

Great Cases of the World's Greatest Detectives

By George Barton

NO. 12—SUPERINTENDENT FROEST AND VERSATILE ROGUE

Frank Froest, superintendent of Scotland Yard, is a man whose entire adult life has been spent in the business of criminal investigation. He has risen from the ranks to the highest position that can be attained by an English detective. An episode in the story that follows was the prelude to a lasting friendship between Frank Froest and John E. Wilkie, now the chief of our government secret service. At the time Froest was a sergeant-detective in Scotland Yard, and Wilkie the London correspondent of a Chicago daily. The name of the chief character in this tale, has, for obvious reasons, been disguised. For the sake of a connected and complete narrative, one incident has been introduced which will probably be entirely new to Superintendent Froest. I am sure he will look lightly upon this permissible embellishment of an otherwise veracious story from actual life.

This is a fragment from the biography of a versatile rogue—a man whose adventurous career leaps at a bound from Chicago to Cape Town, and whose criminal history is a part of the police archives of New York, Chicago, London, Paris, Vienna and Berlin. Beginning as a prototype of the Artful Dodger, he has gone from pocket-picking to bunco steering, and then run the entire gamut of crime, stopping only—providentially, perhaps—at murder.

Frank Macy, the doubtful hero of this queer story, was born at Freeport, Ill. There are many old residents in that place who still recall him as a precocious baby, a smart boy, and a clever youth. Freeport soon proved to be too small to satisfy his bulging genius, but even before he left his birthplace he made little excursions from the paths of virtue which, in the boy, are so often prophetic of the man's career. When he reached man's estate he was tall and as straight as an Indian. He had coal-black hair and a sallow complexion which lightened up brightly whenever he was in a humor to be affable with his fellow-man.

It was in Chicago that Frank Macy first distinguished himself in crime. A little more than a dozen years ago an advertisement appeared in the Chicago papers stating that a wealthy widow, about to take a long trip abroad, was willing to sell her favorite horse "Dobbin." It was with extreme regret, of course, that she took this step, but necessity knows no law, and hence this magnificent animal was to be sacrificed at a private sale. The animal was described as being sound in every particular, gentle and yet with a record fast enough to satisfy the most sportsmanlike driver. There were several nibbles at this inviting bait. One gentleman, who had suddenly acquired riches, resolved to acquire "Dobbin" at any price. He examined "Dobbin" with a critical, inexperienced eye, and was given the privilege of driving the animal along the lake front and boulevard. As a result of this he parted with \$600 American dollars and in return received the much-loved "Dobbin."

After the money had been paid, and within 24 hours, Dobbin began to undergo a most curious transformation. What had been a magnificent specimen of horseflesh began to show strange signs of decrepitude. He shivered up, as it were; it seems almost impossible to properly describe this marvelous transformation in mere words. It was necessary to be seen to be fully appreciated. Any one who has seen the tall, erect form of Dr. Jekyll gradually sinking into the personality of the shapeless and glimmering idea of the change that occurred when the noble "Dobbin" became a spavined, knock-kneed and degenerate nag that would have made an old street or horse blush for very shame. The instance of the first Dobbin was complicated, not once, but a dozen times, and after many of the wealthiest men of Chicago had been victimized the police began to investigate. They were stimulated and assisted in their work by John E. Wilkie, who, at that time, was in charge of the criminal department of one of the leading papers in Chicago. After a short time it was discovered that the "Gyp" game, as it was called, was being worked by a gang of confidence men, headed by Frank Macy. A warrant for his arrest was issued, but before it could be served he had fled from the jurisdiction of the local court.

