

KWANT'S TAN

(THE GOLDEN EARS)



**Lost Mine of Pitt Lake
B.C.'s Oldest Church
Canada's First Train Robbery**

By Don Waite

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The Golden Ears from Fort Langley
(Don Waite Photo)

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The Lost Mine of Pitt Lake

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Foreward

It gives me a great deal of personal gratification to get into print my interpretation of some of the events which have taken place in the Lower Fraser Valley. Although statements in this book have been double checked I feel there is still plenty of room for error. Readers who feel that they have found any mistakes and can back up their findings with concrete evidence are invited to correspond with me direct.

The title of this book Kwant'stan is an abortive attempt to pronounce in English the language of the Coast Salish or the Halkomelem tongue for a group of mountains which Sir James Douglas, the first Governor of the Province, while on a reconnaissance voyage up the Lower Pitt River and seeing the sun reflecting golden on their snow-encrusted peaks dubbed the Golden Ears back in 1858. These mountains form a part of the Coast Range and are located in a park by that name just to the north of the town of Haney. Since the tales in this book all took place within a 20 mile radius of these mountains and since the native people are often principally involved in the stories I feel the choice of title was most suitable.

I wish to take this opportunity to thank all those people who over the past five years have assisted with the research material for this and other historical information pertaining to the Lower Fraser Valley. Special thanks must go to the late Katzie Chief Joachim Pierre and his wife Agnes; Mrs. Mandy Charnley, Mission; Mrs. Seldon Clark, Storyland Trails, Silverdale; Mr. and Mrs. Brian Byrnes, Whonnock; the late Major J.S. Matthews, Vancouver City Archivist; Mr. Cecil Clark, Victoria; Reverend Denis F. Harris, Rector of St. John the Divine; Mr. and Mrs. Bill Keillor, Alvin; Mr. Ed Villiers, Maple Ridge Historian; Mr. Alan Woodland, Assistant Chief Librarian, New Westminster Public Library; Mr. Andy Heatherington, past Supervisor Golden Ears Provincial Park; the Community Arts Council of T'Lagunna; hiking companion John Hume; and last but not least my wife Carol. Without their help this book would never have gotten off the ground.

Sincerely,



The Lost Mine of Pitt Lake

The fact that people like a good mystery is undoubtedly why the Lost Creek Mine tale has persisted for more than three-quarters of a century. Since the 1890s prospectors have been making vain attempts to locate this lost eldorado which allegedly nestles in the treacherous Pitt Range 35 miles north-east of Vancouver. The arrival each spring of both seasoned and amateur gold hunters into the libraries and newspaper offices of Vancouver is a sure sign that the search is still far from over. The many legends together with fanciful newspaper men's accounts of the story make it impossible for these adventurous groups to separate entirely the fact from the fiction.

HERE IS A SAMPLE OF THE LEGENDS

The legend of the mine and its finder, an Indian named Slumach, began in the Royal City of New Westminster in 1889 when the Indian supposedly burst into a saloon and ordered a round of drinks for everyone present. He was carrying a haversack packed with nuggets the size of walnuts which he scattered in all directions as he painted the town red for the next few days. His comings and goings into the city, with each party getting bigger and wilder, persisted for a year-and-a-half during which time the Indian made 16 visits.

Each time Slumach left town he took a young woman with him. These ladies had hoped that by bestowing favours on Slumach he would show them the whereabouts of the mine. Slumach took them along ancient trails to get to the mine where he forced them to slave for him under threats of death. Slumach always disposed of the women before he returned to the city. When the score totalled three white and five Indian girls the police stepped into the picture, Slumach told them that he employed the girls to do his cooking and mending and that he always paid them off before returning to town. His method of payment puzzled the police.

A Constable Grainger was assigned to the case and disguised as a prospector who had struck it rich became a bosom pal of the Salish big spender. The constable soon learned that he was not the only one interested in Slumach. Molly Tynan, an attractive half Irish-half Chinese lass, announced her intention of claiming the Indian as her own

personal property. Molly had arrived in New Westminster while Slumach was away determined to seize upon this one chance in a lifetime to get rich quick. She had handled the toughest of men from the Barbary Coast to Alaska and figured Slumach would be no problem. Besides she packed a mean-looking pistol in the pocket of her skirt and planned to use it on Slumach once he had taken her to the mine.

Things backfired for Molly; however, and her body was recovered in the Fraser River by fishermen. A knife was found protruding from her back. Constable Grainger was able to prove that the knife belonged to Slumach and was thus able to have Slumach hung for murder.

So much for the legend - now what about the newspaper accounts of 1890 and 1891 in regard to Slumach. The following articles appeared in editions of the New Westminster Daily Columbian.

THE NEWSPAPER ACCOUNTS OF THE DAY

September 9, 1890
SHOT DEAD

Louis Bee, a halfbreed, is deliberately shot and killed by an insane Indian named Slumach, at Lillooet Slough.

A terrible unpremeditated murder was committed yesterday afternoon at a point on Lillooet Slough, not far from the Pitt River, and some two and a half miles above the Pitt River bridge. An Indian named Slumach, aged about sixty years, was hunting in this neighbourhood, and coming out of the bush with his double-barrelled shotgun in his hand, found several other Indians troutfishing on the banks of the Slough.

A half-breed named Louis Bee, sauntered up to Slumach and asked him in a casual way what he was shooting around there.

Without a moment's warning, or any preliminary sign of anger, Slumach instantly levelled his gun at Bee and fired.

(Editor's note - Alouette Slough was formerly called Lillooet Slough but because it was being constantly confused with the Lillooet of the interior a Frenchman for a lark changed the name to Alouette because the two words rhymed.)



DYKES BUILT TO HOLD BACK THE WATER AT THE CONFLUENCE OF THE LOWER PITT AND ALOUETTE RIVERS OVER THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS HAVE VERY MUCH CHANGED THE SCENE WHERE LOUIE BEE WAS KILLED BACK IN 1890.

(Don Waite Photo)

Just before the discharge of the piece, Bee held up his hands and begged Slumach not to shoot. The distance between the two men was so short that the whole charge entered the victim's body, just under the right arm pit, behind the shoulder-blade. Death was instantaneous, and Bee fell without a groan and lay weltering in his own blood, while his murderer coolly proceeded to reload his piece.

One of the Indians who witnessed the awful deed immediately fled, not only to give the alarm, but from motives of personal safety. He describes the countenance of the murderer after the act was committed as resembling that of an incarnate demon. Slumach is insane, and what he had done seemed to have kindled all the wild disorderly fancies of madness in the maniac's brain, and lit up his eyes with a ferocious gleam that boded no good to anyone whom he should encounter when his gun was reloaded. Slumach slowly retreated to the impenetrable and pathless jungle surrounding that part of the Lillooet Slough and plunging into its gloomy recesses was lost to sight and is still at large.....

Bee figured several times in police court, owing to his fondness for alcoholic stimulants, but otherwise he was a quiet respectable man.

Several parties of men are now scouring the woods in the neighbourhood of the scene of the murder, in the endeavor to run the desperate perpetrator of the crime to earth.

Capt. Pittendrigh proceeded to Pitt River bridge today at noon to take charge of the murdered man's remains, impanel a jury, and hold the inquest. The Indians in that part of the district are intensely excited over the horrible affair, and are doing everything in their power to capture Slumach.

September 10, 1890
THE MURDER OF LOUIS BEE

Through the courtesy of Mr. L. P. Benson, who placed his fine steam launch at the coroner's disposal, Capt. Pittendrigh and his attendants were enabled to perform the journey yesterday from the city to the scene of the Indian murder at Pitt River, in an expeditious and comfortable manner. Long before the fatal spot was reached, the Indians could be heard chanting a loud strange death song, or coronach, for the untimely demise of their comrade Louis Bee. The party from the city, on arriving at the place where the murder occurred, found a number of Indians congregated together, and apparently suffering from fear to a considerable extent. Enquiry devel-

oped the fact that none of them dared to pursue the murderer through the bush, and their terror of him had been very much increased by the appearance of Slumach the day following the murder, and his appropriation of the murdered man's remains. He placed the body in a canoe and set out in the direction of the lake with it. It was suspected that Slumach's intention was to drop the body overboard in deep water, and Capt. Pittendrigh, acting on the supposition, set the Indians to work dragging the river for the corpse. The latest news received states that the body was recovered, and was in the custody of friends in the neighbourhood of the spot where the tragic occurrence happened.

The Indian eyewitness who came to the city with the first information of the crime, was taken to the city lock-up this morning for safekeeping, by order of Mr. W. Moresby.

Capt. Pittendrigh and jury returned from the Pitt River last night. This morning a new jury was summoned to proceed to view the remains of Bee.

Sept. 11, Thursday
CORONER'S INQUEST . .

A coroner's inquest was held yesterday in the committee rooms at the City Hall upon the body of Louis Bee, the half-breed who was murdered last Monday afternoon at Pitt River by an Indian named Slumach, and whose remains were brought to the city yesterday. Dr. Walker performed the post-mortem examination, and found the bone of the upper left arm to have been shattered by the passage of a ball, which had entered the side of the deceased, fracturing the fifth rib, penetrating the right side of the heart, and torn the lungs. The bullet was found imbedded in the right lung. Death, in the doctor's opinion must have been instantaneous. Charlie Seymour, an Indian, was the principal witness examined by the jury....

The jury returned a verdict of wilful murder against the Indian Slumach.

The body of the murdered man was coffined, and taken home by the Indians for interment in their own cemetery near the entrance to Pitt Lake. Mr. Moresby and two special officers left this morning by steamer for the scene of the murder.

They were to be met by the Chief of the Indians with a selected posse of men, and the search for Slumach will be prosecuted unceasingly until he is captured.

September 12, 1890
STILL AT LARGE

Slumach, the murderer of Louis Bee is still at large, and there is no immediate prospect of his capture, unless he is driven by starvation into the haunts of men. Mr. Moresby went up to Pitt Lake yesterday and continued the search for him, but with no success. Just before Mr. Moresby arrived, the Indians saw Slumach in his cabin, but he quickly plunged into the bush again, and was not visible during the remainder of the day. On examining the cabin Mr. Moresby found a can of powder and a large quantity of provisions, which he destroyed, and then to prevent Slumach returning there for shelter, the shack was burned to the ground. His canoe was also destroyed.

Slumach will now have to keep to the woods until cold weather and starvation drives him in. Mr. Moresby left for Pitt Lake again this morning and may not return for several days. He is determined to bring him to justice, and will, if he can, obtain the assistance required.

The Indians are all afraid of the murderer, and decline to assist in beating the bush for him as he is well armed and has lots of ammunition. Slumach is a desperate character and is credited by the Indians with another murder committed years ago and under similar circumstances. Although a few of the murderer's friends say he is insane, dozens of Indians who know him, say otherwise, and declare he is only a bloodthirsty old villain.

September 13
SLUMACH THE MURDERER STILL AT LARGE

September 16
SLUMACH THE MURDERER STILL AT LARGE

Indians who know him well, say he has committed four or five murders during the last 25 years.

His last murder, previous to the killing of Louis Bee, was committed about six years ago when he is said to have killed an Indian without any apparent cause. He fled to the mountains and remained in seclusion for a whole year, and then suddenly returned one day and took possession of his cabin and lived quietly until the perpetration of his last crime.

Slumach is looked upon by the Indians as a very wonderful person, being able to endure the greatest of hardships without apparent inconvenience. As a hunter he is without an equal, and he is an adept at making fires in the primitive manner, using two sticks and rubbing the same together until the friction ignites the wood. He is said to be without fear of man or beast and to be possessed of a nature vicious in the extreme.

He was armed with his deadly rifle, and was too far away to permit of an exchange of bullets. Of the nearer approach of his pursurers he quietly retreated into the impregnable fastnesses among the stupendous precipices that frown over the lake at that neighbourhood. He has not since been seen.

