April of 1934 brought some excitement to the otherwise quiet, law-abiding citizens of Plain Dealing. The Plain Dealing Progress documented one of the excitement-causing events in its April 19th issue.

In the article titled “California Couple Run out of Town Wednesday” the paper described an unusual racket of a man and woman believed to be “dope” addicts.

“Considerable interest and excitement was manifested among the citizenry here last Wednesday morning when a young woman and a middle-aged man drove into town in a car bearing [a] California license.”

“The woman alighted from the car and made the rounds calling on local people for ‘financial aid to help them get away from Catholics, Masons and publishers who were following them and who had been chasing them to keep them from making an honest living selling lead pencils since they left California two years ago.’”

“When people failed to give them money the woman became very indignant and proceeded to use harsh ugly words and obscenity. The couple was soon shown the way out of Plain Dealing by Mayor McKellar and Deputy Butler. Mr. Butler stated that the couple acted very much like ‘dope’ fiends who were out of the stuff and desperate.”

Later in April, in its April 26th issue, The Plain Dealing Progress reported that a tramp had been chased from the Cornish home in Plain Dealing.

“The J. M. Cornish home and household here was the scene of considerable excitement last Tuesday night at about 12:00 o’clock when members of the family were awakened by disturbances in the kitchen. Fred Cornish rushed to the kitchen and there he found an aged tramp partaking himself of a mid-night lunch from the ice box and the cabinets. The culprit was chased from the house and no arrest was made.”

“The homes of J. E. Walker, B. M. Oglesby and J. B. Walker were also reported visited by an unwelcome guest sometime during the night Tuesday. Nothing was reported missing from any of the latter homes, but the visitor left evidence of pilfering. The man who was chased from the Cornish home is believed to be the same who molested those latter homes.”

A little more excitement was reported in The Progress’ September 27th issue.

“A young man who gave his name as Jack Booker, 24, was arrested near Bolinger by Deputy Jas. L. Butler last Sunday evening, after Bradley, Ark. officers had instructed him to be on the look-out for a young man of his description who burglarized a private residence at Bradley, Ark., last Saturday.”

“The man arrested by Deputy Butler was identified as the Bradley robber, but upon being taken to Benton jail he was fingerprinted and identified as an ex-convict of Texas and an escaped convict from Louisiana penitentiary. He was known to Louisiana authorities as Simmons. He is sad [sic] to owe Louisiana penitentiary six years.”

“The man is being held in Benton jail at this writing awaiting return by local officer to Angola to complete his ‘stretch,’ after which time he will probably be turned over to Arkansas authorities on the burglary charge of the past week end.”
“Simmons is a native of Texarkana, Texas-Arkansas.”

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