

ONE NIGHT IN A BAD INN

A TRUE STORY BY CHRISTY LESKOVAR

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POINTS OF INTEREST HELENA, BOULDER, WHITEHALL, RENOVA, TWIN BRIDGES

HELENA

ST. HELENA CATHEDRAL AND RECTORY—530 North Ewing. Father Tougas was the pastor from 1923 to 1946. He lived in the rectory which is now the Barrister Bed & Breakfast, 416 North Ewing (pages 486–492 of the book).

BROADWATER AND FORT HARRISON—Off Hwy 12 west of Helena. The family lived in the Broadwater area while Peter worked at Fort Harrison (pages 484–487 and 493–501). The Montana Military Museum is at Fort Harrison.

MONTANA HISTORICAL SOCIETY LIBRARY—225 North Roberts. Anne McDonnell worked as assistant librarian from 1924 to 1953 (pages 482–486). The library was originally in the state capitol building. It moved to the present location on North Roberts in 1953. The author did much of her research here.

BOULDER

Take I-15 south from Helena or north from Butte.

JEFFERSON COUNTY COURTHOUSE—201 West Centennial. This was where Roy Walsh's trial took place in 1923 (pages 395–419). There is a display about the case in the corridor outside the courtroom. The bullet is in the display.

JEFFERSON COUNTY JAIL—The old jail that housed Archie Hughes and Roy Walsh was in the stone building east of the courthouse (pages 420 to 425). The building has been enlarged and is now justice court. The facade of the old jail was retained.

SHERIFF JOHN MOUNTJOY'S HOUSE—The sheriff's home was adjacent to the jail, to the south, and is now gone. John Mountjoy lived there with his wife and two sons during his tenure as sheriff. There was some curious activity on the roof of that house during the night of October 19, 1923 (pages 423–425).

COUNTY ATTORNEY HOWARD JOHNSON'S HOMES—107 North Monroe and 101 North Washington. Both homes are across from the courthouse. He was newly married and had been county attorney only a few months when the shooting happened in Renova. Roy's was his first trial as county attorney (pages 392–393, 397).

DEPUTY SHERIFF JOHNNY WILLIAMS'S HOUSE—404 East Second Ave., at the corner of Elder. He lived in this house with his wife and children during the events of

1923–1925 (pages 437–452). Johnny Williams was married to John Mountjoy's sister Ruth. The house has undergone recent renovation.

WINDSOR HOTEL—This is now the Windsor Bar on Main Street. The hotel restaurant provided meals for the prisoners in the jail. One evening in 1923, the waitress discovered a suspicious note after she collected the dinner tray from the jail (page 421).

DRIVE THROUGH THE BOULDER VALLEY FROM BOULDER TO WHITEHALL—Continue south through Boulder on Hwy 69. This is not the same road Sheriff Mountjoy traveled that ill-fated night in June of 1923 when he received the call about the shooting in Renova, south of Whitehall (pages 385–386). That old gravel road, Hwy 399, is to the west of the mountain ridge on your right (to the west). Best to take Hwy 69 which is a paved road. It's a beautiful drive. If you are in the mood for a swim, stop at the historic Boulder Hot Springs south of town.

WHITEHALL

Jefferson Valley Museum—303 South Division. The museum houses artifacts from the Roy Walsh case and a re-creation of Dr. Packard's office. He was the doctor who treated Al Johnson after he was shot (page 385). For hours and season of operation, visit <http://www.goldwest.visitmt.com>. Scroll to the bottom and click on G-L or call 406-287-7813.

RENOVA

This was the sight of the shooting in 1923 (pages 381–383). Renova no longer exists nor does Al Johnson's store. While driving from Whitehall to Twin Bridges on Hwy 55, at Parrot Castle Road, look to the east. Renova was about two miles from Hwy 55, a little south of Parrot Castle Road. The store was east of the railroad tracks on the north side of the road. The road is a dead end.

TWIN BRIDGES

Montana State Orphans' Home—This was where Aila, Archie, and Patsy lived from 1913 to 1915 (pages 56–64). The name was later changed to the Montana State Children's Home. The home closed in the 1970s, but the buildings still stand and are in remarkable condition. The complex is now in private hands.