

## NARCOTICS

By EX-SUPT. JAMES FRIPPS - R.C.M. POLICE

*COURTESY OF "SCARLET and GOLD"*

*The trafficker in dope is one of our greatest social menaces. The observations which ex-Supt. Fripps makes are of great value to the end that wider information and fuller knowledge of this loathsome trade may, in some measure, assist in the suppression of drugs and alleviate the sooner sufferings and degradation of it's addicts. On his recent retirement Supt. Fripps was the recipient of gifts of appreciation from his fellow officers, N.C.O.'s and men of the R.C.M.P. A leading member of the Law Fraternity in making one presentation referred to Supt. James Fripps as "one of the ablest and most popular members of the Present Force." Surely a well deserved tribute to a lifetime of service.*

I RETURNED to Canada from overseas service during April, 1919, and upon reporting at H.Q.'s - Regina, was transferred to Vancouver, and then employed on plains clothes duty, working under cover. I frequented the skid-road, Japan town, Chinatown and waterfront, associated with all classes of people. There were a number of young people - this surprised me, but later I found they were living by their wits, not gainfully employed. Many were addicts. Opium morphine, Cocaine were being peddled by Chinese in Chinatown to Occidentals and Orientals. Contacts would be made anywhere that vicinity - one point of meeting was under the Georgia Viaduct. Later we made a number of arrests and then the peddlers would have a new contact point which would be changed from time to time.

One of the most cruel and dangerous traffickers was **J. J. Wing**, who conducted a tailor shop on Broadway East. He peddled his drugs to young people, but he finally sold to the wrong person insofar as he was arrested and later convicted by judge and jury. He was sentenced to seven years' imprisonment during 1923. This peddler had sold pounds of morphine and cocaine during the three years he was operating, and he was the cause of a number of young people on the downgrade.

Another trafficker in cocaine was **Jew Jake**. He sold an ounce to the wrong man, a Special Constable of the R.C.M.P. Jake talked about what a bad man he was and explained how big a dealer he was in the drug game.

He was arrested and later convicted by a judge and jury. He was sentenced to five years' imprisonment, and later deported to the U.S.A. I believe the peddler obtained his drugs from J. J. Wing.

One of the largest seizures of drugs that I witnessed was when Supt. R.A. McLachlan of Customs and Excise at Vancouver seized five trucks containing one hundred and twenty-nine tins which contained one hundred and twenty-five pounds of morphine hydrochlorate. This shipment of illicit drugs originated in Germany, being consigned from Hamburg to Oriental Hotel Kobe, Japan, and it was in bond, but the shippers W.H. Grien and H. Richard, had not complied with our customs regulations or the Opium and Narcotic Drug Act. The value of the goods seized was approximately one hundred thousand dollars.

During October, 1928, Inspector George Norris of the Customs and Excise at Nanaimo seized one thousand, four hundred and forty cans (7 ounces each) of opium prepared for smoking, concealed in a shipment of Chinese general merchandise. The shipment of goods had been exported from Hong Kong via Empress ship and landed at Vancouver. in transit to Nanaimo, where it was delivered to and accepted by Chin Ming King.

The cans of opium were concealed in cases of peanut oil and turnips. There were approximately seventy cases of goods. The value of the illicit drugs seized at that time in the underworld market prices would be approximately one hundred and eight thousand dollars.

Chin Ming King was arrested by Inspector Norris, and in due course he was found guilty by judge and jury at Nanaimo and sentenced to serve five years imprisonment. These seizures prevented a large supply of poison from reaching the underworld, due to excellent work by the customs officers.

**Lim Jim** was a Chinese boss and we always had our suspicions about him. We had been watching and making observations on this individual for a number of years before we finally obtained an agent who could contact him. This agent was sent from the East by the Chief of the Narcotic Division, and he was accompanied by a Corporal of the R.C.M.P.

Our agent made a few visits to Lim's store, obtaining samples of the brand he could arrange to purchase in large lots - 100 or more. Our man then visited Seattle and advised Lim Jim he would be returnin to Vancouver in a few days. On his return he was supplied with \$1,600.00 in American money.

He proceeded to Lim's store, a policeman was on hand and saw the agent talking to Lim in the store. The agent reported on his return to the hotel that he had paid the American money over to Lim Jim and that he (agent) was to return to the store at 7 a.m. the following day and the twenty cans of opium would be ready for him.

