

## **The Story of Golden, by Thomas King, 1963**

Nestling just a mile above where the turbulent Kicking Horse River spills its waters into the placid Columbia, and on the flat silt lands built up by the flooding of these rivers in the eons of the past, lies the town of Golden. The setting would compare favourably with that of towns about which much is written and advertised, with the mighty Rockies piercing skyward to the East and the grandeur of the spectacular Selkirks to the seen for miles as they confine the waters of the Columbia River to their west bank of its way to find an outlet to the sea. This takes it, as the river runs on its crooked way, north-west about 200 miles from its source to where it round the Selkirks and turns almost directly southward to the U.S.A. border, a few miles from the city of Trail.

How fortunate for those who appreciate the wonderful scenery, to have spent most of our lives here with mountains encircled all around us but far enough distant to have a grand perspective, and without the feeling of being caged in. Because I have been one so favoured and because of my long years here, I thought I should tell something of the story of Golden as I remember it since my arrival here on June the first, 1899, and because I was in a position to learn much about the years preceding my arrival here.

As for myself, it was just by the merest chance I got coming to Golden, and it illustrates how little incidents change one's whole life. By the merest chance I had come to British Columbia.

A young C.P.R. operator in my home town in Ontario happened to be leaning over his father's garden gate as I passed along on the Saturday afternoon following Good Friday, 1897. He asked me, "How would you like to go to British Columbia next Wednesday?"

A boy of seventeen would have been keen to go to Timbuctoo!

I persuaded my folks to let me go along to Vancouver, and two years later, when I had heard glowing accounts of life in the interior, our office staff was bidding our manager goodbye as he was leaving for the "Upper Country" for a few weeks. As my turn came, I asked him if he learned on his trip of a job I could do, I'd like it if he would get it for me. Three days later he advised me that Mr. C. A. Warren wanted someone to keep his store accounts and look after the post office for him and advised me as to the pay — almost double that prevailing in Vancouver at the time. When our manager returned, here I came.

Two and a half years later I married a local girl, Minnie Woodley, and that especially means staying put. It surely did with me.

My work in the Post Office here gave me a grand opportunity to become quickly acquainted with everybody here and those who were settled in the Valley. The land clearings of the latter were very small for the most part, but a great many of them were bachelors and could take on other work if he desired.

The first place south from Golden a mile or so was owned by Alfred and Henry Vachon. They had adjoining quarter sections and maybe ten acres cleared. Two eccentric old bachelors who eked out a very meagre living from their little clearing, but like others, were optimistic, with lots of faith in the future. Their half section is now used mostly for skiing and tobogganing, and is included in a Provincial Park and adjoins the Park land originally reserved by the Federal Government about 1886, when the "Alexander" townsite was subdivided for town lots, George and H. B. Alexander having received the townsite property as a bonus for the building of a smelter adjacent to the C.P.R. main line just to the east of the railway yards. At that time it was the policy of the Federal Government to do this to encourage mining in any mineralized district where that Government then held ownership of the land. Apparently, in that long ago, they envisioned mineral as being ready to be dug up from rock where it might be found, loaded into a wagon, and hauled to the mill as farmers used to take wheat to a grist mill to be ground for flour and feed.

A bridge had been built across the Kicking Horse River from a little above the High School so as to have easy access to the smelter. Needless to say, not a pound of ore was ever treated at the smelter and most of the townsite property reverted to the Government for unpaid taxes.

The next settler continuing from North to South in the Valley, was a quite elderly man by the name of Charlie Stacey. He was another bachelor, who eventually became too old to work enough to live on the farm and he turned his place over to the Golden and East Kootenay Trading Co. who had kept him supplied with his store needs. This was the potential of a real nice farmstead and later became so under the ownership of Mr. G. B. McDermott, Mr. W. G. Habart, and now owned by the latter's son, Wilfred, who has subdivided much of it and this is now the site of many new homes.

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The third homestead was owned by Mr. Charles Nicholson, five miles out of town and, for a small place, Charlie grew a lot of produce and managed real well but was very frugal. He, too, was a bachelor, but later married and, with growing boys, needed more spread for them, so traded his little farm here for land in Alberta near Wetaskiwin with his brother-in-law, August Kallman, whose family was small but who also was a frugal, hard worker. As measured in those days, he must have had quite an income, as early in his years on the farm he could afford to own an automobile when there were not five percent as many in the district as now. In passing, maybe an old man can be excused for remarking on the looks of their two young daughters who often came to town in their car. They looked more like pictures of Hollywood ladies or those in Cadillac ads with two beautiful girls sitting in them to draw special attention to the car. Later, the younger one married a Valley boy, Mr. Jack Harrison, and has since been living in Revelstoke. The elder sister became Mrs. Vaughan Kimpton and has been one of the town's most useful citizens. She has been on scores of different boards and has taken a leading part in many activities for the good or betterment of the village.

The fourth homestead was that of Charlie Nicholson's father. Another son was a noted character, known in those early days as "The Swede Kid." He was small of stature and light of weight and, as a jockey, became quite a noted figure at the Valley horse races of that time and for several years thereafter.

All mode of land travel was by horseback and horse-drawn vehicles and much of the topic of conversation around Lake Windermere district was about cayouses. So much so, the Federal engineer who had charge of the navigable waters from Lake Windermere to the Arrow Lakes, told me soon after he got married to a Miss Lang in Golden about July 1st, 1899 that he chose Golden for his home because at Athalmer he heard so much cayouse talk, in which conversation he could not join, and, as for Revelstoke the conversation was all about engine number such and such or order number so and so, that he chose Golden in which to reside where there was conversation of a diversified nature about matters far afield as well as of local interest.

But getting back to Frank Nicholson. I saw him ride in a "cigar race" at Windermere in June, 1900, on a horse belonging to the Mitchell's of Brisco. The rules

of the race were to saddle the horse and have a cigar alight when back to the starting point. It could be lighted before mounting or at any time, so long as it was alight at the finish line. The horses were to run 300 yards to a post upright in the ground and return. In the light, dry, sandy soil at the Windermere race track, the dust was so thick one could seldom see the contestants. Frank had been slow, for some reason, in getting off and before he reached the turning post an Indian was returning and the dust was so bad even the horses could not see each other and met head on and Frank was shot up into the air so far we could see him through the thinner dust, maybe twelve or fourteen feet up in the air. His horse broke his neck and died on the spot and the Indian had a broken leg. Frank was practically unhurt.

He drove the stage for a few years that ran between Windermere and Golden and was one of the better-known old timers of the Valley. He lived in Vancouver for many years and passed away there about three years ago at the age of eighty-six.

The Windermere horse races were the highlights of interest and excitement in those far off days. The year after year winner of the open mile race was a horse known as Old Goldie owned by an early settler of the Windermere district, Mr. George Goldie, and ridden by Walter Stoddart, then hardly in his teens. Other noted horses were Roy Carruthers, a beautiful but hard to handle stallion the Indians had brought in from the U.S. to try to beat Old Goldie. He was much faster, but a bad starter. Another fine horse of note at the races after Goldie retired was Grey Eagle, owned by the late Mr. Joseph Lake and ridden by his son, the late Mr. Percy Lake. Kootenay Bay was another fast pony as speed went at the local races.

Whether "cayouse talk" bothered Mr. Aylmer (about whom I will refer to later) or not, they provided good sport and excitement for the majority of Valley settlers.

There were four other Nicholson's in the family of Charlie and Frank — their brothers Klaus and Oscar, and sisters, Nannie (now Mrs. Kallman, for many years) and Annie, Mrs. Oscar Carlson.

The next homestead, a mile farther south, was tenanted by a long, slim be-whiskered individual, Jack Leigh. This was the oddest arrangement I had ever heard of, though immorality was the commonplace of the day. His sister bought the place and brought Jack out from Ontario to run it for her while she ran a house



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in town with the assistance of several other women. What depravity in family relationship!

When I arrived in Golden she had moved to a town on the Crow's Nest as that railway had just been built and opened up a few towns the summer before.

Very recently I had a letter from Jack Leigh's son in Ontario stating he understood his aunt ran a boarding house in Golden and he understood she had two daughters and he was wondering if I could help him locate his cousins. In this, of course, I could be of no help except to tell him his aunt had moved to Fernie before my arrival here.

Another mile farther south was Horse Creek and three Italians had homesteaded a quarter section along this creek and lived off the proceeds of their products, which must have been a meagre existence as the land cleared from which to grow their feed was no larger than many one-man places, although they paid their bills and, I am sure, never went hungry.

The partner who seemed to be the business head went by the name of Charlie Ross. The others were Mike Degrazio and Tony Pelligreno. They raised cayouses on the sloughs and kept quite a number of sheep, cutting hay on the sloughs to carry them through the winter; but very poor fodder it is.

A few years after my arrival here they decided to dispose of the sheep, so Ross took them to Calgary. It was reported they brought something over \$700.00, but Ross returned saying he had not received the payment, but was to return to Calgary shortly to get it. That, of course, was not the truth. He returned home to get some personal items, it was thought, but, while ostensibly going back to Calgary to get the money, no one knows where he went for he was never seen around these parts again.

Through process of law, the remaining partners made an amicable settlement between them, Pelligreno keeping the Horse Creek place and Mr. Degrazio going south to near Harrogate to take up another quarter.

The next settler was Mr. Charlie Cartwright. He didn't farm much, but kept a stopping house and had a liquor licence. Later he had a hotel at Athalmer.

Another mile on, Mr. William Wallace had a nice looking little clearing on a hill side with nearly two acres of apple trees started, many of which are still producing to this day. Later, Mr. and Mrs. Jack Wilson owned this place for many years. Mr. Wallace left the Valley about 1901. He too, was a bachelor. This place now belongs to Mr. Chris Pederson.

Settler number nine was the second married one this far — 18 miles from Golden. Mr. W. H. Johnson had, a few years previously, married a Swedish girl who had come to Donald to work as a domestic with another girl friend and they had only arrived there a few days when Mr. Rufus Kimpton of Windermere, who also still had business interests in Donald, was driving up the road and told Mr. Johnson (who was not Swedish, as the name is common to many countries) of these two female arrivals, and further up the road, told another settler, whose name I will not mention, and within a week these two bachelors were in Donald, successfully persuading the girls to marry them, though the late arrivals could speak not a word of English. However, they understood and went back as brides with the homesteaders to their little farms.

Mr. Kimpton was quite a match-maker. About the same time, his wife had a new maid in their Donald home and he told another settler of this young woman while he was going south with the mail and passenger stage. Next trip to Golden, the fellow was waiting on the side of the road for the stage to take him to Golden where he would get a train to Donald. He, too, returned in less than a week with a bride. I do not mention the names because descendants still live in the valley.

Settler number ten was "Billy" Smith. He, too, was a bachelor and didn't marry for many years. It is told that a lady came out from England to marry a man in Calgary, acquaintance having been gained through a matrimonial paper, but that marriage did not take place. Somehow she came up here and Rev. Mr. Yates, then Anglican minister at Golden, married them in Tom Haddon's home at the 14-mile. When the ceremony was finished Billy remarked, "Well, that's done," as if he had just harnessed the horses, and the new Mrs. Smith at once went back to the kitchen to help prepare the wedding meal and Billy joined his male friends and continued on where the conversation had been broken off to have the marriage ceremony. Not much romance in that. Mr. Yates told me of the affair.

Tom Bingham was the next settler, about the twenty mile. He, too, was a bachelor for many years and was on his place for about fifteen years before finding his girl to marry.

The twelfth homestead was the old Hog Ranch, the site of the village of Parson now. It was mostly a stopping place for freighters hauling supplies up the road. Joe Fitzpatrick was looking after it at the time of my arrival. This place made quite a name for itself in

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earlier years by its connection with whiskey running to Golden for the railway workers when it was under construction. Licences to sell liquor were not issued within a certain distance of railroad construction so bootleggers had it brought in from Montana by pack train to these meeting places at Hog Ranch and on Baird's Creek, near the O'Bray farm.

