

“All Occurrences Within or Without the District:”¹ The North-West Mounted Police, the Canadian Government, and the Order of the Midnight Sun’s Plot to Take Over the Yukon

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Abstract

In September 1901 the North-West Mounted Police (NWMP) discovered that a group of American miners, calling themselves the Order of the Midnight Sun, were planning to take over Canada’s Yukon Territory. The “Conspiracy,” as the plot was known, set in motion a furious response by the Canadian government. The Mounted Police launched a full-scale investigation into the Order’s activities. To fully investigate the conspiracy during the Alaska boundary dispute, the Mounted Police, a domestic force, had to operate in Canada and the United States and co-operate with American authorities both in Skagway, Alaska and on the American west coast. The government’s secret service, the Dominion Police, were also involved in the investigation, and they too had to work with American authorities, including Pinkerton’s National Detective Agency, in Seattle and San Francisco. During the Klondike gold rush, the Yukon was part of a borderlands region that made working in the United States and co-operating with American authorities essential to the Mounted Police position in the Yukon.

Keywords: North-West Mounted Police; Klondike gold rush; border; borderland; miners; Canadian government; Yukon; Alaska

On Sunday 20 October 1901, Superintendent P.C.H. Primrose and Detective J.H. Seeley of the North-West Mounted Police (NWMP) boarded a train in Whitehorse, Yukon. Under ambiguous orders to investigate the Order of the Midnight Sun—a group of American miners that seemed to have plans to take over the Yukon—in the United States, and determine if it posed a credible threat to Canadian sovereignty, the pair travelled to Skagway, Alaska.² At first glance, the fact that Canadian police were working in American territory seems odd, but it was not unusual for the NWMP—the Mounted Police—to have a presence in Skagway. The Mounted Police and the Canadian government investigated the “Conspiracy,” as the Order’s plot was known, and other matters in the United States, because the Yukon was part of a borderlands region that encompassed both sides of the Alaska-Yukon border.

Much to the frustration of the Canadian government, Skagway was located on land claimed by both the United States and Canada in the Alaska boundary dispute.³ A temporary border at the summits of the Chilkoot and White passes placed Skagway in American control until the border could be permanently set, meaning that the only practical routes to the Yukon passed through American territory. By 1901-1902, all Mounted Policemen and their supplies, and most civilians travelling to the Yukon, went from Skagway to Whitehorse via the White Pass and Yukon Route railway, crossing the temporary Alaska-Yukon border at the summit of White Pass.⁴ Travelling by boat to Skagway also meant going through a west coast port—Seattle, San Francisco, Vancouver, or Victoria—making it necessary for the Mounted Police and other groups to establish transnational connections and co-operate with American authorities both in Skagway and down the west coast. Many northern miners and business owners lived on the west coast during the winter, and there was a substantial population on the American west coast with Yukon ties, including, after the conspiracy was discovered, the founder of the Order of the Midnight Sun. These transnational connections allowed rumours of a plot to take over the Yukon to spread quickly.

As borderlands historians have stressed, national narratives have had a profound impact on how historians see the past.⁵ Beginning with Morris Zaslow’s 1971 history of the Canadian North, Canadian historians have focused on the history of the Yukon from a national perspective and pushed transnational perspectives to the background.⁶ The national narrative of the Mounted Police as metropolitan agents of the Canadian

government who brought order to American lawlessness, as highlighted by Zaslow, has kept the focus of Canadian historians on the police in the Yukon, and not on the transnational activities of the force.⁷ In the 1980s, Ken S. Coates and William R. Morrison began to stress the other side of the metropolitan history of the Yukon, suggesting that the territory has been treated as a colony of southern interests, and that the police had some degree of autonomy in the North.⁸ But they largely continued to look at the history of the Yukon from a national perspective, only occasionally looking across the border to Alaska. More recently, Charlene Porsild's social history of Dawson City takes a similar approach, while emphasizing the international character of the Klondike gold rush.⁹

Beginning in the 1980s, some Yukon historians began exploring the Yukon from a more regional perspective. In a 1987 article, Coates compared the approaches of the Canadian and American governments to the Yukon and Alaska, challenging the notion that the Canadian government was more involved in northern affairs.¹⁰ Coates and Morrison, discussing the 1918 sinking of the Canadian Pacific Railway steamer *Princess Sophia*, positioned the Yukon and Alaska as a distinct region linked together by common interests and the Yukon River transportation network.¹¹ Kathryn Morse's more recent environmental history of the gold rush discusses the Whitehorse-Skagway corridor as an important transportation route to the gold fields in Alaska and the Yukon.¹² The Order of the Midnight Sun investigation suggests that the activities of the Mounted Police in the Yukon can also be viewed from a regional perspective. As the Canadian government quickly learned, the only way for the Mounted Police to effectively control the Yukon was to have an investigative presence in Skagway and on the American west coast (Seattle and San Francisco). While the police were in the Yukon as a metropolitan force, the conspiracy investigation reveals that they had to co-operate with American authorities and other investigative forces, including the Dominion Police, the government's secret service, in order to effectively enforce Canadian government policy in the North.

In Skagway, the police regularly co-operated with the United States Army and American customs authorities in Skagway to enforce the border along the Chilkoot and White passes and to control the thousands of miners who came in and out of the region. The police also worked with the Canadian customs agent in Skagway to ensure that supplies quickly moved over the boundary, which remained in dispute until the 1903 Alaska boundary settlement. Further south, the police travelled to Seattle and San Francisco to follow leads and consult with American detectives while

investigating crimes in the Yukon. During the conspiracy investigation, Superintendent Charles Constantine, an experienced detective who led the first contingent of Mounted Police in the Yukon in 1894, worked with Pinkerton's National Detective Agency, an American detective force, in both Seattle and San Francisco, engaging Pinkerton's agents to find out what they could of the conspiracy.¹³

The Primrose and Seeley investigation in Skagway on 20 October 1901, however, did not go well. En route to Skagway, the pair drank heavily.¹⁴ "Having several glasses of Canadian hootch abroad," the *Daily Skagway News* reported, "[they] proceeded to sample some of the real [American] stuff."¹⁵ Going from bar to bar, Primrose and Seeley became increasingly unruly, stopping at the house of an American officer and insulting his wife "in a most outrageous manner."¹⁶ At three o'clock in the morning, Skagway police found Primrose outside the Peerless Theatre yelling and splashing around in the mud.¹⁷ When the night watchman tried to approach him, Primrose yelled "to hell with the night watchman, to hell with the American people, and to hell with the American flag."¹⁸ Unimpressed, the night watchman gave Primrose "a licking" and hauled him off to the jail, Primrose fighting every step of the way.¹⁹

The following morning a sober Primrose was released. Later that day he appeared in court, pleaded guilty to being drunk and disorderly, and was fined ten dollars. Over the next few days, news of the affair spread throughout Skagway. Much to the amusement of the locals, a respected Mounted Policeman had come to Skagway and embarrassed himself, the NWMP, and the Canadian government. Residents also reacted with some anger. Primrose had insulted an innocent woman, the American people, and the American flag. A drunk and disorderly charge in the Yukon, it was noted, would have landed Primrose in the NWMP woodpile for three months.²⁰ At the same time, residents noticed an increasing number of Mounted Police detectives working in Skagway.²¹ Local newspapers speculated that the Mounted Police were attempting to discover the extent of their embarrassment from the Primrose affair, but as *The Alaskan* noted, there was "supposed to be something far more weighty in the air."²²

The ease with which even drunken Canadian police could carry out an investigation in American territory, and the passive response of Skagway residents to a Canadian domestic police force working in American territory, highlight the fact that it was not unusual for the Mounted Police to be in Skagway. The police, however, were not officially allowed to work in the United States and, in any case, were not the most experienced agency at the government's disposal when it came to cross-border investigations.

