Story of Week

A B.C. FLASHBACK

The stolen gold was never found

"I have been robbed!"

do?" asked McCauley.

"Hell you say!" rejoined Pit-

"What do you think I better

Constable Dinsmore were im-

area were limited, particularly

if the bandit attempted to travel

with the heavy, bulky gold, which

could not be easily concealed. It

him to carry the loot, in addition

to a pack and rifle, out of the

All routes along which a horse

contained two half empty bottles

of whiskey. Police were positive

viction of the robber and \$1,500

The "Miner" closed on a some-

for the return of the gold.

what virtuous note

had died down.

August 22, 1896.

could travel were watched, as

area without a packhorse.

By Susan Hilliard

Specially written for The Province.

THIS is the true story of a robbery, a mysterious witness, a murder and a lost treasure. The scene is the famous Cariboo Gold Mine, at Camp McKinney, British Columbia. The time is August, 1896.

The Cariboo Gold Mine is not, as its rame implies, situated in said, "Drive on and keep driv-B.C.'s Cariboo country, but is ing! in the historic Boundary District, which follows the International Boundary Line and stretches from Bridesville to Cascade. The ran into the hotel shouting: Boundary District was the scene of a great copper mining boom in the early years of the century, when the cities of Greenwood, Grand Forks and Phoenix enjoyed their brief periods of glory.

Predates boom

This story, however, predates that boom. In 1896 Grand Forks and Greenwood were little more than mining camps. The economy of the Boundary District in 1896 was centered chiefly in the Cariboo Gold Mine, which was British Columbia's first lode gold mine. Rock Creek, situated twenty miles from Camp McKinney, the site of the mine, was the hub of the district and had been known as a gold mining centre since 1858. The various population centres were connected to each other and to the outside world by stage which traversed roads which were only trails through the forests. Law and order was in the hands of two provincial policen.en, Chief Constable W .G. McMynn of Midway, and Constable I. C. Dinsmore of Grand Forks, who covered their large rough territory on horseback. It was in this setting that one of the Boundary District's most dramatic incidents took

Lived at camp

In 1896 the Cariboo Gold Mine well as all departing stages. The was owned partly by James Mon- masked bandit, however, seemed aghan and George B. McCauley to have disappeared without a of Spokane, and managed by J. trace. McCauley could furnish P. Keene, who lived at camp Mc- no useful description of the rob-Kinney. It was the custom of the ber and police investigations owners to take the mine's pro- met with no success. duction of gold, in the form of gold bars, once monthly from saddle bag in which McCauley Camp McKinney down the lonely and Keene had placed the gold. forest trail to Rock Creek. From there arrangements were made the robbery had taken place and, to send the gold by stage to the instead of the gold bricks it now company headquarters at Spo-

On the morning of August 18, 1896, McCauley prepared to make the journey to Rock Creek with the month's supply of gold, consisting of three gold bricks weighing twenty pounds each. The gold was worth approximately \$11,000, at a time when gold was worth twenty dollars an ounce, rather than thirty-five dollars, as it is today. McCauley and J. P. Keene took the heavy bricks, placed them in saddle bags, and put them into the wagon in which McCauley intended to make the journey to Rock Creek.

Driving uphill

McCauley had driven two and a half miles, and was driving up a little hill near a part of the trail named McMynn's Meadows ("Oh, a splendid place for the business," said McCauley later), when suddenly a heavily masked man stepped out from behind a tree, siezed the horses by the bit, levelled a rifle and said gruffly, "Stop! Throw your hands

"I have no shooting irons," said McCauley, quickly obeying the command.

"Throw out that bullion," said the masked man. "Throw it on the bank there."

McCauley complied. "Have you any money?" asked

the robber. McCauley replied, "Yes, a little

-but surely you will not leave

The robber said again, "Throw it on the bank there."

Bills and silver

McCauley tosser out a new five dollar bill, a silver dollar and

some ten cent pieces. The robber said, "Now drive on, and don't go back to Camp

McKinney.' McCauley drove a short way and looked back. The robber was weighing in his hands the saddle bags which contained the three gold bricks. He dropped the bags, pointed the rifle at McCauley and

"These shipments have been made regularly for months past," it said, " and the public always knows within a day or two of the exact time at which they could pass through, so the only surprise created by he holdup is that it has not happened before."