Next settlement was just a couple of miles farther on and the farm where O'Bray Bros. lived for several years. It was taken up by Isaac and Sam Humphrey, who sold their place three or four years after I came here and took up land on the Prairie. They were rather sleepy looking fellows but thought they were smart enough to get away with horse stealing in Alberta but landed in jail for their covetousness.

Connecting the Humphrey place was Jack Dodd's homestead, known as Baird's Creek Ranch, and it was on this locality that Bull Dog Kelly murdered one of the whiskey runners who had just been paid for his pack train load of liquor brought in from Montana. Bull Dog escaped to Minnesota State and successfully fought extradition.

From Dodd's at the 27-mile, there was no settler till one reached the first post office south from Golden. This was operated in the farm home of George McMillan, and the mileage was about 42. Mr. McMillan had been an employee for some years of a bank in Edinburgh, Scotland.

The highway at that time was down by the KCR right of way, the building of which railway, as in many other places, necessitated the re-location of the highway here.

Mr. Walter Dainard homesteaded beyond McMillan's and on the place now owned by Mr. James Dunne. Mr. Dainard apparently had no desire to live on or develop it beyond what was necessary to procure title, and lived in Golden.

There was an unused hotel building at Galena (the post office was called by that name but the district was known as Spillimacheen, which is the name of quite a large river flowing out of the Selkirks and emptying into the Columbia River just north, a mile or so, from the then hotel.

Across the Columbia from here were the first settlers on the west side and to these I will later refer.

Next south and adjoining Mr. McMillan's quarter section, was Mr. Neil McRae. He and his wife raised their family of three or four girls here, and one daughter, Mrs. C. Stewart, lived very close by until her

recent passing. Mr. McRae was one of the more successful farmers of his day.

Mr. Tom Pirie, for some years, had had the farm at the 46-mile which he homesteaded in 1889 and which later belonged to a Mr. Fraser, then an Anglican clergyman, the Rev. Mr. Thatcher, about whose wife someone should write a book. She was such a grand type that her teaching influenced the standard of whoever had time to be with her. Especially for the teenage girls of the district, she worked wonders. Besides influencing their lives for good, she made real ladies of them all. She lived to a great age and surely left her stamp and influence in the places in which she lived. Mr. Geoff Howard now owns this place.

Mrs. Pirie died during childbirth in the winter of 1903 and the father took the children to his old home near London, Ont. In 1929, the child that was the cause of the mother's death came to Golden with an older sister to see where their mother lay. My son, Norman, drove them to the Brisco Cemetery (if such it could be called at that time), so they could see where their mother was resting. Even at that later date she may have been the only one buried there. The girls had a good cry but were satisfied in that they had seen what to them was hallowed ground. One of the girls was a nurse, the other a school teacher.

A few years later, a son, who was teaching at the Indian school near Sardis, B.C., came to see the resting place of one, though not remembered in person, who still held a dear place in their hearts. The son came from near Chilliwack again last summer to visit the mother's grave where now there is a granite slab to mark for them the hallowed spot, and now about twenty others are buried there.

I recall vividly the sorrow of the people of the valley that went out to Mr. Pirie and his young family. Raising the child at so young and delicate an age must have been quite a task as so few babies in those early years were raised other than by the method nature intended. Mr. Pirie was a very highly respected gentleman, and with the help of relatives in his home district, his family became good and superior citizens, the type referred to as the "salt of the earth."

Mr. Danny Campbell was near the 49-mile post and had the homestead where Brisco is now a prosperous community. He kept the post office there which then was called Columbia Valley and changed to Brisco in 1900 or 1901. Even at that time, Mr. Campbell was





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getting past strenuous work and not long after, he sold his place and returned to his native Maritimes.

Next, about the 50-mile, Mr. Harry Atcheson had a fine homestead and grew a lot of hay for cattle feeding and for the freight teams that were fed overnight at his place while the drivers put up at the Atcheson house, which did a lot of business in this line as no others close by catered for this business, and loaded teams could only make 18 to 20 miles per day.

I speak of mile posts because the Provincial Government, about 1902, had had a Mr. Sam Hambly place one every mile, starting at the south end of the Kicking Horse bridge as number "0". He had prepared all the posts before leaving what was then his farm on the east bank of the Blueberry River and facing the then wagon road to Donald — the most crooked one I have ever ridden a horse over. His mode of measuring the miles was by having a marker on a wagon wheel and figuring the number of turns to a mile — tediously computing them all the way through the valley. Ingenious, but I'd think monotonous.

Behind Atcheson's, Mr. Alfred Mitchell had cleared considerable land on his rather bigger acreage known as Fortress Ranch. Some years later, and while in his 50's, he married a Miss Tegart from the Windermere Lake District. This fine place was later bought by Mr. Archie Wolfenden who had successfully operated the first store at Brisco, and the farm is now very efficiently and successfully operated by his son, Winston, maybe the most progressive business farmer the valley has ever had.

Mac and Fred Mitchell had the next place, just recently taken up, and where they lived for many years, keeping a stopping house 'til such became a thing of the past from the advent of the railway through the valley and the common use of the automobile. They served extra good, clean meals but seldom needed to put anybody up for the night, catering mostly for meals. There was no bachelor-housekeeping smell about their home. Mac did the cooking and Fred did the outside work. They were very gentlemanly fellows who later fell heir to a lot of English money and moved to Golden. Mac died about three years ago in St. Mary's Home in Nelson and Fred still lives there.

The next settler was Mr. Ed Watkins, who developed a comparatively big acreage of cleared land and kept a lot of cattle. One son, Charlie, continued on the place and was also a successful beef cattle operator. Another son, Lloyd, has a farm a little farther south

which formerly belonged to his elder brother, John, who passed away many years ago. This place was originally taken up by an Englishman whose name I will withhold, who sold it for \$4,000 cash and went to Vancouver. Instead of placing the money in the bank, he kept it in his pocket with which to four-flush, but within a few nights he went to Dupont Street, where women were then allowed to carry on their ancient trade unmolested. When he awoke in the morning, the girl and the money had disappeared and neither was ever located.

On the old road past this place, as it turned down "Dead Man's Hill" to a small creek of the same name, is a little pole-fenced grave where the remains of a man who was murdered were buried. A suspect was tried for the murder but not found guilty. Mr. Moses Kinbasket, of the Shuswap Indian tribe, told me many years ago they had the right man but could not prove it.

Mr. George Mitchell had been a few years out from England at the turn of the century and had taken land a couple of miles off the main road and nearest to the Watkins farm and his uncle's place, Mr. Alfred Mitchell. Their two sons, Hector and Robert successfully continue the farm operation as well as being interested in other activities. The former has a saw mill and the latter is a big game guide.

At the 57 mile, and picturesquely settled on North Vermillion Creek Dave Morman had a holding used mostly for stoppers. This place is a little isolated now as the development of Highway 95 has made a big fill across the creek valley to save turns on the road and going down one hill to close by go up another.

Down the creek a short ways was a farm owned at my coming by the Elk Park Ranching Co. and known as the "Lower Ranch." Luxor siding on the K.C.R. is now on this place.

Next place, and about the 62 mile, was a fine farm owned by Mr. Dave Armour who, when I arrived, was in Alberta but later returned, operating it for a while and then selling the place to Mr. Eric Smith and it is now owned by Mrs. George Tegart.

The ranching company above mentioned had also recently acquired the Mackay farm, now a Kirk Christmas tree property. The Mackays had made a grand place out of their holding and some people in Truro, N.S., who formed the company to take it over, had dreams of a financially successful operation. They kept Mr. Jim Mackay on as manager and sent out at least six or seven young fellows to help work on it. But



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it was disappointing to the shareholders and was sold back to Jim Mackay, his brother, Shan, having in the meantime, been drowned taking a scowload of cattle down the Yukon River, the destination being Dawson City, the then booming gold mining town of 10,000 people. The scow upset with everything on board being a total loss.

Jim was a going concern, but quite a risk taker. At one time reported worth \$300,000.00, not much of it was left at his demise on a mountain trail near Revelstoke where he had been to examine a mining prospect. He was active in developing many propositions in the valley and other sections of B.C. and was one of the outstanding citizens ever to live in the Columbia Valley and it was appropriate that he die in harness.

He married a Golden girl, Annie Harper, in the summer of 1899 or 1900 and when I saw her at the Lake Windermere District Fair in 1960 she looked astoundingly well for the years she had attained by that time. Two of their sons are now resident in the Valley, William and Gordon. The former, a retired R.C.M.P. sergeant, the latter a big game guide. Two daughters are in California and the elder son, Harold, followed the mining industry for many years in the Boundary Country.

I knew two sisters of Shan and Jim, the younger one was Hattie and the elder was Mrs. McNeill, who had three children — "Billie", who died about three years ago at Haney, B.C. after a very successful career as a big game guide, and a daughter, Pearl, and another daughter, Sarah, from a succeeding marriage. I knew Billie well as a young fellow, and all through his life, but I lost so much by not being much more than an acquaintance of Pearl until a few years ago. She is one of the most charming ladies it has been my privilege to know. As a letter correspondent, she expresses herself so uniquely that I get pleasure in reading some of the paragraphs several times. She also has a great sense of humor and altogether is a very interesting person. She married a gentleman, Mr. Montford Kelly, who came to Invermere to be secretary or an office accountant for the Columbia Valley Irrigated Fruit Lands Co., but later they lived in Banff and Calgary. I am sure Mr. Kelly has lived an enchanted life with such a lady. And for him, afflicted as he has been with blindness for several years, he is always cheerful and as useful as possible under his handicap. Through radio and his wife reading papers, etc., to him, he keeps well abreast

of current events and is good and interesting company. I would judge his age at time of writing to be around 85 years — Pearl, now about 78 — but has a mind and movement of many years less.

Mrs. Kelly's mother owned over 200 acres at the junction of Highway 95 and the Banff-Windermere road which she endeavoured to sell me many times for \$1500 but I was not clairvoyant enough to see into the future. For years now business lots have been selling there for up to \$3500 and residential for \$750.00. Still, even with not making such financial gains, because we can't see into the future too closely, it is well we can't or we might at times feel like a condemned prisoner in his cell with his last day set.

Billy Palmer from New Brunswick had taken up a nice piece of land as the next settler. This was on Stoddart Creek. He was machine operator on the highway as well in his latter years. He married a Kinbasket of the Shuswap and had several daughters.

The story was told that, in a letter he received from his father some while after his marriage, that he'd be arriving at Golden on a certain date on his way to the coast to go up the valley to visit him and his family. Not wanting his father to learn he had married a Shuswap lady, and having only heavy work horses, he started almost immediately for Golden as, there being only a weekly mail service, the letter was long in reaching him and the father was due in two days later. He walked all through the night, not stopping except to eat lunch he carried with him, to meet his father as he arrived in Golden and tell him a story about having to leave his home for a few weeks, so as to have the father continue his journey on to the coast and not learn that he married outside his own race.

Eugene Conture had the next place at the 74 mile on Shuswap Creek. Later Frank Richardson of Atholmer bought it on speculation.

Behind this place and farther up the creek, Jim Lambert had a nice farm and his brother, Jack, had one close by.

Across the Columbia River from the Spillimacheen Hotel of that day, Mr. George Heffner, a German, had a homestead which for many years now has belonged to Capt. G. W. Edwards, a mining engineer who operated developments in that part of the valley for many years. He recently passed away at the advanced age of 90 years after having lived a very active life almost to the end. He had made his home in West Vancouver the last several years and where his widow still lives.

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Next place taken up on the west side of the Columbia River and owned by him for many years after I came to the valley, was that of Mr. James Montgomery and now occupied by his two daughters, Jessie and Agnes, the latter being Mrs. Sutherland.

