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THE KILLING OF BLACK DOE

By TRENTON CLURE

PERHAPS Dunn should never have joined the Northwestern mounted police, for of all types of men who are out of their element there, the moody, introspective, unaggressive man comes easily first. But Dunn had had a hankering after the military life when he went out to Calgary two years before.

Now he was in for several years, and cursing his luck daily. What he liked best was the lonely patrols up in the Big Lake country.

He had met Marie Dufour there, the daughter of an old trapper who had retired, like his fur-bearing beasts, before the march of civilization. He had seen her three times during the past two years, and it had been understood that when he became a corporal he was to speak to her father.

But the coveted stripes would never be his so long as Sergeant Mitchell remained in the squadron. A hard-featured, service-bitten man, Mitchell made Dunn's life wretched. He inspected his uniform with an eagle eye that discovered the smallest speck or flaw, he hauled him before his officers on trivial charges; in short, he did his best to break Dunn or force him out of the service.

It was a long time before Dunn discovered that Mitchell had met Marie in the Big Lake country the year before and coveted her beauty. When Dunn understood this he privately resolved that some day he would even up the score between them. For the present he remained quietly in barracks, doing his duty and suffering under Mitchell's ill-treatment.

The quiet life was interrupted by one of those periodical excitements that descended upon the barracks. Black Doe had shot a police officer at Neverport, and was making for the Big Lake country. Mitchell was ordered to take two troopers and get him.

It was a journey of two hundred miles, in the slushy period of spring. But the police never postpones its vengeance when it can avoid it, and never abandons it.

Dunn could not imagine what it was that impelled Mitchell to select him along with Crum. Perhaps Mitchell wished to see the man he most hated in Marie's presence, so as to be more sure of his bearings. Whatever the motive, he selected Dunn, and he gibed at him all the way.

He found fault with him during the long and painful day marches, with his equipment, his care of his horse, his manner of riding. He detailed him on one-man fatigues in the daytime, and gave him all the difficult work. Dunn's rage smoldered, but the idea in the back of his mind that he would get even with Mitchell hardly assumed any tangible form.

In due course they reached the store at Big Lake. Their visit was a complete surprise. Black Doe had been seen in the neighborhood, and evidently was off his guard. Mitchell ascertained that he had made no purchases, without which it would be impossible for him to continue on his way northward into the barrens.

"We'll spend the night at Johnny Dufour's," he said to Crum, as the three rode away toward the shack.

Dunn's heart sank when he offsaddled. Marie was directly in the doorway to greet the visitors, and her eyes wandered with wonder from Dunn's face to Mitchell's.

"Take my horse to the stables!" commanded Mitchell curtly. "And, say! Take Crum's, too. And see that they're well groomed before you come in to supper."

Dunn went away obediently, riding his horse and leading the two others. Now he began to understand, he thought, the reason why Mitchell had selected him. He wanted to humiliate him in the eyes of the girl.

At supper Mitchell kept up a crossfire of chaff, banter and spitefulness, directed at Dunn. Dunn's acquiescence seemed to enrage him. He would have welcomed a chance either for a brawl or for punishment for indiscipline; but Dunn only sat silently, watching Marie furtively, while the sergeant's eyes were alight with triumph. He felt that he had won, had shown Marie his superiority over Dunn.

They retired to their bunks. They were to start up the trail at daybreak, on the quest for Black Doe. Duan slept fitfully; he was thinking of Marie, and his heart was full of passionate resentment.

He was the first up, and went to groom the horses. As he came back to the shack, he heard Mitchell's voice and the girl's behind the open door. Mitchell had his arm round her waist and was drawing her toward him. Crum was nowhere in sight.

Then Dunn knew what he meant to do. He crept back very softly to the stable and loaded his rifle. He took it in his arms, carrying it as a mother might her first born, and approached the door again.

Mitchell held the girl in his arms now, and she was struggling as he tried to kiss her. Dunn, aiming deliberately, was conscious of the open door at the back of the shack, and a clump of dwarf fir about a hundred yards distant. Then he concentrated his attention upon Mitchell. Carefully he drew a bead on him so as to avoid hitting the girl.

Bang!

