

Armored Truck Hijacked on Canal Street: \$500,000 Hub Brinks Holdup Machine Gun Pair Robs Messenger

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\$500,000 Hub Brinks Holdup

Machine Gun Pair
Robs Messenger

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Globe Staff

A Brink's armored truck was robbed of an estimated \$500,000 at 6:30 p.m. yesterday on Canal Street, North End, after two ski-masked bandits armed with machine guns kidnaped a messenger and drove away in the truck.

No one was injured.

The robbery took place in front of the Union Oyster House, 122 Canal st., only four blocks from the historic 1950 Brink's holdup scene.

The robbers drove the truck to the rear of the Dept. of Public Works building on Nashua Street, about half a mile away, where they emptied the contents into a station wagon driven by a third man.

According to first reports, two guards were out of the truck, and a messenger, Richard Haines, 43, of 797 Livingston st., Tewksbury, remained in the front passenger seat.

Haines told police a man wearing a black ski mask opened the driver's door with a key and confronted him with a machine gun.

A second man, also armed with a machine gun, entered from the passenger side and disarmed Haines. The robbers pulled Haines' hat down over his eyes and told him to keep quiet "or we'll blow your head off."

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Armored Truck Contained Pickups From Downtown Department Stores

★ ROBBERY

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One of them then drove the truck to the rear of the DPW building. The truck was followed by a black and white station wagon, Haines told police.

The truck, Brink's officials said, had just completed a pickup from downtown department stores. In addition to about 50 money bags, the truck held a red wooden trunk filled with cash and checks marked "Filene's" a black steel trunk marked "Jordan Marsh" and a black suitcase marked "Raymond's."

Haines said the men emptied the money bags and trunks into the station wagon in seconds. The robbers' car drove off in the direction of North Station.

Haines, handcuffed, was left in the truck. He managed to get out and walk to the MDC Charles River Basin

station, about a quarter of a mile away.

Apparently, no one at the Union Oyster House or other nearby businesses was aware that a robbery had taken place.

Heavy rain and poor visibility apparently provided near-ideal conditions for the robbery. Traffic was very light in the area.

Haines made it to the MDC station shortly after 6:55 p.m., and, still handcuffed, told his story to patrolman Eugene Innocenti, the duty clerk.

Innocenti immediately called Boston Police headquarters for assistance. Haines said his wrists were bruised from the handcuffs, but otherwise he was not harmed.

Police found the truck at the rear of the Department of Public Works building, 100 Nashua st., and kept newsmen and spectators away.

Haines said two sets of handcuffs were used on him. One set held his wrists together and the second set was used to chain him to the inside of the truck. He said he used a candy wrapper to release the cuffs holding him to a door.

Haines said he used the candy wrapper to slip the latch of the handcuffs much in the same manner as thieves use a piece of cellulose to slip the latches of house locks.

The two guards who were out of the truck at the time of the hijacking, and Haines, the messenger, were taken to police station One in the Government Center for questioning.

All were taken in through a back door.

Called in on the case immediately was Police Comr. Edmund L. McNamara, Superintendent Herbert F. Mulloney and Deputy Supt. James L. Buchanan, head of the Boston Police Bureau of Criminal Identification.

Police said both robbers in the truck wore the same type of black ski mask and black gloves. It was not known, they said, whether the third in the station wagon was armed.

At the station, Haines was released from the second set of handcuffs by Sgt George McGarrity.

The robbery, police said, including the time it took to drive to the D.P.W. building parking lot, took only about 10 minutes.

About 28 minutes elapsed between Haines' confrontation on Canal st. and his arrival at the M.D.C. station.

Probably more than 100 cars drove above the D.P.W. lot while the money was being transferred. An expressway ramp passes almost directly over the lot from the Leverett traffic circle.

The two guards were having coffee at a Canal Street restaurant while their truck was hijacked, Haines told

MDC police. The guards were identified at Station One as Joseph Kelly, 44, of 39 Mount Vernon st., Dorchester, and John M. Gillis, 30, of 21-D Village Court, South End.

When MDC police arrived at the truck, they found the alarm bell on the armored car ringing. Haines had managed to press the alarm button with his nose.

Inside, police said, they found revolvers owned by Haines and the two guards.



DETECTIVES DUST BRINK'S TRUCK FOR CLUES (UPI)