A little farther up the river and across from Brisco, Wm. Batt, Baptiste Paul and Ben Able had homesteads. The first mentioned must have had some money put by as he was bringing a sister out in July, 1899, from Ottawa and ordered a side saddle from my boss, Mr. Warren, so the lady could enjoy herself riding the trails which mostly, in those days, led to mining claims. His land wasn't very productive and, in his isolation, he deteriorated gradually till finally he was taken to a mental institution at the coast. At the time he wore no boots but had his feet tied up in gunny sacks. It was a shocking sight to see him gone thus as he was quite an intelligent gentleman, courteous and nicely spoken with first I met him.

Baptiste Paul had left the Shuswap reserve some years before and located on a nice piece of ground where he put up hay, kept a few cattle, and was much esteemed by the Brisco people. I recall Mr. Alfred Mitchell writing in to Warren's store (being bookkeeper I read all correspondence that came so addressed) for something he wanted to get for Mr. Paul and he described him as a "White Indian". He meant it as a nice compliment but I don't know whether he, being Indian, would feel very flattered.

But Baptiste was a real good fellow and had three sons who, though they all died in their thirties, were good steady fellows and quite in demand as workers. They were Alex, John and Nick. Alex married the younger daughter of Moses Kinbasket, who, when her husband passed away insisted on a cousin of Alex's, Mike Paul, marrying her.

John took some type of disease that turned his skin black and made him look like a coloured man but it was several years before it became fatal.

Nick also was a good worker and quite in demand in the district as a helper.

I knew the Indians very well as in 1923 I reconstructed the road from Stoddart Creek to the Athalmer Junction and a mile and a half south of Dutch Creek and two and a half miles near Brady Creek, the latter district then being known as Thunder Hill. I was compelled by the terms of the contract to hire men 'nearest the operation' and I found the Indians very satisfactory. Alex Paul was one of them and no better

worker or nicer man of any color was ever on a job — steady, obliging, courteous, well-mannered at table and elsewhere and it was very sad he had to go so young.

I became so friendly with the Indians — both Shuswap and Kootenay — that in August, 1931, they did me the honour of putting on a three-day celebration at Golden — stampede, pow-wows and native dances — the latter in the rink building at night and on the park grounds in the daytime — and made me an Indian Chief, "Golden Eagle". In their language, Ak nom lu lam.

I have enjoyed the friendship of the Indians of both sexes and many of them I find very fine people. Chief Michel was against the Indians being allowed into beer parlours as he saw that too many of his people would waste their time and substance in drinking, and it has been the ruin of several of them, as with the whites.

A few years ago, when I represented this district as M.L.A., a Kootenay Indian of above average intelligence asked me to advocate for the same rights for them to have liquor by the bottle as other citizens as many of their women, in their desire for liquor would go to bootleggers for it, and who besides the money for it, insisted on a bonus payment which was debauching many of the women of the tribes. He told me he had made a tour of many sections of B.C., Washington and Alberta and found the same type of payment demanded throughout.

Mr. George Bramell married a Kinbasket woman many years ago and seemed to live a very satisfied life with her all his years. He was reported to be a son of an Anglican clergyman in England but somehow became to like the lady well enough to marry her. He worked for me on three different jobs and was a good, steady employee. Every Saturday evening his Indian wife would drive to the job and take him home for the weekend and deliver him back on Sunday evening — sometimes having driven her team fifteen to twenty miles each way.

On one occasion she told me that my previous employer, Mr. Warren, had wanted to marry her and rode horseback all the way to Fort Steele to ask her father for her hand because she said she was quite young and thought she wasn't mature enough to decide. The father's answer to Mr. Warren's request was, "No Charlie. She marry white man, I lose my daughter. She marry Indian I still keep my daughter."

Years later, however, she did marry the white man above mentioned, and she served him well. Mr.



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Bramell died several years ago — she, about four years ago or so, at over eighty years of age.

While on the subject of Indians, I think it should be recorded here, before leaving the comments on these people, of the courage of one of the Kootenays — Mr. Joe Jimmy — in treeing a full-grown cougar and then climbing up the tree to face it with as meagre a weapon as could be devised. When the cougar went up the tree Joe took a shoe lace from his rubber boot, took his jackknife out of his pocket and tied it with the shoe lace to a stick he picked up which was about four feet long and tapered from an inch and three-quarters to a little over an inch, and climbed the tree to face the cougar with his improvised weapon. As he climbed nearer and nearer the cougar the latter went a few feet out on a limb and turned to face Joe who jabbed him with the knife in a vulnerable spot on his chest till the cougar, though snarling and looking each moment as if he might pounce on Joe, thought the better part of valor as is said was safety on the ground so he jumped down into the snow and made off.

Joe, not to be outdone, hurried down after him and followed the blood trail in the snow and not over fifty years away found the animal in the throes of death, which came soon.

We read in story books of such courageous acts, but based only on imagination and not on fact. When a race can breed such men, what a pity so many of them do not take their responsibilities more seriously. But to most of them, tomorrow doesn't matter.

Joe gave me the shoe lace and knife as a souvenir of his encounter but, of course, the stick was just tossed aside.

Two or three pictures of him and the dead cougar appeared in the Vancouver Sun along with the story. I am sorry I have not these as among my souvenirs.

The soil on the Kootenay reserve is quite productive if properly worked and the number of cattle they could raise if so inclined would give them a real high standard of living. But they are like so many whites — do not take advantage of their opportunities. But they are happy with today and maybe get more enjoyment than those of us who worry about what things will be like next winter.

The greatest development in settling the valley came in the first ten or fifteen years of the century — mostly in the first ten. Many thought a quarter section of land would be a life's security but between 1950 and 1965 small places have been harder to make pay and

wages at other work so good that working a place of small acreage has driven many land owners to timber operations, for which they cannot be blamed.

Many tales were told of incidents happening in those early days, few of which can be told here as many descendants are still living in the valley. But one instance, which the participant told me of himself, was of a young fellow who had been a school teacher in Minnesota. How he ever learned of the then small settlement of Brisco I do not know. His name was W. J. McCord and he and another young man, J.

Christianson, each around twenty-five years of age, came to Golden on their way through. The stage only went south on Sunday mornings so they were to ride up on a wagon with Mr. Ed Watkins who had been in Golden to get his winter's supply of flour and other needs. At their first stop for the night — at that time half the farm houses were "stopping places" — the place was more than filled for regular accommodation. To get the horses fed by five o'clock in the morning all the teamsters went to bed early. The landlady, not having enough of house to accommodate all, told McCord that he'd have to sleep on a "shake down" on the floor.

This article was first written for private reading so we'll omit the balance of this particular story as it relates to the stopping place episode and to the jilted girl as too much Peyton Place for public reading. Suffice to say that a school had just been newly built at McMurdo and the trustees having learned that Mr. McCord had been a teacher in Minnesota, persuaded him to stay and take over their school, the first in the valley between Golden and Windermere.

He left his school and took a night train out of Golden — to an unknown destination. Twelve years later he showed up in Seattle and a large picture of him appeared in the Post Intelligencer bearing the caption, "W. J. McCord, successful and prominent mining engineer of Alaska, where he is President of several mining companies". And only a few years ago both the Sun and Province newspapers carried large front page pictures of him as having just married in London, England, a U.S. lady barrister who had been President of the Bar Association of all the United States. This was a goal, the captions read, he had desired for several years. By then both were in their seventies.

Several still live in the valley who went to school to him and I thought would be interested in what eventually became of him.

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The first teacher at Wilmer (then Peterborough) was a beautiful looking girl whose name was Miss Jean McDonald, a sister of Mrs. Mike Carlin, wife of the manager of the Columbia River Lumber Co. at Golden. She was on a visit to Mrs. Carlin and, having an Ontario teacher's certificate, was persuaded to teach at Wilmer.

A young fellow by the name of Jimmy Howden, who worked for the Columbia River Lumber Co. at Beavermouth had fallen deeply in love with Jean and when she went up the river on the steamboat "Duchess", he went up on the same boat too. One of the deck hands told me that, to impress Jean with his courage, he offered this fellow \$2.00 if he'd seemingly by accident, fall off the boat into the river so Jim could jump in to rescue him. Naturally the deck hand wasn't very cooperative.

I was on the boat on the same trip and I remember Jim expressing his sorrow at such a beautiful girl going to such a place as Wilmer was then and he said to me, "pity is akin to love," so I guess he felt he had a double dose of it on Jean.

But it seemed Jean was not long very lonesome in her new location, then being cut out of the woods. Among several admirers was the then most important citizen of the Upper Country, Mr. R. R. Bruce, who operated the Paradise Mine and whose headquarters at that time were in Wilmer. It developed so seriously that they were engaged to marry and Jean gave up the school and returned to her home about seventy-five miles north-east of Toronto to await the consummation of each other's love.

Soon afterward, Mr. Bruce went east to bring back his bride but, to everyone's astonishment, came back alone. No one, so far as was learned, ever knew what happened but it was surmised that it was broken off because of religion. The McDonalds were very strong Roman Catholics and it is presumed Jean's people objected unless Mr. Bruce would change his religion, which he felt he could not do. So the Columbia saw no more of this beautiful, comely lady.

I wonder if I might here report something of Mr. Bruce.

Born in Banffshire, Scotland, like so many of his race, he took up the profession of engineering; and in the building of the Crows Nest Railroad was employed by the Canadian Pacific Railway Co. as a resident engineer. That road was completed in 1898 but several times before this he'd taken the stage from Fort

Steele into the Windermere Country which he thought most beautiful and was sure rich mineral deposits could be found in the Selkirk Mountains on the west side of Lake Windermere and the Columbia River. With this in mind, he told me he went to McGill University to get a mining degree as well as the civil one he already had. This he obtained in the college year — October to May — and came back to Windermere full of hope and enthusiasm.

While in the east he met Mr. Hammond of the financial firm of Osler, Hammond and Nanton of Toronto. Mr. Hammond told him, if he found anything promising to let him know about it and he'd supply the financing of the development of the claims.

Mr. Bruce told me the names of the different properties, but I do not recall them now. The first one he thought worthy petered out after expending \$8,000.00 of Mr. Hammond's money. He was very depressed to have to advise Mr. Hammond that the money was all spent and the property held out no hope of it ever paying to go any further with it. The news didn't seem to worry Mr. Hammond at all for he wrote back that mining was a gamble and that the next time might be more fortunate.

So Mr. Bruce secured another promising looking prospect. Surface showings were good but those are days before diamond drilling so it had to be done the expensive way — drilling a tunnel. This turned out as did the first one, except that \$12,000.00 had been expended.

Still Mr. Hammond was not down-hearted. And those were days when these amounts were large expenditures as miners' wages were only about \$2.50 for a ten-hour day. Mr. Hammond wrote back again that maybe the third try might be successful.

Mr. Bruce then obtained the Paradise claims that had been staked by Mr. Tom Jones — a very colourful and typical western prospector.

Mr. Bruce still had his headquarters in Wilmer and first shipments were hauled out by team, loaded on the boat at Athalmer, taken to Golden, and re-shipped to the smelter at Trail. This was very expensive transportation but carried on until the K.C.R. was built through to the Crows Nest line in 1915.

Altogether Mr. Bruce told me that after paying off Mr. Hammond, he himself made a net profit out of the operation of the Paradise of \$385,000.00 and then sold it for \$375,000.00 so that eventually his decision to



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stay in the Windermere Country made him quite successful financially.

Some years after his breaking off with Jean McDonald, he married Lady Elizabeth Northcott of Scotland, who passed away in Invermere a few years later and, later on, married a widow woman, Mrs. Nolson of Montreal.

Because of his doing too much of his own assaying, he became "leaded" which gradually effected his eyesight and he could see but very little for some years before his passing.

After making his home in the Windermere till the 1920's, he was appointed Lieutenant Governor of the Province of British Columbia and later was Canadian Ambassador to Japan.

