

A Train Holdup That Failed

By EDWARD SEYMOUR

There was a sudden putting on of brakes, with a slowing up of the train. The time was 9 o'clock at night, and the location was in a wood-just the place, in fact, for a robbery.

The train came to a full stop. A shot was heard. It came from the express car, but the passengers in the smoker and two passenger coaches couldn't tell where it came from.

Suddenly the front door of the foremost coach was thrown open and a man appeared with a short rifle, with which he covered the passengers, while another man with his revolver in his belt stepped into the car and said:

"Produce your valuables!" He was followed by another man, who held a revolver in each hand. With the man at the door covering the passengers with the rifle and a man behind him with six shots in each hand, the "collector" was well protected in his work. The passengers sat perfectly still, each one pulling out his or her valuables with alacrity.

After going through the car as the collector approached the rear door the man with the rifle followed him. The passengers had submitted so passively that this, it seemed, would be attended by little risk. As he passed the girl she whisked a long knife from under her skirt and, turning, drove it into his back. He fell with a groan. The two men who were at the other end of the car, completing their robbery, turned in time to see him fall.

One of the ladies mentioned—the one who was facing the rear of the car—pulled a revolver from under her mantle, fired at the collector's attendant, and he went down. This left the collector the only robber in the car. In the few seconds that followed the disarming of his two pals he knew that he was in danger, but from what person he was ignorant. He had seen a young girl stab the man with the rifle and a handsomely dressed lady shoot her attendant. He could not single out which of the passengers would attempt to finish him. There were several able men who sat near him, but not one of them moved. His eye was on them for a second, and during that very small space of time the dandified young man with others had turned to see what was going on in the rear and a bullet through his forehead.

The same plan had been devised and enacted in the second car, though with a different result. When the collector and his support came to the old man and old woman the woman with goggles, who sat farther in the rear suddenly clicked a revolver and shot the man standing in the front door covering the passengers. This diverted the collector and his attendant, and the old woman with marvelous quickness put a bullet through the attendant. Before the collector could draw his revolver the old man had shot him dead. The events in the rear car first came to a conclusion. The old maid threw away her spectacles, ripped up the front of a calico dress, threw a hat embellished with flowers on the floor and, being rid of women's apparel, stalked forward, a strapping man. The old man and old woman each doffed a white wig. The woman tore off her outer garment, and each with a revolver in each hand followed the "old maid." "She" threw open the door, and the three of them stood on the platform as the last shot rang out in the forward car.

A similar transformation scene had been enacted there. The girl who had knifed one of the robbers became a young man of nineteen, the two ladies turned out a sheriff and his deputy, while the dude was a quiescent looking man noted for being one of the coolest and quickest shots in that region. When the last robber fell the dude threw open the rear door of the car, and those who had done the shooting in both cars jumped off. Three men in the smoking car arose and joined the scattering posse. Three robbers, who had captured the express safe by firing a single shot that had hurt no one, were endeavoring to open it when, at each end of the car, appeared a man bristling with revolvers. The robbers, seeing themselves hedged in, fought desperately, but were mastered. In the front car two robbers had been killed and one wounded, while in the rear car one robber had been killed and ten wounded. The whole fight in the two passenger cars and the express car did not last four minutes.

The reason of this victory was very simple. One of the gang of robbers had quarreled with the leader and had informed the railroad officials of the projected robbery—and of the plans on which it was to be accomplished. The sheriff had disguised a posse and put them on the train, each with a part to perform on signal from him or his lieutenant.

HAD FAITH IN THE OLD MINE

How Fortune Came to a Girl Who Had Confidence.

"My poor little girl!" gasped old Tom Coyner as he died. I dread to leave you with nothing. If I could have lived six months I might have left you rich.

"Oh, I don't mind that, dad. I'll get along." Sallie Coyner buried her father and packed up their belongings ready to leave the old cabin near the mine in which all his hopes had been centered. She found a will drawn a some time before, but now there appeared to be no occasion for a will. Then she went down to Colorado Springs, where she had an aunt to whom she could look for guidance.

