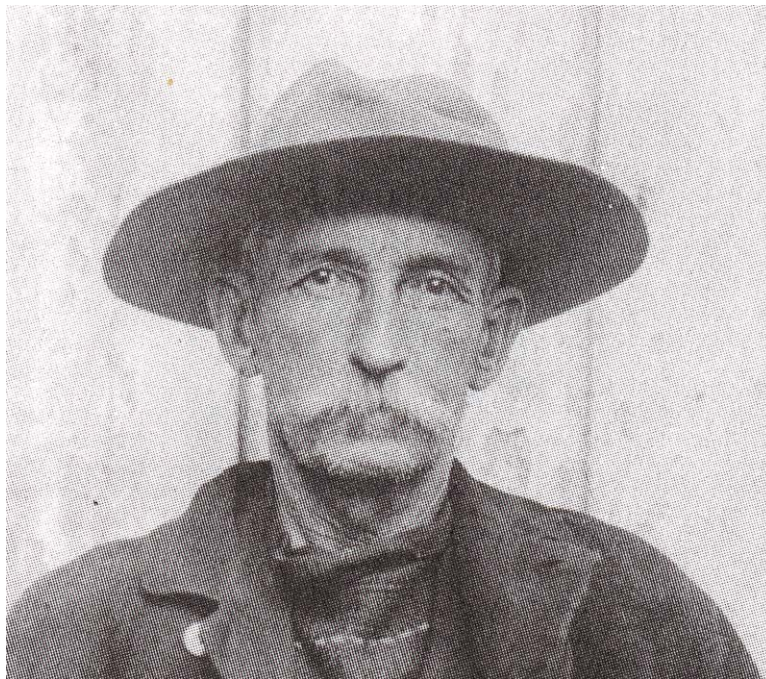


## Postscript to “Bill Miner in Song”

[published in *Canadian Folk Music*, 42.2 (Summer 2008), 9-20]

In reflecting on Bill Miner’s legend, Peter Grauer, author of *Interred With Their Bones: Bill Miner in Canada* (Kamloops, BC: Tillicum, 2006), suggested that the full-face portrait of the bandit, as shown below, was a big part of Miner’s enduring legacy. He comments: “I sometimes wonder if the Bill Miner story would have been with us so strongly if it had not been for that iconic photograph taken by the spinster Kamloops photographer Mary Spencer. The character in the face, the grizzled cavalry moustache, the penetrating eyes reflecting 33 years spent in San Quentin, the flat-brimmed Stetson with the four-cornered ‘Montana Pinch;’ there is so much in that photo that it is the most instantly recognized portrait

of any individual in BC’s history. It is more recognized than any politician, celebrity or other esteemed personage in our so interesting past. As you know, this year BC is celebrating the 150th anniversary of when it was recognized as a colony. On all of the promotional literature sent out by the government and associated organizations, that familiar portrait of this rather obscure American bandit is front and centre.” It would appear that a multimedia onslaught, iconic pictures, poems, songs, films, musical productions, plays and more, as we see with Miner, are the modern day indicators of attaining the vaunted status of “folk hero.”



Mary Spencer photo of Bill Miner  
(courtesy of Kamloops Museum and Archives)

More Bill Miner music has been found since I wrote the original article:

1. Alex Forbes, a Kamloops, BC, poet, has just released a CD entitled *The Bill Miner Roadshow*, which is a set of narrative poems set to music telling Miner’s story (Forbes, Alex (2008). *The Bill Miner Roadshow*. Kamloops, BC: Small World Studios,

SWSAF 0001; CD available at [www.gracespringscollective.ca](http://www.gracespringscollective.ca)).

2. Ron Weihs kindly sent a script of the 1977 Bill Miner musical “Hands Up.” In addition to “Somebody Robbed the CPR” and “The Bill Miner Song” mentioned in the original article, the following songs were also part of this production: “Gold Song,” “The Things I Wanna Know,” “Bill Miner Was

a Boy,” “Only a Jailer’s Daughter,” “Quick and to the Point,” “Take a Chance,” “CP Transcontinental,” “Comparatively Speaking,” “This is Not Right,” “Talking Bill Miner,” “One More Chance,” “The Coyote,” “Jenny’s Song,” “New Westminster Pen” and “Run Billy Run.”

3. Carolyn Anele, a Vernon, BC, singer-songwriter has just recorded a song entitled “Billy Miner’s Breath.”

4. “Ol’ Bill Miner” has been recorded by Katy Moffat on her album *Cowboy Girl*, Bear Family, CD Dual 1180. This CD is available at [www.bear-family.de/neuerscheinungen/?lang=1](http://www.bear-family.de/neuerscheinungen/?lang=1).

5. “Blow—The Ballad of Bill Miner” is recorded on Rachel Harrington’s album *The bootlegger’s daughter*, Bear Family, CD210599. This CD is

available at [www.bear-family.de/neuerscheinungen/?lang=1](http://www.bear-family.de/neuerscheinungen/?lang=1).

