

# BLACK HAND SECRETS REVEALED BY CHIEF OF SECRET SERVICE

## IN THE GRIP OF THE BLACK HAND

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**"Comito the Sheep" Gives Graphic Account of His Experiences with Cruel Counterfeit ng Band.**

ALTHOUGH I was not allowed to go back to New York," Comito says in his confession, "I still believed that I was near Philadelphia, and I was happy in anticipation of getting to work with the printing presses."

"About three o'clock in the morning of December 8, 1908, Cina awakened Caterina and me and told us to get onto a truck which he had harnessed his horses. With us went Giglio, who was one of Cecala's godfathers, and a man named Bernardo, who had the biggest mouth I have ever seen. We drove through the village, and after about two and a half hours came to an old stone house in a lonesome part of the country."

"Here it is, the printing shop," said Bernardo, laughing. "Don't you like it?"

"No," I replied. I was very angry, but I feared to show it, for Bernardo's laugh had an ugly ring.

"Tell it to Cecala when he comes," said Cina, and he sneered.

Cecala, you will remember, was the man who offered Comito the position of printer and who told him that the shop was near Philadelphia. It was he who engineered the kidnapping scheme and managed to get Comito and Caterina to Highland, N. Y., more than one hundred and fifty miles away from Philadelphia. Comito in his confession says:—

"But this is no place for a printing shop," I argued.

"Come," ordered Cina very gruffly. "Don't lose time. Unload the stuff and go inside."

"I will go back with Caterina," I said.

"Where to?" asked Cina.

"To the house where we were, and then to New York."

"Caterina all this time was glaring at me as though it would have given her happiness to plunge a knife between my ribs."

"You can't stay in my house any longer," said Cina. "There are too many children. When Cecala returns you can talk to him."

"By this time all our furniture was in the house. I heard Cina tell Giglio that he was going away."

"I will go with you," I said.

"You're crazy," replied Cina. "Have you any money to pay me for returning your goods? Cecala may return to-morrow. You can tell him about it."

"Cina and Giglio began whispering together, and I went over to Caterina, who stood in the doorway with tears in her eyes."

"Do not let yourself feel troubled," I said to her. "As soon as we are alone we will go away."

"Where will we get the money?" demanded Caterina, with a look of scorn. Then she stamped away from me. This was unreasonable, for it was she who had given to Cecala the \$5 which we had between us."

"In the morning another man, Cina's brother Peppino, brought provisions to the house. I had still nothing to do, for though the press had been set up in one of the rooms above, there was no type, and I did not know what it was I should print. I was very much depressed."

"I thought of running away with Caterina. Where should we go? Snow was on the ground and it was bitter cold. We might perish. My heart bled to see Caterina mistreated. I would have liked to see the death of Giglio and Bernardo, yet I was afraid of them. Their evil faces haunted my mind. And those filthy men whom I had met at Cina's house. I knew that they would have vengeance."

"Caterina fell into a fever and I worried that she might die. This was the happy life which had been promised to me. One morning I sat in the room downstairs smoking my pipe. There came a knock at the door. I opened it and Cina and Cecala entered. At sight of me they both burst out laughing. My anger flared up."

"I am no child," I cried, "and I will not be treated in this way."

"Do not speak so loudly when you address us," said Cecala. "We are gentlemen."

"I know you are," I said, "but these actions do not become gentlemen."

"Come, Don Antonio," he said, "I will talk with you upstairs."

"I had promised myself a dozen times that I would demand an accounting from Cecala, but now that the man's eyes were upon me all thought of crossing him fled. Remembering his record and the deeds of his companions I followed him upstairs with heavy feet and heavier heart. As the door closed behind us in the room with the press I wondered whether I should ever see Caterina again."

"Cecala spoke no word. With quick fingers he unwrapped a large parcel, and as I watched it dawned on me what I should be called upon to do. I saw at last why I had been trapped and my heart sank."

"You are to print counterfeit money," said Cecala with brutal bluntness. "Those words were my sentence. Had I refused, after Cecala



**DON TURI CINA IN WHOSE HOUSE COMITO MET THE BLACK HAND LEADERS.**

would not have been worth the five dollars he owed to Caterina. Nor would hers."

"Here are the plates," said Cecala as he handed them to me. "Compare them with the originals. Do they not show clever work? It is this Canadian five dollar note which we will make at first. It is much easier to imitate than American money, for it has no silk threads in the paper. One hundred thousand sheets of paper I have brought, and before we are done we will print a million notes. Already I have had requests for some of the money. We will all be wealthy and you and your Caterina can then go where you will."

"But I do not know how to prepare the press for this work," I said. "I did not want to break the law. My feelings revolted at the thought of crime, yet dreams of such wealth almost overcame me. How happy I could make Caterina to repay her for all the hardships she had suffered. Was not this better than risking my life by trying to escape these men of the Black Hand? Still I knew that it was wrong."

