



MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

From the collections of the Minnesota Historical Society: Northfield (Minnesota) Bank Robbery of 1876 Selected Manuscripts Collection.

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at dusk on the day of Sept. 6, 1876 my Grandfather and Grandmother, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Hermann, and my Aunt Bertha, then six years old, were standing near their farm home in Featherstone township, three miles from Hay Creek and nine miles from Red Wing when they looked toward the schoolhouse and saw two men on horseback coming down a hill road. Soon two more on horseback came from the direction of the Alms farm, then two from past the John Struss farm which was not far around the hill back of Grandfather's barn. They tethered their horses in the woods back of the school.

9490 Realizing that something unusual was brewing, my Grandparents continued watching and were wholly unaware that one man had come up into the yard and was right beside them. He demanded a ham and two pounds of butter. Grandmother was only too glad to comply in order to get rid of him, for she didn't think he was of good character; so she cared little that she was not paid. My Aunt does not know whether he was one of the six they had already seen or whether he might have been a seventh but she assures me there were at least six.

Some of the family stayed up all through the night. There was no possible way they could get their horses from the barn so as to go into Red Wing to report this suspicious gathering without being seen or heard by the men at the school. Those who stayed up learned that the men left sometime after three in the morning. Members of the family went over to the schoolhouse in the morning and found the flat-top heating stone covered with grease; the men had evidently fried the

ham on top with lots of butter. On the blackboard they saw names written and my Aunt says two of them were those of Jesse James and his brother.

This is the story as told me by my Aunt, Mrs. Louis Thomforde, two years ago and again recently when I wanted to be sure of the number of men. Mrs. Thomforde still lives on her farm on highway 58 between Hay Creek and Goodhue. Here is a rough sketch of the farm, creek and roads.