All in all I'd presume to say he has been the valley's most prominent citizen.

Going back to Valley teachers, only two schools were in the whole valley and from Banff to Revelstoke and Golden and Fort Steele at the time I arrived in Golden. A Mr. J.A. Bates taught here and Miss Mary Lambert at Windermere. The latter was a daughter of Jack Lambert who had settled on Shuswap Creek, but, as her mother was dead, she lived with her grandmother at Ayr, Ontario. She and the latter came out to visit the old lady's two sons, Jack and Jim Lambert and the Windermere School Board engaged her to teach their few pupils. Later she married Mr. Dan Kimpton of Windermere and they lived nearly all their married years in Golden.

Several school districts were formed in the valley after the advent of Mr. McCord at McMurdo and, for the most part, the teachers hired were young ladies, except that the first teacher at Nicholson was a gentleman who had lost part of one arm and whose name was Orchard. He also took up the land where Louis Alfano now has a farm but left and abandoned any claim to it.

Of the first twenty lady teachers in the valley, it was reported not one of them got away single but were caught in nature's meshes to mate with one or other of the local boys. It being lonesome for most of these young girls, they were often not choosy enough and some of the marriages turned out unhappily, but many otherwise.

I remember one girl, still in her teens, married a kid with maybe lots of love in his heart but no money in his pocket, and about nine o'clock in the evening, after the ceremony at a friend's house and congratulations

from friends, were leaving the house and, on being asked where they were staying for the night replied they were going to go to the hay mow in the barn! The kind hearted house-holder offered them accommodation there for the night.

I understand that marriage lasted a year — another, about as senseless, lasted six months. But could one blame the kids, lonesome for their home town people and living in many places with neighbours miles apart? So no one should pass judgement.

As near as I can figure, Golden had a population of about 375 when I arrived here. There were so many young single men working in stores, etc., and boarding in hotels that, with the hotels' help, I figured twenty for each of the Columbia, Queens and Kootenay Hotels, and ten for the then little old Russell House on the south side of the Kicking Horse River. The proprietors of these hotels at the time were, respectively, Wm. McNeish, J.C. Green, Ullock and Barry, and Jim Brewster, uncle to the later famous Brewster Bros. of Banff.

"Billy" McNeish was one of the nicest men one could wish to meet. His hotel originally was not much better than the Russell of that day was on my arrival. But in those early days, red light houses were the accepted thing in every community in British Columbia with populations as small as one hundred people. The girls seldom stayed long but the madams kept on for years.

In Golden four houses flourished and at one time there were twenty-two girls. The madams charged the girls \$15.00 a week for board and room and took no percentages. Neither did they enter into competition with them but usually had a steady of their own for companionship.

A woman known as "Dutch Liz", who had followed railway construction west from Winnipeg, built a house here named "Mountain Castle" and Billy McNeish became her steady. For a promise to marry her she gave him \$5,000.00 to enlarge his hotel and in the middle '90's it was made into a really fine big place for that sum of money would do wonders in those early days. Besides rooms for all hotel purposes, the building also contained a fine dance and concert hall and was known as the Columbia Hall. It was quite in demand those days before the advent of picture shows when many road shows were travelling the country and would put up at a town of Golden's size for sometimes

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two weeks, and single nighters were frequently here. The hall was also a sample room for travellers.

In 1901 there was a shifting of ownership in three hotels and Mr. and Mrs. McNeish went to Vancouver and bought the Boulder Saloon. Mr. Jack Ullock bought the Columbia Hotel from McNeish. Frank Whiting who had been in the Russell House, took a partner, W.W. Rogers, who had been a store clerk here for some years, and bought the Kootenay House; and George Sinclair, who was far from the bartender type but had been doing that at the Kootenay, bought the contents of the Russell House.

The McNeish's prospered financially at their new location and had their home in North Vancouver. He was highly respected there and, about 1911 was elected mayor, which office he held for three years, and in 1913 he was the only mayor in all the province elected by acclamation.

After retiring from the saloon business, he was engaged in different ways and on the occasion of a visit of Canada's Governor General to the coast, it was arranged that, on a certain evening, he, with his wife and travelling officials and local celebrities, were to have dinner at the McNeish home. All preparations were made for the great affair, but on the morning of that very day, an emissary arrived at the McNeish home to tell them the Governor and party would not be there. Someone apparently reported of Mrs. McNeish's former life and those in charge decided against having the dinner there. What a blow, and what an insult! In the meantime the woman led a clean life and, from all appearances, a satisfied and happy one and Billy's old friends who learned of it here were exceedingly sorry for him. Though much younger, he died long before she did. He had been several years on the Workmen's Compensation Board when I last saw him in 1940. He said he had been given six months leave of absence to see if he'd be satisfied to retire but he passed on before his leave expired.

There were several such marriages out of the houses in Golden in those early days, but none but the McNeish's lasted very long.

George Sinclair, mentioned above, was a grand young fellow. He had taught school in Ontario before coming out here at twenty-one years of age and worked in a big logging camp for the C.R.L. Co., his brother-in-law being foreman.

It was at the time when camps made the rule that there was to be no talking at the tables at meal time so

that they could be attended to more efficiently because the noise of conversation interfered with the table waiters or flunkies. After the rule was imposed, some of the loggers ignored it and were told to get their time. About twenty others quit with them — George Sinclair being one of them.

He went to the coast then, which was in the spring of 1899, and returned to Golden a year or so later. He stayed at the Kootenay House and didn't appear to want to work at the time but at recess he'd go to the school, nearby, as he loved kids and they loved him. He'd meet them at noon and closing time and a dozen would be hanging around his hands and coat tails walking up the street. That was heaven to him.

By this time, Mr. Jack Ullock had married a sister of his partner's wife and they had dissolved partnership. They knew even two sisters could not get along in a partnership and family trouble ensues.

Well, one afternoon while Jack was taking his shift at the bar, he had a call to go out for half an hour and he asked George if he'd look after the bar for him meantime, and which he did. Soon this became a common occurrence. So much so that when the regular bartender left not long afterwards, Jack persuaded George to take over the shift at \$40.00 per month and board and room. So easy is it, unless one is stiff-necked, to travel down the hill, for everyone knew that in those days drunks were short changed by bartenders and, if business was brisk, would never be missed.

George's ambition was to become a doctor, so when there was the switch in hotel ownership, he wanted me to become a partner as I was to put up the pittance he was paying for the rough type of hotel. I told him I could never accept any profit out of the liquor business, but gave him all my savings, a little under \$700, which he paid me back in four or five months. He wanted to stay at the business 'til he had \$10,000.00 saved to go to Toronto University.

A girl came to town that summer of 1901 who had none of the appearance of the way she made her living. She went by the name of Lulu Maud Bradley. Several of the local boys fell for her — the most surprising one of all was our local druggist, C.W. Field, who had always been a straight-laced living fellow, a pillar in the Methodist Church and locally thought to be too close-fisted to spend money on a "Fairy" as they were often referred to.

But she got ahold of my close friend, George Sinclair, and cried on his shoulder about the awful



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business she was in, how she loathed it, and pulled all the sob stuff she could to get taken away from it. It finally worked.

When he told me of his decision to marry the girl, I told him of the several here who had tried it before and that Billy McNeish's was the only one that stuck and that no one knew what his private thoughts were. But I could not persuade him not to go through with it.

Fifteen years later he told me he wished a thousand times he had followed my advice. She was a streeter at heart and they had many a quarrel in their home.

She went to visit her mother in Bellingham, Wash., a year or two after the marriage but was a long time coming home. Finally, after two or three months, he went down to see her and bring her back with him. He had bought a ticket for her to return and she put hers in her purse and on the way to get the train in Seattle, as they passed the Bon Marche department store, she said she wanted to get a handkerchief and she'd be back in a moment. He waited some time, then went in to look for her. She was nowhere to be found. He learned next day at the railway ticket office she had turned her ticket in on one for Skagway, Alaska, so he came home without her.

On his return he came to my store and told me the story — saying he'd like me to sell his furniture, and which was all disposed of except the sewing machine which had been sold but not yet delivered when lo! Who should walk in but Mr. and Mrs. Sinclair. They asked me to deliver the sewing machine back to their house and they'd buy new furniture to start again. This was maybe three months or four after he had returned without her.

A year or so later he had enough to go east to study for his heart's desire but had to get a senior matriculation before entering university. This he was obtaining at Owen Sound Collegiate.

He was great at any kind of sport he took up — football, baseball, lacrosse, curling and others, he excelled in them all. Pitching in a game for the Collegiate baseball team one day, he was hit behind the ear with a batted ball that all but broke his skull.

Little by little his hearing started to fail him, but he struggled on. When he had three years in at his medical course, his wife was cutting up badly again. He had come from a very moral family in Gravenhurst, and his folks were very highly respected. A sister was married to a minister high up in his church and altogether such a thing as a divorce in the family would all but kill the

aged parents. She threatened to advertise in the hometown paper that she was suing for a divorce, as was the custom in that province, unless he gave her every dollar he had left. Rather than disgrace his people, he gave her what he had and he had to leave university to work a year to get funds to continue his studies.

Meantime the regulations were changed to lengthen the medical course from four to five years. When he returned to the seat of learning, his doctor professors told him his hearing had deteriorated to such an extent that he could not diagnose disease properly or use a stethoscope. So here was another heartache.

He then learned to be a worker in marble, doing scroll work, and was very proud of the job he did on the marble pillars in the front of the Bank of Commerce on Yonge Street in Toronto.

But war breaking out in 1914 stopped all building, so again he was frustrated. What to do now!

During his university days and the past year he had been hanging out a great deal in a drug store in Parkdale subdivision, being very friendly with the owner. Discussing his state of affairs together, the druggist told him that, with his knowledge of medicine, he could graduate from the pharmacy college in six months and for the time spent around the store he would give him an apprenticeship certificate and he'd be a full-fledged druggist. After graduation, he went to Vancouver where his aged mother lived with his sister, the minister's wife. He soon got work in a drug store but his hearing was worse than ever and it was with difficulty he could take phone orders and one day a lady told him to get someone who knew what she was talking about. This was the last straw. He quit the drug business and went up the coast to a large logging camp where he was timekeeper and first aid man with a salary of \$125.00 and board per month — very big for those days of 1915.

A year or two later he took a trip from Prince Rupert to Edmonton on the C.N.R. and down to McLeod on the C.P.R. He was looking for a location where he could start a drug store of his own, thinking his deafness would not be such a hindrance in a small town. He could find no place with any prospects of making a living unless a drug store was already established.

Back to Vancouver, he was advised to go to the Palmer School of Chiropractic to learn that profession. This he did, and after practising in Vancouver for a

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while, obtained a position of masseur at Harrison Hot Springs Hotel. After several years there, he returned to Vancouver and got on with the Workmen's Compensation Board as he had a certain skill other practitioners did not have. He had married again at Harrison Hot Springs — a young Scottish girl — and was very happy with her. Later he went to Chilliwack and practiced there until his death about 1952.

He was a grand fellow and his tragic life often made me think how the impulses of youth often ruin their lives.

While on the subject of red light houses, after Dutch Liz married Billy McNeish, Frankie Harron came from Vancouver to take over. She was a very pretty woman who, when living at home in that city, was reported to be the prettiest girl there. Except for her moral downfall caused, it was reported, by an unfaithful lover, she was a very fine well-behaved, well-mannered woman.

Another landlady here when I came was Georgie Lee. She was the saddest faced woman one could see. Whatever could drive a woman of her type into that harried business I do not know.

Another place was run by a tall woman called "Stilts." She wasn't long here, but at the station a few years afterwards, she came out on the steps to take a look around and as I passed she put her finger to her mouth so I'd be careful what I said to her for she likely had a husband by this time and didn't want to be given away.

