

CROOKS AND THEIR WIVES

By an OLD THIEF EDWARD W DUNLAP, alias "Split-the-Wind"

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Edward W. Dunlap came of a fine southern family and received a good education. Little more than a boy when the civil war broke out, he enlisted in the Union ranks and served with credit. Toward the close he entered the enlistment service, and his criminal career began by the robbery of \$1000, for which a prison term was unjustly convicted and sentenced.

CHAPTER XI (Continued)

Being of a most creditably industrious disposition, I worked hard. I worked at night, and worked alone, and fortune seemed to smile upon me. I robbed the house of Peter B. McCall, the leader of the Philadelphia bar, and obtained about 500 ounces of silver. I melted this down, sold the bullion, and received for it \$291. I also took a good trick at Ridley Park, securing about \$500 worth of diamonds and 200 ounces of silver. An interesting episode of this part of my career occurred at Bethlehem, Pa. I "turned off" the palatial residence of Mr. Wilbur, the president of the Lehigh Valley Railroad, in the parlor through a window and discovered Mr. Wilbur seated in the adjacent library reading. I went outside again and waited until he had retired, when I re-entered the house and commenced gaiting. I received quite a start from suddenly discovering in the dim light, my own figure in a long mirror. I thought for a second that it was the man advancing upon me, revolver in hand. From this house I carried away a big market basketful of swags. This I "planted" safely near Bethlehem. The next evening I went back, packed it in a large valise, and returned to Philadelphia.

I told Eddie and T— about the robbery. A few days later the chief of police of Bethlehem came to Philadelphia and consulted T— about the affair. He said that Mr. Wilbur was particularly anxious to recover his watch and some trinkets belonging to his daughter. I met T— and two others at Green's, Eighth and Chestnut streets. T— not only spoke to me, but actually instructed me as a detective in the chief of police of Bethlehem. The talk was all about the robbery. T— promised T— and the chief that if I heard anything I would let them know, and that I would make a strong effort to discover Mr. Wilbur's watch and his daughter's trinkets. During this conversation I had the watch in my pocket, having intended to hand it back to T— to work back for the reward. This he did subsequently, with success.

When I had robbed Mr. Wilbur's house, I had seen upon an easel in the parlor a magnificent painting by Rosa Bonheur. The chief of Bethlehem spoke about this painting, saying that it had cost Mr. Wilbur thousands of dollars, and that if the thief had known this fact he would have cut it out of the frame and taken it along. Now the thief had not only seen this picture, but had also read the artist's name, and had thought, possibly, that it was a valuable picture. It is impossible to dispose of a painting, as it is impossible to dispose of a picture, however valuable. It is impossible to dispose of a painting, as it is impossible to dispose of a picture, however valuable. It is impossible to dispose of a painting, as it is impossible to dispose of a picture, however valuable.

I also robbed the house of Aaa Packer, at Mauch Chunk. He had been the builder of the Lehigh Valley Railroad. I have a very distinct recollection of that evening, for, while lying under a low-branched tree, I saw a man with a rifle and a woman with a shadow cast by the tree saved me from being seen. From the Packer mansion I obtained some money and jewelry. The dark, rainy night, as a result of a writing case that rested on the bureau of the third-story front room. From the dining room I secured 20 ounces of silver.

During the entire summer I had but two mishaps that might have worried my undoing. The first happened at Ridley Park. While I was operating in a gentleman's bedroom, gently opening a bureau drawer, his wife, woman-like, heard me and awakened her husband. The distance from the bureau to the door of the room was about fifteen feet, and this noise was very dark. I lost my bearings while groping my way out. I crashed into the washstand, and this noise revealed my position to the man, who lost no time in blasting away at me with a revolver. The first flash showed me the way out, and also his exact location. Between the shots, I lay low down and jumped for the door. As I made the spring, I fired two shots in the air. My gun was a thirty-eight caliber, and in my haste it made a noise like that of a cannon. In my haste to get away, I fell downstairs and seriously injured my arm. My inopportune host made no more noise until after I had wished him a hurried good night, and then his gun erupted out of the window, but of course I was far away. The papers next day described how he had gallantly propelled with a burglar and thrown him down stairs.

