



STORIES OF THE SECRET SERVICE

BY Capt. Patrick D. Tyrrell

STORY No. 1 THE LINCOLN TOMB ROBBERS

Being an Account of the Attempted Desecration of the Grave of the Martyr President at Springfield in 1876, and the Capture and Conviction of a Gang of Counterfeiters That Preceded It.

By CAPTAIN PATRICK D. TYRRELL

[Copyright, 1935, by Marlon G. Schefflin.] PART II—Continued.

In its details the plot was carefully worked out. So far had Swegles wormed himself into the confidence of the conspirators that on the night of the first of November they met in his room to complete the details of the plot. Five days later I learned that Tuesday, November 7, had been chosen as the night to commit the crime, this date being chosen on account of its being presidential election day, on the night of which, the criminals judged, the excitement incident to the receiving of the returns would serve to shield them from any attention they might attract under ordinary circumstances. Hughes, Mullen and Swegles were to open the tomb, extract the casket and load it into the waiting wagon. Swegles' part of the preliminaries was to secure the wagon and driver, which he assured his co-conspirators had been done, and after the work at the tomb had been done he was to accompany the contractor furnishing the conveyance into Indiana. It had also been decided that the trio should go to Springfield on the night of November 6, in order to be able to make such preliminary surveys and arrangements as might be found necessary.

On the theory that, with the information in hand, there could be no difficulty in preventing the conspirators from carrying out their plan, there had been no dissent among the government employes as to the wisdom of going further and permitting the tomb robbers to progress far enough with their work to enable the law officers to capture the criminals red-handed. Robert T. Lincoln, son of the martyr president, and Leonard Swett had been kept fully informed of the conception and development of the plot and had agreed that the capture of the counterfeiters in their initial grave-robbing effort would be preferable merely to frightening them out of the attempt, a course that had been pursued in the instance of the plot of eight months before. At a conference at which Mr. Lincoln was present the services of Elmer Washburn, who had in the meantime been superseded in the chiefship of the secret service; John McDonald, who had assisted in the capture of Ben Boyd, and John McGinn and George Hay, Pinkerton men, were provided for to assist in the capture of the vandals. Owing to the importance of the case Allan Pinkerton had assigned his best two men. Mr. Lincoln protested against the plot being allowed to proceed to the point where profane hands might actually be laid on his father's coffin, but Mr. Swett insisted that an overt act must be committed by them before the vandals could be successfully prosecuted, and our plans were not changed.

This conference was held in the afternoon, and at nine o'clock the evening of the same day Mullen, Hughes and Swegles swung aboard the front platform of the front coach of the Alton train just as it moved out of the Chicago station. McGinn, Hay and I boarded the last sleeper of the same train, after having satisfied ourselves by careful shadowing that the professional counterfeiters, now amateur tomb robbers, were aboard. Washburn and McDonald were to go to Springfield on the next train and arrive there at four o'clock on the afternoon of the day set for the robbery. We arrived at Springfield two hours late and registered at the St. Nicholas hotel under assumed names. We found that Mullen and Hughes, also under false names, had registered at the St. Charles hotel, a small house not far from the St. Nicholas. They had retired to gain rest before entering on their bold work and had left orders to be called at ten o'clock in the morning.

An hour before that time I received a call by appointment from John T. Stuart, of the Lincoln guard of honor, in whose office Abraham Lincoln had read law. We proceeded at once to the Lincoln monument, in Oak Ridge

cemetery, where I was introduced to John C. Power, custodian of the Lincoln tomb, with whom I made a thorough examination and mental survey of the monument structure and surrounding grounds. A spot was selected at which one of the detectives could be stationed from which he could hear the robbers at work on the sarcophagus. Custodian Power was told that during the afternoon two men whose descriptions were given would appear at the tomb and that any questions asked by them should be answered with the customary courtesy accorded visitors to the monument.

It was about three o'clock in the afternoon that Hughes and Swegles appeared, paid the usual fee and entered false names in the visitors' register. Hughes asked many questions, which were fully and truthfully answered. Mullen, as we found later, had remained in the city to collect such tools as he thought necessary for forcing open the tomb and marble sarcophagus. At five o'clock Detective Hay was dispatched to the cemetery to inform Custodian Power that the other officers were coming, and two hours later, after a conference in the hotel where the work of each man had been assigned to him, we reached the monument.