His appointment was kept as arranged and he received the parcel with the twenty cans of opium, but Lim Jim did not deliver them to him, so he enquired for Lim who came downstairs after a little delay, and agent gave Lim a fifty dollar bill for the extra good service, but essentially for the purpose of further corroboration when the arrest of Lim was made. The agent with the opium walked out of the store, and gave the signal, then the search party entered Lim Jim's store from different points; but Lim was not in the store, or in his living quarters with his family. He was found in bed in the bedrooms used by his hired help, which upstairs in the rear of the store. He was partly dressed, pants and shirt over his night clothes. Lim was searched but the fifty dollar bill could not be found despite the fact we searched the premises from 7:30 to 6 p.m., nor did we find any further supply of opium. However we finally found the \$1,600 American money.

This was concealed in a false bottom of a drawer in Lim's office, also other documents which established the necessary evidence to prove our agent was dealing with him.

Lim was found guilty by judge and jury and sentenced to serve four years imprisonment. He appealed the sentence, and the Appeal Court of British Columbia, after hearing arguments by counsel, dismissed Lim's appeal, allowed cross-appeal and increased the sentence of four years to seven years, and later I had the pleasure of escorting Lim to the B.C. Penitentiary. This was a very satisfactory conclusion after years of investigation by more than one police force. Lim was a boss man or one of the "higher ups" in the opium traffic. When this man was incarcerated the price of opium increased in the underworld.

Another trafficker of importance was **Lore Yip**. This Oriental was crafty, he sold opium by the can, or deck and morphine and cocaine by the ounce. His place of operation was in the heart of Chinatown. It was whilst one of our men, Constable McGibbon, was posing as an American buyer of drugs from a Chinese who obtained his supply from an old Chinese cripple who bought the morphine and cocaine from Lore Yip.

When the transaction was completed, the crippled Chinese was persuaded to work with us, and he was successful in making a purchase of drugs from Lore Yip. The search party then entered the hotel and found him in the kitchen eating his supper. He stated his name was Jackson, but he had some identification on his person by the way of a liquor permit in the name of Lore Yip, and he had thrown a notebook with some other papers into a waste paper basket with the name Lore Yip.

On the west side of the hotel there was a room No. 27, which had a Yale lock, and Lore Yip stated that he did not have a key to this room. His keys on the key ring would not unlock the door of room 27, nor could we locate one in the office or in the hall in the vicinity of this room. Lore Yip said the room was occupied by Lee Sum. The door of this room was forced and whilst searching this room I found 97 cans of opium - concealed beneath the baseboard of the room, and four large envelopes containing morphine and cocaine (this was a very clever hide). A set of Chinese seals was found on top of the dresser, a knife with yellow stains on top of the washstand, and a number of documents in the dresser drawer.

One of these read as follows:

“Agreements, prices, boundaries, fixed as following: (reading) Rai goods \$35.00

*each piece. No. 2 goods \$35.00 each piece. Expenses for going to Victoria, B.C. carrying wages included to receive goods not included (possibly that carrying wages refers to the first part of it). Any accident should happen during the time that all goods being handed over to Occidental from a boat the Hong Kong Company shall be held entirely responsible. Any accidents should happen on the way when all goods being handed over to by Occidental employees of this company for the purpose of transfer into Vancouver City each shall be responsible for one-half of the value of the goods at Hong Kong cost price.”*

There were found two letters of advice from a bank dated respectfully July 6th and July 12th, addressed to to Mr. Lore Yip, and one of them read as follows: We have to advise you that you have this day deposited the sum of \$4,935.00 on account of cable transfer to Hong Kong in favour of Tuck Hang Company, 38 Deavoux Road, for \$10,000.00. Signed by the manager and accountant.

The July 6th memorandum was addressed to Lore Yip and Luon Tai Fong:

*“We beg to advise you that we have this day deposited the sum of \$2,963.00 on account of cable transfer to Hong Kong \$6,000.00 in favour of Wong Jong Ping, Deavoux Road.*

Signed by manager and accountant.”

These were found in his room 27. There were also found in this room two labels of opium tins "Lamkee Macoa." The room did not have the appearance of one that had been used by a person to live in. There were no clothes hanging up on the wall. There was a wooden Chinese box with some old clothes in it and three books. There was a bed, but it was very dirty. The sheets were laid down and the comforter was down as though somebody had just recently sat on the bed.

