

## REMINISCENCE NUMBER TWO

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My second experience was with John Bailey, a young man who robbed the county treasury of some \$700.00 in the month of February, 1863.

Bailey was hostler at the hotel where I boarded. He came to Ohio City in November previous and hired to the hotel as hostler. He was of medium size, light hair, blue eyes and red cheeks, pleasant spoken and mild mannered. His image is graven on the retina of my eyes and never to be effaced. He was quite a favorite in the office and spent much of his leisure time there. On the night in question the county treasurer, Mr. Fitton, was on a visit to his parents at the town of Berea, just east of Richmond. When the treasurer was away he always left the key to the safe with me; it was an old salamander safe and locked with a big brass key.

On the night stated Bailey came into my room, getting the keys from my trousers pocket, and opened the office and then the safe, secured the money, and taking a very fine riding horse belonging to the hotel, he struck out no one knew whither.

This robbery occurred on Tuesday night, and on Wednesday morning men were sent out in every direction, east, west, north and south.

On Saturday we were all back in town again and no tidings of Bailey.

The only statement that might be a clew was made by the man who went east to Paola (Jonas Cook). He said Dennis Springer, father of our present treasurer, told him that on Tuesday night some one passed about 2 o'clock riding in a lope; he thought it was some one going to Stanton for a doctor; the sheriff thought the clew didn't amount to anything; Bailey had always told the same story about his history; said he was born in a town in Illinois, and always lived there until he went into the service; was wound-

ed and discharged; came first to Leavenworth and then to Ohio City.

But Sunday morning I rode down to Mr. Springer's and he told me the same that he told Cook. Well, I thought to myself, I will ride over to Stanton and see if those doctors had a call that night. I found neither one had had a call. Then I had a feeling that what Mr. Springer had heard was Bailey riding by.

On returning I passed a blacksmith shop in Stanton and there were five or six young men, hard looking fellows, sitting down by the side of the shop. One of them spoke calling me by name and said, "You have had quite a robbery in your town." I said, "Yes." He said, "Suspect any one?" I said, "Yes, we think it was a young man by the name of Bailey." "Well," he said pointing to one of the men, "that man knows Bailey well." Then I turned my attention to him. He told me Bailey, when he first knew him, was driving stage from Warrensburg to Sedalia; that he married a fine girl and that she was in Warrensburg, Missouri; that he had got into trouble about some mules belonging to the government and had got out of the state.

The proprietor of the hotel in Ohio City where I boarded had a mail route from the Sac and Fox agency to Paola; the mail was carried over the route twice a week and sometimes Bailey carried it; Stanton being on the route this young man happened to see him and had talked with him. It was plain to me that without much doubt I had Bailey located, but the next thing was to get him.

The civil war was at its height; Missouri was a rebel state; and the rebel and the union army each in its turn held sway.

Ewing's famous Order No. 11 had just been enforced and a strip of country about forty miles wide lying

on the western border of Missouri under that order was desolation beyond all comparison.

The blood thirsty Quantrell and his heartless band was in the saddle and on the rampage, and woe to the Union man that dared to cross their path. I made every effort to secure some one to go with me into Missouri after Bailey; it was a useless task, and I found that if I ever got Bailey I must do that job myself.

So arranging my affairs as best I could for such a dangerous trip, and against the advice of my friends, I started on the trail.

My first objective point was Kansas City, Missouri, as a civilian had to have permission from the Provo Marshal of that district to enter Missouri and also to carry arms. Dwight Thacher of Lawrence was Provo Marshal of the district and a warm friend of mine; he advised me against the trip, but failing in that, he rendered me every assistance in his power. Having secured the necessary papers, about 4 p. m. I rode out to Independence, then as now, the county seat of Jackson county, Missouri, stayed over night, and in the early morning I started across this strip of country designated in Ewing's famous order.

I had a spirited riding horse loaned me by a friend for the trip.

I kept him well in hand—not allowing him to move faster than a walk. I knew if I was discovered by the guerrillas that infested that country, that my only safety lay in a rapid flight. I was light of weight and he carried me easily. I saved his strength for any emergency that might befall me. It was a desolate ride; Ewing's order had been rigidly enforced. Everything that had contributed to the happiness of those people had been destroyed by fire. Nothing remained of those well improved homes but the tall brick chimneys that stood as mute monuments of man's inhumanity to man.

I reached Pleasant Hill in the afternoon and stayed there over night.

The government had a company stationed there, and it was the only stopping place between Independence and Warrensburg; I had reached Pleasant Hill without incident.

The next day I got an early start for Warrensburg, and rode leisurely along much the same as the day before.

