

Chapter 3: *“Well, I didn’t believe they would try it.”*

**United States Marshal Hal Gosling Western District, Texas
(February 21, 1885)**

“How they peppered us! I am full of holes,” Jim Pitts complained, as he and Charlie Yeager leaped from the International and Great Northern Express train near the Guadalupe River bridge just north of New Braunfels, Texas. It was true enough; varying accounts place between two and seven lead slugs in Pitts’ body (the smart money’s on four) as he and Yeager hit the ground and began running. The words would be his last. The pair made it only about ninety feet before Pitts sank to the ground. Yeager dragged him a few yards further and then eased down beside his dying partner. He had no choice; heavy steel manacles linked their wrists together. Though Yeager had always looked up to his older partner, his survival instinct quickly displaced hero worship. His only concern now was how to get free of his fix. As he pondered the situation he spied a large, sharp-edged rock – not so heavy it could shatter steel links, but plenty enough to bash through meat, cartilage and bone...