Prime Minister Wilfrid Laurier and Minister of the Interior Clifford Sifton deeply feared that the United States was interested in gaining territory in the Yukon, particularly in the context of the Alaska boundary dispute. When rumours of the conspiracy, amplified by the distance between the Yukon and the south, reached Ottawa, the government immediately viewed it as a serious threat to Canadian sovereignty.²³ Laurier and Sifton had to get to the bottom of the conspiracy as quickly and thoroughly as possible. When the initial cross-border investigation—launched by NWMP Superintendent A.E. Snyder (commander of H Division in Whitehorse) after the conspiracy was discovered—revealed that the Order was not a serious threat, Sifton and NWMP Comptroller Fred White, an Ottawa bureaucrat, sent Yukon veteran Superintendent Constantine to the Yukon to further investigate the conspiracy in Canada and the United States. They also asked the Dominion Police, the government's secret service, to conduct a separate investigation.²⁴ Dominion Police detective P.C. Chamberlin, chosen for the investigation, also worked closely with Pinkerton's National Detective Agency while working in Seattle and San Francisco. A second independent investigation was also conducted by E.F. Drake, a close friend of Dominion Police Commissioner A.P. Sherwood. Not only were these investigators more trusted to investigate the conspiracy, they had more experience and expertise in working in the United States.

The Canadian government's response to the conspiracy consisted of four independent investigations. By May 1902, the Mounted Police stationed in the Yukon, including Primrose and Seeley and the more seriously engaged Superintendent Constantine, Detective Chamberlin, and Drake, had each completed thorough investigations in Canada and the United States, which saw them visit Skagway, Seattle, San Francisco, Vancouver, and Victoria. Much to the surprise and relief of the government, these investigations revealed that the Order was not a serious threat to Canadian sovereignty.

The Order of the Midnight Sun Conspiracy occurred in the context of tensions created by the Klondike gold rush and the Alaska boundary dispute.²⁵ Before the beginning of the gold rush in 1897, Canada and the United States largely ignored the area surrounding the Alaska boundary. The border had been originally set by the Anglo-Russian Treaty of 1825. According to the treaty, the boundary line in the Alaska panhandle was to "follow the summit of the mountains situated parallel to the coast, as far as the point of intersection of the 141st degree of West longitude."²⁶

From there, the line followed the 141st meridian to the Arctic Ocean. But Britain and Russia were not willing to pay for an expensive survey of the unexplored area to draw the line. When the United States purchased the territory from Russia in 1867, there were some efforts to establish the border at the 141st meridian in the Yukon River area.²⁷ But as the first miners arrived in the region in the 1870s, plans to survey the border in the Alaska panhandle were again rejected because of the cost. The Lynn Canal region was largely controlled by Tlingit traders and packers who established economic connections with their Athapaskan trading partners in the interior and guarded access to the Chilkoot and White passes.²⁸ When the North-West Mounted Police arrived in the Yukon in 1894, at the urging of the region's missionary population, they began administering Canadian law, enforcing land and mining regulations, and collecting customs duties on the Canadian side of the border. But they did not control who came in and out of the country.²⁹ With only 1,500 miners and traders in the region, there was no need to settle the boundary or directly control the area.

The gold rush changed the situation dramatically. The 40,000 mainly American miners³⁰ who travelled to the Yukon and the Klondike gold fields, caught the attention of the Canadian and American governments. The rush of miners travelling over the Chilkoot and White passes during the winter of 1897-1898 overwhelmed the local Tlingit and brought to light the fact that the border had not been permanently set. The dispute over the location of the border centred on the meaning of the term "mountains situated parallel to the coast" in the original treaty.³¹ Canada took a strict interpretation that the treaty referred to the mountains immediately next to the mainland coast, which would give Canada control of Skagway, while the United States pushed for a more general line roughly following the coastal mountains.

The Canadian government was deeply concerned that the United States would use the boundary dispute as an excuse to take Canadian territory in the Yukon. Laurier and Sifton ordered the Mounted Police to take control of the summits of the Chilkoot and White passes in January 1898, and the government took steps to control the region and enforce Canadian law—increasing the Mounted Police presence in the Yukon, establishing a territorial government, and negotiating a favourable settlement in the boundary dispute. As the main government agents in the Yukon for much of the gold rush, the Mounted Police were responsible for all aspects of government policy.³² After gold was discovered near the confluence of the Klondike and Yukon rivers in August 1896, the police established a post at Dawson and smaller detachments in the gold fields,

where they were responsible for enforcing criminal law and mining and liquor regulations. The police also ran the mail service and patrolled the major transport routes in and out of the region, establishing posts at Miles Canyon and Lake Bennett.³³ These efforts to protect Canadian interests in the boundary dispute angered American miners and businessmen and led them to support the Order of the Midnight Sun.

When the founders of the Order of the Midnight Sun—Americans Fred J. Clark, a carpenter and painter, and H. Grehl, an ice salesman known to be involved in gambling—released a manifesto in March 1901 announcing their plans, they reminded miners of “the insatiate greed of the present [Canadian] government which loses no opportunity to bleed the miner.”³⁴ As the manifesto noted, miners had to buy miners’ licences to mine in Canadian territory, loggers’ licences to cut any wood, and pay recording fees every year to keep their claims, and a ten percent royalty on all gold taken out of the country. This and other “foolish legislation ... which have been the cause of diverting millions of dollars and hundreds of prospectors from these districts,” Clark and Grehl noted, would “retard the development of the country for years.”³⁵ On the boundary dispute, Clark and Grehl lamented the Canadian government’s “unwillingness ... to meet the United States government half way” and promised to “send a delegation to Washington, D.C., at the earliest possible opportunity, to the end that the boundary may be permanently fixed.”³⁶ This message appealed to less successful miners who arrived in the Yukon after the major gold producing claims had been staked, and who worked as labourers in Dawson or in the mining districts. These would-be miners were generally left out of the mining economy and were more likely to cause trouble for both the Mounted Police and the Canadian government.³⁷ It was from this unsavoury element that the Order of the Midnight Sun emerged.

Primrose and Seeley’s ill-fated trip to Skagway was part of the first of four investigations into the conspiracy that placed the Mounted Police, and other government investigators, in the United States. After the conspiracy was discovered on 16 September 1901, the Wilfrid Laurier government was not informed. The Mounted Police considered it to be “too much of a bubble to be taken seriously.”³⁸ Comptroller Fred White wrote on 22 November 1901 that “it would have been an insult to the better element of citizens of the United States who are living in the Yukon to assume that they would be parties to such a scheme.”³⁹ On 20 September the police in Dawson learned that the Order had “representatives at both Seattle and Skagway.”⁴⁰ Superintendent A.E. Snyder, commander of H Division at

Whitehorse, quietly launched an investigation into the Order's activities in Skagway to determine if there was a threat to Canadian sovereignty.