You know it is said that, "self preservation is the first law of nature." I was not on that particular day much given to meditation; each moment in my gaze I swept the horizon from every point of the compass lest I be taken unawares. Out ten or fifteen miles from Pleasant Hill, I came to what was once the village of Holden—nothing was left of it but the charred remains of a once prosperous village. As I rode along I noticed one small building; it had a sign on it "Saloon;" a man was standing in the door and I reigned my horse in towards him thinking to engaged him in conversation, but suddenly, without any warning, a superbly mounted man rode in between me and the man in the doorway—my hair fairly stood on end, but I said not a word. He dismounted from his horse right into the doorway of the building—keeping the bridle rein over his arm. In an instant he swung into his saddle and was gone like the wind. He was dressed in a military suit of gray, patent leather cavalry boots, wore a broad brimmed sombrero hat. I could but admire his elegant get-up, but his get-away was far more pleasing to me. I rode away without having any conversation with either of the men. In a few moments I reached the summit of a hill—I was terror stricken to see approaching me a company of men, and from the distance I could not determine whether they were union or rebel soldiers. On sight of each other both had halted.

They sent two men and marched me down to where the company was halted, and I could not even then tell whether they were union or rebel men. The captain was a rough

spoken man; he first demanded to know where I was from, and I answered, "Kansas." Then he asked me what I was doing here, and I told him, showing him my papers. Then he cursed me roundly for traveling through that country except with an escort of troops.

I then told him of my experience with a scout a few minutes before and he immediately rushed his men forward. Then I knew that the scout knew of the presence of this company and so did not stop to molest me; it was lucky for me.

I was then not more than ten or twelve miles from Warrensburg and I felt comparatively safe, so I moved on at a faster pace.

Arriving in Warrensburg I went at once to the Provo Marshal's office showing him my papers. "Why," he said, "we have been hunting that fellow for three months and this is the first clue. He stole several mules and sold them to the Government." He was looking out of the window and said, "There goes Bailey's wife with that young lady."

We both agreed that as Bailey had money now he would try to get to his wife, so we kept close watch of the outgoing and incoming stage from Sedalia which was the terminus of the Missouri Pacific at that time.

Bailey's wife was staying in the family of a physician who had a daughter about her age and they were great friends, and after a few days' stay in Warrensburg and not making any headway, I determined to take the doctor into my confidence, knowing full well it would be a great blunder if he should be unfriendly to me and aid Bailey. I took the risk and told him the whole story. He seemed much interested; told me Mrs. Bailey was to leave on the stage for Sedalia that night, and then said, "Young man if I were in your place I would go directly to Mrs. Bailey and tell her the story as you have told me; I will arrange for the meeting; you will certainly get Bailey and it is far better for her

to remain here." We had the meeting at the doctor's and I told her the story. She was greatly agitated and cried bitterly. Just before I left she left the room for a moment and came back and handed me a twenty-dollar bill saying Bailey had sent it to her for expenses; "It's your money, I don't want it." That night I took the stage for Sedalia; in the morning took the train for St. Louis. There were but two passenger trains on the road, one from Sedalia to St. Louis and one from St. Louis to Sedalia and these trains met and passed at the town of Herman, below Jefferson City.

I reasoned that Bailey would come up on the train to meet his wife.

Our train was first at the station and took the siding. As the train from St. Louis came in, I stepped out on the platform and in an instant Bailey appeared, looked up and saw me—ducked and ran west and I after him. In the length of a car I caught him and in his attempt to escape I got him down. Before I let him up I managed to get my revolver and backed him up against the engine going west. In the meantime a crowd had gathered around us. The conductors began calling, "All aboard."

Handing my revolver to an officer, I grabbed Bailey and slipped a handcuff on his left wrist; failing to get his right wrist I put it on my right wrist. He walked along gently then and we boarded the train going west as I wanted to get to the nearest Provo Marshal's office, which was at Jefferson City. Between Herman and Jefferson City there is a tunnel about half a mile long, dark as a pocket. While passing through it I saw a glimmer of something moving and when we got out of the tunnel I said to Bailey, "you threw something out in the tunnel." He denied it most emphatically. On reaching Jefferson City, I turned Bailey over to the U. S. Marshal, who was to take him to the Provo Marshal's office. I went to the agent

and asked for a hand-car. I told him I had a prisoner and I believed he threw something out in the tunnel. The handcar was broken. Then I went to the Provo Marshal's office, made the necessary affidavits to hold Bailey, and he was placed in a stockade. A number of the men in the stockade seemed to know Bailey, calling him by name and joking him for getting in there.

It was night now, and securing a lantern and a U. S. Marshal we walked down to the tunnel and went back and forth through it, but found nothing.