6. Darcy Whiteside of the Edmonton bluegrass group The Big Mix Boys has recorded his “Ballad of Bill Miner.” You can hear this song at <http://www.myspace.com/darcywhiteside>.

I’d appreciate hearing about any other Bill Miner music that I have missed in this survey. Below you will find an extended discography of the music mentioned in the original Bill Miner article, which includes where you can order recordings of the songs that are currently available. Again, if I’ve missed anything, please let me know.

Tim Rogers [tbrogers@ucalgary.ca](mailto:tbrogers@ucalgary.ca)



The captured Bill Miner and gang arriving at Kamloops Gaol  
(photo courtesy of Kamloops Museum and Archives)

## Discography of Bill Miner music

“Back When Billy Robbed Trains” Fjellgaard, Gary and Valdy. *Contenders Two*. This CD is available at [www.fjellgaard.ba.ca](http://www.fjellgaard.ba.ca) and the track can be purchased through iTunes.

“Bill Miner Song” Weihs, Ron (1977). *Ladies and Escorts*. Vernon, BC: Caravan Stage Company CSC07 (45 RPM disc).

“Bill Miner” Bossin, Bob (1994). *Gabriola VOR 1X0*. Gabriola Island, BC: Bob Bossin. This CD is available at [www3.telus.net/oldfolk/ofscat.htm](http://www3.telus.net/oldfolk/ofscat.htm).

“Bill Miner” Phillips, Stu (1956). *Echos of the Canadian Foothills*. Rodeo Records, 5RLP.17 (LP). Available on Stu Phillips’s CD *A Journey Through the Provinces*. Bear Family BEAO15721, available at [www.bear-family.de/neuerscheinungen/?lang=1](http://www.bear-family.de/neuerscheinungen/?lang=1).

- “Bill Miner Roadshow” Forbes, Alex (2008). *The Bill Miner Roadshow*. Kamloops, BC: Small World Studios, SWSAF 0001. CD available at [www.gracespringscollective.ca](http://www.gracespringscollective.ca).
- “Bill Miner’s Betrayal” Spearn, John (1999). *Northern Sightlines*. Edmonton, AB: Reidmore, NS-0699. This CD is available at [www.canadasongs.com/johnspearn2.html](http://www.canadasongs.com/johnspearn2.html) .
- “Bill Miner’s Jailbreak” Kettle Valley Brakemen (2000). *Climb Aboard!* Naramata, BC: Jack Godwin, KVB-CD01. This CD is available at [www.kvbrakemen.com/contact.php](http://www.kvbrakemen.com/contact.php).
- “Blow—The Ballad of Bill Miner” Harrington, Rachel. *The Bootlegger’s Daughter*. Bear Family, CD210599. This CD is available at [www.bear-family.de/neuerscheinungen/?lang=1](http://www.bear-family.de/neuerscheinungen/?lang=1) .
- “Chase, The” The Chieftains (1983). *The Grey Fox*. New York, NY: DRG Records, SL 9515 (LP).
- “Gold Dust” Under the Moss (1997). *Raking the Coals*. Pender Island, BC. This CD is available from the author, Patrick Smith, at 9832 Spalding Rd., RR#3, South Pender Island, BC V0N 2M3. “Gold Dust” has also been recorded on Baker, Dave (1997). *Songs and Sounds of Canadian Steam*. Vancouver, BC: Coast Country Productions, CD available at [www.capcan.com/railroad.htm](http://www.capcan.com/railroad.htm).
- “Hold Up, The” Gallaher, Bill, and Jake Galbraith (no date). *Outlaws and Heroes: The Wild McLeans and Other Ballads*. Victoria, BC: Bill Gallaher. This CD is available at [William.Gallaher@gmail.com](mailto:William.Gallaher@gmail.com).
- “Ol’ Bill Miner” Moffat, Katy. *Cowboy Girl*. Bear Family, CD Dual 1180. This CD is available at [www.bear-family.de/neuerscheinungen/?lang=1](http://www.bear-family.de/neuerscheinungen/?lang=1).
- “Ride to Kamloops” The Chieftains (1983). *The Grey Fox*. New York, NY: DRG Records, SL 9515 (LP).
- “Somebody Robbed the CPR” Weihs, Ron (1977). *Ladies and Escorts*. Vernon BC: Caravan Stage Company CSC07 (45 RPM disc).
- “Train at Ducks Station” The Chieftains (1983). *The Grey Fox*. New York, NY: DRG Records, SL 9515 (LP).



Bill Miner on Trial, Kamloops, 1906  
(photo courtesy of Kamloops Museum & Archive)

*The tunes of the songs about Bill Miner found on the next seven pages were transcribed by Maureen Chafe and Rosaleen Gregory.*