

### Stage Robbing a Recognized Business in the Early Days

At Times the Robbers Got Caught, But Sometimes They Did Not—Lot Livermore Was Wells Fargo Agent.

(By Fred Lockley in Oregon Journal) "Thirty years ago robbing stages was one of the recognized businesses of eastern Oregon," said Lot Livermore, Pendleton's oldest pioneer. "I come pretty near knowing, for I was the Wells Fargo agent as well as the agent for the stage line for many years. One day word came to us that the stage from Pendleton to Umatilla had been robbed. It was held up just about where Hermiston is now located. I went down there with the deputy sheriffs. It had rained just before the hold up, so we were able to track them till we lost their tracks on the mountains this side of Meacham.

"A few days later John Bowman, the liveryman, told me he had heard of a couple of strangers camped near Weston. He suggested that we drive up there and see who they were. As we were putting up our team at Weston, we saw a horse that corresponded with the description we had gotten of the horse ridden by one of the outlaws. The liveryman thought the other man had ridden on to Walla Walla. Bowman went on to Walla Walla while I hid in one of the stalls to wait for the owner of the horse to turn up. Presently he came in. The liveryman gave me a nod. I stepped out. 'Hands up,' I said. He whirled like a flash on me. He saw he was covered. 'All right, you've got the drop on me,' he said and stuck up his hands. We searched him and I turned him over to a couple of men I could trust. In a little while word came to me that the other man was still in town and was at the hotel eating dinner. I went there, made him put up his hands and marched him out and turned him over to the guards I had with the other man.

"I returned to Pendleton and got a warrant for their arrest and sent the deputy sheriff to Weston for them.

"They were tried, convicted, and sentenced to 10 years. One of them, Billy Maxon, became very friendly with me. On the morning the sheriff left with them for Umatilla, Maxon asked the sheriff if he could speak to me. He told me he would locate the stolen treasure from the Wells Fargo express box if we would try to get his sentence shortened. I told him I could not make promises for the company.

"A few months later Superintendent Morris, at Boise, told me to go to Meacham and meet a passenger way-billed as Williams and to go with him to the camp of the outlaws near Meacham. We had discovered where the two outlaws had made camp in the timber near Meacham and the passenger way-billed as Williams was in reality the father of Billy Maxon, the

outlaw. I met him and we spent all afternoon looking for the buried treasure, but he could not seem to get the lay of the land from his son's description. I told him I would lead him through to Portland and pay his expenses if he would go to the penitentiary at Salem, see his son and get a map of the place the money was buried. He was a farmer near La Grande and a good citizen.

"He went to Salem, secured the information and came back to Umatilla, where he was met by H. C. Paige, one of our division superintendents. The o'clock in the morning, Maxon wanted to stop and have me go along, but Superintendent Paige would not consent. He said he was in charge of the case and he would not let me come along. Maxon said 'very well, I will stop off here and see Livermore. I will not go a step unless he goes along.' Paige cursed and stormed and threatened but Maxon wouldn't give in, so they came past my house, woke me up and I went along.

"When we got to the camp Maxon took out his directions and read them to us. They read: 'Go to the elbow of the prairie just above our camp. At the point of the elbow there is a dead pine, the only tree there. Look due east to where a large fir has been stripped of its limbs on the south side by a falling tree. Beside this bog fir there are two trees down, one across the other.' We recognized the place. W. C. Paige said: 'One of you fellows bear off a little to the north and one to the south and we will all meet at the fir. You may see some other tree stripped of its branches.' We refused to go elsewhere till we had looked under the down tree. Billy Maxon had said the treasurer was hidden under the down tree, not buried. We scratched under the tree and found first a baking powder can full of currency. Then we struck two buckskin



sacks, one with \$800 and the other with \$900 in gold dust. Next we found a gold brick valued at \$2500. We located all the treasure and Paige took it with him to Boise. Maxon had been promised \$1200 if he recovered the contents of the Wells Fargo chest. Paige went to him and told him they had decided to prosecute him as an accessory to the crime. He scared the old man badly and probably had him sign a receipt for \$1200 saying him \$200 and claiming he would have to use the \$1000 to buy the big officials off. Some time later our division superintendent, Paige, pulled off a very successful stage robbing himself. We never recovered the treasure he took. The jury was hung though his guilt was perfectly clear."

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### Swiss Guide Climbs High Peak of Canadian Rockies

CALGARY, Alberta.—To cut sixteen hundred steps in snow and ice of which six hundred were in hard ice, was the stupendous and nerve-racking task which had to be done by Conrad Kain, a Swiss guide employed by the Alpine Club of Canada to assist in the ascent of Mount Robson, highest peak of the Canadian Rockies, according to the official account of the climb as given by A. O. Wheeler,

er, director of the club. "The three ascents of Mount Robson with the object in view of reaching its summit were confined to six men," says Director Wheeler, "of whom two were professional guides. Of the other four W. W. Foster, deputy minister of public works of British Columbia and A. H. McCarthy of Wilmer, B. C. were the only two who succeeded in making a complete as-

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sent led by the club's professional guide Conrad Kain. The two who failed to make the complete ascent were B. S. Darling or Vancouver and H. Prouty of Mazama Mountaineering Club of Portland, Oregon.

"The first attempt under Kain was successful, the party of three making the first absolutely complete ascent of the mountain that has yet been made. The ascent was made on the one side and the descent on the other so that a complete traverse was accomplished. On this occasion one night was spent on the mountain at an elevation of 9,000 feet without food or covering.

"The second attempt by Darling and Prouty in charge of a Swiss guide, Walter Schaufelberger, failed when within four hundred feet of the summit owing to the lateness of the hour and the fact that a storm was about to burst. To have been caught in it on the bare ice slopes would, in all likelihood, have meant death to one or more of the party and it was forced to retreat with victory in sight. On this occasion two nights were spent on the mountain at high altitude.

"The third and last attempt was made by the two guides accompanied by Darling and McCarthy for the second time. The object was to ascertain a feasible route up the south face. Again storms interfered and when ascending a steep ice ridge five hundred feet from the summit a fierce snow blizzard threatened to blow the climbers out of the steps in the ice by which they were ascending. So bad was the storm that it was impossible

to see ten paces ahead and the flying ice particles blinded the men. Conrad, who can do anything possible in mountain climbing and often what seems impossible, declined to go any further saying it meant death. With great difficulty and danger a retreat was made in safety. Notwithstanding the object of the climb was attained for the party joined on this south route with that previously made from the east and so established the feasibility of an ascent from the east and south.

"The mountain is a difficult and dangerous one to climb, rising to 13,068 feet above sea level. It is subject to very frequent and wild storms which come on at a moment's notice. The entire crest is covered by ice and snow blown by fierce winds into grotesque shapes and making it extremely difficult to find a path through their labyrinths.

"When it is known that to reach the summit on the first ascent, Conrad Kain had to cut no less than sixteen hundred steps in snow and ice and six hundred of these were in hard ice necessitating hours of patient waiting while this labor was being performed, the difficulties will be partly understood. During this weary waiting the frozen debris from the step cutting was blown for hours into the faces of the climbers and this fact alone exemplifies the great courage and determination necessary to attain success. That first climb took thirteen hours of incessant labor from the Robson Glacier whence a start was made to the summit."

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