



The Law and the Lawless: Frontier Justice in British Columbia and Yukon, 1858-1911 (Amazing Stories)

Art Downs (editor)

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Gold rush fever in the 1860s brought thousands of miners to the new territories of British Columbia and the Yukon armed with rifles, revolvers, and bowie knives. Among them were thugs and outlaws lured by the promise of easy riches. Within months of the first arrivals a provincial police force was formed—the first in western Canada—and constables recruited to preserve order in the colonies. These intrepid lawmen patrolled vast regions of Vancouver Island, the Cariboo, the Kootenays, and the Klondike. They lived in rugged conditions and brought their prisoners by horseback, stagecoach, or canoe to courtrooms that were often hundreds of kilometers away. When no judges were available they evolved their own ways of settling disputes and meting out frontier justice. This dramatic collection of stories recounts some of the most notorious cases of the period—from Boone Helm, the west's most vicious criminal known for shooting his victims in the back and eating at least one of them, to the Wild McLeans, a gang of adolescent brothers who terrorized the Okanagan and Nicola Valley, to the Yukon's "Christmas Day assassins," whose elaborate plan of escape failed to outsmart the clever watch of the North West Mounted Police. Together they offer a vivid profile of outlaw life and the pioneer lawmen who maintained order in a frontier land.

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