Minnie McBride took over from Georgie Lee, as she had operated at Donald for many years, but with the moving of the divisional point from that station to Field in 1898, it became a ghost town, so she had to go elsewhere.

She was a big-hearted woman but never dolled up like the others. She fed dozens of cats and dogs because she could not see any animal go hungry.

A traveller told me soon after I came that he was in Golden one trip over the weekend. He sold shoes for a Toronto firm and Charlie Warren suggested they go down to Frankie Harron's. Besides room and board receipts, the madam's income was added to by the sale of drinks. So, on arrival at the house, Charlie took over the bar and sold the drinks. An English remittance man was playing the piano and next night Charlie asked him to go to church with him, and there was the Englishman playing the organ and, at collection time

Charlie passed the plate too — so he said he thought each was in his right place as from the night before.

Later, when the town got down to one house and orders went over the province to close all down in unincorporated towns, the local police told the madam, Helen Marrs, how to continue to operate — to register as a rooming house; keep a couple of girls as chambermaids; and that no action could be taken if the girls went into different rooms. This she did for some years but she told me she paid \$25.00 per month protection, and that was in the '30s when that was a lot of money.

But finally she became very old. Her house was not looked after so she was reduced to what she made selling drinks. In 1952 I was summoned to the Government Office here where some special judge was sitting on old age pension applications without any proof of age. I was asked several questions about her. I told them when she first came to Golden — that she looked then about thirty-five years of age — went away a couple of times, once to Atholmer where she was a madam, and from my dates and figures it was deduced that she was then eighty-one years of age. This happened to exactly coincide with what she claimed to be. She had reported her birthdate as March 1871.

About 1955 her house burned down which ended a history of eighty years of red light houses in Golden.

After the fire, the old lady was put into the local hospital for several months and, having become senile, often passed judgement on the nurses and maids as to whether she "would keep them on." "The boys won't go for you," she'd often say.

Since discharged from the local hospital she has been in a home for old ladies in Vernon and one of the nurses there told she still passes judgement at times on the girls in the institution.

Her story of early life was that she was attending a parochial school in Guelph, Ontario. A young fellow came along who swept her, at the age of fifteen, right off her feet. He took her to Chicago, married her, and within a year left her with a new-born daughter. The child she put in a home and she said she went into the only way open to her to earn enough to pay the expenses of the child. This she continued to do for many years and until the daughter reached maturity.

Baptiste Morgeau, mentioned earlier in this narrative told me he was Golden's first merchant. He was either a first or second Indian cross so that I am



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not sure whether he was half or three-quarters Indian. At all events, he was a fine, intelligent gentleman who was born in the Windermere district in 1846. He died in 1942 at the grand old age of 96 years.

Then the Lang family started a store in 1885; Carlin and Lake in 1891, the latter being in a very large building known as "The Big Store."

G. B. McDermot took over the Lang business with financial assistance from Mr. H. E. Forster. Later this became the Golden and East Kootenay Trading Co. Ltd. They had a new store building of enormous size for the times — 110 x 45', three stories and full basement — almost finished when it burned down on May 4th, 1904. Then they decided to give up business here and sold the stock to my then boss, Mr. C. A. Warren who that year built the store now operated as Barlow's Department Store.

Carlin & Lake ran into financial difficulties and failed. Mrs. Lake had been ill in a Chicago hospital for two or three months and was so low Mr. Lake stayed until she was able to come home and he told that in his absence, so much had been bought the firm could not meet their obligations and there was nothing to do but go into bankruptcy. Mr. Lake had managed the store while his partner was manager of a sawmill company. Both were very popular gentlemen, Mr. Carlin weighing about 350 pounds and as good natured as anyone could be.

H. G. Parson continued the business till about 1918 when he too was in so deep there was no hope of recovery and the Imperial Bank had the stock disposed of. The "Big Store" was empty for several years when the building was purchased by Ray Gould for the lumber that was in it — for \$250.00. About fifty thousand feet was salvaged and piled up nicely for removal but soon someone, at a noonday, tossed a lighted cigarette close by and in a few minutes the debris was ablaze to such an extent that none of the valuable lumber was saved. And so ended an old landmark and the "Big Store," which if operated properly, should have paid big dividends. So that the original Warren and Durick business is now the only one continuously operated since that early year in the town's history, 1886.

Mr. Durrick withdrew from the business in 1893 and went to join Wm. Carlin at Fort Steele as Carlin and Durick. Warren continued till 1st of March, 1925, when he sold to Thomas King, who, as mentioned

before, had come to keep his books and look after the post office.

I came to know so many and met them all as they came in to settle in any part of the valley.

On October 1st, 1957, Mr. Fred Barlow took over the business which must be now about the oldest privately-owned business in the west in continuous operation.

Mr. Warren never married but had lots of lady friends. He was, however, pretty close-fisted and wasn't very generous with them. Two of them ran quite large store bills with him though, and I, knowing the relationship, didn't feel it incumbent on me to press the husbands for payment of their accounts, and which, up to the time I left Mr. Warren to go into business for myself on September 1st, 1905, had not been paid — and, I am sure, never were. I could hardly charge these to bad debts, and in the six years and three months I had charge of the office there was only one other account unpaid — that being in the amount of \$75.00 owed by a C.P.R. wiper who was transferred and lost track of. What a record! And how it speaks volumes for the honesty of the early settlers as against nowadays when every store loses thousands each year because so many have lost that sense of responsibility.

But to illustrate how stingy Mr. Warren was with his women, I'll tell this little incident. Naturally, being the bookkeeper, I opened all mail not marked "personal" and one evening, after I had sorted the mail that came down on the horse and democrat from Windermere, I was going through the letters for the store when one indicated it wasn't on store business but was too interesting to set aside for Mr. Warren so I finished reading it. It was from a lady living about thirty miles south and she told him she'd be down the next Tuesday evening. (Mail came in Friday evenings and went south Sunday mornings).

There was no warehouse at the time behind the main store and she went on to say that at nine o'clock Tuesday evening she'd rap at the back door and, his rooms being just above, he would hear her and let her in. She told him she could not stay after twelve o'clock as the lady — naming her — where she'd stay while in town, might suspect something. And she wound up by saying, "You know you said you'd pay my expenses anytime I'd come to town."

Not long after I read this letter Mr. Warren came into the office and I told him about the personal letter, that I had read it because after starting it it was too

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interesting to discontinue. After he read it his only remark was, "I never said I'd pay her expenses." Now wasn't he cheap! She'd have come in with a neighbour or one of their own horses and the "expenses" might be only livery barn charges of a dollar a day or so.

But I got off the track a bit when I came to the homestead of Mr. Baptiste Paul as far as settlement of the valley south of the last three mentioned. Mr. H.E. Forster bought several thousand acres on the west side of the river about opposite Radium station. He was a very wealthy gentleman at the time, having a reported income of \$40,000 per year. He had spent a year or more looking over different parts of B.C. for a home location but thought the one he chose on the Columbia was nearest his desires. He had many men work for him and owned a steam launch on the river, Jack Kirkpatrick being the engineer.

Later he married a very fine young lady, a daughter of the superintendent of his developments and a couple of businesses he owned, the Golden and East Kootenay Co. at Golden and the Peterborough Trading Co. at Wilmer.

In 1912 he was elected to the Provincial legislature but did not offer himself at the next election of 1916.

He always had an interest in developing mining properties and in this was very unsuccessful as it was a big gamble in those pre-diamond drilling days. He had many miners developing a property on the Upper Arrow Lake and near the village of Beaton, and another property across the U.S. border at Republic, Wash. These operations drained him of practically all of his funds and his property fell into the hands of the Imperial Bank for loans advanced and became almost bankrupt. He had owned the big farm on the east side of the river as well — known then as East Firlands — and the large one he was developing, and containing over 8,000 acres, as West Firlands.

He eventually came to a very sad end, being murdered by a young Indian hardly out of his teens.

His being elected to the Legislature indicates the esteem in which he had been held throughout the valley. It was both sad and unfortunate in so many ways, his business deals deprived him his capital for the valley lost what would have been a show place when the plans were accomplished that he had for his land holdings. So his adversity was indeed sad, and so was his ending.

A Mr. Perry had a small holding on the west side of the river farther up but its development was small. He

lived there many years, and when 71 years of age, lost a hand by some ailment that entered it and a doctor had to cut it off. At the time, he was greatly enthused over some land he had bought in the Isle of Pines in the West Indies where living was very cheap and the climate salubrious to his way of thinking and where he could live on his means quite satisfactorily as long as he might last. He was full of high spirits even under his new handicap and his advanced years. That was the last time I saw or heard of him and that was about 1927.

I overlooked a couple of settlers who, though they had some land, were not interested in it other than to live there. Mr. Bert Lowe had a log cabin close by the river across from Spillimacheen and did mostly packing with horses into mining claims. He was a very small man, not weighing much over 100 pounds, and a story about him goes that he was out in the mountains with a mining engineer by the name of Pat Cummings, reported to have been a big strong man. They had to cross the Columbia, which was low at the time, and there was a place to ford nearby so Cummings suggested he would carry Bert across, as there was no use of both getting wet. So Bert got on his back and when near the other side, Cummings looked up and said, "Oh, you are there, Bert. I had forgotten all about you." That was too much for fiery little Bert who proceeded to inflict what punishment he could on Cummings while still aboard him and until the latter set him on the bank on the other side.

Bert had come to Golden with the railroad (main line) construction, and for the most part was a mail courier for the men along the right of way. The mail would be sent along from Calgary as far as construction cars could carry it; thence by horseback in summer and dog team when snow called for that type of transportation. It was he with whom Mr. Aylmer, who was the resident engineer for the railway company, and whom I mentioned earlier as being the Federal engineer for river and lake transportation, was speaking when Golden's name was chosen. It was while Bert Lowe was on this work that, one day on his arrival at Mr. Aylmer's office, the latter asked him for the news along the line since his last trip in and he told him of the camp previously known as Carlin's Camp (where Mike Carlin was making ties for the laying of the rails) had changed the name to Silver City, whereupon Mr. Aylmer said, "Well, we'll go them one better. We'll call our camp 'Golden City'. And first



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records I found in the post office after I took over my work there were of that name from 1886 to 1888. After the latter year the "City" was dropped by the post office department and the name shortened to Golden.

Bert was a very intelligent little fellow and I guess a man of his small stature has a lot to overcome mentally.

A neighbour (maybe a mile or so away) Mr. Alex MacAulay, had a homesite, but only just a place to come back to. He was an enthusiastic prospector — as which one wasn't — held a lot of claims of his own and did assessment work on other people's claims whereby he was able to make his living, and since his demise it is reported that some of his copper claims were sold at quite a high figure.

This covers the settlers in the valley from Golden south to the crossroads to Athalmer as I remember them. This village just referred to, had only been started on my arrival. Mr. Jim McKay spent considerable money endeavouring to boost the townsite but, though it mushroomed for a while, its topography was against it as the land was low and most of it subject to flooding.

Mr. McKay started a sawmill, established a village electric lighting plan, but, at the time to no avail.

Previous to starting the village the flats were called "The Salmon Beds."

Mr. McKay's history and activities deserve more mention here as his mind was always full of business wherein he could see financial returns. Around the year 1907, he conceived the idea that the half-desert land close to his farm holding could be brought under cultivation if some large company developed it through an irrigation system with the water brought several miles from the South Vermillion Creek where plenty of water flowed to irrigate all the land tributary to it. He therefore contacted Mr. C. A. Warren and together they went to see Mr. A. B. McClinaghan, then manager of the Imperial Bank at Golden and they made this arrangement — Mr. McKay was to apply for as much land as he thought advisable to the Provincial Lands Department, he to finance Government payments by giving notes to Mr. Warren who in turn endorsed the notes and the Bank discounted them and checks issued Mr. McKay for the proceeds. In this way, several thousands of acres were acquired and Mr. McKay made a deal for the disposal of the land to the Dominion Trust Co. of Vancouver, who formed a subsidiary company called the Columbia Valley

Orchards Ltd. This company became very active, surveying the land into small farm holdings — the village of Edgewater planned and a headquarters house and office building erected.

