

# The True Story of the 1945 Tunnel Escape from Eastern State Penitentiary

In the annals of American crime history, the 1945 tunnel escape from Eastern State Penitentiary stands as one of the most daring and successful prison breaks ever attempted. For months, six inmates meticulously planned and executed their escape, digging a tunnel that led them to freedom.

## The Prisoners

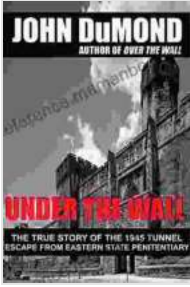
The six inmates who escaped were:

- **Joseph Cretzer**, a 28-year-old serving a life sentence for murder
- **Clarence Carnes**, a 25-year-old serving a life sentence for murder
- **James Lucas**, a 23-year-old serving a 20-year sentence for robbery
- **James Clark**, a 22-year-old serving a 10-year sentence for burglary
- **Thomas Carroll**, a 20-year-old serving a 5-year sentence for forgery
- **John Blough**, a 19-year-old serving a 2-year sentence for burglary

## The Plan

The escape plan was hatched by Cretzer and Carnes, who had been cellmates for several years. They recruited the other four inmates to help them dig the tunnel.

**Under the Wall: The True Story of the 1945 Tunnel Escape from Eastern State Penitentiary** by John DuMond



★★★★☆ 4.3 out of 5

Language : English  
File size : 1088 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 20 pages



The inmates began digging the tunnel in secret, using spoons and other tools that they had stolen from the prison kitchen. They worked on the tunnel for months, taking turns digging and hauling away the dirt.

The tunnel was dug from a cell in the basement of the prison. It was about 100 feet long and 3 feet wide. The inmates covered the entrance to the tunnel with a rug and a mattress.

## **The Escape**

On the night of July 15, 1945, the inmates made their escape. They waited until the guards were changing shifts and then they crawled through the tunnel.

The inmates emerged from the tunnel in a field behind the prison. They stole a car and drove away.

## **The Aftermath**

The escape was a major embarrassment for the prison authorities. They launched a massive manhunt for the escaped inmates.

Within a few weeks, all six of the escaped inmates were captured and returned to prison. They were given additional sentences for their escape attempt.

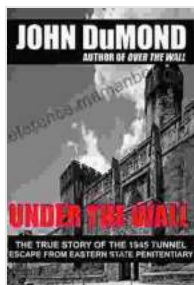
## The Legacy

The 1945 tunnel escape from Eastern State Penitentiary is still considered one of the most daring and successful prison breaks in American history. It is a testament to the ingenuity and determination of the six inmates who risked everything for a chance at freedom.

## Eastern State Penitentiary Today

Eastern State Penitentiary is now a historic site. It is open to the public for tours. Visitors can learn about the prison's history, including the 1945 tunnel escape.

The 1945 tunnel escape from Eastern State Penitentiary is a fascinating story of crime, punishment, and redemption. It is a reminder that even in the most difficult circumstances, hope can never be extinguished.



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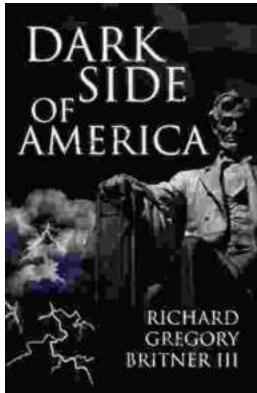
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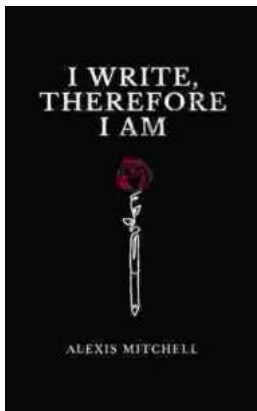
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