September 19, 1890

SLUMACH'S ACTION

The Indians say that Slumach has always acted strangely, and at irregular intervals would withdraw himself alone into the forests that border and remain there for weeks, reappearing at the end of those periods of aberration looking haggard, and more like a savage beast than a human being. In spite of his lunacy however, the maniac never displayed any signs of hostility, nor gave indications that his freedom was dangerous to human life.

He is described as a very powerful man and is rather dreaded by his own Indian friends.

It is of the utmost importance that fishing and hunting parties going into this region, should keep a most vigilant lookout, as the murderer is still roaming the woods armed with a shotgun, and as far as can be learned, with plenty of ammunition.

The Indian who informed Mr. McTiernan, Indian Agent, of the occurrence, says that from Slumach's looks, he had not the slightest doubt that he would murder the first man he met.

Parties contemplating a visit to the spot indicated above should therefore be on their guard, as carelessness in this matter may result in a still more lamentable tragedy than that just described.

September 22
STILL AT LARGE

October 25
STARVED OUT

The Indian Slumach, who attained to ghastly celebrity some weeks ago by wantonly murdering a young half-breed named Louis Bee, has been suffering terrible privations in the mountain fastnesses around the shores of Pitt Lake, whither he retired after the murder and set the power of the law at defiance. A month ago, Mr. P. McTiernan, Indian Agent here, had a conference with the members of the tribe at Pitt Lake, and succeeded in convincing them of their duty to deliver Slumach over to the law. From that day no assistance was given to the outlaw, and probably on that account was he forced to give himself up yesterday to the police. Yesterday he sent his nephew for the Indian Agent, who went up to Pitt Lake accompanied by two Indian policemen, and to them the desperate fugitive quietly surrendered. He had eaten nothing for several days, and was in a terrible state of emaciation and thoroughly exhausted.

His ammunition was all gone and his clothing in rags, and he presented a very wild and weatherworn aspect.

Slumach was at once brought to the city and placed under the care of the physicians of the Provincial jail.

At latest accounts today, Slumach was in a very precarious condition, his vitality being almost spent. The doctors do not care to express an opinion as to his chances of recovery, but it is understood that they are very small. Should he recover he will be given a preliminary trial, and then remanded for trial at the assizes in November....

November 3, 1890
DISTRICT COURT (Before Capt. Pittendrigh, J.P.)

The murderer, Slumach, was up in the district court before Capt. Pittendrigh, J.P., for a preliminary hearing. Several witnesses were examined and a mass of evidence taken down and the magistrate sent Slumach up for trial at the approaching assizes.

The prisoner has greatly improved in health since the surrender and will be strong enough to undergo the tedium of the assize trial this month. Slumach is rather an intelligent looking man of about sixty years of age. His face expressed a great deal of determination, even ferocity. He sat in court listening to the evidence this morning with the utmost apathy.

A number of Indians occupied seats and took a great deal of interest in the proceedings.

November 11

THE CASE OF SLUMACH

Slumach, the murderer of Louis Bee, now confined in the Provincial gaol awaiting trial at the Assizes which opens to-morrow, is in a very bad state of health, and may not be in a fit condition to appear for trial at this term. He is very weak and does not seem to gather strength so rapidly as might be expected, considering the attention and comforts he receives from the medical superintendent and gaol officials.

Mr. McTiernan, Indian Agent, is of the opinion that Slumach will not live long in confinement, and it is a well known fact that an Indian sentenced to a long term of imprisonment soon pines away and dies. It now looks as if Slumach will not be able to stand trial at the coming assizes, and should this turn out to be the case it is pretty certain that he will escape the gallows by death from natural causes.

November 14

FALL ASSIZES

Court resumed sittings at 10:30 o'clock.

The crown prosecutor asked the arraignment of Slumach for murder. Mr. T. C. Anderson, defending counsel, asked that this case be adjourned until next assizes, on the ground that there were two important witnesses for the defence, Moody, an Indian, and Florence Reed, who could not possibly be obtained in time for this assize, but could be produced at the next sitting of the court. The affidavits of Slumach and his daughter Mary, were produced and read.....

Mr. Moresby said he could produce both the witnesses required by the defence by 11 o'clock tomorrow and his Lordship therefore adjourned the court until that time.

November 15, 1890

FALL ASSIZES (Mr. Justice Drake presiding)

The Slumach case occupied the attention of the court today. The evidence had to be nearly all interpreted.

There were several Indian witnesses examined at length, and they gave minute particulars of the tragedy.

It came out in the evidence, that Bee, the victim of the murder, was in the habit of blustering at, and threatening almost everyone with whom he came in contact. Against Slumach he indulged something like a grudge, and for a long time there was bad blood between them. The Indians who were with Bee at the time of the murder were fishing, and on Slumach emerging from the adjacent woods, a slight altercation ensued between him and Bee, with the result that Slumach shot him dead.

The jury retired at 3:45, and after being out 15 minutes, returned with the verdict of guilty.

His Lordship sentenced Slumach to be hanged on Jan. 16 next.

January 16, 1891

PAID THE PENALTY

Slumach, the murderer of Louis Bee, pays the penalty of his crime. Old Slumach was hanged in the yard of the provincial gaol this morning at 8 o'clock, for the murder on Sept. 8th last, of Louis Bee, a half-breed.

The particulars of the murder are briefly as follows... Pierre, (the Indian catechist - medicine man) slept in the same cell with Slumach, and prayed with him day and night, and it is satisfactory to know that the labor of the good priest and his assistant was not in vain....

The condemned man retired to rest at an early hour last night and slept well....

Slumach awakened early and immediately went into devotional exercises with his spiritual attendants, after which breakfast was brought in and he ate with apparent relish.

A few minutes before 7 o'clock Father Morgan baptised Slumach, who professed his belief in Christianity and the hope of salvation. Prayers continued until the arrival of the hangman to assist him, and to this operation he submitted without a murmur. All being in readiness a few minutes before 8 o'clock, the procession was formed and proceeded to the scaffold. Mr. Sheriff Armstrong led the way, followed by Mr. Wm. Moresby, governor of the jail and the deputy sheriff, next came Slumach, supported by gaolers Burr and Connor, and followed by the hangman, masked and hooded.

Father Morgan, Pierre, Dr. J.M. McLean, Dr. Walker, and a number of constables brought up the rear of the procession.

Slumach walked firmly up the steps leading to the platform, and faced the crowd below. The hangman quickly adjusted the noose, and Father Morgan commenced a prayer. Then the black cap put on, and at 8 o'clock exactly, the bolt was drawn, the trap fell, and Slumach had paid the penalty of his crime.

The hanging was very ably managed, and beyond a few twitchings of the hands and feet, the body remained perfectly still after the drop. In three minutes and fifty-eight seconds life was pronounced extinct, but it was more than twenty minutes before the body was cut down and placed in the coffin.

Coroner Pittendrigh and a jury viewed the body and brought in the usual verdict. Slumach's neck was broken in the fall, and death must have been painless. The drop was eight feet five inches. Over fifty persons witnessed the hanging, and a large crowd gathered outside the jail, and remained there until the black flag was hoisted. Among the crowd on the street were several Indian women, relatives of Slumach, who waited around the jail for more than an hour after the execution.

So much for the newspaper accounts of the day. Here is the sworn testimony of at least three of the witnesses who gave evidence at the trial of Slumach. The evidence of Indian Charlie Seymour was translated from Chinook into English by Jason Allard, one of the prominent figures in the history of Fort Langley.

THE EVIDENCE OF CHARLIE SEYMOUR

"I remember the 8th day of September last past. I went up in a canoe with Louie Bee from the place where we were living on Pitt River to look at our sturgeon lines. Louie was the only one with me in the canoe. We went up about two miles when we got to the lines. We found there was no bait on the hooks. We went up a little further and saw a canoe come near. We hailed it and found it contained the Chief of the Katsie tribe. His wife was along with him. We had a conversation for a few minutes. He then left us going downstream. We went upstream immediately after parting. I heard the report of a gun on the opposite shore. That is the left hand side going upstream. Louie Bee proposed to go across to where the shot was fired as he thought it might be whitemen there. When we

got to the shore I saw the prisoner Slumach coming out of the long grass and I told Louie Bee he was coming. Then I caught a glimpse of a canoe hauled up partly on the shore. When Slumach got near Louie Bee asked him what he was firing at. He gave no answer but kept walking up towards our canoe until he reached the edge of the river. He was preparing his gun, that is preparing it into position to shoot. Without any further word he presented his gun at Louie Bee the deceased and fired. Slumach then ran toward his canoe, took out his ammunition, and reloaded. After the shot was fired I saw blood coming out of Louie Bee's arm at the back of the shoulder. He grasped hold of the side of the canoe and after a few seconds fell overboard and sank in about two and a half feet of water. The canoe was afloat and about 15 or 16 feet from the shore. The water here is shallow for some distance out. I jumped on shore immediately after Louie Bee was shot as I was afraid of getting shot as well as Louie Bee who had given no provocation whatsoever and the prisoner was putting powder in his gun again.

The gun was a percussion single barrellled one.

I asked the prisoner as I jumped on shore why he had shot the deceased. He said he wanted to drive us away that he did not want any persons to go up there.

I waited in the grass hidden for a short time to see what Slumach would do. He was holding his gun during the time I was hid which was about twenty minutes. I thought I might be shot so I down the shore and then walked over the Railway Bridge and up to my house. When I got near I hollered out to the women that Slumach had killed Louie Bee. The women came out and went with me to my house. I then started to come down here and arrived at the city at dark and reported the circumstances to the Indian Agent. I met no one on my way down. I told my wife what had happened and there was an old man in the camp in another compartment but he did not hear.

I remained in the city all night and returned with the Coroner. When we arrived we could not find the body as the tide was high. I commenced searching for the body and shortly after found it and a young man who was with me fired off his gun to attract attention. The body was in deeper water owing to the rise in the tide. I recognized Louie Bee's axe in Slumach's house when Mr. Moresby searched it. We had a bottle in the canoe for killing sturgeon. These things were in the canoe when I jumped out. Louie Bee only said to Slumach what are you shooting at. Louie had no club in his hand. I was in the stern and Louie Bee in the bow. Louie being in the bow of the canoe was nearer to Slumach. He was sideways to him. I cannot say if the Coquitlam Chief had any whiskey or not in his canoe as we were some distance from each

other. I had no whiskey that day. I was with Louie Bee all day and he had not had any whiskey either. There was none to be got. The prisoner Slumach now before the Court is the man who shot Louie Bee. On recovering his body I brought it down to Westminster as directed by the Coroner. (To the accused Slumach) I did not hear Louie Bee call you any names.

I was in the canoe that brought the body of Louie Bee down to New Westminster. It was the same body that was taken by Mr. Moresby from the canoe and placed in an out house on Front Street and on which the postmortem by the doctor was made. This took place on the 10th day of September 1890."

THE EVIDENCE OF KATZIE CHIEF SWANISIT

"I remember Monday the 8th day of September last past. I was coming down the Pitt River on that day, my wife was with me in the canoe. I met the deceased Louie Bee and Seymour. Louie Bee spoke to me saying 'alahowya, Tihee!' I then answered 'alahowya, Louie!' The canoes did not get together; they were some distance apart. After we had parted some distance downstream I heard the echo of a shot fired away in the mountain. I know the prisoner. I did not see him on that day. Louie Bee was sober when I spoke to him as also was Seymour."

THE EVIDENCE OF R. EDEN WALKER, M.D.