An irrigation system whereby the water was brought several miles at a reported cost of \$350,000, and agents were appointed to sell the land at quite high prices at the time, reported up to \$250 per acre plus annual fee for irrigation.

Many people bought the plots as laid out and the land, with the help of the water, "blossomed like a rose." The company developed a demonstrative plot themselves and in September 1912 exhibited vegetables at the Golden Agricultural Fair the like of which many old timers remarked they had never seen better grown anywhere. I recall they had mangles that would weigh over twenty pounds — and all vegetables shown were a credit to the producers for their quality. They did not put any of their exhibits into competition, but just to demonstrate what the land could produce.

While ventually it did not turn out to be an orchard district, still I think they were sincere in thinking so at the time. The company only lasted a few years because the parent company, The Dominion Trust, went into receivership so the C.V.O., as the Edgewater company was known, had to fail with it. The President of the Dominion Trust, either by accident or intention apparently knew what was coming and, getting out of his car after a hunting trip, his gun went off and killed him. The coroner's jury gave a verdict of accidental death but the insurance company thought differently as only three weeks previously Mr. Arnold, the president, had placed a \$75,000 policy on his life and which the company refused to pay. However, the widow sued through the courts and obtained judgement for the full amount.

Several other trust companies went into liquidation about the same time. They gambled with trust funds, contrary to government regulations as to how trust money may be invested. For security reasons, these may only be gilt-edged. Here is how they operated. One Trust company I held considerable stock in, purchased Prince George town lots agreements of sale. The town at the time, was booming, not long after the railway was built through. Lots were subdivided for a large city and sold on 20% payments down. The trust company I was interested in would buy these agreements of sale covering the balance due at big discounts. A lot which sold for \$300 would have say

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\$60.00 paid down and \$240.00 due. The vendors would accept maybe \$150 for the agreement, which mostly carried 6% to 8% interest. So it looked like a good business deal. But thousands of the lot purchasers paid no more as the boom broke, and with no sale for the lots, the Trusts suffered heavy losses, besides their officers breaking the law on how they could invest.

And so the Dominion Trust, and in which company Mr. McKay had invested a lot of money. It was locally reported at one time after the selling of the land he had disposed of, he was worth \$300,000 — a grand fortune for those days. Out of the deal too, as per agreement, Mr. McClenaghan and Mr. Warren received \$20,000 each for their assistance in financing the scheme.

Some years after the C.V.O. was no more and the lands had reverted to the provincial government for non-payment of taxes, Doctor Geddes of Kelowna, his brother of Vancouver, and a Doctor Thompson of the same city acquired all the reverted holdings comprising the Edgewater townsite and about 15,000 acres of land for a sum reported to have been in the neighborhood of \$46,000. This included the irrigation system.

Doctor Geddes was in charge of development and sales for several years, being succeeded later by his brother and then his son. Much of the occupied land has now become a garden spot, with lush crops of whatever they desire to grow. The community has grown and developed greatly, most of the raw land of the company's holdings is now owned by the Kirk Christmas Tree Company and which will be a permanent industry for the district.

Around the Lake Windermere country there was much more settlement of land holders. Walker and Arthur Tegart, brothers; Ed Clarke; Colin MacKay (now Elkhorn); Paddy Ryan; Ed and Jim Johnston; Wellington Kimmee; Capt. and Hugh Gordon; Dave Morman; and many others. A Mr. Hope Johnstone filed on the now Elkhorn Ranch land in 1884, the first application on land in the Windermere district.

The principal interest in the valley's economy at the time of my arrival, was in prospecting for and developing mines. When I arrived at Golden, many prospectors were in the hills and, of a summer evening, their fires to cook their evening meal and to keep them company as much as to keep them warm, could be seen in many places along the Selkirks that stand so magnificently along the west side of the placid Columbia.

It was fairly easy to sell a mining claim in those days. Then the buyer took the chances and would appraise the values on samples either taken from the vein or from the float found below it. Many were bought for as low as \$500.00 and few in the Golden division brought over \$1,000.00.

In 1903 a company started operating around the Golden district in a big way. They were known as the "Laborers' Company", their full name being The Labourers Co-Operative Gold, Silver and Copper Mining Company. For the most part, the officers were of Swedish extraction and, while some meant well, the president, a Lutheran minister, had other ideas. He went throughout the Scandinavian sections of the North Mid-Western States, preaching in the churches on Sundays and always mentioning the company of which he was president — how they had so many mining claims, profits from which were going to be very large but that ten percent of the amounts were going to be donated to the Lord. So, in this way, he raised a reported amount of \$3,000,000.

I don't think the Lord got much but Mr. Nylund got his share.

He worked it this way.

Instead of paying cash for claims he bought many for large blocks of shares — often 10,000 to 25,000 per claim. Then he'd buy these shares from the prospectors for 1 1/2 cents or two cents per share. Then, instead of selling developments shares at the going price first at 60c, later at 75c, he'd sell his own shares bought at the above low prices.

It was reported he built two office buildings in Chicago with his unfairly gathered gains but died before receiving any returns from these investments. But there is this to be said, if he had sold company shares the money would have gone down the drains whereas there were two office buildings of value to heirs and to Chicago.

Many officials of this company were fully honest and thought the properties would eventually be profitable. But they were inexperienced in mining operations and, as was to be expected, there were no returns whatever.

They built a smelter on Hospital Creek which only ran one evening in October 1905. They also developed a townsite nearby but all their holdings reverted for unpaid taxes except a building they erected for store, offices and lodge purposes. This was bought about 1908 by the Oddfellow's Lodge.



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While we usually have pretty severe winters, they are tempered by the low humidity of the valley air and altogether it is a very healthy place to live. In the early years of the village coming into being, a man stepped off a train while it waited a few minutes at the station and asked a local resident, a Mr. Reuben Patton, if this was a healthy place in which to live, received the reply that they had to murder a man to start a cemetery. It was the truth that a man who had been murdered was the first to be buried here.

Till I reached real old age I was a pall bearer at many funerals. The one of strangest incidence is still vivid in my mind. I won't mention the proper names as descendants still call here at times to visit haunts of their youth.

A very popular young fellow left here soon after I came to Golden but his elder brother continued to live here as, being a married man, he could not follow tales of riches of far away fields. Well, about ten years later, brother Bob returned to live in a tent in his brother's yard. He had developed TB. He allowed his whiskers to grow for throat protection and when he died, I was a pallbearer and at the funeral, sat in the front row of seats. The older brother was a heavy drinker but could carry it well physically, but it affected him mentally this particular day. After the service and before the coffin was removed, the lid was lifted for a last farewell look at the face of the departed brother. The elder one came up to the front and putting his fingers through the whiskers, said quite out loud, "Damn, but he's cold." He went back down the aisle and tried to persuade a married daughter to come up and "feel how cold he is," but she ignored him. Then he asked his two young sons by a later marriage, hardly yet in their teens, to come up and "see how cold he is." Of course, at that young age they did as their father requested and they too fingered through the whiskers to see how cold he was, but they passed no remarks.

What a fool too much liquor makes of an otherwise fine intelligent person.

At another funeral a few years earlier in my time here, the funeral director — a side line here those days, as deaths were months apart — was so tight he overlooked going to a minister at all and the victim, having no people here, they took the body to the cemetery and lowered it into the grave and covered it over with no religious ceremony at all. When the Anglican minister heard of this he went to the

cemetery and, alone, held a funeral service for looks sake — or maybe peace of mind.

Nowadays, Supreme Court cases are heard in Cranbrook or Vancouver for this district but years ago they were held in Golden — even before the Old Court House had been moved here from Donald.

The first fall after my arrival, an old man was tried for killing a half-breed up near the headwaters of the Canoe River. This trial was held in the "Columbia Hall" of the hotel belonging to Mr. Wm. McNeish.

The old fellow claimed he killed him in self defence as he was trapping that district and the breed coveted it, and when the latter was raising his gun to shoot him, he dodged behind a tree close by, readied his own gun, and shot the breed. He was jailed till the fall assizes and in the meantime the Government sent in our local doctor, J.N. Taylor, and with a Mr. Jack Evans as guide to see if his story had any corroboration as to the tree and whether the direction of the bullet could have been as claimed.

They were gone several weeks, as it was a long tedious trip those days, over a narrow trail. They rode horseback all the way through as streams had to be forded.

The local lawyer, Mr. Thomas O'Brien, a very clever but at times a very heavy drinker, made a wonderful emotional plea for the old fellow and it was reported had the members of the jury in tears and the verdict of "Not guilty" was rendered.

My office window faced the street and a few minutes later I saw the very pale, white haired old fellow pass up the street, walking in the middle of the road. His family lived in the State of Arkansas to which place he left on the next train.

The next murder case was for the killing of "The Banjo Kid" in a girlie house in Wilmer. I forget at the moment the murderer's name. He had drifted into Golden the year before with a young lad and, after doing all the work offered here, the latter went back this home State of Indiana and the elder partner, maybe 35, went to Wilmer — then still called Peterborough.

The painter was both a banjo and guitar player and sang a bit and jealousy sprang up between the two, both over the playing and one of the girl inmates and the painter pulled a gun and shot the Banjo Kid, a man of around 32 years of age. A constable brought the killer down on the mail and passenger stage to the horror of the other passengers who had to ride with him the two days it took the horses to get to Golden

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from Windermere. This fellow, all the way down, tried to play insane and scared the passengers half to death.

His trial was at Golden where he still tried to act crazy but it didn't work and he was given life imprisonment. After a few years in the penitentiary at New Westminster he was transferred to Kingston. Some few years later, while painting the roof of a penitentiary building, he fell off and was killed.

A scion of a noble English family took up land on the west side of Columbia Lake in the early 1890's — a Mr. Lascelles, cousin of the deceased husband of the Princess Royal. He kept a Chinese cook and at the time of which I write (about 1902) had carpenters in the house making some improvements to his home. They were awakened in the middle of the night by gun shots. Lascelles had become unbalanced and had shot his cook.

Brought to Golden, Doctor Taylor adjudged him insane and after about six months in an institution at New Westminster was allowed to leave and he went to Australia.

Not long after, maybe 1905, a young Italian boy was tried for the murder of a Scotchman. Both worked on a C.P.R. crew and lived in the same work cars. The boy, about 19 or 20, could speak practically no English and the members of the crew teased him unmercifully till one evening it got so bad the boy picked up a wrench and hit the Scotchman over the head, killing him. The verdict was "Justified Homocide." The C.P.R. doctor, Doctor Cross, who had given evidence and was sitting next to me when the verdict was brought in, remarked under his breath, "A white man's verdict."

The boy was freed at once and went up to Horse Creek where he stayed a while with Tony Pelligreno and Mike Degrazio.

In such a small community matters of this kind were of great interest and with the daily doings, time never seemed to lag. Many young men had saddle horses. There were about 30 canoes stored in the different boat houses, and one or two sail boats. Tommy O'Brien, the lawyer, had a nice little gas launch that carried a dozen or more, and it was like the carriage in the song, "with the fringe on top."

We had several "remittance men," young fellows who, for the most part, disgraced an aristocratic family in the Old Country —

generally because of their fondness for drink — so they were sent out here and remitted monthly allowances.

The most colorful, though, was a Canadian whose people lived in Montreal. He had been a Captain in the Canadian Army in the Boer War and developed such a desire for strong drink and being under its influence so much, his people had him legally adjudged incapable of handling his money, but they would let him buy anything he wanted to and it would be paid for by his solicitors.

He came west to Calgary, but sometimes would venture into the streets while intoxicated so the police had him interdicted. Next day he boarded a train for Golden — and was he ever a payroll!