The scene now shifts from Chicago to Low's Exchange in Trafalgar Square, London. Wilkie at that time was the London correspondent of an American paper, and while standing in the corridor of this hostelry he was surprised to see his old-time "Gyp" friend, Frank Macy, enter and place his name on the hotel register. Macy looked prosperous. He was dressed in swaggar style, wore a long coat, carried a heavy cane and had a sunburst of diamonds reposing amidst the folds of a blood-red cravat—in fact, he looked too vulgarly rich to be true. Wilkie consulted the hotel register and found that his erstwhile criminal friend had registered as Frank Macy. The change of attire and the assumed name were suspicious and the American lost no time in going to the telephone and calling up Frank Froest, one of the brightest detectives in Scotland Yard. Wilkie told Froest that it might be worth his while to come up to Low's and have

a look at the latest addition to the American invasion of London. Froest followed the advice of his friend and took several looks at Macy. He had him shadowed day and night, and after a week's work was in possession of his history. He found, among other things, that Macy had become a card shark of the first water. He had traveled across the Atlantic ocean in luxurious style and had made his expenses and a comfortable sum besides by the cleverness with which he played the noble game of poker with his fellow passengers. On arriving in London, he established a gambling house in the West End, where he met with remarkable success.

Not long after the meeting in Low's Exchange all London became excited over what was called the "Cutlass Mystery." It began when a well-dressed, elderly gentleman of considerable wealth was found on the sidewalk with his head cut and the blood flowing from several saber wounds. He said he had no recollection of how he came to be in such a plight, and resolutely declined to give the police any information upon the subject. Two days later another man was found similarly wounded and in the same condition. He was not as close-mouthed as the first individual, and went so far as to say that his misfortune was the result of a card party in which he had participated the previous night. He was unable, however, to give the locality of the house, having been taken there by an obliging caddy whom he had sought with a request to be conveyed to some place where he could satisfy his desires to dally with the goddess of chance. In less than 24 hours from this time still another man was found with two saber cuts about his head, and then the "Cutlass Mystery" became the reigning sensation of London.

In the meantime Frank Froest had been hard at work and, although his results were not very promising, he knew that he was on the scent and that it would only be a question of time when he would solve the problem. The cabman was located and he remembered taking the first victim to the house in the West End. Other threads were bound together, and finally all the evidences pointed to the house operated by Frank Macy. It seemed that, in each instance, the victim, after losing his money at cards, got in a row with one of the players. Macy had his room ornamented with trophies of various kinds. Among these was a large saber, such as is used in the Turkish army, and in each case the assailant had torn the saber from the wall and slashed his victim over the head with the weapon. The result was a num-

ber of ugly, but not exactly serious wounds. The house was raided and all the paraphernalia captured, but Macy himself fled from the police.

The next chapter in the history of this curious rogue occurred at the little watering place of Margate. A musical instrument dealer of London was taking his holiday at this resort and was enjoying himself in a manner such as is possible only to a London tradesman. As he was strolling along the strand he came face to face with Macy, who was then a fugitive from justice. He grasped him by the coat.

"Mr. Macy," he exclaimed, "I'm as glad to see you."

"Why?" asked Macy.

"Why?" retorted the other, "because now you will pay me for the mandolin you bought from me about a month ago."

Lacy laughed.

"You will pay me, won't you?" cried the dealer, hysterically. "You wouldn't rob a poor man, would you?"

"Fudge away," said the versatile rogue. "I'm havin' me holiday now, and I can't be disturbed by vulgar tradesmen."

When the musical dealer made a third appeal for his money Macy invited him to go to a wigm climate, with such emphasis that the tradesman realized the futility of further talk. He knew that Macy was a fugitive and he determined to have his revenge. He hurried to the nearest telegraph office and wired to Scotland Yard that the man they sought could be found at Margate.

Lacy immediately realized the mistake he had made and, learning the character of the telegram that had been sent to Scotland Yard, made quick preparations for shortening his vacation at the cozy seashore resort. He acted with characteristic disregard of conventionalities. He summoned a fisherman and hired him to take him out in a small boat, and hailed a Castle liner which was bound for South Africa. By the aid of a clever "cock and bull story" he induced the captain to take him aboard and before the Scotland Yard man reached Margate Lacy was calmly sailing the sea on his way to Cape Town.