The day had been dark, and at six o'clock all daylight had faded from the cemetery. Inside Memorial hall the darkness was intense. By those of my readers who have seen the burial place of Abraham Lincoln it will be remembered that Memorial hall is at the south end of the monument structure and the catacomb containing the body at the north end, 175 feet away. I had selected Memorial hall as the best hiding place for our men. Swegles having promised to inform us in our hiding place when the right moment was at hand for us to appear at the door of the catacomb and thereby entrap the ghouls at their work. Swegles was to work with Hughes and Mullen until the sarcophagus was opened and the casket ready to be loaded into the wagon. Then he was to go for the conveyance, which was supposed to be hidden nearby. While on this mission he was to make his way around the base of the

hill, come to the door of Memorial hall and give the signal that the time for action had come. That there might be no mistake in the darkness a countersign, the word "Wash," had been agreed upon.



THE FLARE OF A BULL'S-EYE LANTERN SHOT THROUGH THE BARS.

We had been concealed in Memorial hall in almost breathless quiet for about two hours, when suddenly the flare of a bull's-eye lantern was shot through the bars of the iron door leading into the hall, and we knew that the conspiracy was rapidly being put into actual execution. From their hurried examination of the hall by the aid of the lantern the ghouls evidently satisfied themselves that no one was inside. At any rate, they departed in a moment and made around the base of the monument to the north end, where lay the body they were running such desperate risks to secure. We knew that the next few minutes would be fraught with events that might mean death to any of us. I now had more reason than ever before to believe in the truthfulness of Swegles and that he would keep his promise to signal us when the right time arrived. So we waited for this signal, and at last it came.

If this story were a fancy of my brain instead of a narrative of facts the current of it would here take a sudden turn from the lines I am compelled to pen. For more than a year I had plotted to outwit the shrewd and desperate criminals with whom we were dealing and, up to this point, had been successful. As soon as Swegles had given the signal we moved cautiously out of Memorial hall and I ordered the others to follow me. At the giving of this order every man drew his revolver, to be prepared for the fight that we all believed inevitable. In doing so Detective Hay, of the Pinkerton force, accidentally discharged a percussion cap in the old-style Colt's revolver he carried. As the detonation was not loud I paid little attention to it, and ran swiftly around to the door of the catacomb, with the others behind me. The staple containing the lock of the iron door had been sawed and filed off, and the door stood a few inches ajar. I called on whomsoever was within to surrender. There was no response. I called again and then listened. Not

even the sound of breathing was audible. I then struck a match. The tools used by the ghouls lay scattered over the floor and the sarcophagus was battered to pieces in such a way as to allow the casket to be moved lengthwise toward the door. The vandals had fled.

There is but one word that adequately describes the sensation that came over me, and that is "cheapness." After weeks of careful planning to catch red-handed the men whose criminality had taken on so depraved a turn that they would resort to the theft of the body of the most beloved American, we found that they had outwitted us. As quickly as I could recover my presence of mind after the shock of surprise over finding the catacomb empty except for the desecrated sarcophagus, I ordered my assistants to separate and scour the shrubbery surrounding the ghouls.

Going back, it occurred to me that the ghouls might have sought concealment on the upper parts of the structure. In the shadow I saw the figures of two men whom I could not discern clearly enough to identify them. It never occurred to me that they might be other than Hughes and Mullen, and I called out for the men below to come up. I fired at them, and they returned the fire, running at the same time to the northeast corner of the terrace. I fired again and again. The shot was answered, the bullets whistling past my head. Then one of the men shouted:

"Tyrrell, is that you?" I made no answer, believing that one of the men was Hughes and knowing he would recognize my voice. Again the excited question was asked, and I still kept silent. It took but a moment, however, for the pursued men to make themselves known as McGinn and Hay, the Pinkerton men, who had mounted the steps in the hope of finding the ghouls hidden there.

Thus for a time was the most serious and dastardly plot ever devised turned into a farce. Our prey had escaped, and in order to justify ourselves against the ridicule that would be heaped on us when the events of the night became known I immediately took up the trail of Hughes and Mul-

len. After finding they had breakfasted at a farmhouse about seven miles from Springfield the next morning, they were again lost to us. There could now be no rest till the men were run to earth. Ten days later they were located in the saloon at 234 West Madison street and arrested by Detectives Simmons, of the Chicago city force; McGinn, of the Pinkertons, and Elmer Washburn and myself, of the secret service. They were taken to Springfield, indicted and tried on the charges of robbery and larceny, there being no specific statute at that time against grave robbing, and sent to the penitentiary for a year. Their counsel, in the trial of the case at Springfield, raised the cry that the secret service had "put up a job" on his clients in order to get them out of the way for counterfeiting operations, but the absurdity of that defense was too apparent to save the counterfeiters from prison.