Mitchell leaped into the air, flung out his arms, and pitched head foremost. Dunn stepped into the shack. There was no need to look more than once at the dead face, or the blood oozing from the heart.

Marie ran to Dunn, sobbing wildly. "You did right, the beast!" she cried.

"Come with me," said Dunn.

They raced to the stables, and in a moment he had freed the horses, saddled them, and placed her on the sergeant's. In another moment they were galloping across the barrens. At the time Dunn was conscious of wondering where old Dufour and Crum were. But a moment later they heard shouts behind them. They galloped frantically forward, anywhere, so long as they could win free.

Crum was a man of resolution, and Dunn knew that he would take up the chase and never leave it. He reckoned on the fact that Crum's horse was the slowest of the three. The freshly falling snow would hide their tracks if they could win the country across the river bed, where a series of hummocks swelled into the Big Lake mountains.

Far behind him Dunn heard a shout. He turned and looked back as he rode. Crum was standing at the door of the stable, waving his arms to him.

A few minutes later Dunn, looking back, saw Crum mounted and in pursuit of them, a tiny figure upon a tiny horse. They rode madly for the dip toward the river.

"We must be careful," said Marie, as they began the descent. "The rocks are dangerous."

Even as she spoke her horse tripped on a projecting bowlder, stumbled, and flung her face downward upon the hard bed of the frozen stream. Dunn leaped from his horse and kneeled beside her. She had been stunned by the fall; she opened her eyes and looked about her half-conscious.

The horse scrambled to its feet, ran up the bank, and raced back toward the stable, followed by Dunn's horse. And Dunn, kneeling at Marie's side, knew that chance had settled his particular problem. And in the distance Crum came on inexorably.

Dunn shrugged his shoulders as one who has played his last card. He carried the girl up to the top of the bank and waited for Crum, who came galloping up on his horse. He flung himself to his feet, panting, like his steed.

"What's the matter with you, to play this crazy trick after killing him?" he shouted.

Dunn smiled. "I guess you're right, Crum," he said. "Take the girl on your saddle; I'll walk. You can trust me."

Crum, staring at him in apparent perplexity, lifted Marie to the saddle before him. She had fallen into a swoon again. Then he rode slowly back toward the cabin, with Dunn walking a little distance in front of him.

He turned his horse away when near the stable, and went toward the little patch of stunted trees that had struck upon Dunn's attention at the moment when he raised his rifle. Dunn saw the motionless body of a man lying hidden among them. It was Black Doe.

"How did you get him, Dunn?" asked Crum, dismounting and turning the body over. "See! He had just fired. You were in the nick of time."

The dead man's fingers were clutched about the trigger; the rifle had been discharged; over his heart was a bullet wound.

Dunn, unable to speak, accompanied Crum back to the shack. Mitchell lay where he had fallen, and old Dufour was muttering in the corner, as if he did not understand.

"He got poor Mitchell a second before you fired," said Crum. "Over the heart, too. See!"

Dunn looked in horror now mixed with agitation. He saw that track of the bullet through the breast and out under the rib. The missile lay upon the floor beside the inert man. It was a battered .45, such as the Indians use. Dunn's bullet had been a .303. And it had been Black Doe whom he had killed, not Mitchell.

Sheep's Long Fast

Seventeen days after being missed by an Osswestry (Eng.) farmer, a sheep was found inside a large water pipe near the Liverpool waterworks. The animal was quite frisky, in spite of the long fast.

"HARD LUCK" MINER LET FORTUNE SLIP

Claim Worth Half-Million Sold for $150.

The death at Quesnel, B. C., of Abe Stott, characterized as the original "hard luck" miner, recalls the story of how he sold for $150 a claim which brought its purchaser a cool half-million, says the Los Angeles Times.

Since Stott's death the story of his early adventures in the Cariboo country has been told by old timers who knew him well and were in the territory when he listened to wiseacres who told him there could not be gold in his holdings and witnessed him sell his birthright for a mess of pottage.

Pat McKenna, a young Irish policeman, fresh from the Chicago blue-coated force, gets a place in this story because if he had not made Stott's acquaintance the Englishman probably never would have made his strike.