"I saith I practice in British Columbia. I remember making a post mortem examination on the body of Louie Bee on the 10th day of September last. The body was in an out house on Front Street lying in shirt, waistcoat and pants and covered with blankets. The clothes were wet as if the body had recently been in the water. On examining the body I found a wound on the outer side of the left shoulder. On following the wound down I found it passed through the upper part of the arm bone into the chest through the left lung through the upper part of the heart and through the right lung into the right plural cavity where I found part of the bullet which had caused the wound. Death was caused by the wound in the heart. There was no trace of the deceased having taken any alcohol beverage within several hours before death. The body was that of a well nourished man."

(Editor's note - To my knowledge the testimony of the other witnesses, if there were any, is no longer on record. My interviews with old-timers on the Katzie Indian Reserve has revealed that the Moody mentioned in the newspaper account for November 14, 1890, was the illegitimate child of Colonel

Richard Clement Moody of the Royal Engineers. Between 1858 and 1863 while in charge of the R. E. in the new colony Moody managed to father two children to a Katzie woman who did his housekeeping. There is the possibility that the witness Moody was conveniently kept from testifying at Slumach's trial to prevent any slander from being directed at one of the prominent figures of the Province's humblest beginnings. In any event the Colonel after his five year contract with the Engineers returned to England with his wife Mary and her children leaving forever his mistress and her growing family.)



COLONEL RICHARD
CLEMENT MOODY, R.E.
(1813 - 1887)
COULD THE PHILANDERING
AFFAIRS OF THIS MAN
HAVE JEOPARIZED THE
FAIR TRIAL OF SLUMACH?
(Courtesy of the Prov.
Archives, Victoria, B.C.)

Perusal of these particular newspaper accounts and testimony do not include any reference to Slumach's finding of an immense deposit of gold in the Pitt Lake country, or substantiate the account of Slumach returning year after year from the wild regions he knew so well with bags of virgin gold the size of walnuts. Although the mention of gold did not come up during the course of his trial Slumach did on one particular occasion at least, according to Peter Pierre, find gold in the Pitt country.

SLUMACH'S OWN STORY ABOUT THE KILLING OF BEE AND THE GOLD TO BE FOUND IN THE PITT LAKE DISTRICT

(The following information was obtained third hand from Mrs. Mandy Charnley of Mission, daughter of Peter Pierre.)

"Here is what my Father told me about Slumach, the killing of Louis Bee, and the gold that Slumach found in the Pitt country.

My Father, Peter Pierre, a catechist from the Roman Catholic Order of Mary Immaculate and Medicine Man of the Katzie Indian Reserve, was Slumach's nephew.

Father said that Charlie Slumach at the time of the shooting of Bee was closer to eighty than to sixty and that he was a crippled and harmless old widower who lived at the bottom end of Pitt Lake in a shack which was on the abandoned Silver Creek Indian Reserve. He was part Katzie and part Nanaimo Indian. He had a brother named Smum-qua and a married daughter Mary living at Cowichan on Vancouver Island.

My Father spent the last week of Slumach's life with him in prison teaching him religion and preparing him for the hereafter. It was during that week that Slumach told him what had happened at Alouette Slough. He said that he had been heading up the Lower Pitt River in his canoe to his cabin when he spotted a deer. He shot at the animal from his canoe and then pulled in to beach to see if he had hit the animal. Seeing blood he ventured into the bush to look for the wounded animal. After a lengthy and futile search he was returning to his canoe when he saw two Indians in a canoe out on the water. One was Louis Boulier, a half French half Kanaka, often called Bee for short, and the other was Charlie Seymour, an Indian from Harrison Mills. Slumach told Peter that Boulier held a grudge against him and stepping ashore came at him wielding an axe and shouting, 'I'm going to chop your damn head off.' Slumach said he raised his shotgun out of sheer fright and fired point blank at Boulier killing him instantly. Seymour,

the only witness, disappeared into the bush. Slumach then placed Boulier's body in the victim's own canoe and set it out in midstream to drift down to the fishing party. Slumach did not accompany the body because he feared Boulier's friends might mob him. He then got into his own canoe and paddled upstream to his cabin.

The following day a boat came out to Slumach's home. The occupants or posse merely fired shots into the house which resulted in Slumach escaping out the back door and hiding under a fallen tree. The group aboard the boat disgusted Peter by the irresponsible manner in which they carried out their duties. To ensure that Slumach would not return to his home for shelter they burned it to the ground.



MANDY (MRS. CLINTON) CHARNLEY OF MISSION CHATS WITH AUTHOR DON WAITE ABOUT THE LOST MINE OF PITT LAKE. HER FATHER, PETER PIERRE, TOLD HER AS A CHILD WHAT SLUMACH HAD TOLD HIM ABOUT THE RICHES TO BE FOUND IN THE PITT LAKE REGION. AUTHOR WAITE HAS GIVEN MRS. CHARNLEY'S STORY OF THE LOST MINE - PROBABLY THE MOST ACCURATE ONE EVER YET TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS ARTICLE.

(Chief Agnes Pierre and Robert Charnley Photo)



PETER PIERRE (1861 - 1946)
Nephew of Slumach

IT WAS TO THIS MAN THAT SLUMACH
EVENTUALLY SURRENDERED. SLUMACH
TOLD PIERRE ALL HE KNEW ABOUT
THE RICHES OF THE PITT LAKE
REGION THE WEEK PRIOR TO HIS
HANGING. PIERRE WAS A WITNESS
TO SLUMACH'S HANGING FOR THE
MURDER OF LOUIS BOULIER.
(Courtesy Mrs. Amanda Charnley,
Mission, B.C.)

It was to Peter that Slumach eventually surrendered. Peter persuaded his uncle to give himself up to the Indian Agent. My Father went into the bush after his uncle without a gun despite warnings from the posse. Peter told them that he was going to see his uncle and not some wild animal. He found Slumach half-starved hidden under a fallen tree. According to my Father there was only the hangman, Father Morgan, and himself that actually witnessed the hanging of his uncle although a great many were present outside the gallows. When the hangman was placing the hood over Slumach's head the old Indian asked him in Chinook not to waste any time. At that moment my Father closed his eyes and began to pray with Father Morgan. When he opened his eyes all he could see was the dangling rope. Slumach was buried in an unknown grave in the prison cemetery in Sapperton despite attempts by his daughter to get possession of his body to give him a proper burial.

It was during my Father's stay in prison that Slumach told him about finding gold in the Pitt country. Slumach told my Father that only on one occasion did he ever take gold out of the Pitt. He said that he had met Port Douglas Indians from the head of Harrison Lake coming off Glacier Lake and down Patterson Creek into the Upper Pitt Valley. They told him that they had taken horses part way but had driven them back towards Port Douglas and had crossed Glacier Lake on foot. They gave him a handful of bullets moulded from gold which they had found in Third Canyon. Slumach spent the night in the canyon and slept on a bench-shaped rock on the west side of the river. The rock was covered with a rust coloured moss. When he awoke around 5:00 a.m. he could scarcely see the sun coming over three mountain peaks for the east wall of the canyon. During this time he was still shrouded in darkness. As it became lighter Slumach could see in his own surroundings. Peeling the moss off his rock bed he saw a yellow metal. He dug out some stake nuggets with a pen knife and half-filled his shot bag with them. He sold the half-filled shot bag, which was about the size of a ten pound sugar bag, to a store keeper in New Westminster for \$27.00. The store keeper went back to England a short time after the purchase. That, claimed Slumach, was the only gold that he ever took out of the Pitt country. Sitting on the cell bench Slumach drew a map for Peter of the location where he found the nuggets. Peter memorized the drawing and then destroyed it. Years later he re-drew the map. His daughter traced out three copies, however the original and the copies were destroyed in the 1930s in a house fire.

A study of the foregoing records, testimonies, and stories do not make any reference of Slumach's finding of a glory hole which produced nuggets as big as hen's eggs. These legends about the Lost Mine of Pitt Lake apparently began long after the death of Slumach. The accounts do, however portray the whiteman's attitude towards Indians and crime by showing the pathetic fashion in which the poor old chap got railroaded to the gallows. The reporter, by giving a very one-sided account of the killing of Bee, hung Slumach long before he was even captured. Expeditions into the Pitt country to re-discover Slumach's quarry over the years have been quite numerous and have usually met with devastating results. Two years after Slumach's death Peter Pierre and Dave Bailey, a half Scottish half Coquiltam, set out for Third Canyon in search of the gold vein. Peter's son August had recently married Bailey's daughter. While attempting to cross a creek on a board Peter lost his footing and took a bad spill breaking his hip. He had to be carried out. He never went back and jokingly suggested that his uncle must have placed a curse on the area. This expedition in the Upper Pitt probably gives rise to the Slumach curse and the bits of knowledge that old-timers on the Coquiltam Indian Reserve have of the Gold vein's location.

According to many news articles a California miner by the name of Jackson appeared on the scene shortly after the Pierre and Bailey excursion. He is to have picked up information by talking to Indians on the Katsie and Coquiltam Indian Reserves and familiarized himself with maps of the area. He then hiked into the mountains. Five months passed before Peter and his wife Catherine found the bearded Jackson on the east side of Pitt Lake opposite Goose Island. Jackson, according to what Peter told his daughter Amanda, was clothed in animal skins and was a physical wreck of a man. He told the two of incredible hardships, dense fogs, hot springs, unimpenetrable underbrush and devil's club that tore clothing to shreds and ripped the skin. He also told the Pierres that he had found gold but he did not elaborate on how much or where he had found it. Peter and Catherine brought the sickly Jackson out to New Westminster where he is said to have taken the next boat back to San Francisco and there deposited close to \$10,000 in gold in the bank.

The miner Jackson and another man named Shotwell often come up in the research of the Lost Mine of Pitt Lake legend. Many accounts claim that both wrote letters and drew



VISITING THE HOT SPRINGS AT SECOND CANYON ON THE UPPER PITT RIVER. COULD THESE BE THE SPRINGS THAT THE PROSPECTOR JACKSON WAS REFERRING WHEN HE WAS FOUND BY THE PIERRES?
(Don Waite Photo)



THE BACK OF THE GOLDEN EARS IS CAPTURED WITH A TELEPHOTO LENS
FROM A LOGGING ROAD SITUATED ABOVE SEVEN MILE CREEK.
(Don Waite Photo)

maps to assist others who would dare to venture into the Pitt Lake territory. No doubt the letters and maps of Jackson and Shotwell, if Shotwell even existed, have become interwoven over the years.

In the summer of 1928 a boastful old prospector known as Volcanic or Doc Brown studied a copy of the so-called Jackson letter which he had apparently obtained from Hugh Murray, an old-timer from the New Westminster area who had arrived on the west coast in 1859 aboard the Thames City as the six year old son of a Royal Engineer. In 1904 Murray had lead a party of men in the search for the legendary mine above the head of Pitt Lake. They searched for two months without any luck. Brown studied the so-called Jackson letter which read as follows:

I had been out over two months and found myself running short of grub. I had lived mostly on fresh meat for one cant carry much of a pack in those hills. I found a few very promising ledges and colors in the little creeks but nothing I cared to stay with. I had almost made up my mind to light out the next day. I climbed up to the top of a sharp ridge and looked down into the canyon or valley about one mile and a half long, and what struck me as singular, it appeared to have no outlet for the little creek that flowed at the bottom. Afterwards I found that the creek entered a and was lost. After some difficulty I found my way down to the creek. The water was almost white, the formation for the most part had been slate and granite, but there I found a kind of schist and slate formation. Now comes the interesting part, I had only a small prospecting pan but I found colors at once right on the surface, and such colors they were. I knew then that I had struck it right at last. In going up-stream I came to a place where the bedrock was bare, and there, you could hardly believe me, the bedrock was yellow with gold. Some of the nuggets was as big as walnuts and there were many chunks carrying quartz. After sizing it up, I saw there was millions stowed around in the little cracks. On account of the weight I buried part of the gold at the foot of a large tent shaped rock facing the creek. You cant miss it. There is a mark cut out in it. Taking with me what I supposed to be ten thousand dollars but afterwards it proved to be a little over eight thousand dollars. After three days hard travelling, it would not have been two days good going, but the way was rough and I was not feeling well, I arrived at the lake and while resting there was taken sick and have never since been able to return, and now I fear I never shall. I am alone in the world, no relatives, no one to look after me for anything. Of course I have never spoken of this find during

all this time for fear of it being discovered. It has caused me many anxious hours, but the place is so well guarded by surrounding ridges and mountains that it should not be found for many years, unless someone knew of it being there. O, how I wish I could go with you to show you this wonderful place, for I cannot give you any exact directions, and it may take a year or more to find. Don't give up but keep at it and you will be repaid beyond your wildest dreams. I believe any further directions would only tend to confuse it, so I will only suggest further that you go alone or at least take only one or two trusty Indians to pack food and no one need know but that you are going on a hunting trip until you find the place and get everything for yourself. When you find it and I am sure you will, should you care to see me, advertise in the 'Frisco Examr.,' and if I am living I will either come to see you, or let you know where to find me, but once more I say to you, don't fail to look this great property up and don't give up until you find it.

