

ARE AFTER THE MEN

Posse Chases the Desperadoes Who Held Up the North Coast Limited at Bearmouth.

THE STORY OF THE CRIME

Everything Was Carefully Planned and Carried Out Without a Hitch by the Robbers.

Bearmouth, Mont., June 17.—(2:30 a. m.)—At 11 o'clock last night two masked men held up North Coast Limited Northern Pacific passenger train, eastbound, about a mile and a half east of this station. After bringing the train to a stop they dynamited the express car, blew open the safe and secured all of its contents. The amount

secured is not known, but is believed to be large. After blowing out the rear lights of the train the two men disappeared in the darkness and have not been seen since.

The hold-up was similar to the one which occurred two years ago in nearly the same spot and in which Engineer O'Neill lost his life. The hold-ups boarded the tender of the engine at the water tank at Bearmouth and after having remained quiet until the train had gone a mile and a half they crawled up over the coal and covered Engineer Wade and Fireman Reed with their guns and told them to throw up their hands. Engineer Wade was then commanded to bring his train to a standstill and he immediately complied. The engineer and fireman were ordered from their engine and with the hold-ups went back to the express car. Before making an effort to gain an entrance they forced the engineer to light a cigar. The express messenger was commanded to open the door of the car but refused to do so. The engineer was next commanded to light a stick of dynamite of which explosive they had a large quantity, and placed the lighted stick against the car door. The

force of the explosion completely wrecked the door and the engineer and fireman were compelled to precede the hold-ups into the car. Once admission was gained the hold-ups at once directed their attention to the strong box. Five sticks of dynamite were placed on top of the safe and ignited. The force of the charge was insignificant and another and larger charge was used. The second charge exploded with terrific force, blowing out the side of the car and throwing the safe a distance of 40 feet. After rifling the safe of its valuables the robbers commanded the train crew to remain quiet and no harm would be done them. While this conversation was going on, one of the robbers accidentally struck the engineer with his revolver and in apologizing for it called him by name, indicating a possibility that he may be a railroad man.

The party then left the express car and the men were ordered back to the engine, being covered with guns until they had obeyed the mandate. The two robbers then passed to the rear of the train and after shooting out both the rear lights of the train, disappeared in the darkness.

Meanwhile the passengers were terror stricken and had crawled under every vantage place which offered a hiding. The rear brakeman, the moment that he realized what had happened, slipped off the rear of the train and ran back to Bearmouth, where communication was had with the superintendents and sheriff's office in Missoula. A posse was immediately summoned and at 12:40 o'clock an engine, a car of horses and Superintendent Palmer's private car was on its way to the scene, arriving at 2 o'clock. The posse consisted of Sheriff Thompson, Under-Sheriff Sterling, George Saunders, Ed Larson, Chick White, James McCaffrey, James Tabor, William Carter.

It will be daylight about 3 o'clock and the posse will immediately start in pursuit. It is believed that the desperadoes immediately headed for the Ovando country. The bloodhounds at Deer Lodge prison have been wired for and will be on the scene by 7 o'clock. It is believed there are four of the hold-ups all told. Four men have been in Bearmouth for the past two or three days and it is said have been laying in a large supply of groceries, especially canned goods. The theory is that they have a rendezvous not far from the scene of the hold-up.

A light engine from Brummond bearing eight deputies was immediately started and it is believed that the man cannot escape. Deputy "Whitey" Watson and George Murray are on their way from Missoula up the Hell Gate canyon to head off escape in that direction, while Tabor and Saunders were let off the train at McCarthy's bridge to head off escape there. It is learned that the railroad people were expecting the hold-up for the past two days but looked for it on the Philippsburgh branch. For two days armed guards were carried on all trains bearing hullion and on Wednesday, it is believed, this course averted a hold up at Flint, just north of Philippsburgh. From the description had of these men it is believed they are the same crowd who did last night's hold-up.

Two boys, Al Barton and Ralph Daily, were stealing a ride on the blind baggage at the time and both say they can identify the men. One of the men had a red beard, but a dimple on his cheek would serve to identify him, even with the beard shaved off. He is described as six feet tall, stubby beard. He wore a black, slouch hat, turned down in front, and overalls turned up at the bottom like a lumberjack. Superintendent Palmer is co-operating with Sheriff Thompson in planning the pursuit and at this hour (3:30), the dawn is beginning to break and the men are getting ready to start out.

The hold-up had its humorous features. Daily, one of the blind baggage passengers, got down as soon as possible after the safe was robbed, looking for loose money. All he could find was a stack of worthless money orders, which he turned over to Superintendent Palmer. He says if a gold brick was in front of him some one would beat him to it. The train was in charge of Conductor Grant. The ruined express car was brought to Bearmouth and is literally blown to pieces. The adjacent country is very wild and a long chase is possible.

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