In October 1901 Superintendent Primrose had just finished a term at Dawson as commander of the Mounted Police in the Yukon and was heading out for two months leave in Ottawa.⁴¹ Superintendent Z.T. Wood instructed Primrose to "consult" with the Commander of United States troops in Skagway on his way out of the country.⁴² Detective Seeley was also leaving the Yukon, but for good, at the end of the month. On 8 October he had been informed by Wood that his "services would be no longer required on and after the 1st November."⁴³ Wood's final assignment to Seeley was to deliver a letter to NWMP Superintendent Snyder in Whitehorse, informing him that H. Grehl, a founder of the Order, was reportedly there.⁴⁴ On 19 October 1901 Seeley travelled from Dawson to Whitehorse to meet with Snyder.⁴⁵ There, according to Seeley, he and Snyder decided that he should go to Skagway and "obtain further information" on the conspiracy.⁴⁶

After their drunken escapade on 20 October, Primrose continued on to Ottawa, apparently not talking to the commander of U.S. troops as instructed by Wood. Seeley remained in Skagway to investigate the conspiracy on his own initiative. Over the next three months, Seeley travelled to Seattle, Vancouver, Victoria, and San Francisco, investigating the conspiracy in Canadian and American territory. Working with the Canadian customs agent in Skagway, E.S. Busby, he was not able to find any information on the Order from the locals, who "seemed to be afraid."⁴⁷ He was also watched by two men stationed outside his hotel. The following day Seeley met with Captain Hovey, the commanding officer at Skagway who Primrose was supposed to consult, who informed him that Fred J. Clark and the other leaders of the conspiracy were leaving for Seattle. After consulting with Busby, it was decided that Seeley should follow them.⁴⁸ Travelling "under an assumed name," according to Seeley, "I left the steamer at Vancouver and immediately commenced to trace any firearms that might have been shipped to the conspirators."⁴⁹ Finding none, Seeley left for Seattle on 2 November.⁵⁰

In Seattle, Seeley located and "carefully watched" Clark but "saw nothing of other Skagway conspirators."⁵¹ Writing to Superintendent Wood, Seeley described Clark as "without friends and also a man who drinks and gambles, in fact, one of the lower order of men," but he had "some mental knowledge and influence in Skagway."⁵² Seeley also "associated with a number of businessmen in the city" who supposedly supported the Order, but found no anti-Canadian feelings among them.

As in Vancouver, Seeley looked for any large shipments of firearms going to Skagway but found none.⁵³

On 15 November Seeley returned to Vancouver to investigate the sinking of the Canadian Pacific Railway steamer *Islander*, for which he, without any apparent evidence, “came to the conclusion that one of the conspirators” could be responsible.⁵⁴ After contacting the appropriate parties in Vancouver and Victoria, who assured him that they would investigate the matter, Seeley continued his search for members of the Order.⁵⁵ Two men, George Tarron and George Clair, claimed to know little but told Seeley that Thomas Freeman in Victoria “knew all about the matter.”⁵⁶ Seeley returned to Victoria and located Freeman. He later sent a cipher telegram to Superintendent Snyder in Whitehorse, who informed him that Freeman was not a suspect in the conspiracy.⁵⁷

On 15 December Snyder asked Seeley to locate another suspected member of the Order, F.T. Keelar. Seeley returned to Seattle and located Keelar in Tacoma. According to Seeley, Keelar was convinced that Skagway would soon become British, but he was not a member of the Order. Seeley returned to Victoria on 21 December.⁵⁸ In Victoria he continued to watch Freeman, who “claimed to have no knowledge of the Conspiracy.”⁵⁹ On 14 January Seeley learned that Grehl was in San Francisco reorganizing the Order of the Midnight Sun. Seeley travelled to San Francisco but was unable to locate him.⁶⁰

On 24 January Seeley concluded his cross-border investigation and sent his final report to Snyder and Wood. “I am satisfied Sir, that the Conspiracy at one time was a serious affair,” he wrote, “if it had not been discovered, would have been brought to an issue, fortunately the leaders in Skagway are men of no responsibilities away from there ... I think Sir, that constant vigilance on the part of your department will be necessary.”⁶¹ Seeley also submitted a request for pay.

Seeley’s report was received with some shock by NWMP Superintendent Wood in Dawson. Unsure why a detective he fired in November was submitting a report and a request “for pay and expenses” in January, Wood launched an investigation.⁶² He eventually concluded that the Seeley affair was a misunderstanding. Wood did not tell anyone outside Dawson that Seeley had been fired, and the letter that Seeley carried in his last assignment misled Superintendent Snyder and Customs Agent Busby to believe that Seeley was still employed by the police and investigating the conspiracy.⁶³ Wood also reported to his superior NWMP Comptroller White that Seeley was given contradictory instructions that may have led him into a larger investigation. It seems more likely that

Seeley knew he was not authorized to work in Skagway and played off the confusion to remain employed by the police a little longer. In any case, White replied that Wood's report "would justify granting reasonable compensation to Seeley."⁶⁴

In the meantime, on 6 January 1902 Snyder reported to White on his investigation in Skagway.⁶⁵ Snyder was evidently unaware that Seeley was investigating the conspiracy without orders. "There still continues considerable feeling and agitation in Skagway," Snyder reported.⁶⁶ Members of the Order continued to meet, believing "that the publicity given to the movement would strengthen their numbers."⁶⁷ The "idea of making a raid on the Yukon has firmly established itself in their minds," Snyder wrote of those in Skagway, "when two or three of them meet together they discuss all the possibilities of carrying such a movement through."⁶⁸

Snyder warned White that "from the class of men interested in this movement, I feel that we must be continually on the watch. If it were only the rougher element, there need not be so much to be alarmed at, but they are shrewd practical business men."⁶⁹ The Order knew the layout of the NWMP barracks in Whitehorse, and the nature of the country, and, with railway employees on their side, Snyder believed "surprise would be an easy matter."⁷⁰ But he did not believe that there was an immediate threat to Canadian sovereignty.⁷¹ He did, however, suggest that "a thoroughly experienced detective should be located in Skagway."⁷² He continued, "if there is ever any trouble of a serious nature, that is the point from which we must look for it."⁷³

Snyder's report is typical of how the NWMP viewed rumours of trouble in the Yukon. Rumours of unrest in the Yukon during the Klondike gold rush and after were common. Many never amounted to anything, but they quickly spread along the poor communication networks in and out of the country. The Mounted Police quickly learned that almost all rumours of unrest among Americans in the Yukon turned out to be false.⁷⁴ For the Mounted Police, the conspiracy was just another rumour that did not need to be taken seriously unless an investigation showed that there was an immediate threat. As there seemed to be no such threat found during their investigation, Snyder suggested that only increased caution was needed.⁷⁵ There were more serious concerns for the police to deal with in the meantime.

Snyder's report was the first received in Ottawa to outline the Order's continuing organization during the winter months. These developments,

gaining momentum on the way to Ottawa, worried Minister of the Interior Clifford Sifton who, unlike the Mounted Police, immediately viewed the conspiracy as a serious threat to Canadian sovereignty and a challenge to Canada's position in the Alaska boundary dispute. If the Order succeeded in taking over Canadian territory, they could cede it to the United States, or the Americans could claim that unrest in the North posed a danger to American citizens and send troops to the Alaska panhandle to draw the boundary in America's favour. Now even Comptroller White, who was initially unconcerned with the conspiracy, changed his attitude when he learned that his political superiors were concerned.⁷⁶ In a 19 December 1901 memorandum, White had suggested that "it is quite possible that an effort will be made to foment trouble during the early days of navigation—immediately after the breaking up of the ice in the spring."⁷⁷ The Order's activities seemed to confirm this fear. And while he was sure that only an experienced detective would be needed, Snyder noted, "the means at my disposal for obtaining information have not been great, the men employed being amateurs at the business."⁷⁸ Presumably this admission would not have inspired confidence in the Mounted Police in the Yukon.

From Ottawa, the first Mounted Police investigation into the conspiracy in the United States did not appear well organized, given the serious nature of the conspiracy. Snyder was relying on inexperienced detectives and was not even aware that he had "sent" Seeley to the west coast. Primrose had been arrested. Seeley was investigating the conspiracy in the United States without permission, and Wood did not keep everyone informed. White and Sifton were not entirely happy with how Snyder, Seeley, Primrose, and Wood handled the conspiracy investigation, especially with the supposed threat of an attack in the spring.

