

**BLINDFOLDED**  
A Mystery Story  
of San Francisco  
BY EARLE ASHLEY WALCOTT

(Copyright 1934, the Bobbs-Merrill Co.)  
Bockstein greeted me affably:  
"Welcome to de marget vonce more, Mr. —, Mr. —"

"Wilton," said Eppner, assisting his partner in his high, dry voice, with cold civility. His blue-black eyes regarded me as but a necessary part of the machinery of commerce.

I gave my orders briefly.  
"Dot, is a larch order," said Bockstein dubiously.  
"You don't have to take it," I was about to retort, when Eppner's high-pitched voice interrupted:  
"It's all right. The customary margin is enough."

Wallbridge was more enthusiastic.  
"You've come just in the nick of time," said the stout little man, swabbing his bald head from force of habit, though the morning was chill.  
"The market has been drier than a fish-horn and drier than a foggy morning."

Lattimer and Hobart, after a polite explanation of their rules in regard to margins, and getting a certified check, became obviously anxious to do my bidding.

I distributed the business with such judgment that I felt pretty sure our plans could not in any way be exposed, and took my place at the rail in the board room.

The opening proceedings were comparatively tame. I detected a sad falling-off in the quality and quantity of lung power and muscular activity among the buyers and sellers in the pit.

At the call of Confidence, Lattimer and Hobart began feeding shares to the market. Confidence dropped five points in half a minute, and the pit began to wake up.

There was a roar and a growl that showed me the animals were still alive.  
The Decker forces were taken by surprise, but with a hasty consultation came gallantly to the rescue of their



stock. At the close of the call they had forced it back and one point higher than at the opening.

This, however, was but a skirmish of outposts. The fighting began at the call of Crown and Diamond.

It opened at 63. The first bid was hardly made when with a bellow Wallbridge charged on Decker's broker, filled his bid, and offered a thousand shares at 62.

There was an answering roar from a hundred throats and a mob rushed on Wallbridge with the apparent intent of tearing him limb from limb. Wallbridge's offer was snapped up at once, but a few weak-kneed holders of the stock threw small blocks on the market.

These were taken up at once, and Decker's brokers were bidding 65.

At this Eppner gave a blast like a cornet, and waving his arms frantically plunged into a small-sized riot. I had entrusted him with 5,000 shares of Crown and Diamond to be sold for the best price possible, and he was feeding the opposition judiciously. The price wavered for a moment, but rallied and reached 66.

At this I signaled to Wallbridge, and with another bellow he started an opposition riot on the other side of the room from Eppner, and fed Crown Diamond in lumps to the howling forces of the Decker combination. The battle was raging furiously.

There was a final rally of the Decker forces, and the call closed with Crown Diamond at 63. I had sold 12,000 shares.

I was pleased at the result. Doddridge Knapp had entrusted me with the shares with the remark: "I paid 60 for 'em and they're not worth a tinker's dam. I got an inside look at the mine when I was in Virginia City. Feed Decker all he'll take at 60. He's been fooled on the thing, and I reckon he'll buy a good lot of them at that."

I had sold Doddridge Knapp's entire lot of the stock at an average of over 65, had netted him a profit of \$15 a share, and had, for a second purpose, served the plan of campaign by drawing the enemy's resources to the defense of Crown Diamond and weakening, by so much, his power of op-

erating elsewhere.

By the time Omega was reached I had the plans full in hand.

The assault on Crown diamond had caused a nervous feeling all along the line, and under rumors of a bear raid there had been a drop of several points.

Omega felt the result of the nervousness and depression, and opened at 75.

There was a moment's buzz—the quiet of a crowd expectant of great events. Then Wallbridge charged into the throng with a roar. I could not distinguish his words, but I knew that he was carrying out my order to drop 5,000 shares on the market.

At his cry there was an answering roar, and the scene upon the floor turned to a riot. How the market was going I could only guess. At Wallbridge's onset I saw Lattimer and Eppner make a dive for him and then separate, following other shouting, screaming madmen who proulted about the floor and tried to save themselves from a mobbing. I heard 70 shouted from one direction, but could not make out whether it set the price of the stock or not. The din was too confusing for me to follow the course of events.

At last Wallbridge staggered up to the rail, flushed, collarless, and panting for breath, with his hat a hopeless wreck.