Superintendent Froest immediately telegraphed to the authorities at Cape Town, describing Macy, and instructing them to apprehend the man on his arrival at that port. Macy managed to get ashore and strolled about the African city, admiring the botanical gardens and the astronomical observatory with the enthusiasm of a tourist whose only desire is to profitably while away an idle hour. He was inspecting the fine new docks of the place when the agent of Scotland Yard clapped his hand on his

shoulder and placed him under arrest. Lacy submitted with perfect good grace and was formally lodged in jail at Cape Town. Arrangements were made to have him returned to England the following day.

But in the case of this versatile rogue man proposed and Lacy disposed. During the night he broke jail and made his way to Johannesburg. He was delighted with this place and saw a great business possibility in the gambling line in this gold mining town of South Africa. The Boers were in control at that time and Lacy, by his affable manner and liberal ways, soon won their good graces. Just as he was about to settle down to what would no doubt have been a prosperous career of crime in South Africa one of Superintendent Froest's men placed him under arrest again. That afternoon captor and captive took a train for Cape Town with the intention of going from there to London. The local officer congratulated himself on having made such an important capture.

But, alas! his satisfaction was premature, for the daring Lacy jumped off the train while it was in motion and disappeared in the depths of a South African forest. The officer had the train stopped at the next station and, with the assistance of several other men, made a search of the woods. They finally located their man in an empty house a few miles from the point where he had jumped from the train. He was arrested "for keeps" this time, taken back to London, tried, sentenced and imprisoned.

After he had served his time he started on a tour of the continent, accompanied by a mysterious blonde woman who passed as his wife. He played cards, engaged in the pastime of bunco steering and varied these performances occasionally by assuming the part of the wronged husband. He was quite successful with this game and made large sums of money at several of the more prominent continental resorts; but a man of his restless disposition could not remain long in the same line of business, and a few years ago he returned to the United States and was arrested in Washington charged with being a confidence man. He met a well-known resident of the District of Columbia, and finding that the man had a weakness for cards, offered to take him to a room where they could play a game which would mean wealth for both. He had a scheme by which the bank could be broken, and offered to show the man how he could take a thousand dollars and come out with a profit of ten thousand. The man accepted this glowing offer, but instead of going to the house that was designated he notified the District police and the versatile rogue was once more arrested—this time under the name of Frank Tracy.

He was released on bail, however, and soon after sought the historic atmosphere of London.

His latest exploit is really deserving of a chapter in itself, but because of lack of space must be condensed into a few paragraphs. Superintendent Froest, who was always on the lookout for queer characters, learned that Tracy—as he now called himself—was in London 24 hours after he had set his feet on English soil. He instructed his subordinates to be on

the lookout for Tracy, but otherwise did not give much thought to the man.

One morning the telephone bell at Scotland Yard rang, and the voice of an excited individual, who proved to be a clerk in a banking house near Leadenhall street, informed the authorities that a thief had entered the institution that morning and robbed one of its depositors of £200. There was much excitement; a crowd had gathered in the corridors, and in the confusion the thief had escaped with the money.

The clerks and the depositor, between them, gave a rather indefinite description of the thief, but they were perfectly agreed upon the incidents preceding the robbery. The depositor in question, an elderly gentleman, called at the bank and handed in a check for £200. He was well known to the paying teller and the money was given to him in Bank of England notes. As he received the cash he walked over to a little desk on the side of the corridor for the purpose of counting it before placing it in his wallet. He went about this leisurely and with a perfect sense of security. Before he had finished counting the notes, however, some one tapped him gently on the shoulder. He looked around and saw another man standing by his side. The stranger was tall and as straight as an Indian, with stiff, coal-black hair. He had a sallow complexion and was very affable in his manner.

"Pardon me," said the stranger, "but you have dropped one of your notes."

The depositor glanced at the floor on the other side of the desk and, sure enough, there was a blank note.

"Thank you," he replied gratefully, and stooped down to pick up the odd note. The act only consumed two or three seconds, but when the depositor straightened up and was about to add the missing note to his pile he found, to his amazement, that the original package of money had gone, and with it the stranger. He gave the alarm and rushed out of the bank but when he reached the street the crowd was so great that it was impossible to find his man.

