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Kid Curry's demise

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Law and Order on the Frontier

When outlaws were common
and sheriffs were scarce,
settlers often had to
take matters into
their own hands

PLUS

The original
Buffalo Bill
didn't want
to be famous

When Texas
revoked its
welcome
to Cherokees

Arizona Sheriff
Commodore Perry
Owens confronted
a gang of rustlers
one Sunday in 1887
and killed three of
them in seconds.



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Pocock and Cassidy

Roger Pocock, who had come to Canada from England and had joined the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in the late 1880s, was determined to ride on the so-called Outlaw Trail from Canada to Mexico. On this trail, men like Butch Cassidy and his Wild Bunch could make getaways and find ranch work without worrying about their employers asking a lot of questions.

Pocock mounted up and hit the trail on June 28, 1899, armed only with a Kodak camera. He made stops at such outlaw hideouts as Hole-in-the-Wall (Wyoming) and Brown's Park (Utah-Colorado border). In desolate southeastern Utah, he asked about the Wild Bunch stronghold known as Robbers' Roost. "I cross-examined men whom I knew to be robbers, and they lied cheerfully to throw me off the scent," he wrote in a 1900 10-part London newspaper series. He found the stronghold anyway, though rumors that it was a cave with electric lights and defended by a machine gun proved false. "I have talked to the outlaws," he wrote, "and seen their hard mouths twist into an ugly grin over these inventions." One of the outlaws was Cassidy himself. Pocock heard details of the equine escape system (safe ranches, water holes, obscure trails, a trusted network of informants) that CuChullaine O'Reilly of the Long Riders' Guild described as "an underground railroad for mounted outlaws." Pocock's recollections of his historic ride are in his autobiography, *Following the Frontier* (Long Riders' Guild Press, 2001).

After bidding good-bye to Butch and the boys, Pocock continued on his way through the unforgiving deserts of southern Utah and Arizona Territory. He ended up riding three good horses some 3,600 miles to Mexico City. "The immensity of Pocock's equestrian achievement was soon shoved aside by the advent of the new motor age," O'Reilly

said. Pocock's meeting with Cassidy and his amazing ride are detailed in the 2008 biography *Outrider of Empire: The Life and Adventures of Roger Pocock* (University of Alberta Press), by Geoffrey Pocock (no relation). Did the long-riding Pocock ever take a photo of Butch Cassidy at Robbers' Roost? O'Reilly says it's likely. To see more on the Guild and to read Pocock's just published original Outlaw Trail articles, see www.thelongridersguild.com. To order a copy of *Following the Frontier*, visit www.horsetravelbooks.com.