This is the true record of a plot that failed. It is not known to this day why Hughes and Mullen left the tomb after Swegles went after the team he was supposed to have, but which, in fact, did not exist. One theory is that they heard the detonation of Hay's revolver and fled. Another is that they left the tomb to meet Swegles and the driver, and instead saw the officers rushing on them. Whatever may be the correct theory, their escape from the tomb before we reached it was merely one of the innumerable breaks in the plans of all detectives—except in story books.

Story No. 2 Will Be "The Bothamley Murder Mystery."

Supply and Demand. "I tell you," said the passenger with the skull cap, "there is something wrong with a country where a prizefighter can make more money in one night than a college professor can make in five years!" "You're right, pard," said the passenger with the loud check suit. "There's too blamed many college professors and too blamed few great prize fighters."—Chicago Tribune. How You Can Tell. A pretty girl is one who gets a seat on a crowded car.

POPULAR SCENIC ROUTE. Buffalo & Susquehanna Railroad Company.

Condensed Time Table in Effect June 4, 1935.

Table with columns for READ DOWN, READ UP, Week Days, Daily, and Week Days. Rows list stations like Addison, Knoxville, Westfield, etc., with corresponding times.

Additional trains leave Galeston at 8:45 a. m. and 6:25 p. m., arriving at Ansonia at 9:21 a. m. and 7:50 p. m. Returning leave Ansonia at 9:35 a. m. and 1:30 p. m., arriving at Galeston at 10:03 a. m. and 9:55 p. m.

Advertisement for Kinloch paint. 'Above all, USE GOOD PAINT!' The oil-linseed oil 'Just pure linseed is the "life"—the one great requisite of good paint for which there is no substitute—and the sure way to get the pure, fresh linseed oil is to buy the oil and separately. For every gallon of Kinloch Paint buy one gallon of linseed oil.

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Advertisement for Windsor Hotel. THE Windsor Hotel. Between 12th and 13th Sts., on Filbert St. Philadelphia, Pa. Three minutes WALK from the Reading Terminal. Five minutes WALK from the Penn. R. R. Depot. European Plan \$1.00 per day and upwards. American Plan \$2.00 per day. FRANK M. SCHEIBLEY, Manager.

Advertisement for Patents and Gasnow & Co. We promptly obtain U. S. and Foreign PATENTS. Send model, sketch or photo of invention for free report on patentability. For free look, apply to Sec'y of State, Wash., D. C. Write Patents and TRADE-MARKS to GASNOW & CO. OPPOSITE U. S. PATENT OFFICE WASHINGTON, D. C.

Advertisement for Madam French Female Bean's Pills. A safe, certain relief for Suppressed Menstruation. Never known to fail. Safe! Sure! Speedy! Satisfaction Guaranteed or money Refunded. Sent prepaid for \$1.00 per box. Will send them on trial, to be paid for when relieved. Samples Free. UNITED MEDICAL CO., BOX 74, LANCASTER, PA.

Advertisement for J. F. Parsons. The Place to Buy Cheap — IS AT — J. F. PARSONS' LADIES DR. LAFRANCO'S COMPOUND. Safe, speedy regulator; 25 cents. Druggists or mail booklet free. DR. LAFRANCO, Philadelphia, Pa.

Advertisement for Kodol Dyspepsia Cure. KODOL DYSPEPSIA CURE DIGESTS WHAT YOU EAT. The \$1.00 bottle contains 2 1/2 times the trial size, which sells for 50 cents. PREPARED ONLY AT THE LABORATORY OF E. C. DeWITT & COMPANY, CHICAGO, ILL. Sold by R. C. Dodson, Druggist.

TIME TABLE No. 37. BOUDERSPORT & PORT ALLEGANY R. R. Table with columns for STATIONS, 10, 8, 4, 6, 2. Rows list stations like Port Allegany, Colemans, Burtville, etc.

Table with columns for STATIONS, 1, 5, 3. Rows list stations like Utzess, Crowell, Carpenter's, Perkins, etc.

Advertisement for R. Seger & Co. Who is Your Clothier? If it's R. SEGER & CO., you are getting the right kind of merchandise. There is no small or grand deception practiced in their store. Sustained success demonstrates that there is "growth in truth" in the retailing of NEW AND UP-TO-DATE CLOTHING AT POPULAR PRICES.

Advertisement for Piles. PILES RUDY'S PILE Suppository. A sure guaranteed if you use RUDY'S PILE Suppository. Sold in Emporium by L. Taggart and R. C. Dodson.

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