By the end of January 1902 Sifton and White decided to send Superintendent Charles Constantine to take command of the Mounted Police at Whitehorse and launch the second cross-border investigation into the conspiracy. They hoped that Constantine's experience in the Yukon would help him learn more than Snyder had in the Yukon and the United States. "You have been selected by [the] Minister Interior [to] command Whitehorse District," White wrote to Constantine on 28 January 1902. "Snyder remaining [in] command [of] Whitehorse Post, leaving you free [to] move about and give special attention [to] conspiracy matters," he wrote.⁷⁹ On 11 February 1902 Constantine received his confidential orders. He was given full authority to continue to investigate the conspiracy on both sides of the border, including specific instructions

to keep “fully informed with regard to all occurrences within or without the District in any way affecting the peace, and particularly with respect to the efforts which are being made to foment discontent and embarrass the Canadian administration.”⁸⁰ He was also given permission to “continue to employ detectives when and where required.”⁸¹ And he was instructed to give “personal attention to the detective service” and “keep discreet men traveling on trains between Skagway and Whitehorse.”⁸² White also gave Constantine additional orders for his journey to the Yukon. Before sailing north, he was to visit Seattle and San Francisco and “without causing suspicion, pursue inquiries re the so-called conspiracy to annoy the Canadian administration in the Yukon and create ill feeling between the British and U.S. Governments.”⁸³

With orders in hand, Constantine left Ottawa on 15 February. He arrived in Seattle, via Vancouver, on 27 February, “remained for a day,” and arrived in San Francisco on 4 March.⁸⁴ While in San Francisco he met with William B. Sayers, Superintendent of Pinkerton’s National Detective Agency, to launch an investigation into the conspiracy in Seattle.⁸⁵ Constantine left San Francisco on 5 March and arrived in Whitehorse on 17 March, taking command of the Whitehorse District.⁸⁶

On 4 April Constantine sent the first in a series of reports to White on his investigation into the conspiracy in Skagway. The treasurer of the Order had left Skagway with between \$15,000 and \$30,000. Grehl was mining in Koyukuk, Alaska.⁸⁷ And Clark had been in Seattle “but had left there, and nothing is known of his whereabouts at present, except that he is in the U.S., and travelling with some theatrical Company in the capacity of scene painter and shifter.”⁸⁸ The other members of the Order who remained in Skagway were apparently concerned about “what might be done to them for their participation in the ... Conspiracy” and they had sought legal advice.⁸⁹ Constantine also reported to White that “the papers in connection with this late organization are in a safe in the possession of one Price, a lawyer in Skagway.”⁹⁰ He was sure that he could buy the papers for a sum of money, but it does not appear that he was able to.

On 17 April Constantine reported to White that “there may be an effort on foot to revive the ‘Order’ under another name.”⁹¹ According to a man from Caribou, a D.N. Hukill—who was in charge of the Order’s operations in Atlin, British Columbia—was head of a money-making scheme to gather funds “to help to develop the country.”⁹² Constantine suggested that “there may be nothing in it” (that it was a money-making scheme with no purpose) and that the attempt to revive the Order was “simply for the

purpose of annoying and embarrassing the Canadian officials."⁹³ He did, however, ask Superintendent Snyder to look into the matter.⁹⁴

Constantine finally received a report from Pinkerton's National Detective Agency on 24 April. After meeting with Constantine in San Francisco, Sayers instructed a Pinkerton's agent, known as No.1, to find out what he could of the Order of the Midnight Sun. "From conversations I have had with different Alaska people," No.1 reported to Sayers on 2 April, "it is evident they all consider the whole thing a 'fake.'"⁹⁵ Interestingly, Seeley had earlier told No.1, when Seeley was in Seattle investigating the conspiracy, that he too believed "the whole thing was a 'fake,' but it had excited the people in Ottawa."⁹⁶ A reporter for the *Seattle Times* told him that "there was nothing in it."⁹⁷ The matter was started when "one of the Canadian officers got drunk at Skagway and remained there for several days."⁹⁸ The Order of the Midnight Sun, the reporter claimed, was a group formed by "Doc" Clark and Chas. Grehl (former members of the infamous Soapy Smith gang in Skagway) with the goal of "running" the town.⁹⁹ Both men had come to Seattle, where No.1 "learned that they are not engaged at anything at present."¹⁰⁰

In the meantime, White, not convinced that Constantine alone could get to the bottom of the conspiracy, asked A.P. Sherwood, Commissioner of the Dominion Police (the government's secret service), to launch the third investigation into the Order of the Midnight Sun in the United States. On 15 March White met with P.C. Chamberlin, selected by Sherwood for the investigation.¹⁰¹ White instructed Chamberlin to travel to San Francisco and then Seattle, Skagway, and Whitehorse, and learn what he could of the Order and its members. Chamberlin was also told not to discuss his assignment with any Mounted Policemen. With the police already engaged in two cross-border investigations in the United States, White wanted the opinion of a detective who had more experience working in the United States to determine if the conspiracy was a serious threat. "What we desire," White wrote to Sherwood, "is to get the result of independent enquiries by a man versed in detective work, for comparison with the reports of others who are employed on the same work, but in other directions."¹⁰²

Chamberlin arrived in San Francisco on 14 April 1902. His reports to Sherwood reveal that Chamberlin spent much of his time interviewing T. Cunningham.¹⁰³ Chamberlin believed that since Cunningham was the founder of the first newspaper in Dawson, *The Midnight Sun*, he was "about as well posted in and around Dawson as anyone," though

Chamberlin admitted that Cunningham “has been drinking heavily lately.”¹⁰⁴ Cunningham claimed that “there is positively nothing in the threatened invasion of the Yukon.”¹⁰⁵ Mr. Stephens, a bank clerk from Dawson, confirmed that “it was bosh.”¹⁰⁶ Cunningham traced the rumours to a group of miners who were stockpiling guns and dynamite to “exterminate” any Japanese labourers employed in the gold fields.¹⁰⁷ But there was, according to Cunningham, a movement in San Francisco by Dutch and Irish Boer sympathizers to seize a Canadian port. After completing his investigation in San Francisco, Chamberlin went by train to Seattle, arriving on 22 April 1902.¹⁰⁸

In Seattle, Chamberlin worked with P.K. Ahern, the Assistant Superintendent of Pinkerton’s National Detective Agency, to locate the Order’s founders Clark and Grehl. Ahern assured Chamberlin that “he knew both Clark and Grehl quite well.”¹⁰⁹ Presumably, Ahern was also familiar with the work Pinkerton’s had done for Constantine, though Constantine had only received the report around the same time. Ahern heard from a man from Skagway that “it was the Mounted Police Officer that got into trouble at Skagway [Primrose] who started the sensational report, as he spent a lot of money while there and took that means to square himself with his superior officers.”¹¹⁰ It turned out, as Chamberlin reported to Sherwood, that Ahern was referring to “H.R. Clark and Grall, both professional gamblers of Skagway.”¹¹¹

H.R. Clark was a member of Soapy Smith’s gang in Skagway, and Ahern was “positive” that he was “the right man.”¹¹² On 27 April Chamberlin found H.R. Clark at the Trocadero Theatre outside Seattle. H.R. Clark claimed that the conspiracy “was nothing more nor less than a fake from the word go, and was started by some would be detective.”¹¹³ Ahern concluded that there was no “such person as Grehl,” as he could find no one from Skagway who knew him in Seattle.¹¹⁴

Chamberlin found Fred J. Clark working as a painter in North Yakima, Washington, 400 miles (644 km) southeast of Seattle.¹¹⁵ Ahern and Chamberlin concluded that “it would be impossible” for Chamberlin, “a total stranger to the coast and one who knows nothing of Alaska or Yukon,” to approach Clark.¹¹⁶ On 29 April Chamberlin asked Sherwood if he could “engage” a Pinkerton’s agent for the job.¹¹⁷ On 2 May Ahern sent an agent to North Yakima to find Clark.¹¹⁸ Chamberlin waited for the results.