The second affair took place near Ardmore. I had looked the house over and was getting something to eat to refresh the inner man. It is my custom, when possible to do this, and I was standing at the table, eating a piece of pie, the owner of the house came in to find me. He saw me, but I had already quietly slipped out of the window. My friend had been good shot at me. Before I knew what was going on, he had my arm, and I had my left hand to my head, and my right hand was raised, and I jumped out of the window.

business at the old stand. Indulgences were brought, torn up, and strewn to the winds. The good crook might get arrested and be held up financially by the authorities, but the judicious disposal of a certain number of dollars ended the case. Politicians, crooks and crooks were near-relations; and the city consequently was no stronger than it was very hard to break.

Many of the best crooks made Philadelphia their home, grafting outside of it. Some specially favored ones grafted where they pleased with impunity. The men that robbed the benevolent Saving Bank never left the city at all, but remained here and opened a bank of their own; that is, a faro bank. The street cars, the railroad depot and the theaters literally swarmed with pickpockets. Jim Logue and Mysterious Jimmie were active practitioners of the second-story act, and they beat numbers of corner stores all over the city. Hops, Haggerty, Big Frank, Harry Chase, Ned Moran, and a host of others helped to make the city warm.

Again and again, without avail, the citizens attempted to purify the town. Finally, after many efforts, the roof of the evil was torn up, and the city of Philadelphia ceased to be a paradise for professional crooks, although remaining for many years favorite grafting ground for crooks political.

One day I met an old pal, Big Charlie Gardner. He and I formed a partnership at house-breaking and went to work. We did fairly well, but got no wages, and were partitioned anxious to make a good stake. In working houses, a good stake could be secured only by a mere accident. About this time we turned off the house of Tax Receiver Lentz. From this we got about \$500, some diamonds and a fine watch. This, of course, being a member of the ruling gang, made a tremendous fuss. The coppers were actually well about us. He told me about a safe that would be a "dead walkover" and never contained less than \$100. This safe was in the Conway Soap Works, a small corner store in the corner of Fourth and Lombard streets. The building was small, and could be reached from the rear by way of a burial place; in fact, the safest "get-in" I had ever seen.

In order to make sure that the dust was there, I "felt" it out on a rainy day, and taking for a change, for a \$100 note. The money, in a tin box, was there, sure enough. The safe was a small, simple drawer. Haggerty told me that Hope was the owner, and that when the thing came off, and I said: "Put Big Charlie in, also, and Charlie and I will do the work." This Haggerty consented.

The only method known at that time to beat this variety of safe was to drill and pump a light for the job. At last we went down to the place and entered it in a few minutes; and in a few minutes more Charlie had the drill in operation on the safe. The hole was bored, all right, and the only thing left to be done was to load it and fire. Haggerty was standing by, and I told him to stop, for he was putting too much in, but he paid no attention to what I said. When he got through, he placed the gun on the table and the hole was all wet into the churchurch.

In about three minutes there came a terrific explosion which shook the neighborhood. The safe was torn off and hurled directly into the street, through the main door of the store. The windows were torn to pieces, and the glass in its lower windows broken. In almost no time at all at least 100 persons were there. We were among them, but soon disappeared.

Charlie and I were very sore at Haggerty. He said that he had been before Haggerty, and that he had paid for this time, the safe of the new Chestnut Street building. This ended my sojourn in Philadelphia. Just about this time, the safe of the new Chestnut Street building had been in operation on the safe. The hole was bored, all right, and the only thing left to be done was to load it and fire. Haggerty was standing by, and I told him to stop, for he was putting too much in, but he paid no attention to what I said. When he got through, he placed the gun on the table and the hole was all wet into the churchurch.

The most prominent "lash keg" (drinking resort for crooks) then in Philadelphia was the "lash keg" at the corner of Eleventh and Sanson streets, and was kept by Docky B. Here were to be found the most notorious crooks and their friends, and here thousands and thousands of dollars were put about. The frequenters, in general appearance, were of the "lash keg" variety, and there was only one fight of the fatal variety that occurred there. This was the killing of Paddy Williams.

Williams was a splendid specimen of physical manhood. He was, when sober, quiet, courteous and well-behaved. He and Frank, a great amount of money, but it seemed as if the matter had been smoothed over. A few days afterwards, while in his usual haunts, he came up to town to kill Big Frank. One of the listeners tipped it to Big Frank.

Williams, true to his oath, made his way to Big Frank's in the back room playing crib, yet keenly on the retiring of the family, came out of the place with his pistol drawn, but as he reached the door leading into the back room, Big Frank fired. Williams was instantly killed, and the coroner's jury on the ground that the shooting had been done in self-defense.



"As he reached the door leading into the back room, Big Frank fired"

to have been prepared expressly for my coming. I suppose that after they had lost the horse they looked the stable door; for it usually happens that way.

