

Secrets of the Secret Service

—THE DE SHELLEY CASE

Cadet Operative
Reverts to Football
Tactics and Captures
Counterfeiter
Long Wanted
by Uncle Sam

By JOHN JAY DALY

WORD flashed from Secret Service headquarters to all motion-picture houses in Atlanta, Ga., warning against raised ten-dollar notes.

Without thinking, the girl in the box-office of a downtown movie changed a ten-dollar bill. The man in front of her took his ticket of admission, along with nine one-dollar bills and some silver. He went in to see the show.

In a little while he came out of the playhouse, walked across the street and stood there talking to a man.

The girl got the bill out of her cash box, examined it. Phony! She phoned the Secret Service.

As the call came in, young Cecil Jones, latest acquisition to the ranks of the Secret Service, walked into the office. It was his second day on the job.

The head of the office replaced the receiver.

"Jones," he said, "beat it down to the Acme Theatre, on Peachtree Street. See that girl in the box-office. If she points out a man, shadow him."

Out the door in a bound, Jones determined to show what was in him—his first chance. Any of the older hands around, Jones would have been ignored—a cub. Here he was, a novice, and actually stalking big game. So he thought.

The girl at the box-office called Jones' attention to the man across the street. Jones went over to see what it was all about. In his pocket he had a nice new golden engraved card that specified his calling—a member of the United States Secret Service.

The new operative walked up to the two men engaged in conversation. He tapped the one under suspicion on the shoulder. "I'd like to talk to you a minute," he said.

"Certainly," the man agreed. "What'd ye want?"

Jones led him aside, pulled out the golden engraved card. "I'm from the Secret Service."

That's all Jones remembered, for the moment. The world went black before him. He saw the fist coming, but not in time to duck. It landed on the point of his chin. As he struck the sidewalk Jones' head cleared instead of becoming foggy. Then he remembered making the mistake of all beginners—giving the culprit a chance.

In the time it takes a man to run fifty yards Jones was on his feet and after the fugitive, who ran down Peachtree Street and turned the first corner.

Strong, husky, the young Secret Service man shook off the effects of a bad blow to the jaw and raced after the fleeing figure. Then it was that Jones remembered his first lesson in the Secret Service, remembered, it just as he whipped his revolver from its holster: "Never fire into a crowd."

That street was crowded—packed with humanity. It was Saturday, market day. Women and children made up the greater part of the crowds. The pursued man ran through these crowds, knocked people aside, trampled children as he tried to evade capture.



Jones saw the fist coming, but not soon enough to dodge, and he landed on the pavement. He drew his gun, but did not dare fire because of the crowd on the street

Jones, many years younger, gained on the older man. Soon only ten paces separated them. The Secret Service man ordered the fugitive to stop. The man turned and fired at Jones. The bullet went wild.

Then youth was served. Jones, a former star football player on the University of Georgia eleven, made a flying tackle. He brought his quarry to ground.

It was not much of a wrestling match. The older man was winded. The younger man was decidedly stronger. He had his first taste of the hunt. Now, what to do, and who was the man? He might, by some chance, be innocent—and that would be the end of Jones in the Secret Service.

Jones called the first policeman on the beat. Together they took the man to a police station. There they found that Jones, the novice, had really not made much of a catch.

His captive was only Hugh Downs, whom Jones thought only a minor offender; but this expense led directly to greater glory. Downs' papers raised notes made by a master—and the master eventually was to be Jones' prey.

The day following, the new Secret Service agent was sent out to investigate the passing of counterfeit fifty-cent coins.

After three days' intensive work Jones decided that certain men living in a downtown hotel were probably responsible. So he shadowed them.

One night one of the men left the hotel and went to a nearby store. There he passed a fifty-cent piece that proved to be counterfeit. When the man got back to the hotel Jones decided to raid the place. With police aid he battered down the door leading to a counterfeiter's den—the workshop of Luis Eduardo de Shelley, expert engraver and notemaker, brought by necessity to hobnob with ex-convicts engaged in passing counterfeit coins. De Shelley's pride was hurt. He cried like a baby when arrested in such company. It meant that when he went to the penitentiary De Shelley would be in disgrace.

Never was there a counterfeiter like De Shelley. De Shelley, a native Venezuelan, is still rated by the Secret Serv-

ice as the most expert designer and maker of raised notes the Nation ever saw. No one who ever operated in the United States could touch De Shelley for artistic workmanship. His notes bore the stamp of genius, and yet he was never at large for any long period.

It was on St. Patrick's Day, 1935, that the youngest Secret Service man, Jones, arrested De Shelley on the charge of possessing and passing counterfeit notes. As the old counterfeiter was cornered he tried his best to get rid of the queer money he carried, and notes flew all along the line of pursuit. Still, when they had him safely in a cell, De Shelley had enough evidence on him to warrant a six-year sentence in the Atlanta Federal Penitentiary. He pleaded guilty nine days after his arrest and is now back in his old haunt, thinking it over.

Really, it was while serving a previous term in Atlanta Penitentiary that De Shelley made plans for the operations that led to this spectacular arrest.

Once a counterfeiter, it seems, always a counterfeiter. It becomes a habit.

Years before his last Atlanta arrest De Shelley had been apprehended in New York State as a counterfeiter. He got twenty years in Atlanta, and had served fifteen years when he made his escape some time in 1934.

Immediately following that escape De Shelley fled for Chicago. There he set up another establishment for the making of ten-dollar notes, his specialty. In order to get the money for purchase of necessary equipment this expert counterfeiter had to become a common passer of queer coins.

Only nine months' liberty was enjoyed by De Shelley in Chicago. The Secret Service men got him there after another lively tussle in which gun-play figured.

The law had a strange quirk to it this time. De Shelley, returned to Atlanta to serve out his sentence after enjoying his nine months' freedom, was released on March 21, 1934. Authorities had found that he was not a native American; that he was not even entitled to be in the country. So upon his release from Atlanta they deported him, by direct order of immigration officials.

Anyway, the cleverest notemaker of them all was sent out of New Orleans and into La Guayra, Venezuela, his old home town. There he was born and there he had learned the art of making notes.

La Guayra did not appeal to De Shelley. It was, to begin with, not big enough for his operations. Also, paper money there was not so valuable as that which came from the United States Bureau of Engraving and Printing. So, on September 20, 1934, De Shelley, his pockets full of spurious coins, sailed from his native heath and went to Santo Domingo. It was easy then to cross over to Cuba, and he made that journey by passing counterfeit money. Then on to Key West, Fla. There the nemesis of the Secret Service again entered United States territory illegally.

To make sure they would not identify him so easily this time, De Shelley in Cuba applied for a birth certificate issued in the name of Jose Ignacio Herrera. It was under this name that he purchased passage to the United States.

In Tampa De Shelley probably sensed the Secret Service men were on his trail again, and that was a good guess, for they were about to pounce on him when he started his trek northward.

In Atlanta De Shelley dropped the Jose Ignacio Herrera alias and contacted two old prisonmates, discharged with him from Atlanta. Together this trio entered a conspiracy to make fifty-cent coins—a comedown for a notemaker. They were just getting a good start, the idea being to recoup De Shelley's fortune so he might get back to note-raising, when Jones, the new Secret Service man, went on the job.

When taken into custody De Shelley had in his possession some high art—samples of his superb work as a notemaker. That convicted him and put a novice in the ranks of professional Secret Service men.

A source of trouble to the Secret Service for the last twenty years, old-timers at first could hardly believe a newcomer to the fold had landed De Shelley, the expert.