McKenna made his way up to Barkerville, then the headquarters of the Cariboo miners, and after a week of trying to drink the hardened miners under the table he decided to seek a quieter spot. He ran into Stott, who told him of the quietude around Eight-Mile lake, where the fish bit well.

A week in the new atmosphere was enough for the young Irishman to throw off the effect of his drinking bout and give him his fill of fishing. He decided he would do some prospecting. He did not know how to go about it and Stott, a window dresser, could give him little assistance. So Pat decided to start right at the camp.

He dug a hole in front of the tent in which they lived. Presently he discovered nuggets in the bottom of his pan, even though practical miners said formation of the ground barred gold. Yet the partners turned up gold nuggets whenever they felt like panning a barrowful. Occasionally they went out and fished a day or two and replenished their pokes for months at a time.

Even then the scientists wouldn't admit gold was there in paying quantities. Eventually Stott became disheartened and sold his share in the claim to Billy Ogden, an old-time prospector, for $150.

Ogden and McKenna worked their claim for a while and when a Minneapolis man named Hannah offered them $16,000 for their property they grabbed it before the buyer could change his mind. Hannah began intensive work on the mine and when he got through with it he had taken gold to the value of $500,000 from the claim.

Woman Good Organizer

American genius for organization evinced by Countess Felix von Voss, formerly Esther Lawrence of New York, has revolutionized one of the richest landed estates in the former grand duchy of Mecklenburg. Countess Voss, the only American in the titled aristocracy of this province, has identified herself with her husband's agrarian interests. The poultry farm and the horticulture of the estate, are personally managed by her. Both have been brought up to date. It was the countess' idea, too, to provide a market for her own and neighboring products. She organized a sort of producers' co-operative store, from which the products are in turn sold to more distant places.

Fortunate Aecident

When a painter carelessly upset his bucket in the ore bins of a California mining company recently, he unwittingly exposed an improved method for precipitating the iron pyrites in the minerals, a process which is expected to yield the mining company as much as $50,000 a year. The paint caused the "foam" on the bins to disappear and the effect was at first considered serious, as the form has been thought necessary to separate mineral concentrates. Recoveries that day, however, ran 12 per cent higher than usual, for the paint contained linseed oil and kerosene, ingredients that proved effective agents in the process.—Popular Mechanics Magazine.

Modern Crusoe

Twenty-five years on a tropical island under ideal, almost paradisial circumstances, was the lot of one E. J. Banfield, a former London newspaper man, and his wife. A posthumous book on his experiences has just been published. It's the account of a modern Robinson Crusoe, only the circumstances were happier than in those in which the hero of Defoe is pictured. His retreat to his "isle of Eden" followed a breakdown "due to the weariness, the fever and the fret of crowded years of newspaper work." For most journalists there is no such earthly paradise in store; they must still "sit and hear one another groan!"

KING'S ENGLISH VS. "SLANGUAGE"

Drawing by Ray Walters.

By ELMO SCOTT WATSON

WHERE are the slang words of yesterday?

Gone, most of them, back into the vacuity from which they came, and then into oblivion. Some of them may survive for a few weeks or a few months before they disappear. A still smaller number will persist for a year or more, then find their way into new editions of our dictionaries. But they will be labeled thus: (Slang) or (colloq.), for the king's English is as conservative as the English king, referred to in that designation of our language, and no upstart word need apply for admission unless it can show some kind of ancestry to justify its breaking into Word Society. Eventually, of course, it may appear in Diction's Blue Book without the stigma of (Slang) or (Colloq.) attached to it, but the period of probation is usually a long one. And thus are new words born.

Who remembers the favorite slang words or expressions of ten years ago, or five years ago, or even a year ago? How long has it been since you told a friend to "skiddoo" or exclaimed "oh, you kid!" or declared that your plans has gone "blooey"? Or, for that matter, how recently have you retorted "So's your old man"? To say that fashions in slang change as rapidly as fashions in women's dress is an inadequate statement of the speed with which we Americans add to the bright lexicon of youth and then discard the new extravaganza as worn-out and trite.