“Having ascertained from the stage manager of the Seattle Theatre that Fred J. Clark is in North Yakima, Washington and having been instructed to proceed to that place, make the acquaintance of Clark and

learn all possible in regard to the Order of the Midnight Sun from him," Agent M.F.D. left Seattle on 2 May 1902.¹¹⁹ Under the guise of looking for a man married to his cousin, M.F.D. tried to locate Clark. He learned from a man at the Club Cigar store and card rooms that Clark was painting a house on 7th street and was rooming in a nearby boarding house. On 4 May M.F.D. rented a room at the same boarding house so he could attempt to befriend Clark.¹²⁰ The following day he "made the acquaintance of Mrs. Robinson, the landlady's sister," and the other boarders, including Clark's mother. Clark returned at noon and, "after a little talk," Clark returned to work and M.F.D. "volunteered to go with him."¹²¹

As they worked, Clark explained the Order's plan. They believed that it would be "an easy matter to banquet the police and military posts, get them into a semi-intoxicated state, ... over power them," and seize "all of the gold bearing district of Northern North-West Territory."¹²² Clark figured "that British troops cannot cross American territory under arms, that arms cannot be shipped in from American territory, and that at any rate they can easily hold the passes," until the territory could be "annexed to the U.S."¹²³ At the same time Clark tried to convince M.F.D. to join the Order.¹²⁴ M.F.D. pressed Clark for the names of other members of the Order, but he doubted that Clark would "divulge the names of any of his conspirators for some time to come."¹²⁵ He was sure that he could get "deeper into [Clark's] confidence" in North Yakima and continue to affiliate with Clark when he returned to Seattle.¹²⁶ "He may allow me to inspect the papers of the Order, so that I can suggest improvements in the Order or system of organization," M.F.D. suggested.¹²⁷

Over the next week M.F.D. continued to work with Clark, attempting to learn more about the Order and the names of its members. The pair discussed the conspiracy, but M.F.D. obtained little new information. Clark said "point blank" several times "that he would not mention any of the names of those connected with the original plot"¹²⁸ Some names, however, came up. A man named Harrington, an employee of "one of the largest firms in Skagway," was, according to Clark, "one of our leading men and can be depended on to give financial aid when required," but he "is not connected with the affair."¹²⁹ A man named Burns, "the Skagway agent for the company which operates the steamer Dolphin," said he would transport British officials south if the conspiracy succeeded.¹³⁰ The man who ran the Railroad Men's Hall in Skagway was "one of the principal agitators."¹³¹ Clark also told M.F.D. that Grehl had a list of members of the Order that could be used to "revive the affair" and that he was on his way

to Seattle from Nome, Alaska.¹³² White eventually forwarded these names to Snyder at Whitehorse for further “enquiries.”¹³³

Clark continued to try to recruit M.F.D. Unsure if he could trust M.F.D., Clark questioned why he was in North Yakima and M.F.D. was forced to telegram his sister to confirm his story that he was looking for a man married to his cousin.¹³⁴ On 8 May Clark finally “suggested that we [he and M.F.D.] take up the affair again and start it going.”¹³⁵ M.F.D. assured Clark that he was willing to work with him. The pair planned to go to Seattle when they were done Clark’s work and start planning.¹³⁶ “He is very anxious to get to Seattle and I am under the impression that he desires to consult someone there before he takes me too deeply into his confidence.”¹³⁷

Comptroller White selected E.F. Drake, a close friend of Sherwood’s and an “ardent Britisher,” to launch the fourth investigation into the conspiracy in San Francisco, Seattle, Skagway, and Whitehorse in late March 1902.¹³⁸ Drake was instructed to determine if the Order still existed and if it was a threat and “to report upon the feeling in the American coast cities toward Yukon and Canadian matters generally.”¹³⁹ According to author David Ricardo Williams, “Drake was motivated only by his close friendship with Sherwood and [travelled] entirely at his own expense, except for seventy-five dollars run up in various bars while ferreting information.”¹⁴⁰ Posing as an American citizen, he left Ottawa on 27 March 1902 and “spent three days in San Francisco, six in Seattle, ten in Whitehorse, [and] three in Skagway.”¹⁴¹ “I spent a good deal of time,” he wrote to White, “in hotel lobbies and bars, also in saloons, gambling halls, concert dives etc., as I was led to believe that the class of men who were interested in the Conspiracy were, generally, of the sort who frequent such places.”¹⁴²

Having “met and talked with a great many men” with some knowledge of the North, Drake summarized his findings in a 13 May 1902 report to White.¹⁴³ The conspiracy had existed, but it “never had any real backing south of Skagway.”¹⁴⁴ The members of the Order of the Midnight Sun “were drawn almost entirely from the restless, dissatisfied element always to be found in a new mining country.”¹⁴⁵ Most of Drake’s informants “believed that the Conspiracy would not have amounted to anything even if it had not been prematurely exposed through the press.”¹⁴⁶ Drake did report that a man named Hukill from Skagway was attempting to revive the

conspiracy. But he did not believe that there would be any support on the American west coast for such action.¹⁴⁷ "In my opinion the Conspiracy is dead," Drake concluded, "but it might be well to watch the movements of Hukill at Skagway."¹⁴⁸ This news would have pleased officials in Ottawa.

Indeed, by early May 1902 three of the four Canadian government investigations into the conspiracy in the United States appeared to be going well. Drake believed that the conspiracy was finished. Constantine had located the papers of the Order of the Midnight Sun, learned the whereabouts of its leaders, and the extent of its influences on the west coast. Pinkerton's National Detective Agency had infiltrated the Order in Washington and Agent M.F.D. was well on his way to earning Fred J. Clark's trust. Chamberlin had spent most of his time in the hotels, saloons, and gambling houses where miners gathered in Seattle, but he was not able to find anyone who knew anything about the Order of the Midnight Sun. On 10 May Chamberlin informed Sherwood of the progress of his investigation. "Two boats are expected shortly from Alaska which will likely bring out a number of people who have wintered in Alaska" he wrote, "will try and fall in with some of them and see what I can learn."¹⁴⁹ He continued, "I think it would be a good plan to let Pinkerton's man go to Alaska with Fred Clark, as he has asked him to do and join the Order of the Midnight Sun when I could follow on or go by the same ship and through the Pinkerton man gain admission to the Order myself, when we would learn the aims of the Order and know all that took place."¹⁵⁰

Chamberlin and M.F.D. were on the verge of getting to the bottom of the conspiracy. But on 13 May Sherwood instructed Chamberlin to end his investigation and return to Ottawa. M.F.D. was instructed to end his investigation and return to Seattle; he sent his last report on 14 May. Chamberlin concluded his investigation, leaving for Ottawa on 20 May.¹⁵¹

Chamberlin sent his final report to Sherwood on 4 June 1902. He did not report much success. He had spoken to "a great many people," but "none of whom knew anything about a threatened invasion in the Yukon."¹⁵² In San Francisco and Seattle, the conspiracy was "looked upon as a money scheme gotten up by some would be detective, or police officer who spent more money than he could properly account for so reported this story and had it appear in the papers, someone having been paid to give the story as it appeared."¹⁵³ Chamberlin did note that the Pinkerton's reports from North Yakima "were very full." But, he wrote, "I do not attach much importance to them, for I am of the opinion that said Fred J.

