

TRAIN ROBBERS ON THE D. & R. G.

Train robbing has never been a successful pastime in Utah, and so long is it since there has been anything of the kind that the recurrence of such an event creates a sensation. This was the case when it became known that the Rio Grande Express due in this city the night previous Aug. 7, had been held up by train robbers at ten minutes before ten o'clock, just west of Thompson Springs, Emery County. At this place there is nothing but the station house, and the surrounding country, which consists of barren waste and rolling hills, presents a very forbidding appearance. On the west-bound express train there were the express and baggage cars, three passenger coaches, one emigrant sleeper and one Pullman. Nearly 100 passengers were on the train, and when Thompson Springs was reached most of those in the sleepers had retired. The others were dozing in their seats, and as the train pulled out there appeared no uneasiness or anticipation of danger, and such a thing as highwaymen was not thought possible except by a few of the more nervous. The attention of the passengers was suddenly arrested, however, by hearing a volley of rifle shots, and feeling the sudden application of brakes, which brought the moving train to a standstill. A few persons were venturesome enough to put their heads out of the windows to ascertain, if possible, the cause of delay. The heads were quickly withdrawn, however, when a second volley was fired, and the bullets came crashing into the cars. One man who had pushed his head out felt a peculiar sensation on the top of his head, and on taking his hat off discovered that it had been pierced by a bullet which had passed close to his scalp, but without injuring him.

The train had been stopped, upon the orders of an armed man, who had evidently climbed on the top of one of the cars during the stop at Thompson Springs. The first that the engineer and fireman knew of anything being up was when a man scrambled towards them over the coal in the tender, and with a revolver in each hand ordered them to stop at the third bridge. The engineer replied that he did not know where that was.

"We'll show you," was the reply, accompanied by an oath.

The engineer did not evince any willingness to obey the orders of the armed and masked man, and the latter took in the situation. He was evidently a desperate character, and as the place for stopping came near his manner convinced the engineer and fireman that it would be simply madness to disregard his commands, so they slowed up. On reaching what was called "the third bridge," the shooting commenced. When the train stopped the engine was boarded by one of the highwayman's companions, while others—some say four, and some five—went for the train men. The conductor was taken in tow, and the express messenger

ordered to open his car. He made no reply, and the baggage-man was commanded to call on him. That gentleman, however, had a better idea, and ran into the cars to warn the passengers what was coming. As the express messenger did not respond a fusillade commenced on the car, which was fairly riddled with rifle balls. Nearly half an hour was spent in the effort to get into the car, but the messenger would not open it. It was thought that probably he had been struck by some one of the shots, but this was not the case. When the attack was made he took his position between some boxes, and there awaited, gun in hand, the entrance of the robbers into the car.

After vain efforts to get the door open, the highwaymen started to turn their attention to the passengers. The fireman was ordered to get an axe and chop in the express door. He obeyed, but not with great alacrity. The messenger did not dare shoot, for fear of killing his friends. The engineer was ordered to go with the robbers through the train. In order to give the passengers time to secrete their valuables, he argued with the robbers as long as it was safe, saying that most of the passengers were of the working classes, and it would be vain to think of obtaining any booty from them. He was compelled, however, to go and carry the bag which the robbers had provided to put the booty in. He was followed into the car by one of the highwaymen, while two stood at the car doors—one at each end—with Winchester rifles, ready to shoot any passenger who might interfere. The one who followed the engineer introduced himself with a couple of shots over the heads of the passengers as he entered the car. He then covered the travelers with his loaded weapons. His hands trembled considerably, and from the way in which he handled his weapons, there was considerable fear that they would be discharged, even without a direct intention to do so.

Just before the process of going through the train was commenced, the first passenger coach was treated to a storm of bullets from the outside, and balls and splintered wood flew in every direction. There were several narrow escapes, in one case the seat being pierced with a bullet within about three inches of a man's hip. One man received a slight burn on the knee from a passing ball. The proceeding created a reign of terror, and one young girl went into hysterics. Most of the ladies on the train, however, kept remarkably quiet and cool till all was over, though the severe experience through which they passed made some of them ill afterwards.

During the delay of the thieves at the express car, the passengers were secreting their valuables by putting them into their shoes, under the seats, beneath carpets, and in every nook and corner that afforded a hiding place. Some of them were so nervous, however, that

they made no effort to get their money out of sight, believing that it would all go anyway. The conductor of the train was compelled to give up the money he had not hidden, but was given his watch, probably out of consideration for the running of the train to orders.

As the engineer went through holding the sack, the one who was behind him ordered the passengers to turn out their money and jewelry, at the same time using fearful oaths. Whenever there was the slightest objection he would jam his weapon into the face of the person delaying, and in such a way as to leave no doubt that he would shoot to kill. This brought the passenger to time in every instance, and the loose change, pocket books and watches poured into the mouth of the sack.

One of the first men accosted was a cripple. When the thief ordered him to "shell out" he held out the stump of his leg and said "What do you want of me?"

"Nothing of you, — you," was the reply.

One of the passengers was Mr. Adolph Dose, who was en route to Salt Lake City as the agent of the El Reon factory, at Key West, Florida, to do business among tobacco merchants here. He was also one of the victims. He is an experienced hand, one might say, as this is the second time he has been robbed in this way. He had a large sum of money, but succeeded in getting most of it out of the way before his turn came. He was, however, mulcted in the sum of \$35. When his gold watch was demanded he requested that it be not taken, but the robber declared with an oath that he would rather shoot him than anyone else in the car, and when he felt the cold muzzle of the revolver jammed up against his cheek he thought it well to delay no longer, and the timepiece went into the bag with the other articles. He declares that the next time he travels in the West he will carry a "Waterbury."

There was one poor man who only had \$15 on him. He seemed too dazed to hide that, and the thieves got it, so that when he reached this city he was without a cent.

The ladies in the cars were not disturbed, nor were the gentlemen who accompanied them, except to a limited extent, the highwaymen showing great deference to the gentler sex. Those gentlemen who were without their wives or sisters fared the worst.

One prominent resident of Denver, just before his turn came, and while there were others demurring to surrendering their money, arose in his seat, saying, "Boys, if we have to give up everything, we may as well make a clean breast of it." As he did this he drew a dollar from his pocket and threw it into the sack. This was accepted as all he had—and it was, except something more than \$1000.

There was one employe of the C. B. & Q., a conductor west of Chicago, who stated that he was only a poor railway conductor. The