That applies, of course, to the majority of the current slang phrases. They are the ones which can offer no etymological ancestry to justify their existence. But for such a word as cootie, which the lexicographer labels: (British soldiers' slang) and which can point back to the ancient Sanskrit "kutl," meaning "body," or to the Urdu, an obscure eastern dialect, "khuthi," meaning "scab," there is a good chance that it will become an English word in good and regular standing. The same is true of hootch, a word of Alaskan origin which came from hoochinoo, a spirituous drink made by the Indians of that territory, and savvy, which has a double ancestry, the French sávoir faire, meaning ability or skill, and the Spanish sabe, meaning understand.

Why do we use slang, anyway? There are at least three good reasons, according to one scholar who has made a special study of the subject. The first is for relief from monotony, and no matter how lacking in real meaning the slang word or phrase is, it offers a welcome change from the stale, customary words of our everyday speech. The second motive is usually humorous intent, and bits of slang which contain some element of humor have more chance to persist than others. An example is the word "flivver" which was coined less than fifteen years ago, but which seems to persist and to be gaining general acceptance as a word in common usage which leads to good usage and to eventual incorporation in the language because it is intrinsically an amusing word. The third motive for use of slang, according to this scholar, is to avoid clumsy words, and a short, one-syllable word, even though it is slangy, becomes a recognized synonym for a longer, two or three-syllable word. To many persons it is easier to say "bean," "bone" or "plunk," than to say "dollar," and to refer to a crazy person as a "nut" rather than as a "lunatic."

But slang at its best is exemplified in the coining of a new word, or the adaptation of an old one, to utter a striking, picturesque characterization, and the slang word often provides the exact shade of meaning which the more proper word would utterly fail to do. A pioneer expression for an inefficient and useless person was, "he's a doless fellow." Modern slang has improved upon that. Could there be any more apt and to-the-point characterization of an ineffectual individual than to borrow two words from the realm of motordom and say that he is a "flat tire"? Isn't that about the ultimate in expressing the acme of uselessness?

It is traditional that American slang should be troublesome to England, the home of the mother tongue and with the increasing interchange of American and English literature and drama the English have become more and more concerned about it. An American play in London has been a failure because there was so much American slang in it, and in issuing some of our novels English publishers have found it necessary to print a glossary of American slang phrases so that English readers can understand them. This, however, leads to some amusing blunders, as witness the explanations given in the English edition of Sinclair Lewis' "Babbitt." Here the English reader is informed that "heck" in "by heck" is the "familiar for Hecuba, a New England deity," a "go-getter" is "one who pursues business or information," a "hoodlum" is a "crank," a "once-over" is a "trial," and a "freshman hop" is a "college dancing club."

But the English are valiantly trying to understand us. An English society, the "S. P. E." (Society for Preservation of English or Society for Purity of English, perhaps), has secured the services of an American professor to help them "get hep to our lingo." Prof. Fred Newton Scott of the University of Michigan, an authority on rhetoric, has compiled a dictionary of American slang phrases which has been published as "S. P. E. Tract No. XXIV" to aid English readers who are struggling with American novels. Here are the first 33 of the expressions. There are approximately 200 more, but these will give us some idea of the sort of "slanguage" which has our British cousins puzzled:

All in—exhausted.

Applesauce—(noun or interjection) One of the latest pieces of slang in this country. It has two quite distinct meanings (1) nonsense! and (2) flattery. It is commonly used as a term of jocular contempt in reply to effusive but unjustifiable flattery.

Attaboy (from baby-talk for "that's a boy!")—fine! bravo!

Balled up—stalled; confused, and so unable to go on.

Bat—spree, good time.

Bat round—have a good time, go from place to place (in quest of pleasure).

Bawl out—to rebuke sharply, scold violently (transitive verb).

Bean—head.

Bean—to hit on the head.

Beat it—go, get out!

Beat the living tar out of—give a good drubbing to.

Believe me (sometimes expanded to "believe you me")—take my word for it.

Bellhop—a page in a hotel.

That's the berries—that's just right.

Blaa. (blah)—blunder, foolish talk.

Blab-mouth—indiscreetly loquacious person.

Blowhard—boaster (not unknown).

Blow in—spend.

Blow to a dinner—give a dinner to.

Blurb (a noun) is a term applied to any publisher's announcement, especially to passages of fulsome laudation on the jackets of newly-published books. The word is now used broadly to cover the brief summaries, analyses, and appreciations (usually in smaller type) that often precede magazine stories and articles. Admirable word, indispensable.