Clark was too smart, even for the Pinkerton operative, and getting on to his game, led him on.”¹⁵⁴ It appears, however, that Clark was likely telling the truth. He seems to have been under the impression that the Canadian government was no longer investigating the conspiracy and he would not have thought that they would be working in American territory. In any case, Sherwood forwarded Chamberlin’s report to White on 18 June 1902 with a request for payment of \$635.05 in expenses.¹⁵⁵

Constantine had been informed by White on 12 April that his orders were cancelled and the “police organization” in the Yukon would “revert to previous conditions.”¹⁵⁶ Constantine was to remain working in the Yukon under special commission until his investigation was complete. He left Whitehorse on 6 May to inspect the Dalton Trail detachments and return to the south.¹⁵⁷

During the four conspiracy investigations, the Mounted Police in the Yukon regularly worked in the United States and co-operated with American authorities in Alaska and on the American west coast. Superintendent Primrose and Detective Seeley were ordered, or supposedly ordered, to travel to Skagway to investigate the conspiracy in Alaska. Seeley worked with the Canadian Customs Agent and Captain Hovey of the United States Army in Skagway and repeatedly crossed the border while working on the west coast. Constantine visited Seattle and San Francisco on his way to the Yukon to investigate the conspiracy and work with Pinkerton’s and he was instructed to keep “fully informed with regard to all occurrences within or without the District” once he reached the Yukon.¹⁵⁸ Since the Yukon was part of a borderlands region that included the Alaska panhandle and the American west coast, the only way for the Mounted Police to fully investigate the conspiracy was to work in Skagway, Seattle, and San Francisco. The Mounted Police could easily take advantage of the fact that they had to travel through the United States to reach the Yukon to investigate important matters like the conspiracy. Given the difficulties of controlling disgruntled miners and responding to unsubstantiated rumours in a divided region, it was assumed by Sifton and White that the police in the Yukon would work in American territory. Any information, even from Seeley’s unauthorized investigation, was both welcome and useful.

The Order of the Midnight Sun investigation also reveals that there were limits to the ability of the Mounted Police to carry out thorough investigations in the United States, particularly in the case of the conspiracy. The Mounted Police in the Yukon were not experts in cross-

border investigations and the Canadian government did not fully trust the police to handle the situation. As Superintendent Snyder's report on the initial Mounted Police investigation shows, unlike Canadian officials in Ottawa, the Mounted Police in the Yukon viewed the conspiracy as just another rumour of unrest in a borderlands region and not a serious threat to Canadian sovereignty. But in distant Ottawa, the government was not convinced. Sifton and White sent Constantine to the Yukon to improve the situation, but despite his experience in the Yukon, he would not have had enough time to establish a more reliable detective service. In response, they had the Dominion Police, who had more experience in cross-border investigations, to launch their own investigations into the conspiracy by Chamberlin and Drake. Both forces also relied on the assistance and expertise of the American Pinkerton's National Detective Agency to carry out undercover investigations in American territory. A borderlands perspective on the history of the Yukon, then, shows that the Whitehorse-Skagway corridor and the American west coast were essential to the Mounted Police and Canadian government position in the Yukon. To investigate serious matters like the conspiracy in the Yukon, the Canadian government had to rely on a transnational investigative network that included the Mounted Police in the Yukon, the Dominion Police, and Pinkerton's National Detective Agency in Seattle and San Francisco.¹⁵⁹

The investigations of Snyder, Primrose and Seeley, Constantine, Chamberlin, and Drake also demonstrate how seriously the conspiracy was taken in Ottawa. Within the context of the Alaska boundary dispute, the government had to thoroughly investigate the conspiracy in Canada and the United States and stop the Order before the United States gained control of Canadian territory in the boundary region. The initial investigation by the Mounted Police in the Yukon concluded that the conspiracy was not a serious threat to Canadian sovereignty, but the government was not satisfied with the results. Minister of the Interior Clifford Sifton decided the situation was serious enough to take the unprecedented step of sending Constantine to the Yukon to take charge of the conspiracy investigation and the police in the Yukon. He also had the Dominion Police launch two additional investigations by Chamberlin and Drake, making the decision to suddenly end the conspiracy investigation in early May 1902 all the more puzzling. A possible explanation is that Drake had already visited Skagway and Whitehorse and reported that there was no support for a further move. If the conspiracy was dead in Skagway, allowing Chamberlin and M.F.D. to go there with Clark and

reorganize the Order would only lead to further trouble. In any case, the government had decided that it was no longer necessary to continue the investigation.

In the end, the Canadian government came to the same conclusion as its investigators — that the Order of the Midnight Sun had been a threat, but it no longer was; and only increased surveillance in Skagway was needed. In his 22 May 1902 final report to Sifton on the conspiracy, Comptroller Fred White reported that the Order’s activities currently centred on Skagway and that several suspected members of the Order “will still bear watching.”¹⁶⁰ But he did not “feel that the conditions would justify the continuation of large expenditure for detectives.”¹⁶¹ He did, however, “ask authority to continue the employment of a couple of ‘specials’ between Skagway and Whitehorse, and an occasional visit to Seattle, if deemed necessary.”¹⁶²

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Notes

1. *Library and Archives Canada (LAC)*, RG18 Royal Canadian Mounted Police Fonds, Volume 232, File 195, Fred White to Charles Constantine, 28 January 1902.
2. *LAC*, RG18, Vol. 229, File 149, “Primrose in Disgrace: Major of NWMP Arrested and Fined,” *Skagway Daily News*, 22 October 1901. All newspapers cited appear as clippings in the NWMP subject files. The Order of the Midnight Sun has been only briefly discussed by historians of the Yukon and the Alaska boundary dispute: Ken S. Coates and William R. Morrison, *Land of the Midnight Sun: A History of the Yukon* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2005), 101; William R. Morrison, *Showing the Flag: The Mounted Police and Canadian Sovereignty in the North, 1894–1925* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1985), 63; D.J. Hall, *Clifford Sifton: Volume Two, A Lonely Eminence, 1901–1929* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1985), 124–125; Charles S. Campbell Jr., *Anglo-American Understanding, 1898–1903* (Baltimore: John Hopkins

- Press, 1957), 240–244; Norman Penlington, *The Alaska Boundary Dispute: A Critical Reappraisal* (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson Limited, 1972), 54–57. The few works that discuss the Order directly are written more for a general audience: David Ricardo Williams, *Call in Pinkerton's: American Detectives at Work for Canada* (Toronto: Dundurn, 1998), 124–134; David Ricardo Williams, "The Invasion of the Yukon," *The Beaver* 78, no. 3 (1998), ebscohost.com; Carl Betke, "The Order of the Midnight Sun," *RCMP Quarterly* (1977).
3. On the Alaska boundary dispute see: Campbell Jr., *Anglo-American Understanding*; Penlington, *The Alaska Boundary Dispute*. These histories ignore the role of local issues such as the conspiracy in the boundary dispute, using local issues only to provide context for the negotiations.
 4. On the Yukon transportation system see: Gordon Bennett, "Yukon Transportation: A History" (Canadian Historic Sites Occasional Papers in Archaeology and History No. 19, 1978); Melody Webb, *The Last Frontier: A History of the Yukon Basin of Canada and Alaska* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1985).
 5. On borderlands history see: John M. Findlay and Ken S. Coates, eds., *Parallel Destinies: Canadian-American Relations West of the Rockies* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2002); Sterling Evans, ed., *The Borderlands of the American and Canadian Wests: Essays on Regional History of the Forty-Ninth Parallel* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006); Samuel Truett and Elliott Young, eds., *Continental Crossroads: Remapping U.S.-Mexico Borderlands History* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004). See also: Ken S. Coates, "Controlling the Periphery: The Territorial Administration of the Yukon and Alaska, 1867-1959." *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 78, no. 4 (1987): 145–151.
 6. Morris Zaslow, *The Opening of the Canadian North, 1870-1914* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1971).
 7. On Metropolitanism in Canadian history see: J.M.S. Careless, "Metropolis and Region: The Interplay between City and Region in Canadian History Before 1914" in *Careless at Work: Selected Canadian Historical Studies* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1996), 147–165.
 8. Coates and Morrison, *Land of the Midnight Sun*; Morrison, *Showing the Flag*.
 9. Charlene Porsild, *Gamblers and Dreamers: Women, Men, and Community in the Klondike* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1998).
 10. Coates, "Controlling the Periphery."
 11. Ken S. Coates and William R. Morrison. *The Sinking of the Princess Sophia: Taking the North Down with Her*. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1990.
 12. Kathryn Morse, *The Nature of Gold: An Environmental History of the Klondike Gold Rush*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2003.
 13. On Pinkerton's National Detective Agency see: Williams, *Call in Pinkerton's*; Frank Morn, "The Eye That Never Sleeps:" *A History of Pinkerton National Detective Agency* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982).