Now good bye and may success attend you.

Yours truly,

W. Jackson

Brown, a colourful gold hunter and natural healer of Grand Forks gained fame when he staked Copper Mountain, near Princeton, B. C. in 1892 which he subsequently sold for \$42,000. Prior to striking it rich Doc, as he was often nicknamed, used to finance his gold hunting exploits by procuring abortions. In 1928 Brown was well up in his seventies. In November a search party found Brown on Seven Mile Glacier with one foot so badly frozen that he had undertaken to amputate one toe himself and had removed proud flesh from another two. He had cut the end out of his boot in order to perform the operation and had placed a tin can over the end of the boot to give protection. He was coming out under his own steam when found by the search party.

In the spring of 1930, despite urgings by the British Columbia Provincial Police not to go in, the undaunted Brown went forth again, this time bragging that he would either find the Lost Creek Mine or never come out. Alvin Patterson, after whom Alvin is named, and Dave Keton, in charge of the Federal Fish Hatchery at the head of the lake, were the last to see Doc alive. They were coming down off Glacier as he was going up.

As the weeks went by and he did not appear a search party consisting of Game Warden George Stevenson, P.P. Constable Spud Murphy and two experienced trappers were sent in to look for him. From the head of Pitt Lake the party went up

to the headwaters of Seven Mile Creek, and then crossed the divide to Homestead Glacier. Across the mile and a half glacier they struck what the trappers term Porcupine Valley and making their way up to timberline the game warden and a trapper started across the seven miles of Stave Glacier. Where the Upper Stave River begins they found Doc Brown's last camp.



ROBERT A. BROWN
(- 1930)

@ Doc Brown
@ Sunset Brown
@ Volcanic Brown
@ Crazy Brown

THIS MAN LOST HIS LIFE
WHILE SEARCHING FOR THE
LOST MINE OF PITT LAKE.
HIS BODY HAS NEVER BEEN
FOUND.

(Courtesy Cecil Clark,
Victoria, B.C.)



REMOTE PEAK FROM SEVEN MILE CREEK
(Don Waite Photo)



THE ROTTING LADDERS FROM THE 20S AND 30S CAN STILL BE SEEN AT THE ABANDONED GOLDEN BARS MINE LOCATED NEAR THE BOTTOM END OF PITT LAKE.

(Don Waite Photo)

The camp was found by accident when whiskey jacks, squabbling in a snow-laden tree, attracted the searcher's attention. Yanking the branches loose of snow, Stevenson saw a blackened piece of bear meat wired to a branch. Probing around in the snow, he found a collapsible pup tent, some cooking utensils, a double-barrelled shotgun, and a notebook containing some herbal remedies. He also discovered a glass screw-top jar with eleven ounces of coarse gold in it - gold that had been hammered out of a solid vein for it still had traces of quartz. Brown was never found.

Over the past several years many newspapermen have gone into the Pitt region to return with a few snaps of the area and a sensational account of the mine's rediscovery. It got so bad that in 1951 Vancouver City Archivist Major J. S. Matthews stated that "the story of 'Lost Creek Mine' was pure rubbish and that certain weak-minded individuals accept it as gospel." As if in rebuttal a Vancouver Province news team the following year did a feature article on the legend claiming that they had found and staked the fabulous Lost Creek Mine of Slumach. The team had been guided to the so-called site, located under 30 feet of snow, by the Chief of the Coquitlam Indian Reserve.

The New Westminster Columbian, not to be outdone by the Province, a few years later did their feature entitled 'Is This Lost Creek Mine'. The principal character in this article was Wally Lund, a trapper, carpenter, and dreamer from Hasey. Lund stated that his dreams, which started when he was living back on the prairies, lead him to a crevice on Sheridan Hill in Pitt Polder. Although the crevice was staked out at the time and although his find caused quite a stir and brought numerous people storming into the area, nothing of value was found in the hole and it was incorrectly written off as a natural crevice. Lund did not pursue the matter.

There are several mines in the vicinity of Pitt Lake. Probably by far the most spectacular is the mine owned by the Pitt Mining Company Limited situated on the east side of Pitt Lake near its mouth. Originally known as the Golden Ears Mine it was apparently first worked in 1897. In 1915, the mine, then owned by the Viking Mining Company, erected an aerial tramway to a bunker on the lake. In 1921 the mine again changed hands and by the summer of 1928 20-30 men were employed to put up a hydro-electric plant, a 600 cubic foot compressor, and a concentrator building. The average of several hundred samples gave \$1.20 in gold and \$2.40 in silver to the ton and yielded 3.9% copper. Everything may have gone well

and the mine could have started to show a profit had not the depression of the dirty thirties knocked the props out from under the project bringing operations to a standstill. The mine has been dormant ever since.

One of the last fellows to become fascinated with the Lost Mine legend is thirty nine year old Danny Scooch, from Kayville, Sask. This man has worked in the mines all over the Yukon, Alaska, and British Columbia. Scooch came to Vancouver in 1947 and at that time became an alcoholic. For the next 22 years he was in and out of jails and hospitals as a result of his sickness no good to himself or anyone else and more dead than alive most of the time. Down and almost out he



DANIEL SCOPOCH
(1933 -)
(Don Waite Photo)

wound up on skid row but luckily in 1969 he was sent out to Miracle Valley, a place where they attempt to cure alcoholics, located in Mission, B.C. He was there for only seventeen days and left a cured man. He has not touched a drop of liquor since.

In the early part of 1971 Danny got married and shortly afterwards began reading the bible. At the same time he began having strange dreams about a mine. The dreams depicted a mine with skeletons, gold bullion, and antiques including a small cannon. He was even able to visualize the shape of the mine, its height, and its distance from a river.

In June of 1971 Danny visited Sheridan Hill in Pitt Polder with his nephew James Harahuc and at that time realized that the area was the same as that depicted in his dreams. Incredibly he was able to walk straight to a huge fallen cedar tree which covered a large reservoir of water. Danny pointed to it and told his nephew that this was the mine. They cut a twenty foot pole and began probing in the hole but were unable to touch the bottom. The hole was located less than a fifteen minute walk from the dykes which hold back the Lower Pitt River and only 3-4 stone throws from the river itself.

A few days later they returned with syphoning hose, pumps, and other paraphernalia. In the meantime Scooch had checked with the B.C. Department of Mines in an effort to learn the background history of his discovery. According to them the mine had never before been reported. As a result he staked the entire vicinity. They were able to syphon the water from the shaft to a distance of around 30 feet before problems set in. The syphon would not draw the water any higher up the hose. Neither would the little pump that they had rented. Before Danny could afford the time to get back to the mine the rainy seasons had set in and no matter what they used the mine kept filling up with water.

Last winter during a free afternoon Danny wound up in the New Westminster Public Library pondering over the mass of information gleaned on the lost mine over the years. Much to his amazement he found a photostat of the newspaper article written about Wally Lund, the same Wally Lund who was now his Father-in-law. Danny wrote to his wife's Father, now residing in Laird, Sask., and told him about his dreams and about his find. It has turned out that the two discoveries are only a few hundred yards apart.



SCOOCH'S MINE ON SHERIDAN HILL. THIS ABANDONED 60 FOOT MINE SHAFT WAS NOT RECORDED WITH THE B.C. DEPARTMENT OF MINES UNTIL LAST YEAR WHEN DANNY SCOOCH STAKED BOTH MINERAL AND PLACER CLAIMS FOR THE ENTIRE VICINITY.

(Don Waite Photo)

At the moment attempts are being made to get to the bottom of Scooch's mine. In the past month the water level has been taken down another twelve feet to a drift which seems to take off in a southerly direction. The entrance to this drift is blocked off by rotting timbers, mud, and rock. There also appears to be a wooden platform or trap door where the drift begins. While cleaning out some of this debris Danny and a friend came across a large wooden bucket about the size of a washing machine. A check with the authorities at the Fort Langley Museum suggested that it may have been made at the Fort cooperage as early as the 1850s. According to the B.C. Department of Mines Annual Report, Chinese coolies, probably former employees of the C.P.R., worked the mine in the 1880s in an effort to make a living.

Will the fabulous Lost Creek Mine of Pitt Lake, if it exists, ever be found? This of course is the haunting question which may never be answered but one thing is certain and that is that it will continue to be asked for many years to come or until it is. Meanwhile the story of the mine and of Old Slumach must rank high with other tales of hidden treasure which arouse and challenge the adventurous spirit of the young and the young at heart.

B.C.'s Oldest Church

One mile west of downtown Haney stands the Anglican Church of St. John the Divine - the oldest church of any denomination in British Columbia. Shaded by maple trees this picturesque little church was built by soldiers, later abandoned in the bush for 21 years, and then moved from its original site near Fort Langley and floated across the Fraser River to its present site in Maple Ridge.

It was with the beginning of the Fraser River gold rush that the church authorities in England became concerned for the spiritual welfare of the suddenly acquired population of the new Colony of British Columbia. Even before the ceremonies to the colony's inauguration, in answer to a call from the Reverend Edward Cridge, Chaplain of the Hudson's Bay Company, the Colonial and Continental Church Society of London had decided to send out a missionary to the new land. The project was financed by the Baroness Angela Burdett-Coutts, one of the striking figures in the Victorian age.

In answer to their call the Reverend William Burton Crickmer was selected and prepared for the long voyage to the new colony, where he would take up his duties as the first regular minister on the mainland of British Columbia. Due to urgency, the trip was not taken around Cape Horn, but instead, the 28 year old minister, his wife Sophia, and one year old daughter Nellie, travelled by steamer to New York, arriving there November 12, 1858. Transferring to another ship, they went south from New York to the Panama disembarking at Colon, then known as Aspinwall. After a brief stay they travelled the 40 mile jaunt across the continent by the recently completed Panama Railway before catching another ship, northbound for San Francisco. Here they transferred to Her Majesty Ship the Plummer which had left England some time before they had but had gone around the Horn making the trip 600 miles longer. The Plummer landed the Crickmers along with Colonel Richard Clement Moody, Commanding Officer of the Royal Engineers, at Victoria on Christmas Day, 1858. After an eight week stay on Vancouver Island the Crickmers arrived at Derby, the site for the church, which was situated some three miles downstream from Fort Langley. The construction of some of the public buildings and the laying of roads had already been started by the Engineers under the supervision of Colonel Moody.



THE ANGLICAN CHURCH OF SAINT JOHN THE DIVINE
(Don Waite Photo)



REV. WILLIAM BURTON CRICKMER, M.A.
(1830 - 1905)

THIS MAN WAS THE MINISTER OF THE
FIRST CHURCH ON THE MAINLAND OF
BRITISH COLUMBIA. MOUNT CRICKMER
IN MAPLE RIDGE IS NAMED IN HIS
HONOUR.

