

## HOLDING UP TRAINS.

A BOLD AND PECULIAR CRIME  
ON THE INCREASE.

Brief History of Some Famous Hold-Ups in the United States—A Dark and Bloody Page from the Criminal Annals of the Country.

## Began Since the War.

Solitary travelers were first intimidated and robbed by solitary highwaymen, stage coaches were stopped by one or more men and the passengers relieved of their valuables, and the holding up of railroad trains at the point of revolvers by a limited number of desperados and determined men was a natural evolution. Highway robbery on the rail was unknown before the war. There had been instances of express messengers being robbed and murdered by persons who had obtained access to the car, but the bold capture of train crews, the forcible rifling of the treasure boxes of the express companies and the subsequent robbery of an entire train-load of passengers, dates from 1866 only, and this particular form of piracy may be said to have been

must prove a long series of comparatively safe and profitable crimes, and he at once began that course of procedure which has made his name a terror to express robbers and his conduct a

face to face with a heavily armed posse of determined men. They fled and were pursued. Three of them were captured and put in the Seymour jail. At daylight a mob stormed the jail, took them to a point one mile and a half west of the town, where in the midst of a field stands to this day in plain view of the railroad track a tree to which they were hung. During the day the remaining three would-be robbers were captured, and that night they were hung to the same tree. The six bodies on the one tree presented a gawesome sight, and were permitted to remain there all of the next day.

The certainty that such treatment as this awaited them urged the Reno to make a desperate fight against extradition. When all was lost with them they begged not to be taken back to Seymour, and the officers accordingly took them to New Albany, Ind., where they were to be presumably safe from mob violence. But they were not, for on the night of the day which they were confined a mob of nearly a thousand people came to the city over the J. M. & L. Railroad from Seymour and adjacent towns, attacked the massive jail, which for four hours resisted their assaults, forced their way to the prisoners' cells, and despite a most desperate resistance, during which the four prisoners defended themselves with savage fury, armed only with portions of the cell furniture, they were taken out and hanged to a telegraph pole. It is said that the men were as a matter of fact dead when hanged, having been shot and beaten to death in the cells. Of the Reno gang Jack is alive, having been released from Jefferson City several years ago, and was recently keeping a saloon at Seymour.

The very decisive method of showing disapproval of the profession of train-robbing in Southern Indiana had the effect of discouraging the business both there and elsewhere, and it was not until seven years later, June 6, 1875, that the country was startled by the daring attempt of the Vandalia express car and the murder of Milo Eames, the engineer at Long Point, water station about thirty miles west of Terre Haute. The east-bound train stopped at the tank, a lonesome place, with but one habitation in sight, and a little grocery, which was supposed to have been established by the robbers, when three men, heavily masked, and further disguised with slouch hats and linen clusters, boarded the engine, and drawing their pistols, shot Eames dead. The fireman, who was standing on the tender, gave one look and fell off the tender into the ditch. One of the robbers understood an engine, and he pulled out, carrying the express car, which had been previously uncoupled, two miles down the road, where a confederate with a horse and wagon was waiting on the opposite side of a field. The Adams Express

model for the thief-takers of the country to emulate. The Reno gang were at the time under some slight suspicion, but there was no tangible evidence against them.

Three months later the coupling pin was pulled out of an east-bound train, the engineer forced to run down the track, the messenger held up and

AT LAST THE BULL MADE A RUSH.

robbed of \$3,000. This was the work of two boys, neither of them 19 years of age. They were delivered to the officers by their fathers, who had seen them making masks, the money recovered, and they were sent to the penitentiary for long terms. The express people began to think that the new industry had been nipped in the bud, when, nine months later, the country was startled by another train robbery of most brutal and aggravating details. Jack Reno had in the meanwhile gone to Missouri and was arrested for his share in the robbery of the Daviess County Bank, for which he was sent to the penitentiary for twenty-three years. The third train robbery was on the Jeffersonville, Madison and Indianapolis Railroad, and occurred at Seymour. The engineer was captured at the water tank, and the express car entered while the train was in motion.