Bo (from hobo)—friend, pal.

Bone—dollar.

Bonehead—stupid person.

Boob—dunce, one easily misled.

Boost—to promote, to push, to laud.

Booster—indefatigable promoter.

Bootlegger—one who smuggles strong drink. Now well known.

Booze-fighter—drunkard.

Booze-hoisting—drinking liquor.

Bring home the bacon—secure results.

Buck—oppose.

Buck—dollar.

Bulldoze—to compel by a show of force, to bully.

Drew on Imagination as to Origin of Life

The race is like the child in that during the early stages of development the imagination is the predominating instinct; hence we find the first description of the origin of life highly imaginative. The ancient Greeks looked on the Goddess Gea as the mother of mankind. In their glorious mythology they pictured men and women as springing into life from the stones cast on the earth. The Celts pictured the soil as peopled with gnomes and pixies, friends or foes of mankind. Many ancient writers fancifully portrayed the transformation of dead into living matter. The Greek philosophers taught it. Aristotle wrote in 384 B. C.: "Animals sometimes arise in soil, in plants or in other animals."

Three centuries later Ovid, in his dissertation on the Pythagorean philosophy, defends the doctrine of spontaneous generation, whereas Virgil in his Georgics gives directions for the artificial production of bees.

Paracelsus (1492-1541), a Swiss medical philosopher who greatly confused fact and fancy, gives instructions for the making of Homunculus. Certain substances are to be placed in a bottle; the bottle is well stoppered and burned in a manure heap. Every day certain incantations are pronounced over the bottle. In time, so Paracelsus declares, a small living human being (homunculus) will appear in the bottle. He naively admits that he never succeeded in keeping the little man alive after it was taken from the bottle. Kircher went a step farther and describes and even pictures certain animals which he claims were spontaneously produced before his very eyes, through the action of water on fragments of plants. —Scientific Monthly.

Matrimony Among Birds

The idea that birds never get divorces but stick to their first loves throughout life received a rude jolt the other day when S. Prentiss Baldwin of Cleveland, Ohio, announced the results of a ten-year intensive study of bird habits.

Mr. Baldwin kept a day-by-day record of the lives of a number of household wrens that nested on his estate. These wrens, according to his report in Popular Science Monthly, usually raised two broods of young a year. But each year, between the broods, the parents usually changed mates. The mating lasted only while the young birds were helpless; then the parents felt free to make a new marital arrangement.

Irrigation in Peru

Peruvians are making possible the irrigation work that will transform the barren pampas near Pimentel into one of the most fruitful regions of agricultural land in the world. Irrigation works have been under construction for two years and Americans who are supervising them expect that the whole project will be finished in three years more. The 85,000 hectares of most valuable land, with roads that will allow easy transportation to markets, will be available to most Peruvians and foreigners. The government obtains the necessary funds by a monopoly on matches.

Italy Honors Philadelphia

A Roman fountain copied from the original will this year be presented to Philadelphia by the Italian government. Italy, which did not officially participate in the sesqui exposition, wishes to pay its tribute to the city where the American republic was founded. The Italian ministry of the fine arts is making an inspection of the numerous fountains in Rome to decide which one shall be copied. On the base of the fountain will be inscribed the names of the navigators of Italian origin who came to America, like Columbus.

Japan Taking to Golf

Ten years ago there were three golf courses in all Japan—Yokomaha, Rokosan, near Kobe, and Tokyo. All were nine-hole courses. Now there are seven, two at Tokyo and Hodogaya, near Yokohama, being as good 18-hole courses as the best of golfers could wish. Fifteen years ago golf was unknown to the Japanese. Now the number of low handicap Japanese players is increasing yearly and the foreign players residing there may be said to have lost the lead they held in the first five years.

Turkish Woman Honored

A Turkish woman, Bedrie Hanoum, has been appointed to the most important government position yet granted a woman by the Turkish republic, namely, head of the bureau of hygiene. After graduating from the American college in Constantinople, Bedrie Hanoum studied medicine in Germany and France at the expense of the Turkish government and returned to Turkey last year as doctor of medicine.—New York Herald Trib-