(Photo courtesy of Rev. Denis F.
Harris, present Rector of St. John
the Divine)

(Editor's note - The Derby Townsite was built upon the ruins of the original Fort Langley of 1827 and located almost directly across the river from Kanaka Creek. The restored Fort Langley used as a tourist attraction was built in 1840. Derby was built for the Gold Rush of 1858 and in 1859 was chosen by Sir James Douglas, the Colony's First Governor, to be the future capitol of the Colony of British Columbia. Lots were staked out and sold for fantastic prices and it was hoped the new town would eventually rival San Francisco in size and importance. Colonel Moody however condemned Derby as a suitable location for a capitol owing to its being situated in an indefensible spot and New Westminster was chosen instead.)

Reverend Crickmer wasted no time and immediately arranged for a building in which he could hold church services temporarily. The date of the first service is gathered from the fact that the first lesson for the day was Genesis 1. As this chapter was, and still is, read on one Sunday only in the Church of England - Septuagesima Sunday - the date must have been February 20, 1859. Of this service Crickmer wrote to the Colonial and Continental Church Society: "Your missionary preached the very first regular sermon in the Colony of British Columbia and as far as I can make out the first sermon in this base territory except perhaps a fugitive address to a few French-Canadian voyageurs. My church was a half furnished barrack; my congregation soldiers and civilians; my pulpit, a Union Jack draped over a box, and my text Genesis 1, 27 "The New Creation". Every garb and costume imaginable was there. In one respect only were they uniform, in that they all carried bowie knives and revolvers. There was one gentleman connected with the Hudson's Bay Company for whom that was the first sermon heard in forty years. Many present had not heard the Gospel for periods ranging from twenty years down to twenty months."

John McIvor, the first landowner in Maple Ridge, upon walking the three miles from Fort Langley to Derby, attended the divine service and followed the military into the barrack in his kilts, much to the amazement of the native Indians, who had never seen anyone in kilts before. The kilts had been presented to him by Judge Matthew Baillie Begbie.

Reverend Crickmer did not approve of the plan drawings for his church and got a tender from the carpenter to make it larger. He embodied the contractor's tender with a letter he wrote to Governor Douglas which read:



JOHN MCIVOR
(1831 - 1913)
FIRST LAND OWNER
IN MAPLE RIDGE
(Photo courtesy Mrs.
John McIvor Jr.,)

Langley,
March 4, 1859

My dear Sir,

Embodied by your Excellency's uniform kindness and courtesy towards me from the time of my arrival, I approach your Excellency with the greater confidence and freely state the subject of my present communication. Colonel Moody expresses sorrow at your Excellency's inability to grant more money for an improvement of the Parsonage. Any dwelling but one supplying absolute convenience I never for a moment expected, but I must acknowledge that I was surprized when I found how utterly destitute for the most ordinary accomodation



SIR JAMES DOUGLAS
(1803 - 1877)
"FATHER OF BRITISH COLUMBIA"
(Courtesy of Provincial Archives,
Victoria, B.C.)

was the plan for the Parsonage at Langley. So deficient is it that I feel confident that your Excellency has never had an opportunity of inspecting the plans. I therefore beg respectfully to enclose a facsimile for your examination and decision as to whether or not it is fit for the dwelling place of the clergyman of the parish and his family. For myself, alone, it were sufficiently comfortable, but for the permanent home of a young wife and increasing family, I am sure your Excellency will agree with me that it is sadly deficient. I herewith enclose a very liberal offer on the part of the contractor for the comparatively moderate sum of eighty pounds to add two comfortable bedrooms, a good kitchen and water-closet, an addition which will not only remove from my mind and labours a weight of trouble, but will treble the value of the property. I do therefore under the circumstances most earnestly crave your Excellency the permission to direct the contractor forthwith to incorporate the additions above named with the present building, now in course of erection. Leaving my request with confidence in your Excellency's hands, I have the honour to remain with sincere respect your Excellency's most obedient and humble servant.

W. Burton Crickmer

Governor Douglas granted the request and notified Colonel Moody, in a letter dated March 21, 1859, that work should be completed on the Parsonage according to the enlarged plan.

Colonel Moody's group of Royal Engineers surveyed the site for the church in the new colony and preparations were soon under way for its construction. Roughed California redwood had to be shipped up the Fraser from the Oregon coast because there were no saw mills. John Melvor was present when the boat came up the river with the lumber for the barracks, court house, and the church buildings. The plan for the church was drawn by Mr. Crickmer, as nearly as possible following the design of St. John's at Deptford, the church at which he had held his first curacy. Its bird's-eye maple interior and plain outside were a delight to this new family from the Old Country. "At last the church, the design of which was my own, begins to reach completion", wrote Crickmer. "The cloth for the Communion table I compounded of the red cloth and lace tassels traded by the Hudson's Bay Company to the Indians for salmon, as also the desk and pulpit cloths."

The new church at Derby was finally completed and ready for the first service to be held on Sunday, May 1st, 1859. On April 27, Mr. Crickmer wrote to the Governor asking that in the absence of a higher officer being present, he might be permitted to consecrate the new building; that the name of the parish be called Derby, and the name of the church St. John after his first charge in England.



THIS SKETCH, ELABORATELY DRAWN BY THE REV. CRICKMER, BEARS THE INSCRIPTION "DERBY, BRITISH COLUMBIA. REVEREND W. B. CRICKMER PREACHING FROM A BARREL ON MAIN STREET, 1859." IT DEPICTS THE STERN OR BOW OF A BOAT AND AN ANCHOR ON THE SOUTH BANK OF THE FRASER RIVER; A SOW AND HER LITTER; A GROUP OF INDIANS, ONE WEARING THE CAST-OFF TUNIC OF A ROYAL ENGINEER; A YOKE OF OXEN DRAWING A CART WITH WOODEN WHEELS; EMPTY WHISKEY BOTTLES LYING ABOUT; THREE ROYAL ENGINEER OFFICERS; A DOG SLEEPING; CHICKENS PECKING THE EARTH; CHINESE WITH PIGTAILS AT HI SING'S DOOR; AND A MAN WHITTLING A PIECE OF WOOD.
 (Photo courtesy of the Vancouver City Archives, Vancouver, B.C.)

It is interesting to note that the first official vital statistic entered in the Register was the baptism of William St. John Peppin Crickmer by his father at Derby on July 17th, 1859. He was named for his father, his father's church and his father's best friend during his Oxford days. Just as noteworthy are several of the following baptisms which were Kanaka babies whose parents resided at the fort.

(Editor's note - The word Kanaka originates from the Hawaiian Islands and means man. Several of the Langley fort builders of 1827 were Hawaiians who had arrived on the Oregon coast off whaling ships and had found employment with the Hudson's Bay Company. Several of these men remained in the Fraser Valley marrying into the many Coast Salish bands up and down the river. Kanaka Creek is named in honour of one of these early pioneers.)

One day a few months after William's arrival into the world Mrs. Crickmer was carrying him outdoors for an airing some distance away from the rectory when they encountered a pack of wolves. Mrs. Crickmer shooed them away believing that they were wild dogs. She was very much concerned when she learned a short time later that the wolves had killed a number of sheep nearby. When they needed fish, Mr. Crickmer would ask an Indian to wade into the Fraser, catch a salmon with his bare hands and hold it over his head. If it was too large the minister would call to him to put it back into the water and to catch a smaller one. This would be only during the spring salmon run.

Ironically the boom at Derby was short lived. Only two months after its inauguration, Colonel Moody condemned, emphatically, the choice of Derby as the capitol. He stated that everything was against it, the river was not deep enough for sea going vessels, it was in a low position and on the wrong side of the river for defensive purposes. With the War of 1812 only 47 years old at the time the Hudson's Bay Company officials still looked with some mistrust on their southern neighbours and feared that the Fraser River might eventually become the territorial boundary.

As a result many of the inhabitants moved, some further up the river to the diggings around Yale, and others back to the coast or to Victoria.

On August 26th, 1859, Mr. Crickmer wrote a long and involved letter to Governor Douglas pleading that he reconsider the abandonment of Derby as the capitol. He pictured the decadence of British Columbia that was bound to follow as a result of such a course. "Let Derby once again be restored to life and position, and the effect upon the public would be magical," he wrote. The centrepetal center would be found which the people always trusted, and towards which many longing eyes are now turned looking for some token of Derby's being released from its fetters and declared free."

In spite of this impassioned plea to the Governor New Westminster was chosen in its place. Those who had already purchased lots were credited with others on the new site. Mr. Crickmer advised the Society: "Everyday lately I



PLAQUE ON THE CAIRN AT THE SITE OF THE ORIGINAL FORT LANGLEY.
(Don Waite Photo)

become more anxious respecting my position at Derby and Fort Langley, since the people keep on leaving..... I received a letter from the Bishop asking me to go to Yale seventy-five miles further up the Fraser, the most strongly growing commercial growing town in the colony and the gate to the Cascade Range." And finally in his register he wrote: Derby and Langley given up as a fixed post for a resident clergyman in March, 1860, although still several people scattered about both Fort Langley and Derby." The last entry in the register for Derby was dated January 8th, 1860.

With the townsite of Derby definitely abandoned as the new capital, the people of Yale petitioned the Governor asking that the church of St. John be moved there, but Governor Douglas considered such a move, seventy-five miles against the fast-flowing waters of the Fraser to be impossible. Instead in March, 1860, Reverend Crickmer went to Yale and the church remained at Derby to be used as a stopping-off place for transient settlers, trappers and voyageurs.

One couple who lived in the abandoned rectory for six months in 1876 was Thomas Haney and his wife Anne (after whom the town of Haney is named) until their own house was built on the other side of the river. Upon entering the little edifice Mrs. Haney was shocked to find that some prankster had left a human skull sitting on the mantle piece.

In 1881 the Canadian Pacific Railway had started construction through Maple Ridge. Settlers, attracted by the new railway, began streaming into the district and the Anglican parishioners decided it was time they had a church. The Reverend T.H. Gilbert, in charge of the Anglican Fraser River Mission and ordained by Bishop Sillitoe, was instrumental in bringing the church across the river to where it now stands. The Bishop and Mrs. Sillitoe with Reverend Gilbert took their lives in their hands and were rowed across the Fraser in a boat, described by Mrs. Sillitoe in a letter as "of the crankiest description, dug out of a log. It leaked so much that the Bishop and I had to bail the whole time."

The building was examined, and though it was over twenty years old, it was judged to be in good condition. A Committee for the Church of England met to consider matters relative to the church and let a contract to Mr. Samuel Edge. In the fall of 1882 Mr. Edge took charge of some men, and



THOMAS HANEY
(1841 - 1916)
THIS MAN, AFTER WHOM THE
TOWN OF HANEY IS NAMED,
LIVED WITH HIS WIFE ANN
IN THE LITTLE CHURCH IN
1876 WHILE HIS OWN HOUSE
WAS BEING BUILT ON THE
NORTH SIDE OF THE RIVER.



ANN HANEY
(1846 - 1930)
(Photos courtesy of Mrs.
Mary Isaac, Haney, B.C.)

after dismantling the church, moved it with some difficulty on rollers down to the river bank. Here it was transported across the swift waters of the Fraser and downstream on a scow of its own timbers to the north bank. Then another tedious session followed with rollers, windlasses, and a team of William Hampton's oxen, as the church was drawn up a 30-40 degree slope through a distance of two to three hundred feet before being re-erected at the intersection of Laity and River Roads in Maple Ridge. The floor, ceiling, and insides were relined, new shingles were put on the roof and a belfry was erected. The old font was replaced, a brick chimney added and after two coats of paint the job of restoration was complete.