I sold down to 71—averaging 73, I guess—and she's piling in fit to break the floor," he gasped.

"Did Lattimer and Eppner get your stock?" I could not help asking.  
"They got about 3,000 of it. Rosenheim got the rest."

I remembered Rosenheim as the agent of Decker, and sighed. But Lattimer and Eppner were busy, and I had hopes.

"Where is it now?" I asked.  
"Sixty-nine and a half."

I meditated an instant whether to use my authority to throw another 5,000 shares on the market. But I caught sight of Decker opposite, pale, hawk-like, just seizing an envelope from a messenger. He tore it open, and though his face changed not a line, I felt by a mysterious instinct that it brought assurance of the aid he sought.

"Buy every share you can get," I said promptly. "Don't get in the way of Lattimer or Eppner. Put on steam, too."

A moment later the clamor grew louder and the excitement increased. I heard shouts of 75, 78, 80 and 85. Decker's men had entered into the bidding with energy. The sinews of war had been recruited, and it was a battle for the possession of every block of stock.

Thus far I had followed closely the plan laid down for me by Doddridge Knapp, and the course of the market had agreed with the outlines of his prophecy. But now it was going up faster than he had expected. Yet I could do nothing but buy. I dared not set bounds to the bidding. I could only grip the railing and wait for the end of the call.

At last it came, and "Omega, one hundred and five and three-quarters" was the closing quotation. I feverishly took the totals of my purchases from the brokers and gave the checks to bind them. Then I hastily made my way through the excited throngs that blocked the entrance to the Exchange, brought thither by the exciting news of "a boom in Omega," and hurried to the office.

Doddridge Knapp had not yet come, and I consumed myself with impatience for ten minutes till I heard his key in the lock and he entered with a calm smile on his face.

I gave him my memoranda and tried to read his face as he studied them.

"You did a good job with Crown Diamond," he grunted approvingly.  
"Thanks," I returned. "I thought it wasn't bad for a stock that was not worth mentioning. And here is 7,600 shares of Omega bought and 5,000 sold. That scheme worked pretty well. We made 2,600 by it. Um—the price went up pretty fast."

The King of the Street looked solemnly at the figures before him. "You ought to have got more stock," he growled.

This was a shock to my self-congratulation over my success, and I gave an inquiring "Yes?"

"As I figure it out," he said, "somebody else got 7,000 shares and odd. There were over 15,000 shares sold in your Board."

I murmured that I had done my best.

"Yes, yes; I suppose so," said my employer. "But we need more."  
"How much?" I asked.

"I've got a little over 48,000 shares," he said slowly, "and I must have near 60,000. It looks as though I'd have to fight for them."

"Well, Decker isn't any better off than you," I said consolingly.  
"He's ten or fifteen thousand shares worse off than I am."

"And he's put a fortune into Crown Diamond, and is pretty well loaded with Confidence."

"True, my boy."  
"And so," I argued, "he must be nearer the bottom of his sack than you are."  
"Very good, Wilton," said the King of the Street with a quizzical look. "But you've left one thing out. You don't happen to know that the directors of the El Dorado Bank had a secret meeting last night and decided to back Decker for all they are worth?"

"Rather a rash proceeding," I suggested.  
"Well, he had three millions of their money in his scheme, so I reckon they thought the tail might as

well follow the hide," explained my employer.

"The only thing to do then is to get a bank yourself," I returned.

Doddridge Knapp's lips closed, and a trace of a frown was on his brows.  
"Well, this isn't business," he said. "Now here is what I want," he continued. And he gave directions for the buying at the afternoon session.

"Now, not over 125," was his parting injunction. "You may not get much—I don't think you will—though I have a scheme that may bring a reaction."

Doddridge Knapp's scheme for a reaction must have been one of the kind that goes off backward, for Omega jumped skyward on the afternoon call, and closed at 130. And I had been able to get a scant 1,500 shares when the call was over.

"I did better than you," said Doddridge Knapp, when I explained to him the course of the session. "I found a nest of 2,500 and gathered them in at 120. But that's all right. You've done well enough—as well as I expected."

"And still 8,000 to get," I said.  
"Nearly."  
"Well, we'll get them in due time, I suppose," I said cheerfully.