14. LAC, RG18, Vol. 229, File 149, "Primrose in Disgrace: Major of NWMP Arrested and Fined," *Skagway Daily News*, 22 October 1901.
15. *Ibid.*
16. *Ibid.*
17. *Ibid.*
18. *Ibid.*
19. Quoted in Williams, "The Invasion of the Yukon." For brief accounts of this event see: Williams, "The Invasion of the Yukon"; Williams, *Call in Pinkerton's*.
20. "Primrose in Disgrace: Major of NWMP Arrested and Fined," *Skagway Daily News*, 22 October 1901.
21. LAC, RG18, Vol. 229, File 149, "Are Spotting Americans: Several Canadian Detectives are Reported to be in this City Gathering Information in Some Subject," *The Alaskan*, 24 October 1901.
22. *Ibid.*
23. See: Hall, *Clifford Sifton*, 124; Penlington, *The Alaska Boundary Dispute*, 62–64.
24. On the Dominion Police see: Williams, *Call in Pinkerton's*.
25. On the Klondike gold rush see: Coates and Morrison, *Land of the Midnight Sun*; Morrison, *Showing the Flag*; Porsild, *Gamblers and Dreamers*; Zaslow, *The Opening of the Canadian North*.
26. Quoted in Penlington, *The Alaska Boundary Dispute*, 11-12.
27. See: Lewis Green, *The Boundary Hunters: Surveying the 141st Meridian and the Alaska Panhandle* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1982).
28. See: Julie Cruikshank, *Do Glaciers Listen?: Local Knowledge, Colonial Encounters and Social Imagination*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2005.
29. On the Mounted Police in the Yukon see: Morrison, *Showing the Flag*; Thomas Stone, "The Mounties as Vigilantes: Perceptions of Community and the Transformation of Law in the Yukon, 1885–1897," *Law & Society Review* 14, no. 1 (1979): 83–114; Thomas Stone, *Miners' Justice: Migration, Law, and Order on the Alaska-Yukon Frontier, 1873–1892* (New York: Peter Lang, 1988). Formed in 1873, the Mounted Police played a major role in promoting government policy and shaping prairie society during the settlement of the Canadian West before beginning their northern service, see: R.C. Macleod, *The North-West Mounted Police and Law Enforcement, 1873–1905* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1976); William M. Baker, ed., *The Mounted Police and Prairie Society* (Regina: University of Regina Press, 1998); William Beahan and S.W. Horrall, *Red Coats on the Prairies: The North-West Mounted Police, 1886–1900* (Regina: Centax Books, 1998).
30. Charlene Porsild has challenged the assumption that the gold rush population of the Yukon was mainly American, see: Porsild, *Gamblers and Dreamers*, 16–23.

31. Quoted in Penlington, *The Alaska Boundary Dispute*, 11–12. By the summer of 1898 Canada, Britain, and the United States agreed to submit the boundary question to the Joint High Commission, which set a temporary border at the summits of the Chilkoot and White passes in October 1899. The boundary question was submitted to the Alaska Boundary Tribunal in January 1903 and the border was permanently set in October 1903.
32. The Mounted Police were not the only government agents in the Yukon during the gold rush. Dominion Land Surveyor William Ogilvie arrived in the Yukon in 1897 and was Commissioner of the Yukon Territory from 1898–1901 and the government sent 200 Canadian troops, known as the Yukon Field Force, to the Yukon in the summer of 1898 to assist the Mounted Police in controlling the gold rush.
33. Morrison, *Showing the Flag*; William R. Morrison, “Policing the Boom Town: The Mounted Police as a Social Force in the Klondike.” *Northern Review* 6, no. 2 (1990): 83–97.
34. LAC, RG18, Vol. 229, File 149, “Rebellion Against Canadian Authorities was Planned by Desperate Miners,” *Seattle Daily Times*, 21 November 1901; “Plot to Seize Yukon,” *Ottawa Citizen*, 22 November 1901. See also “That Conspiracy,” *Alaska-Yukon Mining Journal*, December 1901.
35. *Ibid.*
36. *Ibid.*
37. See: Stone, “The Mounties as Vigilantes,” 104–108.
38. LAC, RG18, Vol. 229, File 149, White, 22 November 1901 Memorandum.
39. *Ibid.*
40. LAC, RG18, Vol. 229, File 149, Cortlandt Starnes to P.C.H. Primrose 20 September 1901.
41. LAC, RG18, Vol. 216, File 647, Z.T. Wood to White, 24 June 1901; LAC, RG18, Vol. 221, File 16, Unknown to White, 6 January 1902.
42. LAC, RG18, Vol. 3033, Microfilm C2145, Wood to Captain Hovey, 15 October 1901.
43. LAC, RG18, Vol. 229, File 149, Wood to White, 20 February 1902.
44. *Ibid.*
45. LAC, RG18, Vol. 229, File 149, White to A.E. Snyder, 13 March 1902; J.H. Seeley to Wood, 24 January 1902.
46. J.H. Seeley to Wood, 24 January 1902.
47. *Ibid.*
48. *Ibid.*
49. *Ibid.*
50. *Ibid.*
51. *Ibid.*
52. *Ibid.*

53. *Ibid.*
54. *Ibid.*
55. *Ibid.*
56. *Ibid.*
57. *Ibid.*
58. *Ibid.*
59. *Ibid.*
60. *Ibid.*
61. *Ibid.*
62. LAC, RG18, Vol. 229, File 149, Wood to White, 20 February 1902.
63. LAC, RG18, Vol. 229, File 149, Wood to White, 16 October 1902.
64. LAC, RG18, Vol. 229, File 149, White to Wood, 18 November 1902. There was little fallout from the affair. Primrose returned to his position as Superintendent at Whitehorse after his leave, but was no longer involved in the conspiracy investigation. He was reassigned to Fort Macleod, Alberta some months later and remained there until his retirement. He later became the Lieutenant Governor of Alberta. Seeley, no longer employed by the police, returned to England. Williams, "The Invasion of the Yukon;" LAC, RG18, Vol. 229, File 149, Wood to White, 9 June 1902.
65. Snyder's report also included extracts from Skagway newspapers on the conspiracy, which provided the police with information on how Skagway residents responded to the conspiracy and the Mounted Police investigation.
66. LAC, RG18, Vol. 229, File 149, Snyder to White, 6 January 1902.
67. *Ibid.*
68. *Ibid.*
69. *Ibid.*
70. *Ibid.*
71. *Ibid.*
72. *Ibid.*
73. *Ibid.*
74. On 22 June 1901, for example, a Juneau lawyer named Miller cut the down the Union Jack from the Canadian customs office in Skagway, Campbell Jr., *Anglo-American Understanding*, 241; Penlington, *The Alaska Boundary Dispute*, 57. See: Coates and Morrison, *Land of the Midnight Sun*, 101 for a similar incident at the summit of White Pass.
75. Although he had warned White on 7 December 1901 after a meeting of the conspirators that "matters are more serious than at any time." LAC, RG18, Vol. 229, File 149, Snyder to White, 7 December 1901.
76. As an Ottawa official and the go-between the Mounted Police and the government, White sometimes agreed with the Mounted Police in the Yukon and sometimes with the government during the response to the conspiracy.