683ESWOZO

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It was not long before a clue appeared. James Monaghan of McCauley drove on to Rock Spokane received a letter from a Creek arriving some time later man whose name was never reat the hotel of H. Pittendrich. He vealed. This letter was printed in the Grand Forks "Miner" of November 14, 1896' without a signature "for reasons that are obvious," said the "Miner." The body of the letter to Mr. Monaghan from the mystery witness "You'd better go to the nearest was as follows: magistrate," advised Pittend-

Chief Constable McMynn and Fell to drinking

"I met a man in a saloon in mediately notified. To the advan-Oroville at about the end of May. tage of the police was the fact We fell to drinking together, and that avenues of escape from the he told me that his name was Matthew Roderick, from Seattle, that he was very hard up and on his way to get the bullion from Camp McKinney-an easy job, he of shadowing Roderick as long

"He had a gun, a Winchester, I think, and was going to stage a to the hidden gold. holdup. He liked the way I held my liquor-said I'd be one with a cool head and wanted me to come in with him on the job. I didn't want to. Roderick said he was a dead shot and he wouldn't hesitate to kill me if I ever revealed what passed between us that

ney where we both got work. After we'd been working three would be virtually impossible for ust. After I'd been there three bullion in the "Spokesman Review", so thought I'd better let you know about Roderick.'

Worked there

Inquiries were made about Roderick at Camp McKinney. It was found that, as the letter said. he had worked there. A few days All that was found was the before the robbery he had complained of being sick and had been laid up in his cabin for It was found just off the trail, several days. Shortly after the robbery he had said that there was no point in hanging around the camp too sick to work, and he had left by stage. He had certainly had no bullion with him, the mine officials and police reported. A search of his cabin was made but nothing was found.

Monaghan located the writer of the strange letter, and, since Roderick had said that he came from Seattle, they went there in search of him. When they arrived they located him by the simple expedient of looking him up in the city directory. His name, address and occupation were listed. Strangely, he was a civil

Identified man

the bandit had hidden the bullion in the area, and that he himself Monaghan and his companion remained, waiting to make his went stealthily to Roderick's escape later on when the hunt house and watched it until he appeared. The writer of the letter The "Grand Forks Miner", one identified Roderick as the man of the area's first weekly newswith whom he had talked in the papers, excitedly reported details Oroville saloon, but neither he of the robbery in its issue of nor Monaghan revealed themselves to Roderick, or made any "ONE LONE HIGHWAYMAN attempt to apprehend him. The GETS THE MONTHLY DIVIauthorities were certain that the gold remained hidden in the DEND OF THE CARIBOO", it headlined continuing, "AT ONE Camp McKinney area, and Mon-FELL SWOOP THE ENTIRE aghan made arangements to have MONTH'S OUTPUT OF THE Roderick shadowed in the hope CELEBRATED CARIBOO MINE that he would lead the way to AT CAMP McKINNEY WAS the hiding place of the bullion. Monoghan and his companion The "Miner" reported that rereturned to Spokane on the night wards totalling \$3,500 had been of September 12, 1896, prepared posted by the mining company to await further developments. _\$2,000 for the capture and con-

Made no move

Some times passed before Roderick made any move. In late October 1896, however, he left Seattle and began making his way northward, on horseback, unaware that he was being followed. He made his way again to Oroville, across the border to Osoyoos, and over the Anarchist Mountains to Camp McKinney.

His arrival threw those in the camp who knew that he was under suspicion into a state of suppressed excitement. No outward sign was made, however, that anything out of the ordinary was afoot. The mine manager, J. P. Keene undertook the task

as he was in the camp, in the hope that he would lead the way ember 14, 1896, tell the story in exonerated Keene from all

Little-used trail

On Monday, November 9, 1896, Roderick left Camp McKinney and went into the surrounding forest, setting out on a little used trail. Keene, alone, stealthily not stealthy enough. Roderick "We went on to camp McKin- discovered him and became enraged. Possibly by now he was becoming suspicious that he was months, and nothing happened. being followed. He drew his gun, I left for Trail Creek late in Aug- but Keene was faster. He shot, and the suspected robber fell to days I read an account of the the ground, instantly killed by

The headlines of the Grand brought in a verdict of justifi- TOTALS CAR MILEAGE

"Lost his life while returning for plunder-crime fastened, the man shadowed and a tragedy when he discovers pursuer."

A coroner's inquest into the causes of Roderick's death was followed. Unfortunately, he was held at Camp McKinney on Wedheard several witnesses they been found.