"We'll have 'em by Monday noon, or we won't have 'em at all," growled Doddridge Knapp.  
"How's that?"

"You seem to have forgotten, young man, that the stock transfer books of the Omega Company close on Monday at 2 o'clock," he said as the door closed behind him.

(To be continued.)

**The Shillalah.**  
The shillalah owes its name to the fact that the finest specimens thereof used to be grown in the pleasant groves of trees that formerly flourished in the barony of Shillalah, in County Wicklow. The best shillalah must be a root sprung sapling, for one taken from the branches of a full grown tree would lack the necessary toughness. Being trimmed and "brought to hand," the young stick undergoes preparatory discipline by being placed in the chimney to season, thus becoming early acclimatized to the hot work in store for it. This part of the curriculum finished, it is rubbed until completely saturated with oil, after which it is securely wrapped in a stout sheet of brown paper and buried in a convenient hotbed. At this stage of its development it is an object of unceasing watchfulness on the part of its proprietor, who to forestall any detrimental warp in the object of his care visits it daily, correcting any youthful tendency to depart from a straight line and ultimately securing as straight a bit of timber as heart could desire.—New York Tribune.

**Hot Scotch.**  
The young wife dipped the ladle into the porridge and smiled inquiringly at the overnight guest.  
"Will you have some hot Scotch, Mr. Dash?" she asked.  
Dash laughed.  
"Hot Scotch? Where is it?" said he.  
"Why, here, of course," said the young wife in a perplexed tone.  
"Didn't you know that oatmeal is called hot Scotch?"

"Er—" Dash stammered, and then the young husband caught his eye, and he was silent.

"I didn't know it myself till last year," she explained. "I heard George inviting his cousin over the telephone to meet him at the office and have a hot Scotch. I didn't know what hot Scotch was till you told me, did I, George?"

George, very red, answered huskily: "No, my dear."  
Laughing at her own ignorance, the lady proceeded to serve the thick, pale hot Scotch.—New Orleans Times-Democrat.

**Vicissitudes of a Picture.**  
The vicissitudes of Leonardo da Vinci's picture, "Last Supper," reminds a correspondent of the strange experiences of Holbein's "Field of the Cloth of Gold," which may be seen any day at Hampton Court palace. After the downfall of Charles I., Cromwell in order to raise funds proposed the sale of certain pictures, this among the number. The bargain was already made, but when the would be purchaser came to inspect Holbein's masterpiece he discovered that the head of Henry VIII, had been cut from the canvas. He naturally withdrew his offer, and the picture was preserved to the nation. On the restoration a nobleman confessed to having committed the theft for love of art and his country, and he returned the missing head, which now occupies its original position in the canvas. The circle made by the knife is still plainly visible.—London Chronicle.

**Cold Storage Rats.**  
The attendant came out of the cold storage room with an awed look.  
"Rats are wonderful," he said. "We thought modern plumbing would abolish them, but they live in the clean light and dryness of the best modern plumbing more comfortably than they did in the damp and filth and darkness of the past. We thought the modern ship would abolish them, but the Lusitania has as many rats as had the Columbus caravels. And here—" He made an awed gesture.

"And here I find rats in our cold storage rooms at temperatures that freeze the breath and cause it to fall in the form of snow. To and fro they prowled. Their coats are thick and warm like fur, and, with frost on their whiskers, they feed heartily on meat and game frozen to rocklike hardness."—Exchange.

**Prune Sponge.**  
Soak one pound of prunes over night in enough water to cover. In the morning stew in the same water till tender. Add one cup of sugar and put through a sieve to retain all stones and skins. To the pulp add one-half box of gelatine softened in one-half cup of water, the juice of one lemon and one orange. Beat till foamy. Add the stiffly beaten whites or two eggs and beat again till well mixed. Mold.

**Tender Round Steak.**  
To fry round steak and make it tender, cut each piece the desired size, pound it a little, then dip each piece in a beaten egg, then in rolled cracker crumbs, fry until brown on both sides, season after removing from frying pan.

**Spots on Windows or Mirrors.**  
Finger spots and all grease and dirt can be removed from windows and mirrors by putting a few drops of ammonia on a piece of paper and rubbing.