ATTACKING THE ENGINEER AND FIREMAN.

started by the Reno gang of four brothers and their brother-in-law, Anderson, who lived in and about Seymour, Ind. There was, previous to this, an extensive robbery of passengers that was semi-military in its nature. On September 24, 1864, occurred at Centralia, Mo., the memorable massacre of thirty-two Union soldiers by Bill Anderson's band of guerrillas. The band of robbers and murderers, from which were afterwards recruited the world-famous James and Younger gangs of desperados, had ridden into Centralia, pillaged the town and then taken possession of the depot. When the North Missouri train came along it was captured by Anderson's gang, and cut throats, the thirty-two soldiers taken out, disarmed and then stood against a wall and murdered. After the cowardly deed of blood the guerrillas went through the train and robbed all of the

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THE BLIND BAGGAGE CAR.

He offered some resistance and was beaten over the head and then thrown bodily from the train, inflicting injuries that made him an imbecile for the rest of his days. This job was done by Frank, Jesse and Sim Reno and Anderson. They secured \$13,000, with which they made their escape. This was the last case of holding up a train in Indiana. The subsequent murder of a stagecoach messenger on the Rock Island Railroad and his robbery by one of the train's aliases and engaged in business. They were well supplied with money and made a hard fight against extradition. It was over a year, and their cases were taken to the court of last resort before they were surrendered to the United States authorities.

Six Indians Robbers Lynched.

A circumstance had occurred at Seymour during the interim that made the Reno equally desirous not to be returned to Indiana. Six young men

Some Statistics for 1893.

The Railroad Gazette has collected statistics of train wrecking and train robbing for the first six months of 1893 which yield some surprising results. One is accustomed to think of train wreckers and train robbers infesting sparsely settled Western States, but the statistics show, on the contrary, that such crimes are most prevalent in well-settled States. The Gazette's figures show sixty-one attempts to wreck trains and twenty-one attempts to rob them. Massachusetts and Illinois head the list in the number of attempts to wreck trains, and Ohio follows. In these three advanced States were made more than one-half of all the attempts to wreck trains, and the State of New York follows. The only explanation offered for this preponderance of train-wrecking in well-settled and, generally speaking, well-governed States is that the mileage of railroads is greater in those States than in others, and that tramps, who are responsible for most attempts to wreck trains, flourish in thickly settled regions.

The geographical distribution of attempts at train-robbing are still more limited. Iowa heads the list, Indian Territory, Oklahoma taken together have the same number. Texas follows, and then comes Kansas and Nebraska. Sixty-seven per cent of all the train-robbings or attempted train-robbings occurred in these four States and two Territories.

The Crime on the Increase.

This form of crime is on the increase, rather than on the decline. The percentage of increase is so great that many men are tempted to attempt it. The majority of the cases of the past ten years seem to involve railroad men. Public schools are everywhere supported in whole or in part by the plan of the railroad man turned robber.

He was ordered to stop. One man remained on the engine and three entered the express car, which had ended doors overpowered the messenger and forced him to open the safe. They got \$12,000, and then fled, leaving the engineer to return with his locomotive to his train. Not a shot was fired. This bold and successful crime created the profoundest sensation. Col. L. C. Weir, who was at the time agent of the Adams Express Company, recognized that this was but the first of what

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passengers without distinction.

This was, however, an incident of the war, and police officers in discussing train robberies always date from 1866, when the Reno's began operations in Southern Indiana.

## The Reno Gang of Robbers.

There were four brothers, Frank, Jessie, Sim and Jack Reno, and their brother-in-law Anderson, all four boys who loafed much of their time about the streets of Seymour. One night in September of 1866, the west-bound Ohio and Mississippi train was on its way westward from Seymour and had reached Brownstown, where it stopped, when the engineer and fireman found themselves suddenly looking into two revolvers held by two masked men and heard an imperative order to pull out. As the engineer complied, the express car was cut off from the train, a simple matter in those days, and the engineer forced to run ahead two miles, when

he offered some resistance and was beaten over the head and then thrown bodily from the train, inflicting injuries that made him an imbecile for the rest of his days. This job was done by Frank, Jesse and Sim Reno and Anderson. They secured \$13,000, with which they made their escape. This was the last case of holding up a train in Indiana. The subsequent murder of a stagecoach messenger on the Rock Island Railroad and his robbery by one of the train's aliases and engaged in business. They were well supplied with money and made a hard fight against extradition. It was over a year, and their cases were taken to the court of last resort before they were surrendered to the United States authorities.

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