When her father died Sallie was sixteen. A year later a vein was discovered in the mine in which she still had an interest. A dividend was declared that gave her \$1000, which by the terms of the will she could not have till she was twenty-one years old. But the vein soon dried out, and the Coyner mine was abandoned.

Two years later a couple of speculators bought the property for a song, wiped out the old stock and organized a company called the Hope Mining company.

Meanwhile Sallie Coyner was earning her living in Colorado Springs. When she was twenty she became engaged to a clerk in a bank with a salary so infinitesimal that matrimony between the two seemed but a multiplication of their troubles. But the day was approaching when Sallie would come into her \$1,000, and that would enable them to set up in a small way at housekeeping.

The day she was paid the money he got happily and ended in misery. Willard Stearns, her lover, had been long looking for the day when they should be married. Now when the money was paid, Sallie told him that she proposed to invest it in the stock of the Hope Mining company. He looked at her aghast.

"I have kept in touch with the property," she said, "and know something about what they are doing. My father worked that mine for three years. He used to talk to me about it because he hadn't any one else to confide with, absorbed him. I know that when a certain event happens, if it ever does happen, a rich tide will be struck."

She got out her father's old maps showing plot after plot crossing and covering one another, and tried to explain what her father had so often explained to her. But either he could not or would not understand. He took no interest in the angle at which the Sanborn lode dipped nor in the depth at which it crossed the Coyners.

gold mine to him meant a capricious, uncapable of swallowing the hard-earned money of simple minded people. He told Sallie that if she married her he had the prospect of living with a woman who had inherited a speculative mania. He preferred to go through life alone.

Sallie fearfully accepted the situation. The next day she visited the mine and introduced herself to the superintendent of the working gang as the daughter of the former owner. He was very kind to her, answered all her questions but showed no expectation of striking paying dirt. Indeed, he told her that he expected soon to abandon the work. Sallie asked him how deep was the lode. He told her it was 1,400 feet. "Promise me that you won't stop till you have gone 200 feet farther," she said. "Why so?" "Because you'll strike a rich vein at 1,500 feet."

He gave the promise, and Sallie returned to Colorado Springs. The next day she went to a broker and asked the market price of Hope Mining shares. They told her that there had not been a quotation for months, but if 2 or 3 cents were offered it would bring all she might wish to buy. She authorized them to offer 2 cents a share for as much as \$1,000 would purchase. The offer was made and \$50,000 par value of the stock secured.

Old Coyner had expected to make a strike at from 1,450 to 1,500 feet. Sallie waited a week in a terrible suspense. She had absolute confidence in her father's expectations, but her \$1,000 was backing these expectations. The next day, looking at the quotations of Hope stock, she was astounded to see that it had been run up to 50 bid and few asks. The vein had been struck, the stock became worth \$2 a share, and Sallie was rich.

Willard Stearns kept away from Sallie from the day he told her he would not marry one who had inherited a mania for speculation. One day he heard of a great rise in Hope Mining company stock and saw an item in a newspaper stating that the daughter of "Coyner," who formerly owned the mine, had a huge block of the stock. His heart for a moment seemed to cease to beat. He hoped Sallie would send for him. But she didn't. He wrote her a note congratulating her on her good fortune and received a very kind reply. This encouraged him, and he sought to renew the engagement.

"No," she said, "your reasons were good, though not exactly as you stated them. You and I are made of different stuff. I am like my father, ready to risk all out in that in which I have confidence. Your natural bent is in a different line. Together we should be constantly pulling in different directions."

Sallie Coyner turned out a great speculator and got enormously rich.

A FRAUD DISCOVERED

By DAVID WALTER CHURCH

Rose Thornton and I were school mates and chums. I say chums because we were very young and at that time our friendship had not ripened into love. Rose's mother died when she was a child, and her father married again. The love of her mother and her father's second marriage made the poor girl's life a very unhappy one.