The forty dollars which we had supplied to our agent to purchase drugs from Lore Yip was found under the mattress on the bed in room No. 27. There was also twenty-seven dollars found right next to the forty dollars, but was not part of our marked money. No doubt the twenty-seven dollars was money Lore Yip received from other sales of drugs. There was also found in this room a shirt which had sewn on it, ten large pockets, just the size of an opium tin. This shirt could be used for the purpose of smuggling opium off ships, or transferring opium in tin from place to place. We had often arrested men wearing similar shirts carrying opium.

Insp. Reams and Detective Const. Black searched room 30. They found a cash box, which one of the keys that were found in the possession of Lore Yip unlocked, but he stated that he did not own the cash box.

In the cash box was found two hundred and twenty dollars marked money, which had been paid by McGibbon to the Chinese who purchased the cocaine from the crippled Chinese, who bought it from Lore Yip.

The foregoing outlines the evidence we obtained against this drug dealer. The police magistrate found Lore Yip guilty of distributing drugs - "cocaine and morphine", and he was sentenced to serve three years imprisonment.

In the early years of my work in the narcotic squad of the R.C.M. Police, I found that the drug peddler had a large and fertile field to dispose of his goods in the B.C. area., where we have a large Chinese population who are employed in sawmills, fish canneries and coal mines. I found that some who were employed in these industries were addicted to smoking opium (Of course there are some Occidentals who smoke opium). The central points of activity were Vancouver, Victoria, Duncan, Nanaimo and Cumberland. Located in these cities and towns are Chinese general merchants, vegetable stores, laundries, rooming houses, etc.

The Chinese opium smoking resorts or dens were secretly located in the heart of Chinatown in a city, town or village, and in the vicinity of sawmills, canneries and coal mines.

During the first few years of our drive against the opium resorts, it was not difficult to locate and gain entrance, make seizures and arrests, but the time soon arrived when the Chinese realized that the R.C.M. Police were in earnest in their effort to stamp out the traffic in opium. By our frequent searching or raids on suspected premises, we obtained sufficient information which enabled us to lay charges before magistrates against Chinese who conducted these smoking resorts, and in cases were in a position to charge the boss Chinese-or higher-ups in the smuggling and drug traffic.

The largest opium smoking resort we searched or raided was in Cumberland, where there are twenty-seven inmates arrested. An aged Chinese was rooming on the premises and the supply of opium with extra opium pipes were found concealed in his bedroom with his identification papers. He was arrested, charged with possession of opium, convicted and deported to China, but I was satisfied he was employed by a boss Chinese, whom we later arrested, convicted and deported to China.

In due course we obtained similar evidence against other opium smoking resorts which caused them to close, but the opium smoking then was carried on in hotels and rooming houses. However, not to the extent it had been. Of course by this time the supply was diminished and the cost of opium had increased from 50 cents per deck or package to \$1.00. There would be about five smokes to one deck. This was expensive for laboring Chinese and they reduced the number of smokes each day.

I may now say that all these individuals I am referring to are not drug addicts. There are numerous cases which would make a very long story, but here are a few of the more important ones.

**Wong Wah** of Victoria (general Chinese merchant) who after securing his release on posting bonds. This man sold a can of opium to D/Cpl. Black who was posing as an American. Wong Wah was convicted and sentenced, but allowed bail to settle his business affairs, and when his case was called in court a week later he did not appear. We located him in Chicago and after a legal battle I had the pleasure of escorting him back to Canada and placing him in the BC Penitentiary.

**Lee Kim** of Victoria arranged for the smuggling but did not handle a can of it. When arrested he had just torn in small pieces of paper a sheet which when we placed together unfolded a plan showing how opium was dropped from the steamer as it passed by Three Coal Mountain. There is a small bat at this point and the tide would take it in and hold the sacks of opium at this point until picked up by motor boat. This appeared to be a safe way to land the smuggled goods. However Lee Kim made a mistake when he arranged to sell 20 cans of opium to one of our agents in Vancouver. We seized the opium from a Chinese (Wong) who was working with him, and they both were charged and convicted. Lee Kim was sentenced to 5 years imprisonment.

