in borrowing anything, for his financial star had long since set.

Downfall Laid to Gamblers. One of those who early attached himself to young Steele in the hour of his wealth was Seth Slocum, a gambler, and to the work of Slocum friends of Steele attribute his downfall. It was not long until "Coal Oil Johnny," as he was now known, was the biggest plunger of them all at the gaming table. He seldom won and when he did he would almost invariably lose his winnings to the dealer or some bystander, saying: "Buy yourself a new hat and have a drink on Johnny Steele."

But the ordinary roulette wheel or the faro deal too slow for "Coal Oil Johnny." He wanted action, and wanted it in bunches. He seldom if ever played poker. "There's too much time lost dealing and drawing cards," he used to say, when pressed to sit in



Coal Oil Johnny

at a game. "It's too slow; it's an old ladies' game." One of the favorite stunts of "Coal Oil Johnny" was to walk into a gambling room with a few of his choice friends and ask the proprietor to sell him the place. He usually bought at a fearful figure, and then would take his place at the dealer's chair and loan his friends money to play against himself.

The news soon spread throughout the world of this modern lad of money and that he was easy. From the north, south and east and from the gold camps of California came gamblers with the old brace games for fleecing Johnny Steele. For him, it is now said, specially crooked faro boxes and roulette wheels were made, for he did not long remain in ignorance of the games and the time came when he had to be shown that he lost, on a turn of the card. He was always shown. His losses at the gaming table in the first half of his moneyed career were something fabulous. Then he seemed to tire all at once of the game and sought new fields for enjoyment.

Horse That Drank Champagne. One night at Bradford, Steele rode down the main street at full speed on a beautiful mare, for which he had paid \$3,000, and through the swinging doors of a saloon where 100 oil men were doing their best to emulate him in getting rid of their money. He did not know a soul, but that didn't matter.

"I'm Johnny Steele. Close the doors and every one make a night of it with me. Give Bess a bottle of champagne to start with."

Bess was the beautiful little mare he rode, and immediately interest was centered on the horse whom her owner said drank champagne. Bess, moreover, was the only sober one of the outfit some hours later, for Johnny Steele surely made good when he started out to "make a night of it," and this was one of them.

"Nobody who hears my voice can spend a cent. I'm Johnny Steele," was the favorite cry of the little fellow as he entered a resort, and there were always those within sound who at once began to figure just how expensive they could make the hour with Steele. There is yet to be found the man who will say he ever saw "Coal Oil Johnny" take a cent of change from the bar or anywhere else, for that matter. For such as the young fellow was no such things as dollars or small bills.

Lights Cigars with \$100 Bills. What was considered the height of his extravagance came one day when he entered the Oil Exchange at Bradford to look around. He never dabbled in oil himself. "I want to see my money go," he always said when asked to invest in some seemingly luscious bit of a flyer in oil. But on this occasion he came in from the street and stood unnoticed by many of the oil kings who were scrambling for a shade on the market. One minute in obscurity for "Coal Oil Johnny" was enough. The next moment he had clogged the wheels of the oil exchange. He stepped out where he could be seen, selected a cigar from his vest pocket, pulled a roll of bills from another pocket, skinned off a \$100 note, and folding it as a lighter struck a match and lit the \$100 bill, then touched it to his cigar. After getting a good light from the century note, he watched it burn up, and threw away the tegar.

"Faugh! That's a bad one," he said, as he tried another cigar, and also lit it with a new \$100 bill. This simply paralyzed the members of the big oil exchange. They had been used to making and losing fortunes in a day, but such wanton waste of money had never before come under their no-

### RECORDS OF DAIRY COWS.

System Which One Man Follows in Keeping Tab on the Productiveness of His Herd.

In keeping the record of the milk, we use a ruled sheet with a split column in which to record the morning and evening milking, writes H. H. Dean. We place the cow's number at the head of the column devoted to that animal. These sheets we keep in a frame with a movable glass to protect the sheet from dirt.

It is not sufficient to weigh the milk; you must know what the cow is testing in fat; therefore, we keep a bottle in which to place samples taken from the milk. Each bottle is labeled with the number of the cow, and the label covered with shellac varnish for protection. Each milker has his own row of bottles corresponding with the cows he milks. After the milk has been weighed, he pours a tiny dipperful into the bottle belonging to that cow. In each bottle we place a preservative consisting of potassium bicarbonate and corrosive sublimate, which will keep the milk perfectly fresh for a month. The test for the fat is made once a month.

I do not know that any part of the work has enabled us to improve the record of our cows, by culling out the poor ones, so effectively as this system.

As the slips become torn or are lost it is necessary to have a permanent record. Once a month, therefore, the record of each cow is transferred into a book, one page of which holds the record of a cow for a year. There is a special column on the page for remarks, in which any important facts regarding the animal are noted down; so that if you ask me about any cow in our herd, I simply have to turn to the index and look her up. I do not think the dairymen realize what value there is in keeping a record of performance of individual cows or more of them would do it, and I think perhaps our dairymen's associations ought to do something to assist men who are willing to take up this work. I would suggest that these associations should furnish suitable scales and necessary apparatus to men who wish to keep records, and if necessary send a man to show them exactly how it is done. It might also be desirable to offer prizes for the best kept records.

5 Tons Grass Hay Free. Everybody loves lots and lots of fodder for hogs, cows, sheep and swine.

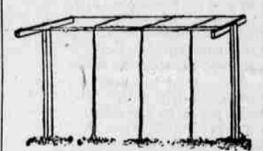
The enormous crops of our Northern States feed our needs in our best farms. We are now offering to issue a special catalogue called "SALZER'S BARGAIN SEED BOOK." This is brim full of bargain seeds at bargain prices. SEND THIS NOTICE TO-DAY, and receive free sufficient seed to grow 5 tons of grass on your lot or farm this summer and our great Bargain Seed Book with its wonderful surprises and great bargains in seeds at bargain prices. Remit cash and we add a package of Cosmos, the most fashionable, serviceable, beautiful annual flower. John A. Salzer Seed Co., Lock Drawer K., La Crosse, Wis.

