

How Poker Saved the Bank

"It was at the time we had undertaken to start a town," said the gray-haired, young-looking man, "and felt that we were all speedily to become millionaires. There was really no reason why we shouldn't, for the conditions were all as favorable as the most sanguine pioneers could ask, and if we were not pioneers it was at least a little difficult to say what you would call us."

"You see the great transcontinental railroad had run its first train across from ocean to ocean. We selected a site and pre-empted all the land we could under the law and we got options on miles and miles more from the railroad company. We organized a town government and elected ourselves to all the offices. Then we waited for the settlers."

"Some settlers came, too. The only trouble with us was that we hadn't patience enough or capital enough to stay and grow up with the town."

"The rock we split on finally was a bank. No, I don't mean a faro bank. We had almost everything else from a blacksmith's shop to a small public library, that was really necessary in civilized life, but for a time we had no bank. Jake was the first to broach the subject."

"I had a letter from a guy in St. Louis today," he said, "and he thinks favorably of investing with us. We can probably hit him for five or ten thousand if we can get him out here, but he's a man that wouldn't carry \$500 in money around with him. If we get it, we get it in checks."

"Checks are a nuisance," said Blond Harry. "I've got five of 'em in my pocket now that I've carried for weeks simply because I haven't had time to ride over to the county seat. And I'm running short of money at that."

"There wasn't one of us that hadn't suffered a like inconvenience, and we were all ripe for Jake's proposal, when he said 'Let's start a bank.' If he had said 'Let's have a standing army,' we would have agreed just as promptly, if there had been the same need of an army. Nothing seemed impossible to us at that time."

"Accordingly, we had a bank next day. That is, we organized one and opened an office. Indigo Dick was made president of it, he having had experience as a paying teller in Evanville, and being supposed to know the ropes."

"We were all directors, and if any of the others had known any more about financial management than I did, possibly we would not have come to grief the way we did, but we trusted Dick. He meant well, and we had to trust some one, so it is hard to see, even now, how we could have done any better."

"Our capital, I remember, was a hundred thousand dollars, and it was all subscribed on the spot. I can't say just how the others understood the matter, but my belief was that the five thousand I put in was a deposit in fact if not in name, and that when I needed the money I could get it in the form of a loan if I couldn't check it out."

"Of course, there were papers to sign and a charter to get, and formalities of all sorts to attend to, but Indigo Dick did all that except the signing, and that we did as he asked us to. I didn't know what it all meant, and I was too busy to study it out, but I knew that he knew and that satisfied me."

"I knew I put \$5,000 in bills in Dick's keeping and received a certificate of stock for it, and I know that certificate went into the bank's safe as soon as we got a safe. And more than that I know I negotiated a loan of five thousand from the bank after it got running, and that was the nucleus of my bank account."

"I strongly suspect, now, that there may have been some technical irregularity about this last proceeding, but as it was just what the other fellows were doing I had no misgivings at the time, and I don't care to investigate the matter too closely even at this time. The main thing to be considered, we even thought, was that there was a bank in town, and it not only made business easier to transact, but it gave an appearance of solidity to the whole outfit."

"For a while everything seemed to be going on fairly well. We couldn't push the improvements as fast as we wanted to. The first hint of trouble came at one of our caucuses when Dandy Dan said to Dick quite casually that he was coming over to the bank next day to get another loan."

"Dick looked troubled and wished rather hesitatingly that he said he wouldn't come for a few days. The bank, he said, had been making some heavy advances to some of the farmers who needed money for home improvements, and the reserve fund was pretty well used up. It appeared from what he said that there had

been a reserve fund, but somehow it hadn't exactly been reserved."

"Dan looked grave in his turn and said, as if disposed to argue the point, that he had plenty of security. He was willing, he said, to mortgage some of the choicest lots in town if necessary, but that he'd have to have the money."

"But Dick said he was afraid the bank was carrying too many mortgages as it was. Of course, the real estate was good security, but there was some question about its bringing its value at a forced sale."

"At this point Big Jim broke in with the question what the blue blazes was a bank good for, anyhow, if it couldn't supply the necessary funds for the legitimate business enterprises of the community; and this precipitated a general discussion in which a variety of ignorance was displayed by most of those in the party."

"The upshot of it was that a directors' meeting was decided on for the following night. Indigo Dick undertook to lay a complete statement of the bank's affairs before the meeting, and said with great earnestness that he would make everything perfectly clear and that he did not see how any one could be blamed if the business had not proved as profitable as had been expected."

"The bank had enough money to pay everybody all it owed, he said, if it could realize anything like what was owing to it. When he was asked, however, if there would be any trouble about realizing, he said he was afraid there would be if things were forced."

"We were all pretty grave when we heard this, for there was no doubt that the bank had been a great convenience to us. Indeed there was a serious question whether it had not been altogether too convenient."

"What Dick told us at the directors' meeting was not calculated to raise our spirits. I can't pretend to say what the technicalities were, but it appeared that the bank was entirely solvent on paper, only it was wretchedly short of ready money, and in case any of the heavier depositors should call for all they had, there'd be trouble. Dick thought it would be necessary to make an assessment of about \$30,000 anyhow on the stockholders, to carry things along."