(Editor's note - Edge Peak, one of the mountains making up the Golden Bars chain, is named in honour of this man. One of the earliest settlers in the Lower Fraser Valley, Mr. Edge in 1876 became the first white man to climb to the top of the Bars. His journey took him three days.)

A popular rumour often told to the children of Maple Ridge by their Parents is that the good Anglicans from the north side of the Fraser one foggy night stole the little church from the bad Anglicans living on the other side. It is understood that the Anglicans on the south side of the river tell a somewhat different story.

The Reverend A. Shildrick succeeded Mr. Gilbert. Congregations were very small according to the register for services. For example: "Xmas Day, 1883. Matins and sermon. No collection - so few people." Good Friday, 1884. "No service. Although notice had been given. This was due to the irregularities of the boat, and the misfortune of its being exceptionally late,"

From the New Westminster newspaper Mainland Guardian dated January 6th, 1883, a report reads: - "Our correspondent, writing on 29th Dec. says: - The new church was opened by the Bishop last week. On Wednesday evening (20th) an ordinary service was held, and on Thursday there was Celebration at 10:30 AM, a tea meeting at 6 PM, and Dedication Service at 7:30 PM, the Church was named "St. John the Divine". Notwithstanding the pouring rains on both days, which made materially against the occasion, yet a number were present at the services and tea - many more than could have been expected..."

Encouraged by him the St. John's Ladies Guild replaced the old font, provided the funds for a brick chimney, and installed the diamond-shaped windows. A belfry was erected and the church given two coats of paint free of charge by Mr. Edge.

The Reverend Theo E.W. DePencier was licensed to the joint care of Maple Ridge and Whonnock in May, 1922, and contributed major items to the life of the church. Aware of the rotting foundation supports of the church he had the original rough-hewn sills removed and a concrete foundation replace them.

When the church in Derby was abandoned, the bible that was originally used by Mr. Crickmer, was given in trust to Mr. S.E. McKenney, a retired Royal Engineer. At his death, Mrs. McKenney turned the bible over to Mr. McIvor for safe-keeping. In 1939, on the 80th Anniversary of the church the bible was returned to its rightful place. It is now in the possession of Reverend Denis F. Harris, the present rector of St. John the Divine.

On one of his many drawings the Reverend Crickmer made mention of a mountain which is located about seven miles northeast of Haney and in behind Nutt Mountain, commonly referred to as Blue Mountain, as Mount Crickmer. This rounded mountain top can be seen from across the river from the old site of Derby on a clear day but cannot be seen from Haney because Blue Mountain stands in the way. While it is true that Mr. Crickmer received assurance from Governor Douglas that the mountain across the river was to be named in his honour, it must be remembered that at the time British Columbia was only a distant colony and many official acts were not properly recorded.

In September, 1956, Major J.S. Matthews, Vancouver City Archivist, saw the sketch made by Mr. Crickmer of the Derby church and rectory, with mountain across the Fraser River in the background indicated by an arrow and marked "Mt. Crickmer", and immediately requested that the Province's Chief Geographer, Mr. W.R. Young, apply to have the mountain named officially and shown on all official maps. Guided by the Crickmer drawing surveyor Kenneth Bridge took panoramic photos of the mountain across the river from the old Derby Townsite, matched the photos with the Crickmer sketch, and pinpointed Mount Crickmer on a point of land between Stave and Alouette Lakes. Mount Crickmer, 4,500 feet high, is now shown on all maps issued by the Department of Lands and Forests.

Mr. Shildrick was followed by the Reverend C. Croucher. On March 4th, 1884, there had been a confirmation with the seventeen candidates and the congregation gradually increased. Total offerings in the first year of Mr. Croucher's incumbency amounted to \$79.20. The Reverend George Ditchon took over the parish in 1888 and continued his faithful service until 1901. Meanwhile the fabric of the church had received little attention and was in need of repair. On his arrival in June, 1906, the Reverend William Govier found the altar to be an empty organ case, covered with a tea cloth.

The most famous visitor to date was Her Royal Highness, Princess Margaret, who signed the guest register in the summer of 1958 when Padre Harry Moss was the rector. The invitation was made by Reverend P.B. 'Tubby' Clayton, famed founder of Toc H, and working out of 'All Hallows', Tower Hill, and the Chaplain to the Queen. Clayton suggested to the Princess that she look in on the old sanctuary and his old friend from the First World War days old Harry Moss. It wasn't that easy and after a frustrating series of comic events the Padre was ready to chuck the deal, as much as he admired the Royal Family and wanted to see 'Meg'. Apparently the Princess' first visit to Maple Ridge consisted of an unscheduled highway stop at a wrong church which threw the Mounted Police security system into a bit of a tizzy. The Princess, unable to see the church on that particular day, managed to work another day into her tight agenda and Padre Moss was able to show her around. As the Padre told it, Margaret explained, "I just had to come after that special invitation. My Mother is so very fond of Tubby".

The following year the Right Reverend Godfrey F. Gower (now Archbishop) dedicated two plaques bearing the crests of the Royal Engineers and the Royal Canadian Engineers presented by Colonel J.R. Carson, commandant of the Royal Canadian School of Military Engineering at Camp Chilliwack, B. C.

Within the past year there was some talk by officials to have the little edifice of religious teachings closed and its parishioners sent to a larger church in Haney. As a result a petition opposing such action was presented to the church members for signature. Since then the church has received a fresh coat of paint and attendance has been higher than ever.



HER ROYAL HIGHNESS PRINCESS MARGARET IS GREETED BY PADRE HARRY MOSS AT ST. JOHN THE DIVINE IN THE SUMMER OF 1958.
(Photo courtesy John Solly, Courtney)



THE ANGLICAN CHURCH OF SAINT JOHN THE DIVINE TO-DAY IS STILL
IN ACTIVE USE WITH WEEKLY SERVICES
(Don Waite Photo)

Only a few of the many ministers and workers of the congregation who struggled for the life of the church have been mentioned but each did their part. Over the years the words have been answered that were written by the Reverend Crickmer: "I would fain labour and pray that this invisible church may lie in the Saviour's bosom for protection and fostering love". No longer invisible the Anglican Church of St. John the Divine still stands, the oldest church in British Columbia and the sole remaining building of a townsite that was chosen to be the Province's first capitol.

Canada's First Train Robbery

Bill Miner, the notorious stagecoach robber described by W. M. Pinkerton, head of the famous Pinkerton Detective Agency, as "the master criminal of the American West" and two of his cronies engineered Canada's first train robbery near Silverdale, a small community 40 miles east of Vancouver and on the north bank of the Fraser River. Before the trio was caught they had managed to pull off Canada's second train robbery which not only brought the British Columbia Provincial Police into the chase but also the Royal North-West Mounted Police and Pinkertons from south of the border.

On Saturday, September 10th, 1904, at 9:30 p.m. Engineer Nat J. Scott eased gently on the throttle of the big Transcontinental Express No. 1 and drew slowly away from the water tower 200 yards west of the depot at Mission Junction. The powerful beam of the train's headlight was scarcely penetrating the darkness. Visibility was made even more limited by the dense fog which overhung the Fraser Valley. Already 2½ hours late because of the fog, the veteran trainman knew he would be even further behind schedule before he reached his destination at Vancouver, 50 miles away.

Intent upon watching the twin ribbons of steel before him, Engineer Scott was unaware that three men had boarded the crack express at the water tower and had hidden in the blind baggage car. The train had proceeded a few miles before a hand was laid on his shoulder and he heard a soft voice whisper, "Hands up." This was the first indication to him that something was amiss.

Scott turned and saw three men standing on the swaying platform in front of the coal tender. Over the head of each was a cloth of dark material with a slit for the eyes. Two of the men were packing revolvers while the third carried a rifle. They were roughly dressed and wore floppy hats that came down to eye level.

One of them appeared to be in his 50s, about 5 foot nine and around 130 pounds. He spoke with a slow, southern drawl. The second man was about 30, slender, round shouldered and dark-haired. The third, who carried the menacing rifle, seemed younger, possibly 25, was of medium height and build, square shouldered, full faced, clean shaven and of fair complexion.



WILLIAM A. MACDONALD
(1847? - 1913)
@ William A. Miner
@ Bill Miner
@ George W. Edwards
(Photo courtesy RCMP
Archives, Ottawa, Ont.)

Their coolness and confidence marked them as experts at train robbery. The oldest of the three and the obvious leader frisked Scott and pocketed his gold watch.

"I want you to stop the train at Silverdale," the leader said in his soft drawl. "Do as you are told and not a hair of your head will be harmed."

Realizing the trio was serious, Scott nodded his head in agreement. "I am at your service," he replied. Scott's intentions were to bring the train to a stop at Silverdale four miles west of Mission, however he failed to bring the locomotive to a complete halt until he was directly in front of the Louie Donatelli home midway between Silverdale and Ruskin.

None of the men said anything further until the train stopped. Then the leader motioned Fireman Harry Freeman down from the cab and with one of his partners escorted him back along the tracks while the third outlaw remained in the cab with hostage Scott. As the two passed by the Dominion express and mail car Express Messenger Herbert Mitchell opened the top half of the door of his compartment and looked out.

He saw nothing unusual and thinking it was a routine stop to sidetrack some fruit cars, withdrew closing the door. The darkness and fog prevented him from seeing the revolvers in the hands of the two following Freeman. The Conductor, John Ward, also looked out and saw three men pass between the express and mail car and the blind baggage car and asked what was the matter. He was told in no uncertain terms to keep his head in or he would be shot. Incredibly aware that for the first time in history a Canadian Pacific Railway train was being held up, Conductor Ward ducked back inside and raced through the passenger section alerting the passengers of the holdup. Locating Brakeman W. A. Abbot, he sent him back along the tracks to Mission to get help.

The wildest confusion followed. Some passengers in the sleeping cars tore off their valuables, throwing them in spittoons or hiding them in crevices. One foolhardy passenger, despite the fog and darkness, fired a few random shots towards the three men but hit no one. The screeching and hissing coming from the locomotive had alerted the Donatelli family whose house was a scant 50 yards from the single track main-line.

While they were watching the fire and steam from the engine they heard the shots. Mrs. Donatelli moved the children away from the window and put out the lamp. The two bandits, unperturbed by all the panic going on about them, ordered Fireman Freeman to uncouple the express and mail car from the blind baggage car and then return with the leader to the engine. The other bandit remained with the passengers and kept them under guard.

"Move this thing half a mile or so down the track," the leader instructed Engineer Scott.

The locomotive, with two of the robbers riding in the cab with the engineer and fireman, chugged off with the express and mail car and its two occupants who were each locked in their respective compartments. The passengers, one of whom was Judge William N. Bole of New Westminster, B.C. were left behind with the other outlaw.

No sooner had Scott brought the Transcontinental to a stop for a second time when he and Freeman were taken back to the express compartment of the sole car by their captors. Thinking that hoboes might be responsible for the constant shunting of the train, Express Messenger Mitchell again went to his door and peered out.



THE ORIGINAL DONATELLI HOME AS IT APPEARS TO-DAY
(Don Waite Photo)

This time he saw three or four men pass by in the shadows. One of them ordered him to pull in his head or have it blown off. Still unaware of the preceding events he closed the door and located his .38 Smith and Wesson revolver before going back to work putting all the money in a bag ready for delivery to the agent in Vancouver.

Shortly there was a knock at the door accompanied by the words, "Open this door or the car will be blown up." He looked out the window and saw Scott with a torch in his hand,

"Who's going to blow it up?" he queried.

At that moment two bandits emerged from the darkness and the elder of the pair shouted, "Open up or we'll blow the door down with this dynamite!"