I returned to my hotel; and in the morning as I went into the dining room I noticed people looking at me and laughing. I knew that they were rebels and felt that something had happened. Eating a hurried breakfast I went to the clerk to pay my bill and the clerk told me, "your man has escaped." I went to the stockade and found it was a fact. The prisoners took great delight in yelling at me and calling me all sorts of names until I was entirely out of sight. I was mortified beyond all expression.

I felt that I was in the enemy's country and I did not know which way to turn, nor where to look. My long chase had suddenly come to naught.

I should have said that while in Warrensburg I wrote to the chief of police in St. Louis, Mr. Cozens, a minute description of Bailey and asked him to look out for him. Now I knew Bailey had been in St. Louis, and I decided to go down there.

While at the hotel that forenoon, I got a telegram from the Missouri Pacific office in St. Louis, stating that one of their freight conductors had stopped his train in the tunnel and found a large pocketbook containing \$480.00 and that if I would call at the office I could get it.

I took the train late in the afternoon for St. Louis and reached there at 11 o'clock p. m. A policeman accompanied me to Mr. Cozens' office; Cozens was in; said he got my letter

and that he had had men out looking for Bailey. I told Cozens that he had been here and that I had caught him, but he had escaped—and I wanted to find where he stayed as it might aid me in getting him again. I said, "If you will give me a man I will go right at it now." There were several policemen in the room. He called one and we started out. He said to me, "I have been all over the city and I couldn't find him." "Well he has been here and I want to find where he stayed," I said.

We had walked a little more than a block from the office when I noticed a sign, "Board by the day or week." I said, "Did you go in there?" He said, "No, he had money and he would stay at a hotel." I said, "You don't know what he would do—let us go in." We went up several steps into an office dimly lighted, the clerk was snoring on a lounge. There was a small desk and a register which I commenced to examine. There sure enough was Bailey's name. I called my guide and said, "Here is where he stayed." I then woke the clerk and asked about Bailey. He said he had gone up the road to meet his wife and hadn't got back. We went to his room but found nothing of any value.

My guide took me to a hotel and in the morning I called at the Missouri Pacific offices, told who I was, and without any further identification they handed me the pocket-book containing the \$480.00.

On examining the pocketbook I found a receipt from a Mr. Buchanan, a public administrator, for \$80 paid by Bailey on the rent of a farm; the receipt had no town or county on it. Public administrator in Missouri is the same as probate judge in Kansas.

I had left my horse in Warrensburg, hence I must return there.

I had given up all hope of again capturing Bailey for the present.

As I found he was born and reared about twenty-five miles west of Jefferson City. I was in the enemies country and he in the house of

friends. I left St. Louis on the first train going west to Sedalia; after passing Jefferson City, I made a thorough canvass of the train asking every passenger if they knew a public administrator in Missouri by the name of Buchanan, and I was gratified to find a man who knew him. He said he was public administrator of Carroll county, that the county seat was Carrollton; that it was about eighty miles northeast of Kansas City.

On arriving at Warrensburg I found a company that had been ordered to Lexington, Missouri, a town not very far from Carrollton, and I reached there without incident, called on Mr. Buchanan, showed him my papers and told my story. He treated me courteously; said Bailey came there two weeks ago and rented from him a farm of eighty acres, paying him \$80.00 as stated in the receipt. Bailey told him he was going to St. Louis to meet his wife and would return in a short time; that he had left his horse at the livery stable. He stated that on the necessary proof being made he would return the money, which he did. He also went with me to the livery stable and I got the horse on paying the charges for board.

Taking the horse I went directly to Kansas City and thence to Ohio City. I was away two weeks or

more and in that time I traversed much of that portion of Missouri which was the hot bed of secession and the home of Quantrell, the Youngers and James boys. All but forty miles from Warrensburg to Lexington was made alone. Do not suppose for a moment that I had given up my determination to find Bailey.

On my return I immediately issued a circular giving a minute description of him and offering a reward of \$150.00 for his delivery in any jail in the United States.

Six months afterward I received a letter from a detective in Springfield, Missouri, stating that he had my man in jail there, and on the payment of the reward he would be turned over to me.

I immediately repaired to Springfield accompanied by our sheriff, C. L. Robbins. Paying the reward and purchasing a pony for Bailey to ride we returned to Ohio City and thence to the Douglas county jail.

Before his trial in our district court he committed suicide by hanging himself in the jail. Mr. Ogden, the sheriff of Douglas county, informed me that the day before his death he received a letter from his mother up-braiding him for the life he had led, and the disgrace he had brought upon the family and also his wife.