

Thieves Used This Door



W. O. Moorhead, right, guards against return of thieves as he instructs Repairman Lawrence Campbell to replace the broken lock and strengthen the door which thieves used yesterday to escape with \$2,000 worth of clothing. 7-3-1939

* Jimmying a basement door leading from Nixon Alley early yesterday, thieves looted Moorhead's large local men's furnishings store of suits and topcoats valued at about \$2,000.

W. O. Moorhead, a member of the firm, discovered the theft at 10:00 A. M. Sunday when on a visit to the store, he found hat boxes stacked high across the aisle, apparently placed there by the thieves to shield pedestrians on Philadelphia Street from observing them as they leisurely removed from 75 to 90 suits and 25 topcoats from show cases.

Mr. Moorhead notified Police Chief Arthur E. Beal who instituted an investigation by state police as well as local officers. Fingerprint experts were summoned to make records of markings left on show case glass.

The thieves apparently had made a study before the crime to ascertain the layout of the store and its entrances, police said, because the basement approach which they used is also a common entrance for the Elks Club storage rooms. The entrance is less than a half-block from the police station in the Municipal Building.

The fact that only nationally-advertised clothing, such as could be easily disposed of by fences, was

taken led investigators to believe that the crime was the work of professional store thieves.

Reports of similar men's store robberies in Northwestern and Eastern Pennsylvania in recent months further bolsters the theory of police that a professional clothing gang is operating in Pennsylvania. Ten robberies have been reported.

On June 21 a store at Erie was entered and 152 men's suits and topcoats taken. The Erie theft came four days after entrance was gained to Enyeart & Thompson's store in Ebensburg, early on the morning of June 17. Two hundred and fifty suits and other merchandise valued at \$4,000 was taken from the Ebensburg store.

Value of the loot from the Erie establishment, about \$4,000, approximated that hauled away from Trov & Co.'s store in Johnstown April 1.