"It is very difficult work to execute for one not accustomed to it," I said.

"Cecala shot me an angry glance. 'Do not begin to make excuses,' he said. 'And see that your Caterina remains here with you. We need her. If she attempts to go away—'

"I was decided. They would have killed me had I not done as they wished. Caterina might have met worse than a sudden death."

This is an example of the capacity for detail of these clever criminals. Cecala knew that three men living alone in the lonesome stone house would have excited suspicion among rural folks, but if Caterina were seen by passersby they would think that a family occupied the building. To resume Comito's confession:—

"I examined the plates which Cecala handed me. They were wonderful imitations. There were five pieces of zinc, one of which was engraved a part of the matter appearing on the notes. There were two large plates for the green, one for the black, one for the seal in a violet color, and one for the serial numbers which were to be in red."

"There was still some little doubt in my mind as to whether I could evade joining these counterfeiters. Cecala must have guessed my thoughts for he said very quietly to me, looking all the time into my eyes without blinking:—

"Don Antonio, you are the person who under my direction and that of one other whom you must not now know will print the notes. You know our secret. So much as whisper it to the trees and you are lost; Caterina as well."

"We are twenty that have organized this business, and we will respect you as one of us—UNTIL YOU BETRAY US. As for Caterina, we will respect her, too, and when we are all rich we will give her money to go to Italy. But you must be one of us for all time. Not even your parents shall know what you are doing, but we will better their condition as we better yours. But if you wish ever to see them again you must be true. No one will come here whom we do not know. The property is ours, and if detectives should be led here they will never go away. Do you understand what I mean?"

"So black was Cecala's frown as he spoke, and so surely did I know that he would slay me if I so much as made excuses, that my tongue clogged between my teeth and I could make no reply. Cecala laughed, and at last I said:—

"It is only my wish that you have never satisfied with my work, for I have never seen counterfeit money before, nor printed it, and I will have much to learn."

"Then Caterina called us to dinner, but I ate little, for the food stuck in my throat and fear stifled my appetite. After the meal Cecala, who had eaten and drunk heartily, showed me the plates for a two-dollar bill of United States currency. He said that we would first print \$20,000 in Canadian money and then \$50,000 in American two dollar notes. The plates for the American bills were of check letter A, plate number 1111. There were three plates, one to print the green, one for the face or black, and one for the seal and counter of dark blue."

Cecala and Cina remained in the stone house that day, and we were busy setting up the plates. Next day they returned with a man they called Uncle Vincent, and we all worked over the press. The plates were mounted on



**THERE WAS THAT IN CECALA'S TONE WHICH FRIGHTENED CATERINA.**

caia prepared the inks. All that day we worked at pulling proofs, trying to get the proper shade of green. At last Cecala added just enough yellow to the dark green ink and we lit upon the light tint we had been trying for. When the proofs dried we decided they were right for the Canadian five dollar notes."

"By the end of January we had printed \$17,540 in the Canadian notes and packed them in an empty macaroni box, which was nailed up and made ready for Cecala to take away with him. We then began to work on the two dollar American bills, but we could not produce the exact shade of green. At last Cecala became discouraged and told me that we would have to consult with a man in New York who was experienced in such matters. He went away, giving me \$5, and telling me to go to New York, on February 4 to meet him at his house. I was not to leave the stone house, however, until Cina called for me with a carriage."

"All things occurred as Cecala had said they would, and immediately on my arrival in New York I went to his house in Fourth street. There I met his wife, who first asked me:—

"Are you Don Antonio?"

"Yes," I replied.

"Do you come from Highland?" she

"Yes."

"Very well," she said. "Go to the address written on this piece of paper and ask for my husband in the bank on the ground floor."

"When I had found Cecala he took me to a room above the bank. There I saw two men. One was tall, wrapped in a shawl of brown material, had an oval face, high forehead, aquiline nose, dark hair and dark mustache, and appeared to be about forty years old. I noticed particularly that this man kept one arm hidden beneath the shawl. Later I learned that this was a shivelled arm."

"This is Mr. Morello," said Cecala. "It was easy to see that Morello held authority over Cecala."

"Make yourselves comfortable," he said, then without further ceremony, "How is it, professor, that you cannot succeed in reaching a color similar to that on the two dollar notes?"

"Because I am accustomed to printing books," I said. "I have never printed money, and I do not know how properly to mix the inks."

"Well then, we will find a man to mix the inks," said Morello. "But you must remain with us to do the printing. Do not think of betraying us, for your life would not be worth a penny. On the other hand, when you are in disre-



**VINCENZO GIGLIO WHO HELPED GUARD COMITO IN THE STONE HOUSE.**

Suppose you are arrested. You must never tell that you know us. If you do, you will die, but if you do not, even at the cost of all our property, we will save you."