I remained in Sacramento only one day and then went to the Golden City, where I stayed three weeks. I visited various pleasure resorts and objects of beauty in the neighborhood, but I did not look over San Quentin prison. I may be a little superstitious; but I never voluntarily go through a prison, and enter the gates of one only under protest. While in San Francisco I made the acquaintance of an Englishman connected with a large commercial establishment at Hongkong, and I had about concluded to accompany him to that city, but changed my mind at the last moment.

He had started I regretted this step, for I heard that if I went there I might go broke or get colored. I went by steamer to Los Angeles and learned the interesting fact that old Governor Peck, the last Spanish governor of the province, was still living there. From Los Angeles I departed by stage for San Diego. Just before this there had been a hold-up on the line, and I had not contributed any of my money. In fact, for a short time I felt intensely indignant that a man should rob his fellow-man, so I started back and did not feel any until I had reached Los Angeles once more. General Negley, a well-known Pennsylvania soldier, was then living in that city. He resided in a magnificent house, surrounded with beautiful flower-gardens.

In San Francisco, to which I returned, I met Johnnie Dolan, a "stall" for a "dip" (assistant to a pickpocket). After I had started I regretted this step, for I heard that if I went there I might go broke or get colored. I went by steamer to Los Angeles and learned the interesting fact that old Governor Peck, the last Spanish governor of the province, was still living there.

The chief of police was Pat Cronley. Pat had come from New York City, where he had been a volunteer fireman in the old days. On going to Cronley, he joined a fire company, and in less than two years he was made chief of the fire department. Whenever the political party came into power he became the chief of police; and whenever it was out of power he was chief of the fire department.

At this time there was a bunco joint on California street. It was being run by Charles Mason, Boston Charley was his usual designation, and Peter Lake (Grand Central Park, as he was nicknamed). Peter was one of the most celebrated bunco men in the country. Boston Charley was the first man to be convicted for bunco in the United States. Lake got three years in Sing Sing, and I saw him there during my sojourn there. He told me about this California joint, and said that it was about ten months he and Peter had made \$2000. Chief of Police Cronley closed the joint.



"As he reached the door leading into the back room, Big Frank fired"

up on account of the many "squales" made by the buncoed men.

I liked the Pacific coast, and had almost made up my mind to remain there permanently. Great was the amount of money that I had secured. I was a little more than key sappers and a bolt wire; many houses in Oakland and other places were sure marks; yet, having plenty of means, I had no need of them. My notion of idleness; but men of my kind do not remain glued long to one place, however attractive that place may be. Mr. Byrnes, a member of the "lash keg" variety, was a remarkable man. He was discharged from the military service in New York City.

Three days after my arrival, while coming out of Nibbo's Garden, Sergeant Dolan and Phil Greig, both of headquarters, picked me up, ran me in and "sloughed" me up (emptied my pockets). In the morning, I had a great Mr. Thomas Byrnes good day. He looked me over and, noting my prosperous appearance, said: "What must be good?" "Yes," I replied, "fairly so." After a short talk, he ordered a new picture taken of me. This was done, and then I once more faced the great detour.

My money, watch, chain, stud and ring had been taken from me the night before; but I had a receipt for all my collateral, and it was, of course, impossible for any one at headquarters to retain any of my belongings, no matter how much they might wish to do so. The bulk of my money was deposited in a bank, and I had only about \$45 with me. Mr. Byrnes, however, insisted that I should "wear mitts" while in New York, and I promised that I would do so. He kept me as a great amount of money would soon be shown, and I showed me to the various persons about headquarters; but none of them recognized me as a New York crook. The following morning at roll call, I was again exhibited to the entire bureau. After this I was taken to the office. My property was restored and in a Gothic hall. He asked whether I would register and look out for yourself.

Byrnes was not only a capable, but in many respects a remarkable man. Having moved so largely among crooks, he trusted no man. He watched his own men as carefully as he would professional crooks, and kept them well in hand. He had a large secret fund to draw upon whenever it might be needed. He had no favor to ask, and was more than anything else, much more than an undoubted master of headquarters. The bureau, under his charge, became really effective. He had stoups of every nation everywhere, and he was the best informed chief of police that any city of America has ever possessed.