Forks "Miner" of Saturday, Nov- able homicide, and completely Sixty-one years have passed

"Throw down the bullion," the man

said.

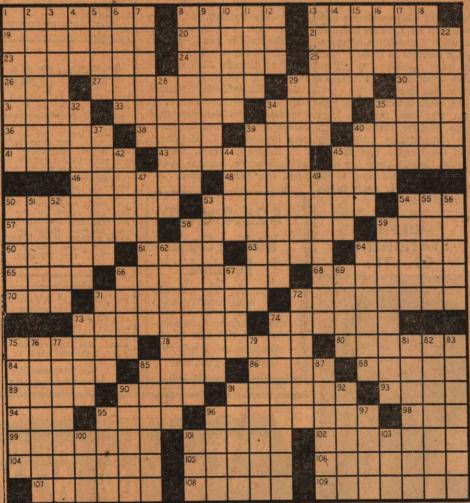
MATHESON

since these dramatic events took place. The Cariboo Gold Mine has long since discontinued operation, and Camp McKinney has fallen into ruin. Most of the people who remember this incident are dead.

And the gold? Roderick's bulnesday, Nov. 11, 1896, two days lion still lies wherever he hid it after the shooting, by Dr. Jakes on the lonely trail near Camp of Greenwood. The jury was McKinney. Many searchers have composed of local men, namely, looked long and hard for the H. Nicolson, foreman; J. Att- three gold bricks, an "entire wood, W. H. Blick, A. Coseus, month's output from the cele-George M. Bennett, and R. brated Cariboo Mine at Camp robbery of the Camp McKinney one bullet from the mine ranger's Swanson. After the jury had McKinney," but it has never

Crossword puzzle

By JACK LUZZATTO (Answer appears next week)



ACROSS 1 Exultant joy. 8 Knockdowndrag out fight. 58 Those placed 19 Trouble in the

54 Sizable.

57 Gets one's

bearings.

59 Read before

61 Wasting time.

battle river

in France.

71 Most gifted.

63 Give up.

20 Frilly pleating. berth. 23 Porcelain

25 Little house wrecker. 26 Gypsy man 68 Numbness, 29 Saucy. 30 In great shape. 33 Had scope.

35 Vital city 38 Single. 39 Alas: Lat. timber.

43 Strong poison. "Little Women."

50 Type of rental

an air-raid 80 Smoothed 84 Close by. 85 Alley setups. 86 Yale rooters. 88 Rent. 89 Tragic king.

DOWN 73 Tax-rate man. 1 Comes out. 74 Foray. 75 Elephant seat. 3 Town on San 6 Petroleum

93 Despatch:

94 Kiln: Var.

99 Rarefied;

105 Various

108 Rhebok

106 Strength or

celestial.

101 Where to see

98 Farmer caste,

Francisco Bay. 50 Moslem 4 Cap on a Scot. 8 Boaster. 9 Streamlets

machine sound

12 Mary Ford's 13 Bayou boat.

95 Dong's partner. 14 All. 96 Hinged catches 15 Wrongful act. 16 Dickens boy. 17 Structure. 18 Goes out of business. 102 Deadly potions. 29 Gave minute

> details: Rare. 32 Natives of a Himalayan country. 34 Craved water. 37 Soften. 39 Heightened. 40 Man of action

44 Sound effect. 45 Symington and 47 Small bone 49 More calm.

51 Bathsheba's first husband. 52 Whirls or revolves. 53 Originators. 54 Uncle Miltie.

56 Divine at

random.

from a whale. 81 Guardian 59 Infuriated. 62 Tot's problem. 82 Intrinsic

83 Dethroned. 85 Think about. 87 Russian plain 67 Plain. 69 Uses up. 71 Historic ruler. 91 Measuring 72 Fashionable. device. 92 Backless seat. 73 6th Jewish 74 Draftee.

95 Small drink. 96 Thespian part 75 Rings of light. 97 Wife of Rama. 76 Type of dance: 100 Finial. 2 words. 35 Granular snow 77 Condition of 103 Fall month: the atmosphere Abbr.

Answer to last week's puzzle



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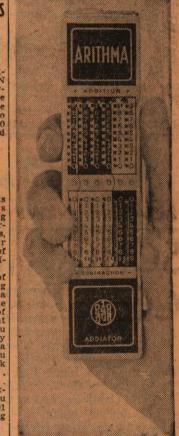
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