"It was certainly a facer, for individually we were all of us in pretty much the same fix as the bank. That is, we were solvent enough if we could realize, but we were short of ready money."

"When we thoroughly understood the situation we looked at one another in dismay until Big Jim made a suggestion that we all thought was brilliant. As I look back at it now, it seems as if we must all have been crazy, but I suppose we all saw that we had pretty nearly reached the end. What Big Jim said was something like this:

"It's plain enough to me, and I reckon you all see it in the same way, that we have bitten off more than we can chew. We can't carry our interests without realizing on some of them, and trying to realize on them means bursting the bubble. It's been a big gamble, but I reckon we're out of it. Now we can let the bank go down, but if we put up the \$30,000 we'll all go down."

"What I propose is that we raise all we can among us and play progressive poker till one man gets it all. Then let him put up for the bank and stay here if he likes. The rest of us can hold out enough for traveling expenses and light out for some other game."

"Well, we had all played poker more or less, though there hadn't been any big gambling among us in the new town, and we were all young enough and venturesome enough to fall in with the scheme after we had talked it over for half an hour. So it was arranged that we take a week to put things in order as well as we could and then come together with all the ready money we could raise."

"There were eleven of us that had hung together up to this point, and we reckoned roughly that we might be able to scrape up fifty or sixty thousand. That would give the winner a comfortable stake in addition to putting the bank on its feet, and the rest of us—well, as Big Jim said we could hold out traveling expenses."

"But at the end of the week we compared rolls and found that each man had from three to ten thousand dollars. It was fifty-five thousand in all, and we took chips at one, five, twenty-five, a hundred and a thousand dollars each, up to the full amount."

"The arrangement was that we should cut for seats, the five lowest to play in one party and the six highest in another. Then the play should go on till three men in each party were busted, and the five sur-

vivors should continue the game till one man had all the chips."

"It was to be a fable stakes game with no limit excepting as to time. It was agreed that we should not play over twelve hours out of every twenty-four, for we had an idea that it might take several days to finish up, and we agreed not to give up the appearance of attending to business till it was all over."

"We had no desire to start a panic in the town for there wasn't one among us that hadn't some property interest there that we couldn't convert into cash, but which we thought might be valuable some time."

"It happened that I was one of the first five and I sat down with Dandy Dan, Indigo Dick, Big Jim and Blonde Harry. Jake and Whiskers and Shorty were in the other game at first, and proved to be the winners that joined us later."

"Quick play being an object with all of us we played all jacks, the dealer putting up fifty dollars and dealing the pot out. It was a sufficiently stiff game, and I felt from the first that I hadn't much show."

"It was ten to one against me, of course, as a matter of mathematics, even if I had an equal stake with all the others, but as a fact I had only \$3,500 and some had considerably more than that, as I said."

"The luck ran my way for a time, though, and at the end of the first night's play I had nearly fifteen thousand in chips. Blonde Harry had gone broke, and Dandy Dan was down to about four hundred, but two men had dropped out of the other game and Whiskers was the heaviest winner in the second party. He had over twenty thousand in hand and the luck was coming his way when the first rest came."

"It wasn't much of a rest, for we all showed up at business as usual that morning, according to our agreement, but I managed to get two or three hours' sleep before we met for the second night's play. It was a nice precaution, too, for I was fresher than some of the others who hadn't slept, and I played a steadier game."

"It turned out pretty well that night, too, for I held my own and won a little besides up to the time that Dandy Dan and Big Jim dropped out. Then Indigo Dick and I took a short rest while the other party was narrowing down to three players, according to the program. It was a respite that we both wanted, and I, at least, felt the benefit of it when the final struggle began."

"This proved short enough for Whiskers and Jake, for Whiskers caught a flush against my full and went broke on it in the first ten minutes, and Jake came to grief with a pat straight the very next deal. Indigo Dick got away with his pile by filling up a full house on a two-card draw."

"That left us two and Shorty to finish the freeze out. I thought for a time that Dick would win out, for luck ran his way pretty steadily, and I could not seem to do anything after I had downed Whiskers, but there came, after a while, a three-cornered struggle in which we all had confidence enough in our hands to bet heavily."

"Shorty put up all he had and I saw him. Then Dick raised me a thousand, and my flush being ace high I called him also."

"Shorty wasn't in it, having only a straight, and the highest card in Dick's flush was a ten-spot, so he and I were left alone on the home stretch with \$45,000 in front of me and only \$10,000 in his pile."

"Then we played thousand-dollar jacks. It was the only time I ever did it, and I don't care to do it again, but it looked like a win for me all right, and I pressed the play all I knew."

"He caught me twice for his pile, though, inside of half an hour, and turned the tables badly. Then in an hour more I lost my last chip."

"I don't suppose I would go into such games now, under any circumstances, but after all, perhaps it was the best way to settle it. Anyhow, the bank was saved."

