

**A GAMBLER'S LEGACY.**

**A Life Story Well Worth Reading.**

When a man dies unexpectedly his affairs crystallize into a rigid pattern traced by old letters, keys in his pockets; of clothing left hanging over a chair; by half-emptied bottles on the dresser; by telephone numbers jotted down on the back of a soiled envelope; by pictures and trinkets in the till of a trunk.

So it was with the gambler in the accompanying story. When he went to bed that night—with a thousand poker plays—the next morning it ran through his tired brain — he probably expected to sleep ten or twelve hours and in the morning renew his active life. But he died of heart disease brought on by 30 continuous hours of poker playing. The next morning it was too late to sort out the letters and papers, destroy traces of little indiscretions. It was too late to gather up the loose ends.

He left—a gambler's legacy. On the afternoon of Monday, November 24, last year, a professional gambler of Kansas City sat down at a poker table and broke the seal of a new deck of cards. He played all that afternoon and night and all the next day, pausing only to take sandwiches, coffee and whiskey from a Japanese servant's tray.

At 8 o'clock Tuesday night, after 30 hours continuous play, he counted his money, pushed back his chair, bade the other men around the table good night and went out. He walked across the street to a hotel, where he lived, got his key at the desk, went to his room on the third floor, undressed and went to bed. Three hours later he was dead of heart disease.

What does a professional gambler leave behind him when he dies? Floyd Jacobs, county administrator, who took charge of the gambler's property the morning after he died, found the gambler had \$1,800 in cash and \$1,800 in liberty bonds in a safety deposit box in his hotel. Bank books showed he had \$9,500 on deposit at a downtown bank. There was a 1-2 carat diamond ring, worth about \$1,000 on the dead man's finger.

A man who had known the gambler in Omaha told the administrator the gambler had a large amount of money—estimated at \$60,000—in currency in a safe deposit box in an Omaha bank several months ago. Investigation revealed the gambler had made a trip to Omaha early in the fall, returning with the currency to Kansas City. Like all big gamblers he liked to handle money, and he preferred to keep his "bank roll" where he could have ready access to it, instead of investing it or depositing it in a bank. So he rented a safe deposit box.

When the public administrator opened that box at a bank that day after the gambler died there was no currency or papers of value. The administrator learned that a man said to be the gambler's partner had visited the box early in the day, but the partner insisted he took out only a few papers, concerning the partnership that belonged to him.

Where is the \$60,000 which the gambler brought from Omaha? The mystery of its disappearance is one of the interesting things he left behind him.

There are three claimants to the estate; the relatives of the man's dead wife, who live in Denver, a Kansas City woman who says she was his common law wife, and the partner, who seeks a half-share on the basis of business partnership. If the gambler had made a will it is probable he would have left his property to none of them, but to a fourth person—a manicure girl in a downtown hotel. As yet she has brought no claim against the estate and it is probable she never will bring one. The gambler had said they would be married in December. That was one of the tragedies he left behind.

What else did he leave? When the coroner had finished his work in the gambler's bedroom the morning after he died, the administrator began his examination of personal effects of the dead man. In a bureau drawer he found more than fifty envelopes containing weekly bills for room rent from a large hotel. Receipt stamps on them showed that almost all of them had been paid on the date rendered. He was punctual, methodical.

There were letters, correspondence with business associates in Denver and Omaha, postcards from a woman who was spending a vacation on a farm. One letter was from a lieutenant in the army stationed at Camp Taylor, near Louisville, Ky., telling of a big stud poker game in which two young millionaires from the east were "easy picking."

The lieutenant told how easy it would be to trim the millionaires with marked cards, and asked the gambler to be ready to take the train for Louisville when things were "ripe." "It would be a shame to let money like this get away," the lieutenant wrote. "You could win \$1,000 at a sitting. A chance like that doesn't come often." He inclosed a code for use in exchanging telegrams.

In the gambler's trunks the administrator found more striking evidence of his life, as well as an explanation of how he managed to accumulate \$60,000 in currency. Attached to an old vest was a complicated poker "hold-out," a device for slipping cards up the sleeve and concealing them for use in an emergency. The holdout was equipped with delicate springs and adjustments. A slight movement of the knee would bring the extra cards instantly into play.

There were twenty-five or thirty decks of marked cards, a machine like a tobacco cutter with a razor edge for trimming the edges of cards. There was a catalogue from a firm in San Francisco listing more than seventy five crooked gambling devices—from a tiny thumbband trick used to scratch a rough spot on aces, listed

at 50 cents, to a combination poker and dice table with electric wiring and holdout attachments, which sold for \$350.

In the game which the partners ran in the upper floors of a small hotel here, the sky was the limit. Their "customers" were farmers and stockmen and oil men from Kansas, Oklahoma or Texas. Whatever elements of mystery surrounded the gambler's death, there is no mystery in the way he built his fortune.

In one of his trunks was an interesting collection of books. There was an old family Bible inscribed on the fly-leaf: "To Dear Mother, Christmas 1898." Here are some of the books which he had possessed:

- A Little Book of Old Time Verses.
- Science and Health, with a key to the Scriptures.
- Illustrated South America.
- Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam.
- Collected verse of Rudyard Kipling.

Thanatopsis.

In a small pasteboard box was a collection of newspaper clippings, mostly poems. They were happy-go-lucky little poems, full of the bubble philosophy of life. Here is one extract: m

Oh, I worry over this thing and I worry over that,  
But I notice when the atmosphere is cleared.

That the bad luck I had looked for didn't come and knock me flat;

And I didn't have the trouble that I feared.

This is another:  
A little bit of life, a little bit of love,  
A little bit of happiness and money;  
Just to shove  
Up the hill and over to make our journey sweet—

And yet we do not ask too much, we say to all we meet;

Not much, not much, only all there is  
Of richness and of beauty in a world

like this.

Perhaps the gambler had clipped them out himself; but it seems more likely that his wife clipped them and sent them to him in her letters, for some of them are underscored and interlined with remarks. At any rate he saved them, and there they were when the public administrator and his assistant searched through his trunks.

The gambler's money probably will be divided between the claimants who are scrambling for it in the courts, but his real legacy is found in the object lesson which he left behind him.—Kansas City Star.

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the better. That was six years ago and I am still here and am a well, strong woman, and I owe my life to Cardui. I had only taken half the bottle when I began to feel better. The misery in my side got less... I continued right on taking the Cardui until I had taken three bottles and I did not need any more for I was well and never felt better in my life... I have never had any trouble from that day to this."

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