The Boscombe Valley Mystery

In this week's story, *The Boscombe Valley Mystery*, Australia is the location of the first crime.

The wild, remote reaches of the empire helped contribute to the mood of this story.

If the **location** is a variable, how would the story change?

Would it still work?

Could we still arrive at the same outcome if the original crime took place in another part of the empire?

India?

Ireland?

South Africa?

Hong Kong?

Even Central London?!

I'd like to get this week's discussion going by changing the background variable of BOSC to my own favorite corner of the empire, Scotland.

The story would appear to hold up pretty weel, er, well, with that change of location.

Scotland was a "verra" wild place, a suitably inspiring origin for McCarthy's later years of blackmail and Turner's slow burn.

No gold convoys there to stick up, but Turner's robbery could have involved payroll or a cash shipment from one of the big three local industries — the woolen trade, fishing, or distilling.

Charles MacCarthy (making him a Mac instead of a Mc) could not have called "cooee," but would need to use a call that identified the Scots background.

Lots of colorful words and phrases to choose from!

The plaid dropped by Turner is consistent with having once lived in Scotland; a plaid is a length of tartan usually belted and drawn across the shoulder.

By Victorian times the plaid and other items of Scots attire enjoyed a certain vogue in Britain, anyway.

Many tartans incorporate predominately gray hues like James saw.

The rest of the story could unfold pretty much as Watson laid out, with the same conclusion.

Scotland was just rugged enough and remote enough to lend a solid background to the later events in BOSC.

A whole **other** area of discussion is how would James McCarthy and/or Turner fare had Boscombe Valley been located in Scotland itself.

Scotland's criminal laws were somewhat different from British criminal laws, and either man might well have gotten off Scot free!