There are a good many people who would throw down a gauntlet if they were quite sure it would not be picked up.—Puck.

### THREE-WIRE GRAPE TRELLIS

An Arrangement Which Greatly Reduces the Tendency to Mildew on the Vines.

A very useful trellis for certain localities where grapes are liable to mildew is that designed and used by I. V. Munson of Texas, says the Farm and Home. A picture of it is shown in the cut. The posts are four feet high and to the top of these are nailed crosspieces two feet long. On the posts below the crosspieces is strung a wire, and other wires on top of the crosspieces at each end. This makes three wires one foot apart. The vine is trained straight up until it reaches the middle wire and no shoots are allowed to form between it and the ground. The vine is tied to this



USEFUL FORM OF GRAPE TRELLIS. Wires and two arms of canes are formed, one being trained along the central wire in each direction. These canes are for the first crop.

The next year the canes are cut back to about three buds each, and as the new shoots put out they naturally grow and drop over the side wires to which they fasten themselves by tendrils. No summer pruning or tying is necessary with this system. The fruit is well shaded, and yet the foliage and new growth are so distributed that there is always a free circulation of air around the fruit.

At pruning time the canes which bore this year's crop are all cut back, except the two nearest the main stalk, which form the bearing wood for the next year. As the vines become older four canes may be left.

### MAKING THE FARM PAY.

It Can Be Done If the Farmer Is Thoughtful and Careful Enough.

Keep the outgoes less than the incomes. Any dunce knows that? All right, but it takes a smart man to do it. If you do not believe it, try it, challenges the Farm Journal.

And then, don't make a mistake about what it really means to make the farm pay. Some folks have wonderfully queer notions about that. They think if they can get \$5,000 or \$6,000 in the bank, that is all there is to it. They are quite apt to be mistaken. Do you know any poor rich men? We do. More of them than you can count. Takes more than money to make a farm pay.

How then shall we be sure that we are making the farm pay? Do we have enough to eat three times a day? Are our children all well, strong and happy? Are we bringing them up so that they will love us when we are old, and do all they can to make the world happier for their having lived in it?

Do the horses, cows and other dumb animals on the farm love us? When we get home from town, is there a dear little woman standing in the foot to greet us? Do the little folks come running down the walk and reach up their arms to give us a mighty hug? Is our breath pure and sweet as the morning dew every time we come from the village? Is our life clean in every way? Do our neighbors tell us their little troubles, and come over to sit up with us at night when we are not very well? Are we filling our place just the best we can, always and everywhere?

If these things are true, the farm pays, and pays big, whether there is a dollar in our pockets or not. But there will be. God has promised it, and He keeps His word.

### Logie.

The Argumentative Man.—But, my dear fellow, I tell you it's impossible for the moon to be inhabited. When it is full it is all right, but when it waxes down to a little crescent, where the moon goes to all the people go to.—Tales.

### Cures Cancer, Blood Poison and Scrofula.

If you have blood poison producing eruptions, pimples, ulcers, swollen glands, bumps and rashes, burning, itching skin, copper-colored spots or rash on the skin, mucous patches in mouth or throat, falling hair, loose joints, old rheumatism or foul catarrh, take Balm of Blood (B. B. B.). It kills the poison in the blood; soon all sores, eruptions heal, hard swellings subside, aches and pains stop and a perfect cure is made of the worst cases of Blood Poison.

For Cancers, tumors, swellings, eating sores, ugly ulcers, persistent pimples of all kinds, take B. B. B. It destroys the cancer poison in the blood, heals cancer of all kinds, cures the worst humors or suppurating swellings. Thousands cured by B. B. B. after all else fails. B. B. B. composed of pure botanic ingredients. Improves the digestion, makes the blood pure and rich, stops the awful itching and all sharp, shooting pains. Thoroughly tested for thirty years. Druggists, \$1 per bottle, with complete directions for home cure. Sample free and prepaid by writing Blood Balm Co., Atlanta, Ga. Describe trouble and free medical advice also sent in sealed letter.

The trouble with the people who stand up for their rights is that they always want to sit on everybody else.—N. Y. Times.

### 5 Tons Grass Hay Free.

Everybody loves lots and lots of fodder for hogs, cows, sheep and swine.

The enormous crops of our Northern States feed our needs in our best farms. We are now offering to issue a special catalogue called "SALZER'S BARGAIN SEED BOOK." This is brim full of bargain seeds at bargain prices. SEND THIS NOTICE TO-DAY, and receive free sufficient seed to grow 5 tons of grass on your lot or farm this summer and our great Bargain Seed Book with its wonderful surprises and great bargains in seeds at bargain prices. Remit cash and we add a package of Cosmos, the most fashionable, serviceable, beautiful annual flower. John A. Salzer Seed Co., Lock Drawer K., La Crosse, Wis.

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Itching, Bleeding, Protruding Piles. Druggists are authorized to refund money if LAZO OINTMENT fails to cure in 10 to 14 days. 50c

Zal sometimes outruns discretion, and sometimes it doesn't even travel in the same direction.—Puck

Do not believe Piso's Cure for Consumption has an equal for coughs and colds. F. Boyer, Trinity Springs, Ind., Feb. 15, 1900.

A woman has to be mighty fat to really like to go horseback riding early in the morning.—N. Y. Press.

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At pruning time the canes which bore this year's crop are all cut back, except the two nearest the main stalk, which form the bearing wood for the next year. As the vines become older four canes may be left.

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