

October, 1959]

Campfire on "Murder Island" where Corporal Piper and Constable Woodill located fragments of evidence.



he tied the hands and feet of the corpses together and weighted the bodies with rocks before throwing them into the Yukon River in order that they would not float to the surface and be found. But the plan had backfired.

But the crime of these two men did not end there. There was still another brutal murder committed. As explained by Labelle, after reaching Dawson after the three murders, the pair stayed a few days and then headed down river and at Eagle City in Alaska, they met another French Canadian, Archie Gilbault, who accompanied them farther down river. And a few miles short of Circle City, they also murdered him, after which they discovered \$705 in cash in his clothing. This additional murder was brought to light by investigations by Cst. Joseph Bourke, and later substantiated when Fournier confessed. Labelle did not mention this crime in his confession.

Now, only two months after the body of Leon Bouthillette had been discovered bearing only that tiny scrap of water-soaked paper which led to his identification, the North-West Mounted Police had both confessed murderers in their custody in the Yukon and unsurmountable evidence linking both of them with the crimes. Labelle, in his confession, had

mentioned the fact that Fournier had carried a .44 calibre revolver when the two first met, and that after the crimes, had disposed of the gun in the river. Doctors examining the bodies of Bouthillette and Beaudoin, however, were able to say that both rifle and revolver wounds were found, thus linking both men with the actual killings.

Both Labelle and Fournier were committed for trial at their Preliminary Hearings in Dawson and the former's trial began Oct. 27, 1902 before Mr. Justice Craig. Late in the evening of October 31, the jury returned with a verdict of "guilty". Fournier's hearing was shorter, commencing November 4 and concluding the same evening when the jury also returned a "guilty" verdict after having been retired only five minutes.

The death sentence was passed on both Frenchmen and on Jan. 20, 1903, both were hanged in Dawson early in the morning with the temperature recording 52 degrees below zero.

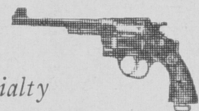
The final chapter in this sordid affair was completed the following Spring. On May 18, John McLean and George Ortell, en route to Dawson by scow, tied

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