

REMINISCENCE OF OLD RAILROADER

Tom Hatton, Formerly Conductor on This Branch Tells Interesting Story to Bismarck Tribune.

Probably the oldest veteran in the Northern Pacific railroad service in the Northwest, is Tom Hatton, aged 65 years, who is one of the conductors on the passenger trains from Mott to Mandan. Old Tom says he has been in the railroad service for over 38 years in this part of the country, and that he was in the service six years before he came out here, and he is still punching tickets and helping the ladies off the cars at the little country stations along his line with the same gallantry as he did years ago.

He often tells his passengers of the time when Jesse James and the Younger brothers robbed the First National Bank at Northfield in 1876. At that time this same Tom Hatton was on the police force at Northfield and he says "it was some day" in that town. He tells of how the James and Younger brothers came into the town going to a restaurant, eating a meal and visiting several other business places before they attacked the bank. Old Tom Hatton says he remembers well of seeing Cole Younger at the restaurant, and that after he was arrested at the next town after the robbery he went down there to identify some of the men.

After the robbery, Hatton says most of the people had their lives scared out of them and that he himself, was one of the men to stay under the sidewalk for nearly two days and that every once in a while he would give a kid a nickle to see if the robbers had left town.

One of the stories that Hatton tells in connection with the robbery was that after Bill Chadwick and Clem Miller had been shot their bodies were placed in barrels to be shipped to a medical college to be used as subjects, but that before the barrels had reached the next town someone had labeled them both as "Northfield bank robbers." Chadwick's body reached the medical college all right and for a long time Dr. Wheeler who shot Chadwick had his skeleton in his office at Grand Forks. Relatives of Miller however claimed his body before the students could make use of it.

Cole Younger's buckskin mare was kept at Northfield a long time after the robbery and Hatton tells of a sensational ride he had on the back of the mare in pursuit of an offender of the law at Northfield while he was on the police force there.

For a man of his age and rough experience all his life, Tom Hatton is well preserved and probably will remain in the railroad service here for years to come.