

0. Tricky Vic and the Prohibition Era - Story Preface

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Prohibition agents, working for the U.S. federal government, destroy a bar (and its alcoholic beverages) during America's prohibition era. Image online via U.S. National Archives.

Arriving in the States, after he was forced to flee France, Lustig came face-to-face with a culture dominated by ... Prohibition. The federal government had outlawed the making, distributing and selling of alcoholic beverages.

Flagrantly disregarding the law, gangsters made such beverages available to anyone willing to pay the price. Rum runners, who imported liquor from places like Scotland, transported their goods in really fast boats as they tried to avoid capture by local police and the FBI.

Lustig, continuing with his criminal activities, used different aliases and was arrested many times. In more than forty of those cases, he either escaped from jail—including Crown Point in Indiana, more well-known for John Dillinger's famous jail break—or beat the charges altogether.

He even made friends with—and conned—Al Capone, a gangster based in Chicago who was once known as America's "Public Enemy Number One."

Why did he dupe the man who was also known as "Scarface?" Because he wanted to gain Capone's trust ... which ... he did.

Then, one spring day in 1935—about two years after America had abolished Prohibition by passing the 21st Amendment—Lustig made a very bad mistake: He betrayed his girlfriend.

Angered because he'd been seeing another girl, she called the police to let them know where they could find her straying boyfriend. The events which followed would lead to one of Lustig's most-outrageous cons.

See [Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:](#)

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/Tricky-Vic-and-the-Prohibition-Era-Tricky-Vic-An-Impossibly-Good-Con-Man>

See [Learning Tasks for this story online at:](#)

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/Tricky-Vic-and-the-Prohibition-Era-Tricky-Vic-An-Impossibly-Good-Con-Man>

Media Stream



Prohibition Agents Destroy a Bar in 1930

During America's Prohibition Era, the federal government made it illegal for anyone to make, distribute, sell or consume alcoholic beverages.

People, everywhere, flagrantly ignored the law.

Prohibition agents, employed by the U.S. government, would search-out and arrest law breakers. If agents found liquor in bars, they would destroy what they found. This image, which is maintained at the National Archives, depicts prohibition agents destroying a bar, circa 1930.

Click on the image for a better view.

Photo maintained by the U.S. National Archives, National Archives Identifier: 595674.

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<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Prohibition-Agents-Destroy-a-Bar-in-1930>



Dillinger - Crown Point Jail

Photo online, Indiana Department of Corrections.

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<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Dillinger-Crown-Point-Jail>



Capone House in Chicago

Image CHS DN-91356 online, courtesy Chicago Historical Society.

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Dillinger - Escape from Crown Point Jail

Clip from Gangster File - The Sensational Truth: Bonnie & Clyde / Al Capone / Dillinger. Online, courtesy yakidk89's channel at YouTube.

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