77. LAC, RG18, Vol. 229, File 149, White, 19 December 1901 Memorandum.
78. Snyder to White, 6 January 1902.
79. White to Constantine, 28 January 1902. The Mounted Police records on the Whitehorse District and Constantine's investigation often use the spelling White Horse, here the modern Whitehorse is used.
80. LAC, RG18, Vol. 232, File 195, White to Constantine 1, 11 February 1902.
81. *Ibid.*
82. *Ibid.*
83. LAC, RG18, Vol. 232, File 195, White to Constantine 2, 11 February 1902.
84. LAC, RG18, Vol. 232, File 195, Constantine to White, 17 April 1902.
85. LAC, RG18, Vol. 229, File 149, Constantine to White 3, 4 April 1902.
86. Constantine to White, 17 April 1902.
87. *Ibid.*
88. *Ibid.*
89. *Ibid.*
90. LAC, RG18, Vol. 229, File 149, Constantine to White 2, 4 April 1902. See LAC, RG18, Vol. 229, File 149, White to Constantine, 19 April 1902; Constantine to White, 21 April 1902; White to Constantine, 22 April 1902; Pinkerton's National Detective Agency to Constantine, 24 April 1902.
91. Constantine to White, 17 April 1902.
92. *Ibid.*
93. *Ibid.*
94. *Ibid.*
95. LAC, RG18, Vol. 229, File 149, Pinkerton's National Detective Agency to Constantine, 24 April 1902.
96. *Ibid.*
97. *Ibid.*
98. *Ibid.*
99. *Ibid.*
100. *Ibid.*
101. David Ricardo Williams describes Chamberlin as "the most skilled" detective in the Dominion Police and "a man in whom Sherwood placed the utmost reliance." Williams, *Call in Pinkerton's*, 119.
102. LAC, RG18, Vol. 229, File 149, White to A.P. Sherwood, 15 March 1902.
103. LAC, RG18, Vol. 229, File 149, P.C. Chamberlin to Sherwood, 15 April 1902; Chamberlin to Sherwood, 17 April 1902; Chamberlin to Sherwood, 18 April 1902.
104. Chamberlin to Sherwood, 15 April 1902.
105. Chamberlin to Sherwood, 17 April 1902.
106. *Ibid.*

107. *Ibid.*
108. Chamberlin to Sherwood, 17 April 1902; Chamberlin to Sherwood, 18 April 1902.
109. LAC, RG18, Vol. 229, File 149, Chamberlin to Sherwood, 24 April 1902.
110. LAC, RG18, Vol. 229, File 149, Chamberlin to Sherwood, 23 April 1902.
111. Chamberlin to Sherwood, 24 April 1902.
112. LAC, RG18, Vol. 229, File 149, Chamberlin to Sherwood, 22 April 1902.
113. LAC, RG18, Vol. 229, File 149, Chamberlin to Sherwood, 27 April 1902.
114. Chamberlin to Sherwood, 24 April 1902. Sherwood eventually learned from White that Constantine had located Grehl mining in Koyukuk, Alaska, but Chamberlin was instructed not to pursue him. LAC, RG18, Vol. 229, File 149, Chamberlin to Sherwood, 1 May 1902; Constantine to White 2, 4 April 1902.
115. Chamberlin to Sherwood, 24 April 1902.
116. LAC, RG18, Vol. 229, File 149, Chamberlin to Sherwood, 29 April 1902.
117. *Ibid.*
118. LAC, RG18, Vol. 229, File 149, Chamberlin to Sherwood, 2 May 1902.
119. LAC, RG18, Vol. 229, File 149, Pinkerton's National Detective Agency to Sherwood, 6 May 1902. Ahern had first sent Agent F.C.I. to locate Ernest Clark, Fred J. Clark's brother, in Seattle to confirm Clark's whereabouts. Ernest Clark informed F.C.I. that Clark was in North Yakima.
120. LAC, RG18, Vol. 229, File 149, Pinkerton's National Detective Agency to Sherwood, 6 May 1902; Pinkerton's National Detective Agency to Sherwood, 8 May 1902.
121. Pinkerton's National Detective Agency to Sherwood, 8 May 1902.
122. *Ibid.*
123. *Ibid.*
124. *Ibid.*
125. *Ibid.*
126. *Ibid.*
127. *Ibid.*
128. LAC, RG18, Vol. 229, File 149, Pinkerton's National Detective Agency to Sherwood, No Date (covers 7-9 May 1902).
129. *Ibid.*
130. *Ibid.*
131. *Ibid.*
132. *Ibid.*
133. LAC, RG18, Vol. 229, File 149, White to Snyder, 22 May 1902.
134. Pinkerton's National Detective Agency to Sherwood, No Date (covers 7-9 May 1902).
135. *Ibid.*

136. Pinkerton's National Detective Agency to Sherwood, No Date (covers 7-9 May 1902); LAC, RG18, Vol. 229, File 149, Pinkerton's National Detective Agency to Sherwood, No Date (covers 10-12 May 1902).
137. Pinkerton's National Detective Agency to Sherwood, No Date (covers 10-12 May 1902).
138. Quoted in Williams, *Call in Pinkerton's*, 130.
139. LAC, RG18, Vol. 229, File 149, Drake to White, 13 May 1902. Drake's final report is the only record of his investigation and it contains little detail on his movements and findings.
140. Williams, *Call in Pinkerton's*, 130. Brackets removed.
141. E.F. Drake to White, 13 May 1902.
142. *Ibid.*
143. *Ibid.*
144. *Ibid.*
145. *Ibid.*
146. *Ibid.*
147. *Ibid.*
148. *Ibid.*
149. LAC, RG18, Vol. 229, File 149, Chamberlin to Sherwood, 10 May 1902.
150. *Ibid.*
151. LAC, RG18, Vol. 229, File 149, Chamberlin to Sherwood, 13 May 1902; Chamberlin to Sherwood, 14 May 1902; Chamberlin to Sherwood, 22 May 1902. It is not known if Clark returned as well or what happened to him.
152. LAC, RG18, Vol. 229, File 149, Chamberlin to Sherwood, 4 June 1902.
153. *Ibid.*
154. *Ibid.*
155. LAC, RG18, Vol. 229, File 149, Sherwood to White, 18 June 1902.
156. LAC, RG18, Vol. 232, File 195, White to Constantine, 12 April 1902.
157. LAC, RG18, Vol. 232, File 195, White to A.B. Perry, 5 May 1902.
158. White to Constantine 1, 11 February 1902.
159. For more examples of co-operation between the Dominion Police and Pinkerton's National Detective Agency on the Yukon file see: Williams, *Call in Pinkerton's*, 120–124.
160. LAC, RG18, Vol. 229, File 149, White to Clifford Sifton, 22 May 1902 Memorandum.
161. *Ibid.*
162. *Ibid.*