



# Hanging the Peachtree Bandit:: The True Tale of Atlanta's Infamous Frank DuPre

*By Tom Hughes*

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## Hanging the Peachtree Bandit:: The True Tale of Atlanta's Infamous Frank DuPre By Tom Hughes

On December 15, 1921, with Christmas shopping in full swing, gunshots echoed across Atlanta's famous Peachtree Street. A handsome young man darted away from Kaiser's Jewelers clutching a 3.5 carat diamond ring. A Pinkerton detective lay dead. Frank DuPre sprinted up Peachtree, waving a pistol, as terrified shoppers scattered. Dupre turned into the motor entrance to the famous Kimball House Hotel. A businessman who made a move towards him took a bullet in the face. It all happened in minutes and the so-called Peachtree bandit vanished.

Frank DuPre had gone back to his boarding house to find his girlfriend, Betty Andrews. She wanted a diamond ring. He had gotten it for her. He was 18. She was 17. They had known each other for six days.

The brazen events terrified a city already "in the grip of crime." A manhunt for the brazen desperado crossed a half-dozen states. DuPre was finally captured in Detroit. He returned to Atlanta for a quick trial, directed by a prosecutor who demanded some "good old fashioned rope." Dupre was sentenced to hang but his case fascinated Georgians during seven months of legal appeals and petition campaigns. Was he a naive youth, a high-grade moron, and worthy of mercy? Or, were his supporters, almost of them women, merely "maudlin sentimentalists" and "sob sisters."

Author Tom Hughes recounts the true harrowing story behind the legend of one of the last men hanged in Atlanta. In addition, he explores the musical tradition of the story of Betty and DuPre, recorded by artists as disparate as Josh White, Chuck Willis and the Grateful Dead.

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## **Hanging the Peachtree Bandit:: The True Tale of Atlanta's Infamous Frank DuPre By Tom Hughes Bibliography**

- Sales Rank: #2623338 in Books
- Published on: 2014-03-25
- Released on: 2014-03-25
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.00" h x .31" w x 6.00" l, .0 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 128 pages

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#### **About the Author**

Tom Hughes was a radio journalist and morning host in Atlanta for over thirty years and is a member of the Georgia Radio Hall of Fame. He has resided in in-town Atlanta since 1977. This is his second book exploring a true crime from Atlanta's past. The first was Rich Georgian Strangely Shot: Eugene Grace, Daisy of the Leopard Spots, and the Great Atlanta Shooting of 1912" (McFarland 2012)."

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