When Superintendent Froest received news of the theft, he immediately dispatched one of his men to the bank, but not satisfied with this he resolved to go there in person as soon as he had finished the work in his private office at Scotland Yard. That only consumed a few minutes, and at its completion Mr. Froest pulled down the top of his roll-desk and hurried towards Leadenhall street. At Oldgate, where Cornhill and Leadenhall street converge, he saw a tall, well-dressed man, hurrying along amidst the crowd. It did not take him many seconds to recognize the man as his old friend, the versatile rogue, who had lived successively under the titles of Frank Macy, Frank Lacy and Frank Tracy. Instinctively the superintendent associated the fellow with the theft of the bank in Leadenhall street. He walked up and took Tracy by the arm.

"My dear friend," he said, "I would like you to go down to the office with me and have a talk over old times."

Tracy made no resistance—indeed, this was characteristic of the law touched him he surrendered without a struggle. The two men proceeded to Scotland Yard and Tracy, when searched, was found to possess the £200 which had been stolen from the depositor in the bank that morning. He was tried for that offense, convicted and served his time.

The versatile rogue is at liberty once again, and for the time being is honoring the United States with his presence. This brief sketch is not offered as a story of his life. It is only what it purports to be—a fragment from the life of a versatile rogue.

Color of Eggs an Asset.

One of the most potent factors, perhaps, that should be considered when selecting a breed for producing eggs for market, is the demand of the market at which the eggs are to be disposed of. Some markets, notably New York city and cities immediately adjacent, prefer white shelled eggs, and the best trade in these markets will accept none other. Boston prefers brown eggs, and pays a substantial premium for them; and, taking the country over, the preference is for brown eggs by a large majority. However, in many markets no preference at all is expressed; in fact, those just mentioned are practically the only markets in which the color of the egg receives attention to the extent of influencing prices. Where there is a preference, and whichever the preference is, one should keep a variety of fowls that lay eggs of the preferred color.—From "Profitable Chicken Raising," by Roscoe B. Sando, in The Outing Magazine for April.

He Was a Clergyman.

According to the Pittsburg Press, a couple of New Yorkers were playing golf on a New Jersey course on election day when they saw a fine-appearing old gentleman looking at them wistfully. They asked him to join the game, which he did with alacrity. He was mild in speech and manner and played well. But once when he made a fool he ejaculated vehemently the word:

"Croton!"

A few minutes later, when he had made another bad play, he repeated:

"Croton!"

The fourth time he said this one of his new-arrived friends said: "I do not want to be inquisitive, but will you tell me why you say 'Croton' so often?"

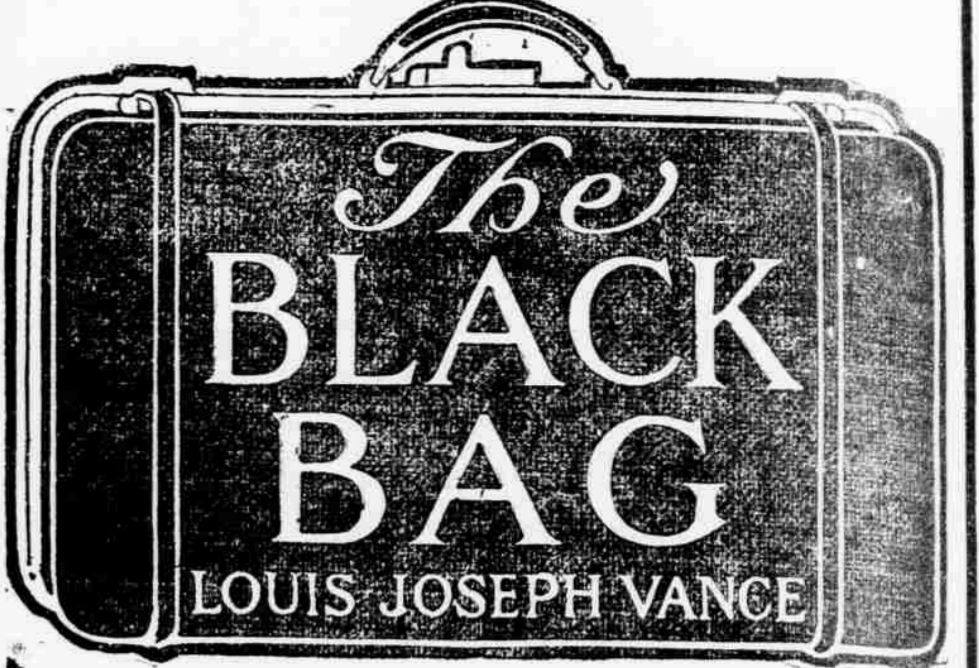
"Well," said the gentleman, "I'm just that the biggest dam near New York!"