He lived at the Columbia Hotel — at the time belonging to Mr. Ullock. He drank two bottles of champagne every morning before getting out of bed.

He would stroll around the stores, buying anything that took his fancy and his store accounts, I am sure, averaged \$2,000.00 per month and his hotel bill \$700.00 (at a time when room and board in a hotel was \$25.00 per month). Bills up to \$250.00 could be paid from Calgary — beyond that they were paid from Montreal. I recall one month his bill at Warren's store was something over \$1800.00.

The first New Years he was here some members of a C.P.R. crew stationed at Lake Louise came to spend the day at Golden and one, a Scotchman, brought his bagpipes along. The Captain immediately hired him at \$75.00 per month and hotel board and room (store clerks were getting \$50.00 per month and paying their own board).

They went to a local tailor and were measured for Highland suits to be made in Toronto — \$250.00 for the piper's; \$750.00 for the Captain's. They were sure beautiful costumes, but the Captain not having good control one afternoon, fell off the sidewalk into a low dry ditch and up went the kilts exposing more than the law allows so the police kept him confined at their place till he sobered up somewhat and gave orders not to wear the suit again without trunks — that he wasn't in the army now.

It was reported the only day he was sober in the two or three years he lived here was when expecting a sister out from Montreal to spend the summer. He had a gas launch too and took the sister up the river on it but on his return made up for the couple of days he had eased off. A local lawyer and some friends (?) persuaded him to make a will from which they all were to benefit — the friends, \$6,000 each; the lawyer, \$8,000 and his secretary \$3,000. Fortunately, he was



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later up around Lake Windermere and Mr. Bruce had him make a "last will and testament," not knowing, good luck, about the grafters having had him make one. So when he died at the early age of 35 years and the Bruce will turned up, was the Golden crowd angry! Mr. Bruce had him turn everything over to his own people.

It was reported, to save any publicity, they gave the lawyer, the same Tommy O'Brien referred to earlier, a couple of thousand dollars as he threatened to sue or make a claim for services. The latter, too, died as did the Captain, of pneumonia brought on from a protracted drunk. The Captain died in Golden. O'Brien, who was 38, died in Spokane.

We were nearly all fairly young in those days and so there never seemed to be a dull hour as frontier and pioneer life seems to have always satisfied in itself. So pioneer it was that for a few years after I came to the valley, even the only highway there was then — that to Windermere and further on — had gates across it to keep horses from straying too far afield. One was just a few yards south of Charlie Cartwright's at Carbonate (now McMurdo). The next, near Brisco — the third one, at Sinclair, close by the MacKay Ranch. As many horses were bought in the Windermere country and taken north to Golden, they would not get too far on the way back to the place they felt was home before being held by the gates.

Early after the turn of the century the Federal Government installed a telephone line between Golden and the Windermere district, the southern "central" being in Wilmer. The first lineman was a man who was dismissed from the C.P.R. as an operator because of his drinking. His name was Vivian Dunn, but locally spoken of as "Batty" Dunn. Well, he married an English lady after getting this job and lived at Spillimacheen to be about the centre of his work. He still kept to the drink and many times abused his poor wife who was not a strong woman at best. Finally a neighbour who lived where the Dunne's live now, could stand it no longer. He took Dunn to the river's brink one day after hearing further tales of these misdemeanors, and pushed his head into the water saying, "Will you ever abuse your wife again?"

"No, no."

But he received several duckings before Mr. Bob Milligan let him off to go home in shame to his wife.

Mrs. Dunn later died and he enlisted in the First War and left his trunk in my barn with his few worldly

possessions but, locally, he was never heard from again.

It may have been against the law for Mr. Milligan to do what he did, but it surely pleased everybody.

As I write this page (February 23, 1963) (and rewritten February 1965) there is a federal election in the offing. What a large constituency East Kootenay was in on my arrival here. The previous election had been held in June, 1896 when Sir Wilfred Laurier was head of the Liberal party, who were elected at that time. Mr. H. C. Rostock of Ducks, near Kamloops, had been elected to Yale riding, which took in all the territory from near Ashcroft to the Alberta boundary as well as to the U.S.A. line and north as far as B.C. extended.

I think B.C. had six members at that time. But what a riding to look after!

He was a wealthy English gentleman and it was said the election cost him \$50,000, it was so far flung.

For the next election, the Kootenays were separated from Yale as one riding and for two Parliaments, Mr. Wm. Gallagher of Nelson represented the Kootenays. Then Mr. Goodeve, a druggist of Rossland was elected in the 1911 election when the Liberals had made a reciprocity agreement for freer exchange of goods between Canada and the U.S.A. But the Conservatives brought out the old flag — shadow pictures of the ten-year-gone Queen Victoria and Sir John A. MacDonald — played on voters patriotism, and asked how ten million Canadians could compete with one hundred million Americans, and to the unthinking, this proved too much and Sir Wilfred Laurier's Liberal Government went down to defeat. Strange to say, the new Government approached Washington to try to make a similar arrangement.

For the election of 1917, the Kootenays were divided into two ridings — East Kootenay and West Kootenay. At this election, another druggist, living in Fernie, was elected. This was fought on the issue of compulsory military service, as the First World War was still in the balance. The issue split the Liberal party and those of them who wanted conscription went with the Conservatives into the Union Party.

It was really to get more recruits from Quebec this measure was being put forward. Sir Wilfred claimed he could get more by voluntary enlistment than by coercion. Later it was proven this to be right as eligible young men were shielded and even hidden so that in that province nothing was gained by conscription and

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voluntary enlistment was so successful that it wasn't necessary for the other provinces. However, it did get many not willing to bear their duty.

That Government only lasted one Parliament and the two parties again went back as before. In 1922, Mr. Beattie, another druggist, this time of Cranbrook, was elected under the Liberal banner but, as the new Premier Mr. MacKenzie King, wanted Doctor King, then representing the Cranbrook riding in the Provincial House and Minister of Public Works in that Government, to take the same portfolio at Ottawa, an arrangement was made whereby Mr. Beattie retired and Doctor King represented East Kootenay at Ottawa until 1930 when he was appointed to the Senate and a mine superintendent from Fernie was elected to represent East Kootenay against the Liberal candidate, a Mr. Guimont. Again a switch was made. The newly elected member was prevailed upon to resign to make room for a seat for Mr. H. H. Stevens, defeated in Vancouver, and whom Hon. R.B. Bennett, the newly elected Prime Minister at Ottawa, wanted as his Minister of Trade and Commerce.

Later Mr. Stevens was discharged from his office for talking out of turn at a meeting in Toronto about an investigation held on price spreads and before the report had been presented to the Government. Out of this quarrel, Mr. Stevens formed a new party called the "Reconstruction Party." This organization put 198 candidates into the field at the election of 1935 but Mr. Stevens was the only one who was elected and that because the Conservatives of Cranbrook had pledged their support to Mr. Stevens and no Conservative opposed him. A Rev. Mr. J. P. Westman, retired minister, was sent up from Vancouver to run as a Conservative. He called on the president of the party, Mr. Bowness, who replied when informed he had come to Cranbrook for the above purpose, and not knowing him to be a minister, "The Hell you are". He returned to Vancouver the next day.

For the 1940 election there was a three party contest, Rev. Mr. Matthews ran as a C.C.F.; Mr. E.K. Stewart, owner of the Trites Woods business and both of Fernie, and Doctor McKinnon of Cranbrook. Because of their profession, doctors have a greater advantage, other things being equal, and though there was a very close contest shown in the votes cast for each candidate, the doctor was elected. He did not run in 1945 when Mr. Matthews was elected over Mr. John

O'Neill, a druggist of Kimberley, and Mr. Archibald of Creston.

In the election of 1949, Mr. James Byrne won in a close fight against the C.C.F. candidate and previous member, Rev. Mr. Matthews. The Conservative was an also-ran.

Mr. Byrne was also elected in 1953 and 1957 but defeated in the "Follow John" election of 1958 by Murray McFarlane, the Conservative candidate.

In the June 1962 election, Mr. Byrne was again elected and as I write these lines is again seeking the support of the electorate — and is expected to receive it — at an election called for April 8th, 1963.

The first election after the Provincial riding of Columbia was established was in 1898. Mr. Wm. Neilson (brother of the chocolate bar magnate of that day) was elected over W.C. Wells of Palliser. Both were in the lumber business, the former being secretary of the Columbia River Lumber Company and living at Beavermouth, the then headquarters of the company and site of their largest mill, cutting 75,000 f.b.m. per day whereas the Golden mill only cut 45,000 at that time.

Mr. Neilson died within a year and Mr. Wells obtained the seat by acclamation. He was made Minister of Lands and Works.

One ran pretty much on his personality at the time as party politics were not introduced until 1903 when Sir Richard McBride became first Conservative Premier.

Mr. Wells was very proud when the people of Wilmer named their village after him when, after a couple of years as Peterborough, the post office department asked them to give them a less conflicting name. Mr. Wells name was Wilmer C. Wells and I think that pleased him as much as his appointment to the high office in the Cabinet. He was defeated in the election of 1906 by H. G. Parson who represented the riding until 1912 when Mr. Forster defeated him running as an Independent-Conservative with the backing of the Liberals. At that election the McBride Government was so popular there was no chance of electing a Liberal in this riding as in the whole province only one of that party became a Member of the House — Mr. Brewster, for a Vancouver Island riding.

In 1916 Mr. J. A. Buckham won over Doctor Taylor who at the time was in the Medical Corps at Salonika in Greece. Mr. Buckham held the seat through the



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elections of 1920, 1924, 1928, but died at 59 years of age in 1931.

Thomas King was elected in that year as a Liberal, as Mr. Buckham had been. At a redistribution of constituencies, the Conservative Government, acting on the request of the defeated candidate, the Columbia riding was divided between Revelstoke and Cranbrook because of the chagrin felt by Mr. F. W. Jones in getting his first set-back in his financially successful business life. Some of the Conservative Members would not lend themselves to such petty spite and voted against it when the Constitution Act was being amended.

Mr. Patullo, leader of the Opposition, put them to shame by his comments on their smallness told them he'd have control after the first election and about his first act after the House convened in January 1934, was to reinstate Columbia and he called a by-election amending the Act so there'd be no delay in the riding having representation. But there was no election, King going in by acclamation. He continued to represent the riding till 1952 and, being then 73 years of age, felt he should not seek re-election as he didn't expect to last through to 1956 as none of his people had lived that long; but he's still going fairly strong at this writing and bordering the age of 86.

After 1952 Mr. Orr Newton of Invermere represented the district till about ten days before this page was written when he passed away at the age of 57 years. So a by-election is in the offing, the result of which no one can presage. As the saying goes, "Nothing sure about an election or a horse race."

The opening of the Rogers Pass section of the Trans Canada Highway opened a new vista to progress in the village of Golden as the scenery is grand beyond description and makes the village the hub of probably the most spectacular mountain scenery to be found anywhere. The "loop" as the triangle trip is called from Golden to Radium Hot Springs, to over the Banff-Windermere to its junction with the Trans Canada and over the latter back to Golden, is one of the most gorgeous and breath-taking drives to be found anywhere in the world — or to Jasper, Banff, Revelstoke, and on through the Okanagan — all out from Golden, gives us who live here the world's greatest drives.

If the Mica Creek dam is ever built on the Columbia it would further add to the prosperity of the district during the several years of construction. But

the lake would cover a lot of timber-growing land and how it might effect the economy eventually I cannot prophesy. The cheaper and large supply of power might induce a pulp mill on the newly-made lake shore to be built to utilize the large quantities of wasted timber consequent on making lumber. However, as all the government timber land in this district is now being worked on a sustained yield basis, there will always be industry of that nature here for all time.