"I returned to the little house near Highland and soon afterward a man whom they called Don Peppe came to mix the inks. While we worked, Giglio or Uncle Vincent remained always on guard with a rifle and revolver prepared to kill any one who trespassed on the farm and would not go away."

"One night there came a great rapping on the door of the stone house. It was two o'clock in the morning. It is the detectives, I thought. Uncle Vincent sprang from his bed, and I heard his rifle click as he cocked it. He was very white, Bernardo and Giglio stood in the middle of the room, revolvers in their hands. Their faces pale, lines changing together from fear. It was the first time I had

themselves thought greater than their own."

"Go down to the door," said Uncle Vincent to me.

"I did not want to go, but there was nothing for it but to obey."

"I went below and demanded in as firm a voice as I could, 'Who is it?'"

"We," replied a voice feminine in tone.

"Who are you?" I demanded more boldly.

"Open, Professor," cried Uncle Vincent, hurrying down the stairs.

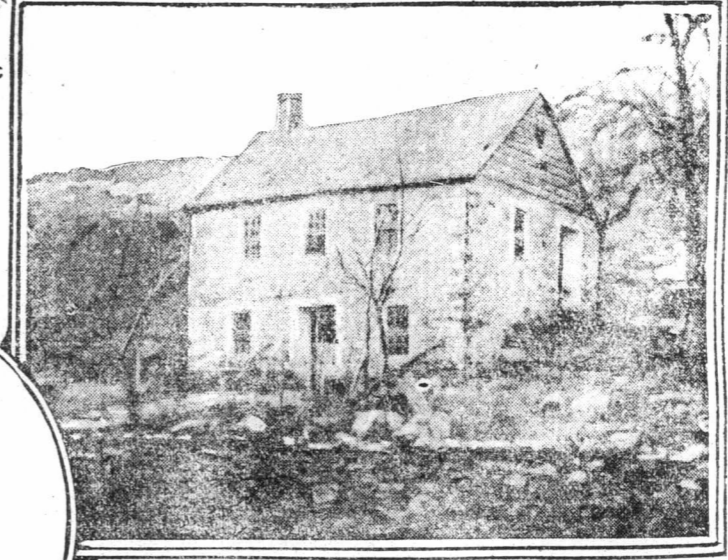
"We opened the door and Ignazio Lupu entered with Cecala, Nick Salvatore, Cina and an elderly man who was dressed elegantly and wore handsome diamonds. Cecala and Cina opened two valises and took out two repeating rifles, two revolvers and about 1,000 rounds of ammunition. Lupu then instructed us in the use of the firearms, which, he said, would

\$200,000 in the two dollar notes, and they were sent away."

"One day Peppino arrived at the stone house and told me that I was to accompany him to Cina's house, where certain men from New York wished to see me. I was disconcerted at this message, for I felt sure that my last hour had come. There was no doubt in my mind that I was to be murdered. Caterina and I had been alone for a week in the stone house, so unknown to any one I signed one of Uncle Vincent's receipts as into my pocket."

"At Cina's house I met Morello, Lupu and many others. They found fault with the way I had worked and insulted me, but though they turned much of the counterfeit money, some of it was kept, and I went back to the stone house to print more of the counterfeit bills."

"On Wednesday the driver in state through the Guildhall, in order that than may be necessary with of the city of London retained to determine. A—and a state hall as the first—also to be a great days of the state hall."



**THE STONE HOUSE NEAR HIGHLAND WHERE THE COUNTERFEIT MONEY WAS MADE.**

### HIS ROYAL HAIR

His Urbanity Charmed Day—High City—Feat

H.R.H. the Duke of Cornwall and Devon, Prince of Wales, came and gone, leaving a trail of admiration and genuine interest. The prince's visit to this city was not a mere courtesy call, but a day visit with its attendant and hence his thought in

At the Depot. The Royal party had a day earlier in the day, at 11 o'clock, and their train, due Saturday afternoon was late. The prince's visit was not a mere courtesy call, but a day visit with its attendant and hence his thought in

Splendid Guard. There was a fine guard drawn up of members of the Rifles under command of Colonel. They tottered in of well matched height as they looked in their glistening uniforms and new uniforms the guard stood by the command of Capt. Ste Sweet and Buckborough's attendance. In rear of were a number of boys' leader McFarland.

The Arrival. "Here they come," was a train whistle sounded.

### DANISH ROYAL PAIR VISIT IN EN

Political Significance to the Event.—George's Toa

By Special Wire to The MONTREAL, May 11.—The Queen of Denmark and Queen of Norway, the first visit paid during the reign of George, says a London Daily Mail.

The Danish sovereigns, accompanied by their children, arrived in London on Saturday. The Danish sovereigns, accompanied by their children, arrived in London on Saturday. The Danish sovereigns, accompanied by their children, arrived in London on Saturday.