Mitchell opened the door as one of the fellows aimed what looked to him like a cannon at his nose and ordered him to put up his hands and jump down. While this was taking place the other outlaw busily lent himself to the task of covering Scott and Freeman and ensuring that no trouble came from the mail compartment of the car which contained Mail Clerk William M. Thorburn.

Because of the thick partition which halved the car, neither Mitchell nor Thorburn were aware of the other's actions. As Mitchell alit on the ground the gang leader grabbed him around the waist and took his revolver. Then he ordered Mitchell back into the car. He held Mitchell's own .38 at the back of his ear while his partner stood off about ten feet with his rifle, hammer cocked, pointed at his nose.

He wanted to know if Mitchell could open the big safe to which Mitchell replied, "I might as there is nothing in it anyway." With that he opened the big and empty safe. He was then ordered to open the small safe which was locked and which did contain \$1,000 in currency and another \$6,000 in gold dust. The leader of the gang ordered Mitchell to stand back so he could rummage through the loot. In doing so he emptied Mitchell's travel grips into which he intended to place the take.

The other bandit, disappointed with the results, made the remark, "Haven't you got a shipment for Victoria? You've got it hidden in the water can or something."

Mitchell answered, "I have not. If you think it's in there you had better look for it yourself." It was later thought the robber was referring to the \$62,000 in gold dust from the cleanup of the Consolidated Cariboo Mines at Ashcroft which would have been on the train had not a delay in the shipment changed the plans.

Mitchell was ordered to jump from the car and to line up beside Scott and Freeman. While one of the two guarded the three trainmen the other bandit passed into the mail compartment of the car and forced Mail Clerk Thorburn to sit tight while he threw the registered mail out onto the ground. He then ordered him out of the car, but almost immediately told him to climb back in and to shut the door. Mitchell was likewise told to return to his post and to close the door.

Even before Mitchell had time to close the door the younger bandit had begun ransacking through the take, collecting the registered mail and throwing it into Mitchell's travel grips. The gang leader also tossed in an innocent looking parcel which later proved to contain \$50,000 in US bonds.

Following the looting, which had taken less than an hour from the moment the train was first stopped, the leader ordered Engineer Scott to back the train up so that the third outlaw could be picked up. Once the third robber was safely aboard the leader instructed Scott to return to the scene of the robbery.

As soon as the engine came to a complete halt the outlaws uncoupled the sole mail and express car containing Mitchell and Thorburn from the engine. The outlaws, with Scott and Freeman as hostages, then rode as far as the R.C. Indian church at Whonnock. A good four miles of track separated the scene of the train robbery from Whonnock. No sooner had the locomotive stopped before the robbers and the trainmen parted company.

As a precautionary measure, to slow the train and thus delay information of the robbery getting to Vancouver, the old bandit threw the fireman's shovel over an embankment as the train was brought to a halt. He returned Scott's watch claiming he liked the boy's nerve. As he climbed from the engine to disappear into the darkness Scott said to him, "Happy journey to you."

The old bandit replied, "Be careful when you are backing up that you don't meet with some accident." He was referring to the fact Scott would have to back the locomotive without any backup lights four miles in the fog and darkness before being able to re hitch the express-mail car. Then he would be required to back up another half mile before hitching up to the rest of the train.

When the train did eventually arrive in Vancouver -- nearly eight hours late -- Engineer Scott and his crew were immediately taken to the office of Superintendent H. E. Beasley of the C.P.R. and there questioned by Chief Constable Colin Campbell of the British Columbia Provincial Police. As the events of the holdup unfolded it became obvious it was the work of Americans and that they were experts at the job. All three bandits had spoken with an American accent.

The C.P.R. prepared a special train to go to the scene of the robbery. Descriptions of the three men were broadcast by telegraph and later by newspaper.

Several Pinkerton agents from south of the border, a scant ten miles from the scene of the crime, drifted into the area to search. Superintendent James E. Dye, head of the Pinkerton office in Seattle, was quick to note that the modus operandi used by the culprits had been originated by the infamous American train robber and mastermind, John T. Chapman, some 30 years earlier.

Prior to Chapman's M.O. several blundering methods were tried, such as trying to shoot the engineer, but these all proved dismal failures and the trains invariably disappeared into the darkness belching the black smoke of defiance.

The B.C.P.P. under Campbell concentrated on the area around Abbotsford. One lad, J.R. Spencer, was arrested on the night of September 11 in the New Westminster freight yards because he was acting suspiciously, however he proved harmless and was released.

More promising leads came from Mr. B. Shortreed of Abbotsford who headed a local posse. His men had found the mail boat from Whonnock adrift near the south bank of the Fraser. They learned that the boat, used to carry mail across the river from Whonnock to the residents of Glen Valley, had been stolen sometime the previous night from the Whonnock wharf.

The posse searched along the main road until they found the footprints of three men. They started at a point near the south bank of the river just east of historic Fort Langley and led southward through Abbotsford and towards Lynden, Washington. Shortreed and his men followed, but at a spot near Sumas -- just inside the US border -- they suddenly lost the tracks which led from the main road into the bush. They could not trace them beyond that point.

It was two weeks after the robbery before two teenage brothers, Tom and Wilfred Thompson, grouse hunting in Mount Lehman across the river from Silverdale found three mail bags discarded in an abandoned house. This plus the fact that the Gillis family residing in Glen Valley saw three horses tied up in their orchard the evening of the robbery unfolded the escape route used by the bandits.

Following Shortreed's lead Superintendent Dye scoured the region around Sumas and arrested a man named B.R. Davies. This man, who had been in the district for three weeks, had been acting strangely. On a borrowed bicycle he had toured the area between the C.P.R. lines and the border asking numerous pointed questions about train times and police posts. Next he had rented a horse and buggy and had roamed the Sumas area due south of the holdup site.

He was held for investigation in Bellingham, Wash., and the Pinkertons were convinced he had taken part in the easing of the train robbery but had not participated in the actual holdup. Also suspected for the robbery were three men reported by Pinkerton agents to be holed up in a cabin near Ferndale, Wash. Chief Constable Campbell hastened there with some men to join in the chase, but before their arrival it was established the three were legitimate homesteaders who had been in Seattle on the night of the robbery.

Even while these leads were being checked a second bold attempt was made to holdup the C.P.R. Transcontinental. On the evening of September 12 at a point almost identical with the first outrage, ties were placed across the line in an effort to stop or derail the train. Fortunately the engineer saw the barricade in time and was able to halt the train and back up before anyone appeared.

This action evidently frightened off the would-be bandits, for they did not show up and the crew was able to remove the obstacles and proceed on the way. The amateurish method led police to believe that others, stimulated by the stories of the bullion carried by the express car, had tried unsuccessfully to copy the daring trio.

After two-and-a-half weeks the Provincial Police, weary and disheartened, returned to their various barracks, some having gone in stretches up to three days without adequate food or sleep. All leads had dissolved abruptly into nothingness.

More than 20 months elapsed before the next worthwhile lead was developed. Then on the night of May 8, 1906, Canada's second train robbery occurred. Many of the characters in this escapade were the same as in the original train robbery however the place and amount of loot changed.

At Ducks, B.C. -- now Monte Creek -- a small settlement 18 miles east of Kamloops, Engineer J. Callin had brought the Imperial Limited No.97 westbound for Vancouver to a routine stop and was pulling out when suddenly he and the fireman were confronted by two armed masked men crouching in the coal tender. The older of the two fit the description of the outlaw who had masterminded the previous train robbery, only this time he had a dark handkerchief tied across his face and goggles over his eyes. He also wore a black slouch hat.

The other man matched the description of the youngest bandit involved in the previous robbery. This time he wore a handkerchief over the lower part of his face.

The two outlaws scrambled down from the coal tender and levelled their weapons at Callin and Fireman A. Radcliffe.

The events which followed during the next hour were very similar to that of Canada's first train robbery with a few exceptions, one of which was that the third member of the gang appeared by running across a field as the train came to a stop. He wore no mask but had the neck of his sweater pulled up and his cloth cap pulled down. Despite these elementary precautions his face was visible to the trainmen. Under his arm he carried a parcel of dynamite wrapped in newspaper.

The robbers had the fireman uncouple the first car from the rest of the train and then the locomotive and this one car moved further down the track. Unknown to the robbers this was the baggage car and not the express and mail car as they had suspected. Due to a recent changeover to summer service the train was running in two sections - the bullion had been on No. 5 which had gone through some time earlier. According to one source this slip-up on information cost the robbers \$10,000 which had gone through on the early train destined for San Francisco earthquake victims. According to another the early train had been carrying a shipment of 6,000 pounds of silver ignots destined for the Orient valued at less than \$5,000.

Inside the baggage car were Clerks A.L. McQuarrie and William Thorburn, the same Thorburn who had been a victim of the previous train attack. He instantly recognized his opponent as the same man who had masterminded the first holdup but concealed his start of recognition. The bandits found the

registered mail which consisted of eleven letters, two of which contained cash - one a \$5.00 bill and the other a \$10.00 bill. The leader began to swear in a most ungentlemanly-like manner making violent movements with his revolver. This gesture dislodged his mask and gave McQuarrie a good look at his flowing white mustache and face. A package of liver pills on a shelf attracted the attention of the old bandit and he broke it open. He passed several of the pills to a partner and pocketed some himself. The bandits then locked the Mail Clerks in the baggage car before returning to the cab of the locomotive and ordering the engineer to proceed down the tracks and to stop between Mile Post 119 and 120. There the disgruntled trio waved their good-byes to the engineer and took their leave in the direction of Campbell's Meadows.

It was well into the night before the train pulled into Kamloops. This time officialdom acted swiftly and a substantial reward for the robbers -- dead or alive -- was posted. There was little that the Provincial Police could do that night in the way of pursuit. Confident that the robbers would make for the US border, B.C.P.F. Superintendent Fred Hussy wired to Calgary for the assistance of the Royal North-West Mounted Police.

In 1906 \$11,500 in reward money went a long ways and as a result cowboys, trappers, minor, Indian trackers, -- practically everyone that could walk, creep, crawl, or ride -- joined the hunt for the robbers.

The morning following the holdup P.P. Constable W.L. Fernie, a man recognized as a top notch investigator and already marked for promotion, found a parcel of dynamite beside the track. It was wrapped in a page of the Kamloops Inland Sentinel newspaper which carried the mailing address of an Aspen Grove subscriber. He also noted that three sets of characteristic footprints led away from the train's third stopping place between Mile Post 119 and 120.

Enlisting the assistance of Indian scouts, Constable Fernie followed the tracks to a secluded campsite which gave a good view of the C.P.R. tracks. Because of a forest fire raging in the mountains to the north, behind Ducks, Fernie reasoned that the culprits would work their way southward in the direction of the border. He and his scouts began to circle southward from the campsite and soon picked up three sets of prints, now accompanied by the marks of two horses. They followed them without difficulty to Campbell's Meadows where they found a fresh campsite. Here Fernie was joined by a fellow member who assisted with the hunt. Frequently the trail

\$11,500.00 REWARD

The Canadian Pacific Railway Coy.

A reward of \$5,000 (Five Thousand Dollars) for the capture, dead or alive, of the three robbers who held up train 97 between Ducks and Kamloops on the morning of the 9th inst., or \$1,000 (One Thousand Dollars) for the capture, dead or alive, of any one of the robbers.

The Dominion Government

Also offers \$5,000 (Five Thousand Dollars) on the same terms as the above.

The Provincial Government

Offers One Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (Five Hundred Dollars for each man) for capture and conviction.

DESCRIPTION.

LEADER: About 5 ft. 7 in. in height, slim build, about 50 years of age, wore a grey stubby moustache, face and hands very much sun burnt, eyes somewhat inflamed, wore glasses, tattoo mark on back of right hand, wore a black slouch hat and a blue-black overcoat.

