

Krum Bank Robbery 1925 -Part 1**By Kathryn Dodd**

So we continue this Krum Robberies, Murder, Mischief & Mayhem series with a bank robbery by none other than Yancy Story and W.A. Martin who rob the Farmers and Merchants State Bank in Krum on June 10, 1925. There are hundreds of newspaper articles about this robbery, the trials, the re-trials, and the appeals in newspapers across the state. There were at least three changes in venue from Denton to Sherman to Marlin. At one point Yancy Story was supposedly in coma after an automobile accident even though three physicians said he was not. I am not for sure that Yancy Story ever served any time for the robbery. He was first given 99 years for the robbery initially and on appeal was changed to 5. He eventually moved to another town, became a businessman had more children and grandchildren and died at the age of 81. Another interesting note is that I was never able to find any pictures of Yancy Story in any of the newspaper articles.

Denton Record Chronicle-June 10, 1925**Rangers Aid In Robbery Probe****No Trace of Bandits Or Of Loot Taken From Krum Bank So Far As Given Out Here**

Ranger Captain Tom R. Hickman with Sergeant Start Stanley reached Krum Tuesday night and came on to Denton Wednesday morning and are assisting Sheriff W.S. Fry and his deputies in the probe of the robbery of the Farmers and Merchants State Bank at Krum Tuesday afternoon about 10 minutes before closing time, in which two heavily armed and masked bandits held up the three employees of the bank and rifled the safe and cash drawer of \$3,100 in cash and \$1,550 in negotiable bonds.

Early conjecture that the Robert Storrie Cadillac, stolen off East Hickory Street during the afternoon, was used by the bandits was borne out by the finding of the automobile where the bandits had abandoned it on the Old Denton Gainesville dirt road about a half mile east of Blue Mound late Tuesday afternoon. Tire marks on the dirt road showed the bandits either had their getaway car "cached" there or were met there by confederates.

The rangers arrived in Denton early Wednesday morning and after talking here with Storrie and some of the people from Krum who witnessed the robbery they left for about three hours without telling where they were going or what was the nature of the trip and no information was given out when they returned. They were accompanied by County Attorney Elbert Hooper and returning to Denton they were closeted for some time in conference with Hooper, District Judge C.R. Pearman and Sheriff Fry. It was said following the conference they had nothing to give out, and they would not authorize a statement of any kind about what they had learned or what they might anticipate in the way of developments.

From talking with the three bank attaches at Krum and Krum citizens who watched the robbery from vantage points inside the buildings surrounding the bank Hickman said it seemed the men were doing their best to disguise their appearance. He said the bank employees thought the bandits were slender men but they moved bent over the time and covered with baggy unionalls they had the appearance of being low, heavysset men. The bank officials said that because of the hoods completely covering their heads they could not state positively that the men were white.

Robert Storrie's Cadillac automobile, stolen in Denton Tuesday afternoon by the bank bandits and used in the job, was found late Tuesday where it had been abandoned off the highway a short distance. Tracks in the vicinity indicated the bandits were met there by someone in another automobile and continued their flight. Officers said this possibly accounted for only two men making the holdup at Krum, a job usually handled by three or more men in order that at least man can be left to protect the machine with which it is planned to make the getaway.

Much Excitement at Krum

Much excitement was caused at Krum by the broad daylight robbery but the citizens and visitors from the country in the business section who saw the big automobile stop at the side of the bank building and the two masked men enter sought vantage points from which to watch the robbery while some of them at once began spreading the alarm by telephone and the bandits could not have left the bank before the word had reached

Sheriff Fry in Denton and deputies were being dispatched to watch for the automobile and its two bandits along possible routes they might take in leaving Krum while the word was spread to all the surrounding towns and counties by telephone. The change in automobiles however helped to defeat all efforts to locate the men as they left the scene.

Immediately after the theft of the Storrie automobile was reported and the word came in about the same time that a similar car was used in the robbery, officers were confident the car had been used in the robbery, officers were confident the car had been stolen by the bandits for use in the Krum job and that it would be abandoned in the county somewhere. Reuben Rucker, assistant cashier of the bank, ran to the windows as the car left the bank and though the handkerchief tied over the rear number on the car covered most of it he could see the third figure of the license number and it was a 5, corresponding with the number on the Storrie auto.

Barnett Fired on Bandits

Fred Barnett was at a filling station diagonally across the street from the bank when the bandits were seen to drive up and first taking refuge in the office of the building with his companions he then emerged and ran to his home about a half a block away and returned with his pistol about the time the bandits returned to their car and started to drive away. As they turned to drive back north he opened fire on them at a distance of around 75 feet but his shots did not have any effect other than to strike a garage in the line of fire further down the street and one of the bullets narrowly missed a man in the garage.

Two Young Women Stop

Just after the bandits entered the bank Misses Zella Benton and Irma Huffhines passed the gasoline filling station on their way to the bank but men at the filling station stop them after convincing them that they were not joking with them and that a bank robbery was actually taking place. The young women then joined the men in the office of the filling station.

Bank Employees Tell Story

The bank employees were able to tell very little about the robbery other than that two men did the job and that they got all but the \$250 overlooked near the cash drawer that was available in the institution. Dr. A.H. Knox and Reuben Rucker were still excited from their experiences nearly an hour later and they could give almost no description of the two men. Rucker said that one of them had on a green mask but it was from men outside the bank it was learned that both of them had on green masks that were shaped like hoods and covered the entire faces with the exception of diamond shaped holes through which they could see. Lewis Koiner, a farmer boy of north of town, was the only person who would be positive about how the men dressed. They passed him as they came into the town and he said they were wearing unionalls. He saw them put on their masks about the Hugh A. Parks home north of the bank about a block and they passed him again as they left town. Others said they wore hats over the hoods.

Rucker said the first he knew of the robbers being at the bank was about the time the first man got inside the cage where Rucker was working and he looked up to see the bandit marching Fritz Barthold, the bookkeeper ahead of him with his hands in the air while the bandit covered him with the two guns. Rucker immediately complied with the order of the man to put his hands up and the bandit started back through the bank with them. Dr. Knox said he saw the bandit who entered the front of the bank about the time he raised up in front of the railing and about the same time the other bandit came in the side door.

“I don’t know why I did it,” said Knox at Krum Tuesday afternoon, “but when the man came in the door I got to my feet from the chair at the table where I had been writing. He motioned to me to put up my hands.”

As Rucker and Barthold were being moved back to the back office of the bank to be put with Knox for one man to hold them during the robbery Rucker thought the bandits would want to lock them in the vault and he turned toward it but the bandit told him to keep out of there.