Her stepmother was a selfish, crafty woman who treated her as if she were in the way, and I am not sure but that if she could have got rid of her without injury to herself she would have done it. Mr Thornton himself had cause to regret the step he had taken in marrying the woman, and there was a perpetual quarrel going on between husband and wife. Rose would have gone to live somewhere else had not her father begged her to stay with him.

Doubtless Rose's making a confidant of me and my sympathy drew us together and made lovers rather than friends of us. Mr Thornton was worth something like a hundred thousand dollars, a part of which would belong to his daughter after his death, provided the stepmother didn't beat her out of it. Rose repeated certain conversations she had had with her father on the subject of the inheritance, from which I inferred that nothing deterred him from leaving all his property to Rose but the fear that his wife would break the will. He preferred to let the law divide his property since it would give his widow a third and his daughter two-thirds. This plan seemed safer than any other.

When Rose was nineteen and I twenty-two her stepmother treated her so abominably that she was obliged to leave the house, which she did with her father's reluctant consent. Rose thought that he would apply for a divorce were it not for the fact that he had no cause which would come within the law, and his wife took care to give him no such cause. Any such attempt on his part would, undoubtedly, cost him dear.

Rose and I would have been married but for the fact that I had been unlucky in the business positions I had occupied. Two different firms in whose service I was rising failed, successively. I was now with the third, the agent of paper mills, and just getting a hold on the good will of my employers. So Rose went to live with an aunt till I could take care of her.

The position she occupied with reference to her stepmother was very irritating to me since it was so wearing upon my sweetheart. I longed to take some sort of vengeance on the "old man" as I called her, but could do nothing in the premises. I could prepare myself to give Rose what Mrs. Thornton deprived her of, and that was all. However, Providence, fate or whatever we choose to call it put me in a way in which the dear girl far beyond anything that I could have been accomplished by my own efforts.

Mr Thornton died very suddenly. I believed that his wife helped him out of the flesh and expected her to produce a will leaving her all or the bulk of his property. But when no will was found I believed that her husband had authorized his intention not to make a will. Several months passed, during which the courts were engaged in settling the estate, and Rose and I were congratulating ourselves that she would receive two-thirds of the estate or between \$50,000 and \$70,000.

Then all of a sudden the widow produced a will executed several years before her husband's death, leaving all the property to her except some swamp land of no value to Rose. I believed the moment I heard of this will that there was fraud in it and advised Rose to contest it. I got a lawyer to take the case, but he said that if it was a forgery the woman had done it so cleverly that there was no hope of proving her guilty. Rose, who dreaded and feared her stepmother, was opposed to taking any legal steps in the matter. Before giving it up I was determined to examine the will and went to the court for the purpose.

Persons acquire habits from their daily business life that they practice unconsciously outside of it. In the paper business on taking up a sample I always rubbed it between my thumb and finger to learn its texture, then held it up to the light to see the water lines. I had no sooner touched the one and seen the other than I recognized the paper on which the will was written—it was not on a printed form—as some thing had passed through my hands in a business way. Then I remembered it as some paper manufactured by a company which my firm represented. From this I stepped to a certainty that it had been consigned to us as just manufactured when I had first handled it. The will was dated three years before, written on paper made within a year. Fraud was evident.

Accompanied by my lawyer I called on the forger of the will and proved to her that we could send her to state prison for a term of years. This broke her down. I had long been hungry for revenge upon her on Rose's behalf and now was merciless. I gave her a choice of turning over the whole estate to Rose or going to the penitentiary. She chose the former course.

Rose and I celebrated our wedding under very happy circumstances. Rose wished to give up to her stepmother her widow's third, but I put my foot resolutely down on such magnanimity.

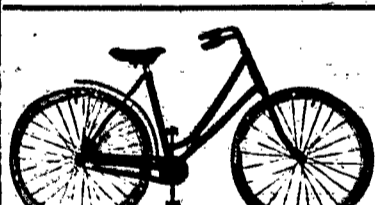


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