



Last Hurrah of the James-Younger Gang

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So small it had only one bank, so quiet no citizens carried guns. Hard-working, peaceful Northfield, Minnesota, was an orderly yet busy mill-town in the heart of prosperous farm country. On a serene autumn Tuesday in 1876, local shopkeepers, farmers, and citizenry went about their normal routines, little realizing that the infamous and deadly James-Younger gang had designs on tiny Northfield.

The experienced robbers planned to target the single bank, which held the hard-earned money of the townsfolk. Jesse and Frank James and the Younger brothers had never experienced defeat.

During a wild gun battle that raged between the outlaws and the bankmen up and down the town's main street, two unarmed townsfolk were murdered. Northfield's angered populace fought back. The townspeople killed two members of the James-Younger gang and wounded several more. The remaining bandits fled but were pursued across southwestern Minnesota by a posse that gradually grew to more than a thousand men.

In Last Hurrah of the James-Younger Gang, Robert Barr Smith debunks the James-Younger "Robin Hood" image and shows that the real heroes of the Northfield raid were the ordinary people--the bankers who protected their depositors at their own risk, the townspeople who pitched in to chase the gang from town, and the posse members who pursued and triumphed over the retreating remnants of the gang.



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