SECOND MAN: About 5 ft. 7 in. in height, medium build, weight about 170 lbs, black hair, dark complexion, very clear and distinct voice, with slight Cockney accent, wore an old blue sweater.

THIRD MAN: Age about 40 years, about 5 ft. 10 in. in height, light or reddish moustache and thin face.

By Order.

Kamloops, B. C., May 12th, 1906.

REWARD POSTER THAT CAME OUT SHORTLY AFTER CANADA'S SECOND TRAIN ROBBERY

(Photo courtesy of Cecil Clark, Victoria, B.C.)

was lost. Everytime it was located, however, it was to the south - indicating that the outlaws were following an old Hudson's Bay Company trail into the Nicola Valley. By Noon of May 14 Fernie and his companions had lost all sign of the train robbers.

Unable to decide which of the many routes might have been taken by the fleeing train robbers, Fernie decided that the fellow member should go towards Grande Prairie while he would scout in the direction of Dcuglas Lake. The Indian scouts, useless now because there were no tracks to follow in the rocky terrain, were left behind. Fernie came upon the three bandits and finally when he was sure he had run them to bush camp he high-tailed it back for help.



THE MOUNTIES THAT WERE INVOLVED IN THE BILL MINER CASE 1906

Left to right: Sergeant P. G. Thomas (standing); Constable J.H. Tabuteau (sitting); Jim Benjou, guide (standing); Sergeant T. M. Shoebtham (standing); Sergeant J. J. Wilson (sitting center); Corporal J.C. Stewart (standing); Corporal C.R. Peters (sitting); and Constable J.T. Browning (standing)

(Photo courtesy of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Archives)

The Mounted Police patrol had left Calgary May 11 via train and had reached Kamloops mid-afternoon the following day. Sergeant J.J. Wilson was in charge of the small patrol made up of Sergeants P.G. Thomas and T.M. Shoebottom, Corporals J.C. Stewart and C.R. Peters and Constables J.T. Browning and J.H. Tabuteau. They were met at Kamloops by their head boss Commissioner A. Bowen Parry who got them into a hotel room and told them of the progress being made in the robbery investigation. They were then provided with a poor lot of untrained horses from the Douglas Lake Cattle Ranch and rode south out of town in a driving rain. They spent most of the next two days in the saddle questioning the many ranchers as they worked their way in a southerly direction.

Fernie found the M.P. patrol camped for the night at Chapperon Lake. According to Fernie, although they were bedded down for the night they were in the saddle in three minutes. Guided by Fernie, the M.P. patrol arrived at the spot where the Provincial Constable had observed the fugitives but it was bare. Believing that it would only be a matter of time before the police on horseback would overtake and apprehend the bandits, Fernie left them to their task and returned to look after his Indian scouts and to get some much needed rest. The Wilson patrol spread out and covered scarcely a mile-and-a-half before Corporal Stewart threw up his arm letting the others know that he had located the trio. Surrounding the spot indicated by Stewart, the police moved in. As the police closed in none of the three men seated around the campfire showed the least concern. The oldest chap chit-chatted with Sergeant Wilson identifying himself as George Edwards and his buddies as Louis Colquhoun and Shorty Dunn. He claimed that they were locals and that they were prospecting. Unconvinced Sergeant Wilson decided to move boldly and said, "You answer the description of the train robbers and we arrest you for that crime."

The old man tried to laugh the remark off but the younger of the trio pulled his .44 Colt and opened fire on the police. His act of panic caught his own companions completely by surprise but the wary police were ready. Before the other two had time to react they were covered by the seven Mounties. Three policemen took into the bush after the third fellow. Shots were exchanged and the culprit was felled into a waist-deep ditch grazed on the right kneecap. Upon being hit the bandit threw up his hands and dropped his revolver. A careful search of the three prisoners produced three automatics, a .44 Colt, two .38 revolvers and a rifle. More significant were a pair of goggles and several liver pills found in the possession of the old fellow.

It was Sergeant Shoebottom, who recalling a wanted poster, examined the tattoos on the oldest robber and exclaimed to Constable Browning, "Look out for that old fellow, that's Bill Miner!" This was the first recognition by the Canadian authorities of America's most daring train robber being in their jurisdiction.

When the M.F. patrol and their prisoners arrived back at the Douglas Lake Cattle Ranch some of the ranchers insisted that there must be some mistake as they knew the prisoners as local prospectors.

The Mounties took their catch to Kamloops anyway where they proceeded to photograph and question them. They learned that Colquhoun was a former school teacher from Clifford, Ontario, who had worked his way to the west coast seeking a moderate climate for his tuberculosis condition. Dunn, whose real name was Grell, hailed from Minnesota. Apparently he had a rough life as a youngster and had drifted west. According to him his run in with the Wilson patrol was his first brush with the law.

It was the following day before the Canadian police were able to get information about the badmen via telegraph from the American authorities. According to them Colquhoun had served a two year stretch in Walla Walla Penitentiary, Wash., for petty theft. Miner, the leader of the gang, had a criminal record which could only be compared with the Jesse James Boys or Butch Cassidy's 'Hole in the Wall Bunch'. Dunn did not have any previous record. They learned that between 1863 and 1901, if not in San Quentin doing time for a stage-coach robbery, Miner was on the road easing his next job. The soft-spoken command, "Hands up," followed by several apologetic remarks during the actual holdup, became a Miner trademark and earned him the nickname 'Gentleman Bandit'. In 1901 Miner was released for the third time from San Quentin. He was 54 years of age and had just served 19½ years of a 25 year sentence for Grand Larceny. Up to this time he had served a grand total of 28 years, 7 months, in San Quentin since his first conviction. So frequent and routine were the Gentleman Bandit's stage-coach holdups over the years that the Pinkertons had been able to plot his movements on a map of the American West.

The outside in 1901 in all likelihood puzzled Miner. Many changes had occurred during the 19½ years he had been imprisoned. Gold mine managers, appalled by the ease with which desperadoes seemed to learn of large shipments of gold dust by stage, had sought safer means of its transportment. The train, able to outspeed the fastest horse and offering built-in forts in the express cars, had been a vast improvement and as a result mine owners were shipping by rail.



WILLIAM GRELL
(- 1927)
@ William Dunn
@ Shorty Dunn
@ Thomas William Dunn
(Photos courtesy RCMP
Archives, Ottawa, Ont.)



LOUIS COLQUHOUN
(- 1911)
@ Lewis Colquhoun

The increased use of photography as a means of police identification was probably an additional factor which prompted Miner to seek a sanctuary in the interior of B.C. Policemen there at the turn of the century were few and far between. As a result Miner, using the alias George W. Edwards, suddenly turned up at the 350 acre ranch of Jack Budd 5 miles out of Princeton, B.C. Budd, who became a legend in the Nicola Valley in his own lifetime, had originally come from Texas where he claimed to have known the affable George Edwards as a boy. Edwards, when not travelling back and forth to the border or making trips to the coast, bought and sold cattle or prospected in the mountains.



THE CAPTURED TRAIN ROBBERS ARRIVING AT THE PROVINCIAL JAIL AT KAMLOOPS, MAY 1906. THE MAN JUST GETTING DOWN FROM THE WAGON IS BILL MINER. THE MAN WITH THE BLANKET AROUND HIM IS SHORTY DUNN WHO COMPLAINED OF BEING COLD. THE ONE NEAREST TO THE PHOTOGRAPHER IS LOUIS COLQUHOUN.

(Photo courtesy of Cecil Clark, Victoria, B.C.)

There was hardly a town along the 200 mile lower stretch of the Fraser River which did not have (or else still has) a shack in which Miner lived. It is known that he lived for short spells at least between 1903 and 1906, so that he could properly case a job, in the Chilliwack, Mission, and Haney areas. It was during this period that he met up with and had for companionship the shiftless Dunn and Colquhoun. Miner introduced himself into these areas and was so well respected by the residents that some swore that he ate breakfast the morning following Canada's first train robbery with the posse without ever once being suspect.

He was to have his troubles with the Justice of the Peace at Kamloops, however, following his second Canadian train robbery bid. The preliminary hearing before Mayor Marsh Gordon, a Justice of the Peace, was a gala social event for the curiosity seekers with visitors coming from as far as Vancouver. The three accused, charged with robbery of the King's mail, listened closely as the Crown covered all the elements of the offence. The Mounted Policemen took the stand and identified the trio as the culprits apprehended in possession of the many exhibits which they also identified. The train crew identified the three as the ones that had held up the train. They were able to identify some of the exhibits which had been taken from the effects of the three accused according to the evidence given by the Mounties. Constable Fernie and his scouts established the tracking.

Mayor Gordon, upon hearing the evidence committed the three to the higher courts.

The trial which followed before Mr. Justice P.A.E. Irving, with frills and flourishes, was the same as that presented at the preliminary hearing. Mr. Justice Irving's charge to the jury at the conclusion of the evidence left no doubt that he, at least, was convinced of the guilt of all three prisoners.

The verdict of the jury was guilty for all three men.

Mr. Justice Irving, aware of the past criminal record of Miner and taking into account Dunn's attempt to murder some of the M.P. patrol, ordered the two incarcerated for life in the British Columbia Penitentiary at New Westminster. Colquhoun, because of his rather mild record, was given a stiff 25 year sentence in the same prison. He died there in 1911 of T.B. Dunn was paroled after the First World War and took a mining course at the University of British Columbia. In his

later says he lived at Telkwa, B.C. where he was very well thought of in the community. Only the local Provincial Police-men knew his real identity by his ticket of leave from the prison. He died in 1927 trying to rescue a forest ranger from an overturned boat on Ootsa Lake. The ranger saved himself by climbing into a tree but Shorty was drowned. He was buried on a sandbar by Provincial Constable G.A. Johnson and an Indian helper.

And what became of the elusive Bill Miner? Even in prison he was being constantly harassed by the constabulary, especially the C.P.R. Police who wanted to know what had become of the bonds stolen in Canada's first train robbery. The police were positive that Miner, Colquhoun, and Dunn had pulled the caper. When caught by the M.P. Miner was still in possession of the .38 Smith and Wesson that he had stolen from Express Messenger Mitchell. The police were satisfied with the sentences handed out by Mr. Justice Irving and realized that a second court case would only be a waste of time.

Gaslers at the B.C. Pen were most upset and it is understood that heads rolled when after only 14 months of imprisonment Miner, with three other inmates, made good his getaway.

When, on June 22, 1909, Canada's third train holdup took place in the same vicinity as did the second, Miner was at first a prime suspect. This robbery was later accredited to the Haney Brothers, Dave and Bill, (in no way related to Thomas Haney after whom the town is named) from California and an unknown accomplice.

Miner was not to make the news in any big way until the night of February 11, 1911, when with two new companions, he pulled off the first train robbery in the State of Georgia. For this Miner was eventually caught by an American posse and in due time ended up in the Georgia State Penitentiary. The Americans were not much interested in returning their prize back to their northern neighbours.

One might think that this would surely be the end of the old boy but such was not the case. He managed to escape from the State Prison on two separate occasions and then escaped from the posse that captured him on his last escape bid from prison. Upon being returned to the prison on the last occasion Miner's powers of recuperation failed him and he made his last escape from the Penitentiary, this time with the Angel of Death. He was laid to rest September 8, 1913.



LAST PHOTOGRAPH OF BILL MINER,
Taken by Pinkerton's in
Georgia in 1911.
(Photo courtesy of Cecil Clark,
Victoria, B. C.)

It was not until the death of Jack Budd, Miner's pal from Princeton, that his real identity came to light. Having no near relatives, some letters found in Budd's pocket at the time of his death were handed over by the undertaker to his oldest friend, James G.C. Schisler. By the content of the letters it was apparent that Jack Budd and Bill Miner were brothers and that their real name was MacDonald.

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