Donald settlement is coming back, but only as a shadow as it shone from 1885 to 1898. It was a divisional point on the C.P.R. during those years. Headquarters for the many railroad crews building snow sheds in the slide sections adjacent to Rogers Pass. Bridge crews, etc., etc. necessary to operation and upkeep of a trans-continental railroad. An early station agent told me that at one time 5000 men made their headquarters there — living in railroad cars, etc. It was a bustling place when I first saw it in April 1897. But after 1898 it died completely. For a while the C.P.R. kept an operator at the station and, of course, the section crew of a few men, but everything was vacated.

The employees of the railway company asked for compensation for loss of their houses but all that was granted them was free transportation of material salvaged from the taking down of any building, which was but a pittance of their original outlay. Houses were selling for \$50.00 and the land all reverted.

It was at this time the church now standing at Windermere was removed to that village while a couple of parishes were persuading the Bishop to let them have it. Mr. Rufus Kimpton, who had a store there in partnership with his brother-in-law, Mr. J. C. Pitts, had some men tear it down, load it on a flat car and taken to the dock at Golden for transportation by boat to Windermere. The bell was part of the material and the secretary of the boat company, Mr. C. H. Parson, father of our postmaster, told me he removed the bell from the scow on which the shipment was loaded. He tied a rope to it and tied the latter to a floating stick so as to easier remove it from its twelve feet of water the following day. It was, soon after, calling Anglicans to worship, or tolling for the passing of some local resident, and while there was demand made from Windermere for the bell, it hung in the belfry till 1960 when it was taken down to make some improvements in the church building. Before being replaced, some Windermere residents learned of its

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accessibility and one night about 11 o'clock, loaded it on a truck and took it to Windermere where it was on exhibition at the Fair grounds for the hundreds attending to see and learn its history anew. A placard on the truck read, "Stolen 1900; Repossessed, 1960". But their triumph was short-lived. The Bishop ordered it returned to Golden. Sixty years possession would indicate ownership.

There are six or seven denominations of religion holding regular services here now, but on my arrival there were four — Roman Catholic (priest held service about once in five weeks as none stationed here then), Anglican, Methodist, and Presbyterian. There were four hotels and four houses which are not now allowed. A stranger in the barber shop of Joe Lamontagne asked him what kind of a town this was and he said, "Most balanced town in Canada," telling him of the above and all having an even chance.

Golden has always been a good place for business far beyond that to be expected.

It was 1915 before K.C.R. trains went through to Cranbrook, and prior to that, settlers came to town with teams of horses during the months when the river was frozen and every night the livery barn was taxed for accommodation of the many teams being stabled there. The most I ever learned of being put up for the night was 48 teams. Twenty miles a day was as far as any cared to drive a freight outfit. Mostly they were two-horse teams but some used four-horse outfits.

Many hills were very hard on the horses, such as Dead Man's, North and South Vermillions, and Sinclair Creek. Poor brutes of horses were such faithful workers they'd pull their hearts out at the command of their drivers. A monument should be erected for them now they are not beasts of burden any longer but only the fancy types are raised for saddle, race, or show purposes.

Of the colourful men who have lived in Golden I consider the most so was a Mr. Orville D. Hoar who came here from Revelstoke in 1900, being originally a native of the State of Vermont. He was a promoter of mining properties and timber limits. Provincial regulations provided that individuals could only obtain land and timber in one section parcels, so when anyone wanted more they had to have others apply for it and, except for Mr. Hoar, "Thank you" was all the recompense they'd receive. Not so with him. He'd give the appliers \$500 to \$1500 each for the use of their names and then when he'd make a sale he'd take six or

eight of his friends to Banff for a two or three day holiday — all expenses paid. And then, to cover scores of lesser friends, he'd give a banquet at which would be entertainment to round out a grand evening till midnight or later.

For a time he was Superintendent of the Park at Field. I must leave it untold a little Peyton Place story in connection with his personal life while holding this position. But he surely pulled off a smooth scheme to get out of a mess he had gotten himself into. But it partly caught up with him later. With some other Golden citizens he was prospecting — mostly coal — and somehow shot himself in the leg while a mile and a half from the salt water shore but dragged himself to it and his partners found him dead there when they returned in the evening.

Next in color I would consider, was a manager of the Bank of Commerce who lived here three or four years in the early 1920's. He could sing, tell interesting stories, and was generally the life of the party and liked by everybody.

The most colourful lady I would consider to have been Jenny Wells, later Mrs. Cameron Brady. As a child she was the inspiration for Pauline Johnson's poem, "Golden of the Selkirks." She grew up to be a handsome lady, full of personality, clever, witty, and a wonderful pianist. But circumstances occurred that took her off the straight and narrow path and her excellence at the piano was her downfall.

There had come to Golden about 1903, a young man hardly out of his teens, to be a secretary for the Columbia River Lumber Co. His name was Jimmy Gunn, and a real smart bright-minded fellow he surely was — and a near Fritz Kreisler on a violin. A beautiful madam had a house in town at the time, who fell strongly for him and his moral fibre suffered badly and he and Jenny played the music for many dances and so were in frequent contact with one another and eventually they became very familiar with one another and a bright, hopeful life was shattered badly. The words of the poet who penned these lines could apply to her:

"Sin is a monster of such fierce mien  
As to be hated needs but to be seen.  
But seen too oft, familiar with her face,  
We first endure, then pity, then embrace."

Eventually she married as fine a young man as could be found the country over. He was a government engineer and, when he was transferred to another



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centre, she said her place was with her mother who had gone to Vancouver, so didn't live with him any more. The marriage had been a mistake as she only was looking for security as her father was suffering from an incurable affliction and the parents, too, wanted to see her settled before the father would cease to be.

How sad to think of such an opportunity through her wit and wisdom to lead a wonderful life for herself and her friends should have thus been tossed aside because she had allowed her moral strength to weaken. When young, I had admired her qualifications and personality so thoughts of how she let herself deteriorate sadden me even yet. For her, too, the poet could have written the poem, "What Could Have Been".

An incident occurred in June, 1904, that gave the town some notoriety. A local watch repairer had a little shop on a lot belonging to Mr. Green, owner of the Queens Hotel and just beside it. Wanting to make a conservatory where Mrs. Green could keep her house plants, he told the tradesman that he could have the building if he'd move it to some other place.

Without permission, he put it on a lot belonging to a man living in Vancouver, and not many feet from the front of C. A. Warren's store, which stood at that time, where the Big Bend Hotel now stands, and to get length, it ran parallel with the street and faced right toward this shack of a building which looked like an oversized out-house. Naturally, Mr. Warren was very put out about it, but was leaving town in a few days to attend a Grand Lodge meeting in Trail which would keep him away for a week or so. The day he left, he told me something was going to happen and that it should have been the night before but didn't know why it didn't, and I made a vague guess at what it was.

A couple of nights after, at about midnight, the town was awakened by a loud explosion and in the morning, as I passed the Queens Hotel stable, I saw the downhearted watchmaker picking up bits and pieces he could find of what remained. It was a pitiful sight.

The afternoon before, my brother, Sam, who clerked in the store, told me he found a box with several sticks of dynamite in it, so I told him what Mr. Warren had told me.

Our druggist of the day, Mr. Jack Buckham, was a daredevil, and discussing with Mr. Warren about the placing of the shack near his front door of the store, suggested it should be blown up. Never turning down a dare, Mr. Warren asked him if he'd do it. Sure, he'd do

it. The reason it was not done the night Mr. Warren expected was because too many people were astir that night. But the next night it was raining and gave a good opportunity to make the blow — without danger to anybody.

Whether from the skill of placing the dynamite or just good luck I don't know, but the concussion all went across the Kicking Horse River and cracked windows in the Mill Boarding House close by the Columbia River and didn't do that to windows in the Queens Hotel, not 60 feet across the street.

Mr. Buckham told me he cut the fuse long enough to get to his room in the Kootenay House, was undressed and looking out of the window to watch the result of his handiwork.

Next day the authorities made a few inquiries but not much of an investigation took place. But quite a bit of notoriety came to Golden over the incident because, as far distant as San Francisco heard of it and the next issue of The Weekly Examiner of that city, of which paper several subscribers received that publication here, reported it as a jewellery store that was blown — loss \$20,000.

A subscription list was passed around town next day after the blow and Mr. Buckham headed it with a \$20.00 donation and enough was gathered to start Mr. Alexander up in business again — but in another town.

Now while Mr. Buckham was a dare devil, he was a square shooter.

On one occasion, some devilry had been going on one night and a Chinaman was up before the Magistrate for some damage done and several of the boys about town went to hear the case, among them Mr. Buckham. When the case was heard, the court official fined the Chinaman \$50.00. Mr. Buckham stood up and told the magistrate that he, and not the Chinaman, had done the damage or committed the misdemeanour, and forthwith paid the fine without trial.

At another time, going along the front street late one night he went into a Chinese laundry. Feeling full of devilry, he went inside, kidded Sam Lee for a while, then pushed over his stove pipes and the soot drifted all over the clothes hanging on the lines. Next morning he went back, gave the fellow \$50.00 to wash the clothes over again, and pleased the laundryman to no end.

His exploits were many but he let no victim suffer from them financially.

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Physically, he had terrific strength. I recall one day on the C.P.R. station platform several of us were testing our strength on a piece of machinery belonging to a sawmill. It was a belt wheel with a four-inch shaft, but the latter projected about three feet on one side and less than a foot on the other so that lifting by the wheel, it didn't balance. For most of us the 260 pounds it weighed was about our limit. After we all had a try at it, Mr. Buckham came up the platform and said, "What's going on here?" We told him and he walked over and picked it up between his fingers and thumb but, because of the long end of the shaft unbalancing the lift, he had to raise it three feet to clear it from the platform as he was lifting by the face of the wheel. Such a feat of strength is seldom seen.

The names of some of the early settlers in the village were: F. W. Aylmer, engineer; J. C. Green, hotel keeper; Mr. Archer, Mr. Manuel Dainard, Walter Dainard, Mrs. Dainard Sr. (mother of Walter), the Lang family, Capt. Armstrong, the Connor family, John Gibson, Bobbie Wild, Gus and Fred Anderson, farmers; Sandy Campbell; Tom Sutherland; Richard Love; Frank Burnette; Wm. McNeish; James Henderson Sr.; Dr. Taylor; John Pratt; the Woodley family; Jacob Dalmadge; Wm. Kay; M. Carlin; Wm. Neish; Harry Connacher; C. W. Field, druggist; Frank Fields; Joe LaMontagne; C. A. Warren; Mr. Derrick; Mr. Kerfoot, livery; Tom Alton; G. B. McDermot; Mr. F. Harrison, mill superintendent; Mr. Barber, owner of Golden Lumber Co. and a private bank; C. E. Wells, C.P.R. Agent; the Moody family; W. L. Houston family; T. Mercier; Chas. and H. G. Parson and their parents, Capt. and Mrs. Parson; Alf Ottoson; Peter Lund; Peter White; George Foreman; E. A. Hagen, mining engineer and publisher of the Golden Era; Peter Sebastian; J. F. Hanna; Ed and Charlie Pierce; Dave and James Good; J. McHattie, blacksmith; Wm. Avery; George Rehder; the Bubar family.

Mr. J. E. Griffith was the first government agent. Father Cocolo came intermittently to the Roman Catholic Church; Rev. M. Turner was Anglican minister, Rev. J. P. Westman the Methodist, and Rev. Mr. Munro, Presbyterian.

In all the years since Golden first was it has been a good business town, far beyond what would be expected judging by its population, and now, with the amount of timber within trucking distances, the highway systems leading out from the village, and the prospects of the Mica Creek dam being built, its

economy seems assured for all time. The poem written by W. H. Longfellow is, too, quite appropriate to Golden:

"Wise was the choice which led our sires  
To kindle here their household fires  
And share the large content of all  
Whose lives in pleasant places fall.  
More dear as year on year advance  
We prize the old inheritance  
And feel, as far and wide we roam,  
That all we seek we leave at home."



