

a means of keeping track of the large number of adventurers entering this vast country. Ladoceur saw Cst. Thomas Curry who copied down the names of the five men and painted the number 3744 on the boat. Before dark, the party was underway.

Arriving at the same wharf about seven the next morning, Charles Mack was a little annoyed to learn that Forrest and Ladoceur, in company with three other Frenchmen, had left the previous evening. However, in canvassing others congregated on the wharf, he was able to hook up with another party bound for Dawson. And as he was also anxious to get to Dawson as soon as possible, Mack had cause to smile to himself near Hootalinqua—about 70 miles from Whitehorse—as his party overtook and passed the five Frenchmen who were camped on the river bank. Mack's party reached Dawson the following Monday, June 23, and it was two or three days later that he saw the two Frenchmen he had originally negotiated with to transport him to Dawson.

But after leaving Whitehorse, Forrest and Ladoceur were not in too much of a hurry. The following Sunday—June 22—they and their three companions called in at Mrs. Carrie Nelson's roadhouse and store, the "Savoy", at Selkirk, Yukon, and hung around for about an hour and a half before they showed any signs of taking to the river once again.

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Nearly 11 months had elapsed since the North-West Mounted Police files at Dawson had been officially closed on the Rolfe-Clayson-Olsen murder case which originated near Minto, Yukon, on Christmas Day 1899. This was by then a world-renowned case in which minute and painstaking evidence had been literally dug up by Police to weave a complete chain of circumstantial evidence around George O'Brien, finally sending him to the gallows at Dawson on Aug. 23, 1901.

The dogged determination shown by the Force in clearing up these brutal

murders had done much to enhance the prestige of the Mounted Police both in the Yukon country and throughout the rest of Canada. And in the words of Insp. W. H. Routledge, Officer Commanding old "B" Division, Dawson, in 1902: "the arrest, commitment, trial, conviction and ultimate hanging of George O'Brien in August 1901, was thought to have been the culmination of (major) crime in this country."

Although on the surface this appeared to be an extremely broad statement, it should not be interpreted to mean that Inspector Routledge thought for one minute that all crime in the Yukon had been wiped out. In a civilization such as that there was bound to be the usual number of thefts, robberies and even murders, but rather the Policeman was of the opinion that the particular type of crime which was so time-consuming, which required more manpower to cover all the various aspects of the offence and which swelled the public expenditure would be sharply curtailed when it was shown to what lengths the Force would go to bring the culprit to justice. But Inspector Routledge's opinion was to be rudely shattered, for very shortly, the Yukon once again was to be the scene of another shocking murder mystery.

On July 15, 1902, Cst. Albert James Cudlip of Indian River Detachment arrived at Dawson headquarters to report the finding of an unidentified male body in the river near that location. Insp. D. M. Howard was detailed to investigate, and the following day returned with the corpse to Dawson where it was examined by Dr. J. H. MacArthur. There was evidence of bullet wounds in the head and body and so a post-mortem was held and an inquest ordered.

There seemed to be nothing to identify the body until a small ring containing three keys and a badly water-smearred tag was found in one of the pockets of the clothing. The writing was extremely hard to decipher, but it resembled the words, "Couthiller, East Broughton, P.Q."