

# November 12, 1881

## Buckskin Jim Atkinson

### The Ready Revolver

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Vancouver, BC, Canada

#### THE READY REVOLVER.

##### A Desperate Shooting Affair near Fort Maginnis.

One Man Killed, one Dangerously Wounded  
and two Others Slightly.

On Sunday, Nov. 12th, one of the most desperate shooting affairs known in the annals of the Territory occurred at the saloon kept by Atkinson & Gray, about three miles from Maginnis, on the Carroll road, in which one man was killed outright and three wounded, one dangerously, being shot three times. The facts as we have learned them from different parties are substantially as follows:

The saloon in question has been run by Atkinson & Gray and during the absence of the former at Benton, where he came to purchase supplies about a month ago, Gray conducted the business. During this time a man named Thomas Pool, a well known desperado in that country, frequented the house and at times succeeded in "running the ranch" to suit himself, the proprietor and every body else seeming to be afraid of him. He ran a saloon bill of twenty odd dollars which Atkinson on his return concluded to collect. On the date above mentioned Pool rode up to the saloon and hitched his horse at the rear of the building. Atkinson, who is sometimes called "Buckskin Jimray," went out soon afterwards and took the saddle as collateral for Pool's debt. This is the step that led to hostilities. As soon as Pool discovered that his saddle was missing he entered the saloon and drawing his revolver accused another man who was present at the time of the theft, and at the same instant fired at him. Atkinson told him to hold up and explained that he (Atkinson) had the saddle behind the counter and would keep it until the saloon bill was settled. "Well, we will settle it right now," retorted Pool, who instantly commenced firing at Atkinson, getting in three shots before the latter secured his revolver, two of which were effective. Atkinson then returned the fire, but without effect. He then walked from behind the counter, bleeding from two terrible wounds, and moved upon his antagonist. The latter fired again hitting Atkinson upon the right arm, shattering the bone. When hit upon the arm the revolver dropped out of Atkinson's hand and then the men grappled, Pool having exhausted the contents of his weapon. In the scuffle Atkinson managed to get hold of his pistol with his left hand and placing the muzzle against his antagonist's throat fired, fairly blowing his head off, and thus ending the desperate encounter.

The victor was badly wounded in three places and it was at first supposed that he could not survive his terrible injuries. Being a man of vigorous constitution and iron will he rallied when other men probably could not and at last account was alive although not out of danger. During the exchange of shots two by-standers received slight wounds, one in the leg and other in the foot.

Thomas Pool is said to have been a desperate man, always seeking and ready for a row. It is said he began his career as a cowboy on the Texas frontier, a good place and position to become schooled in ruffianism and the use of the ready revolver.

A gentleman who is intimately acquainted with Herbert Atkinson and has had business relations with him informs us that he is an exceptionally quiet and inoffensive man. He has no bad habits—does not drink or smoke or swear—and is not at all quarrelsome, but is a strong, determined man and fearless as a lion when there is danger ahead. If he had been anything else he would have come out second best in his encounter at a disadvantage with such a desperate man as Pool.

The truth of the adage that misfortunes never come singly is fully established in Atkinson's case. Two or three weeks before the occurrence of the exciting event above narrated, and while Atkinson was at Benton for supplies, his partner ran away taking \$3,000 in clean cash belonging to the firm. He followed the absconder as far as Carroll but was a few days too late to capture him.