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**THE CARBURETOR.**  
The carburetor is an apparatus in which is effected the mixing of the fuel necessary for the operation of internal combustion motors. Such mixture is composed of atmospheric air and the vapors of a liquid hydrocarbon in proper proportions. In order that it may give the best results, a carburetor should furnish an accurately proportioned mixture, that is to say, one containing just the proportions of fuel required, and, moreover, containing such fuel as nearly as possible in the state of vapor.

**WHERE MEN ARE SCARCE.**  
There is a parish in rural England, Linsdell, that has not had a marriage in eight years. The men go away as soon as they are old enough to work and the girls are beginning to follow, and no doubt the time will come when there will be no people in the parish but those too old to work. The girls don't seem to have much trouble in getting husbands in London.

**BOSTON WANTS MORE QUIET.**  
The Boston Professional Woman's club has taken up the matter of unnecessary noise and held a meeting recently at which the subject was discussed by Mrs. Isaac L. Rice of New York, the prophet of the Anti-Noise association, and expressed their sympathy in material ways.

**THE BYSTANDER'S JOKE.**  
"Oh, what will my wife say?" sobbed the victim of a reckless chauffeur.  
"If she's anything like my wife," remarked a bystander, "she'll say 'it's your own fault.'" Which added a touch of levity to an otherwise serious scene.—Detroit Free Press.

**EUROPE WANTS OUR GRAPES.**  
Vice-Consul L. H. Munier of Geneva sends a clipping from a Swiss newspaper from which it is noted that more modern methods of grape culture are being adopted in Switzerland. The old vineyards have been attacked by phylloxera, in fighting which the government has already spent \$482,500. Now it is decided to replace the old vines with the more robust American vines. To aid the planters in the substitution the government has voted an annual appropriation of \$96,500, to extend over a period of 60 years.—Horticulture.

**Preserving Lingerie Waists.**  
The lacey lingerie waists so popular of late are "things of beauty," but, alas, not "joys forever" by any means, says Housekeeper. They are easily ruined in the laundering, and the broken lace is difficult, well nigh impossible, to mend. To greatly prolong their usefulness buy common waist net, cut in strips or the shape of the insets, and sew upon the underside of the inserted lace when the waist is new or as soon as it begins to break. Even badly torn pieces may be mended in this way, the pattern being darned down invisibly upon the net. Many very open patterns are really improved in looks by the addition of the net.

**If You Would Look Well—**  
Use hairpins, visible, invisible and all kinds.  
Wear a net or thin veil to keep your eyes clear.  
Cleanse your face with cream every night before going to bed.  
Wear immaculate neckwear, a clean shirt waist and gloves without holes.  
Don't allow the public glimpses of a soiled white skirt or a shrodded one.

But, above all, look at your back in the glass before you start out. Just remember that the punishment of Love's wife does not await you if you do.

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**TABLE DECORATIONS.**  
**Bisque Figures in Pose of Premiere of the Ballet.**  
Hostesses who are at their wits' ends trying to break away from the trite and formal in the matter of decorations for the dinner table appear to owe a debt of gratitude to the result of the happy collaboration of two Frenchmen, M. Pierre Carrier-Belleuse, the painter, and M. Gregoire Calvet, equally celebrated as a sculptor. Together these two artists have spent three years in designing and executing a dozen or so of the daintiest and most bewitching dancing girl figures imaginable.  
Each figure perpetuates a characteristic pose of a premiere of the ballet. It is the psychological moment of the dance, when the little figure, the gauzy skirts, the graceful limbs, the expression of the irresistible countenance, all combine to define an emotion that is captivating.  
The graceful abandon of the figures and the management of the ballet skirts convey a wonder sense of motion. The figures seem almost to skip on toe tips, to whirl about, to fly, so painstaking, yet apparently careless, have the artists been with their detail.  
The material of these joyous little statuettes is "bisquit de Sevres." The models are executed for the art market at the French national factory at Sevres. Probably no other medium would express the artists' ideas half as well. Every one acquainted with examples of bisquit statuary will understand how exquisitely light and fragile must appear these dainty figures.  
It can be imagined how well these charming figures serve as accessories to the decorative piece de resistance on a dinner table. Perhaps they are placed in a line up and down the length of the table or in groups here and there. If the hostess is lavish in such matters, she may place one before each cover—to be carried away as a souvenir.

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