"Dick is still president of it, and has never let it get in difficulties since then. And the rest of us, pocketing our loss as gracefully as we knew how, started in search of new opportunities."

"Most of us have done fairly well, and I reckon that's more than we would have done if we had tried to hold on to more than we could handle. But I reckon that's the only freeze-out at poker that was ever played with the welfare of a whole community for the stakes."

This Terrier a Ratter

"Willis Sweatnam," said a friend of that comedian, "has an exceedingly fine-bred fox terrier. She has great fame as a ratter. She had a litter of puppies, the father of which was also of royal pedigree and of fame as a ratter as great as that of her mother, so that when Willis gave me one of the puppies, a beautiful little chap, all nerves and playmates except those of its own

relation, and it receives but few carresses from its parents. The squaw mother is in the habit of putting her baby to bed at dark—they sleep in little sacks—then she goes away to a dance or something of that nature, leaving the child to its own resources. If it cries, no one comes to soothe it. So crying has come to be almost unknown among these children."

An Invitation

A good story is told of an elder in an English church who on one occasion had to take the pulpit in the absence of the minister at the last moment. He got through the first part of the service all right, but on getting up to give the sermon he found his difficulty then. He started with, "Brethren (pause—b-b-brethern

(pause—b-b-b-brethern, if any of you wants the concert taken out of you come up here."

An attack of hysteria simulating unconsciousness in a woman may be stopped, says Modern Medicine, by the surgeon taking a pair of scissors and regretfully announcing that she will have to cut all the patient's hair off in order to make the application to her head. It is doubtful whether this bluff has ever been known to fail."

"Did you know dat dar was more dan 200 bones in de human anatomy?" asked Miss Miami Brown. "I didn't neber figger on de exact number," answered Mr. Ernest Pinkley, "but of coorse I knowed de nicks in my razor dat dey was 'um ska'se."

Japan American Line

Carrying U. S. Mails to Oriental Points.

Steamer Every 2 Weeks

For Japan, China and All Asiatic Points.

Ticket Office - 612 First Avenue, Seattle

The Great Northern "FLYER"

LEAVES SEATTLE FOR ST. PAUL EVERY DAY AT 8:00 P. M.

A Solid Vestibule Train With All Modern Equipments.

For further particulars and folders address the GENERAL OFFICE - SEATTLE, WASH.

The Northwestern Line

Is the Short Line to Chicago and All Eastern Points

All through trains from the North Pacific Coast connect with this line in the Union Depot at St. Paul.

Travelers from the North are invited to communicate with F. W. Parker, Gen'l Agent, Seattle, Wash.

Alaska and Western Alaska Points

U. S. MAIL

S. S. NEWPORT

Leaves Juneau April 1st and 1st of each month for Sitka, Yakutat, Nutchek, Ores, Ft. Licoum, Valdes, Resurrection, Homer, Seldovia, Katmai, Kodiak, Uyak, Kerluk, Chignik, Unga, Sand Point, Belkofsky, Unasaska, Dutch Harbor.

FOR INFORMATION APPLY TO

Seattle Office - Globe Bldg., Cor. First Ave. and Madison Street
San Francisco Office, 30 California Street

INSANITY PAT

Seven Will be New Westm

Peculiar Hallucinations Who Imagines Pugilist.

One of the boats leaving here next week will be her cargo an interesting humanity. There are confined in the insane barracks a number of patients afflicted with wheels and it is the intention of the Dominion to ship them out to the Dominion of Westminister. They number and include James McPhail, Charles Sincal, J. H. E. Nesbitt and Solomon are violent with the Sinclair and he can be appeased by his sister. He imagines him and as he is a trembling big fellow with several ordinary me things interesting for more than one brain became affected while at work on the and the police were to get him to town until one who knew Sinclair's ambitions last a go with Frank he promises to pull dust. When it was him to town he is from Dominion until he had been arranged and he would have to that satisfied into the sled in was a trouble whatever except for his teeth about uppercuts. The right hand hooks.

Solomon Jeha is one of the far-east who custody during the frozen, half starved a subsequent sea 500 in drafts considerable miserable hovel he. What his national disputed. Some others insist that at any rate the Arabic language J. H. Eidman is well known about name of "Dutch" in '88 and has always the theatres, first for a year or more Monte Carlo then Standard. He was with but a single dancing. Many, man laboring hard all day night and in the same his work with is said he was never any salary beyond dancing away. earned. After work at the Standard a settlement who produced over tabs that he had really presumed "is due to his own Dick and Charles ed with the same sibly one or two o yet been decided tents will be tran will accompany th

HOTEL A

Rochester Hotel son, Dr. Carper, J. Blackburn, Sea Victoria; R. V. frae, Arthur Sea F. Morgan, G. O.

Mania fo

Seattle, May 2 last night Boyle, accused of of the Eyres Train check for \$29 by Boynton's hard street Tuesday. Ellsworth Boy members of the most familiar with form of swindling itself in antics. During years he has than eight tim His father is said bankrupt in a good the son's t