He was a Presbyterian clergyman from Brooklyn.

Absent-mindedly the young woman yawned. "Pardon me," she said, "I didn't mean to do that."

"I see," responded Mr. Lingerlong. "Opened by mistake."—Chicago Tribune.

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Great Telephone Company Favors Public Control

New York, March 20.—The greatest public service corporation in the country has come out in favor of the public control advocated by President Roosevelt for great corporations, as is shown by the annual report of the American Telephone and Telegraph Company, the central company of the Bell system, made public by President Theodore N. Vail today.

In view of the dominant position of the company in the telephone business and following so closely upon the declaration of Judge Gary of the Steel Corporation for the same policy, the official declaration of the American Telephone and Telegraph Company is especially noteworthy. The report says: "It is contended that if there is to be no competition there should be public control. It is not believed that there is any serious objection to such control, provided it is independent, intelligent, considerate, thorough, and just, recognizing, as does the interstate commerce commission in its report recently issued that capital is entitled to its fair return, and good management or enterprise to its reward."

The report shows that there was a greater growth of telephones in the United States during 1907 than in any previous year. During the year the daily average number of telephone calls reached a total of 18,624,000, or about 5,997,000,000 for the year, equal to 75 calls for every man, woman and child in the country. The total number of stations in use through which these calls were handled amounted to 3,859,000, an increase of 768,310. The number of miles of wire in use is given as 8,610,592, of which 1,411,687 were added during the year. The latter amount would encircle the earth more than 15 times, while the total amount in use would reach around it more than 344 times, or would stretch to the moon 35 separate wires.

The gross earnings for the year were \$120,752,200, an increase of \$12,311,000 over 1906, and the total expenses \$87,905,000, as compared to \$77,845,000 in 1906. In these figures is found the cost to the American public of its annual talk opportunities. The balance for 1907 after deducting interest is given as \$25,819,700 out of which \$19,206,109 was paid in dividends to the 23,463 shareholders of the 1,253,250 shares of stock standing. The average holding is shown to be 65 shares, indicating a general participation in the profits on the part of the public. Only 16 persons hold more than 5,000 shares. The total outstanding obligations of the associated Bell companies are given at \$55,939,000, thus making this one of the greatest corporations in the world.

Lowther to Go to Germany.

Washington, D. C., March 20.—The news that Sir Gerard Lowther has been chosen to succeed Sir Frank Lascelles as British ambassador to Berlin has received with considerable interest and satisfaction in official and diplomatic circles here. Sir Gerard served for several years as First Secretary of the British embassy in Washington and was well known socially both here and in Newport. His wife is an American, the daughter of the late Atherton Blight of Philadelphia.

Sir Gerard is distantly related to the late Lord Salisbury. His rise in the diplomatic service, which he entered in 1879, has been rapid. From Washington he was promoted to the post of British minister to Chile, from which place he was transferred to Tangier.

"Do you think kissing is dangerous?"

"Not when you are in the parlor and all the doors are closed."—Chicago Journal.



THE DEPOSITOR GLANCED AT THE FLOOR ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DESK, AND SURE ENOUGH, THERE WAS THE ODD NOTE.

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