He was unscrupulous, bitter and vindictive to a degree. He succeeded in the capture of Old Shakespear (a notorious female of the fourth ward) on what was believed by many to be manufactured evidence. Her next victim was Johnnie Hope to Sing Sing on the charge of having been in the Manhattan Bank affair, although he was innocent. Byrnes went out of his district on the ground that a mistake had been made, and Johnnie Hope was pardoned. Byrnes went out of his district on the ground that a mistake had been made, and Johnnie Hope was pardoned.



"I thought for a second that it was a man advancing upon me"



"I thought for a second that it was a man advancing upon me"



"I thought for a second that it was a man advancing upon me"



"Then I made a fire and counted the booty"



"Then I made a fire and counted the booty"

CHAPTER XIII

I Deviate in Danger Land and Take Up With "Buncoers"

GEORGE McKAY kept a saloon at the corner of Eighth street and Eighth avenue. Here I first met Andy Roberts, George Gleason, Big Bill Bartlett and "Shell" Hamilton. These men were all sergeants. They were, beyond doubt, the most successful buncoers in all the district. They were, by means of a forged check, best of the big banks out of money. He was told to leave the city and stay away; but he left only for a short time, and was returned, being promptly captured. He was sent up the river for five years. Joe was the husband of Kate Castleton, at one time a well-known European belle. When she was the first man to be convicted for bunco in the United States. Lake got three years in Sing Sing, and I saw him there during my sojourn there. He told me about this California joint, and said that it was about ten months he and Peter had made \$2000. Chief of Police Cronley closed the joint.

a fine, large house in the well neighborhood, known as Nob Hill. I "beat" the whole family (i. e., five women, and got away with three good watches, some valuable jewelry and \$20,000. I brought the swag to Philadelphia and fenced it to a well-known pawnbroker. I then went to New York and rented, playing crib at George McKay's for small amounts and dining each day off the best.

My next visit was to Rahway. From this town I had an ignominious and hasty retreat. The coppers gave chase, firing at me as they ran; but I was too fleet of foot for them, and left them in the rear. This fleetness has been so well recognized by my colleagues and contemporaries that years before they had christened me "Split-the-Wind" name I still bear.

My next visit was to Trenton, and from there I went immediately to Philadelphia. I sold the watch and chains to a Philadelphia fence. The watches were all tolerably light. For about a week I remained in Philadelphia, under cover, for I wanted no trouble with the fence, who had sent me back to New York City, remaining there for some time.

During this interval, I had done my first official bit of bunco. I had a \$25,000 check from \$40,000, made up of \$100,000 in cash, so as to make it more secure. I was very much pleased with the ease and celerity of the operation. I went to Paterson with Billy Perry, who was a fine-looking young man, fastidiously dressed and far above the average intelligence. My partner, who went out on the street with this man. This could be quite easily accomplished, of course, in my case. When I saw the two together, I did, of course, know that it was the man to follow. I did. He entered the bank, and so did I, and I saw him a second, and then the draft. The latter looked at it and told me that it was all right, and the bank would pay it. The receipt was made up, and he went back to the store, and the balance due him, but he asked for cash to make good the purchase. He received the cash, and by an employee, the check was accompanied to the bank minutes he and I were on our way to New York. My share in this affair was about \$200, and was not more than this because there were five men in our party, and expenses had to be paid.

Some time I did no more paper business. Responsibility is important in the air that would put an all on our feet; and I was, of course, not a good thing to do. I was, of course, not a good thing to do. I was, of course, not a good thing to do. I was, of course, not a good thing to do. I was, of course, not a good thing to do.

My achievements were numerous, and I have forgotten many of them. I do remember, however, that I went to Salem and beat a hotel, making an entrance from the street, and going through several rooms. From Salem I went to New York City, where I was again successful. I was, of course, not a good thing to do. I was, of course, not a good thing to do. I was, of course, not a good thing to do. I was, of course, not a good thing to do.

Byrnes was more than anxious to do the Roberts mob, and when told of this affair, he had me brought to headquarters. He told me that I had not altered the draft, for it was not my line. He said he knew I did things in a jummy and not with my pen, and that the draft had been fixed by either Roberts or Gleason. He said that these men had only made a good thing to do. I was, of course, not a good thing to do. I was, of course, not a good thing to do. I was, of course, not a good thing to do.

Before passing sentence Judge Cowing asked me a few questions, but I am glad to say that I denied all acquaintance with my criminal associates, and I even said that it was my first sentence. The judge said no word, and the judge sentenced me to four years instead of five. If these men ever meet me, I will tell them that I was not a good thing to do. I was, of course, not a good thing to do. I was, of course, not a good thing to do. I was, of course, not a good thing to do.