The case of **Gordon Lim** was important. It started during the year 1936. A long drawn out court proceeding. After two years it was brought to a conclusion when the Supreme Court of Canada refused to grant any further leave to Appeal. It was proven that a conspiracy existed, over years that arms were exported to China, and that large quantities of opium was smuggled into Canada in return. He was sentenced to 7 years imprisonment. D/ Sgt. Haywood was instrumental in bringing the investigation to a successful conclusion in the year 1938.

Jack Seaman was before our court during 1930 when he was extradited to U.S. Narcotic Officers and escorted to San Francisco where he was sentenced to 10 years imprisonment. However, when he was discharged from prison he was returned to Canada and during 1943 he arranged to have smuggled into Canada from the U.S.A. 20 cans of opium, but the man who was to bring the opium to Canada was arrested before he departed Los Angeles. In the meantime D/Sgt. Haywood had Seaman under observation and upon receiving information that action had been taken in the U.S., Seaman's residence was searched in Vancouver and a supply of opium was made up in decks for peddling purposes. However, this is one case in which a suspected peddler was addicted to smoking opium. Seaman pleaded guilty before a Supreme Court judge and jury and was sentenced to 6 years imprisonment.

A case which revealed how drugs are difficult to trace because of many kinds of containers used, was that of an Oriental one **Lee Bow**, who conducted laundry at Agassiz, BC, would obtain his opium from Vancouver and then broke it down into decks (small packages) for peddling purposes

He did not deliver himself, but he used the mail as his delivery boy. By placing the decks of opium in Chinese Newspapers he would mail the same to his customers (Orientals and Occidentals). When we received information regarding his activities, a search party paid a visit to his laundry and found a supply of decking papers and opium on his premises. He was arrested and later convicted by a magistrate and sentenced to serve 12 months imprisonment.

In the case of **Charles Marino** we faced a hard-boiled individual who served time rather than give us information that would lead to the higher-ups. In this case a trunk was prepared on an Empress boat by the No. 1 Chinese, and tagged for a Vancouver hotel (Previously 50 cans of opium and one brick of crude opium had been placed in this trunk). It was delivered to the hotel in due course by the hotel baggagemen and about three hours later a taxi driver called for the trunk and delivered the same to a residence on Pender Street East. The trunk had been accepted by a lady, but when questioned by the R.C.M. Police she denied all knowledge of the contents of the trunk, only that a man had phoned her to take delivery of the trunk and pay the taxi driver, which she did in our presence.

However, we did not have very long to wait before Marino arrived on the scene.

We suspected that the opium was for a certain boss Chinaman but we could not confirm this whilst at the house. The case was adjourned for two weeks and in the meantime one of the girls gave a written statement to the effect that Marino was the man who instructed her to accept the trunk in question. A charge was laid against Marino, and he was found guilty by the police magistrate and sentenced to serve three years imprisonment. Marino would not give us any information regarding the boss Chinaman, but I was informed he was paid well for bearing the full load of punishment.

Charles Marino was arrested shortly after he paid his debt to society for his first offence. On the second occasion he was jointly charged with Frank C. Yipp and Fannie Frank for distributing drugs - morphine and cocaine. Marino and Yipp were found guilty (Franks not guilty) by judge and jury, and they were sentenced to serve five years imprisonment. They appealed the verdict and sentence to the Court of Appeal of B.C. The appeal was dismissed, they appealed to the Supreme Court of Canada where it again was dismissed.



In so far as opium is concerned, Turkey, and Yugoslavia produce most of that used for legitimate drug manufacture. Greece and Bulgaria also produce some, while Japan and Russia grow some for their own use. Persia, China and India grow most of that used for smoking and for eating. India, however, has reduced her export 10 percent annually since 1926, and that ceased entirely at the end of 1935. Probably 90 percent of the world's opium production is grown in China. Most of the cocoa leaf is grown in Java, Peru and Bolivia, with some production in Japan and Formosa. Indian hemp (Cannabis) is grown in most parts of the world. The chief drug manufacturing countries are France, Germany, Holland, Switzerland, Great Britain, Japan and the United States. The last named country manufactures almost exclusively for internal consumption. Canada does not manufacture any of the basic drugs, but imports from abroad, when necessary.

Col. C.H.L. Sharman, C.M.G., C.B.E., the Chief of the Narcotic Division of the Department of Pensions and National Health at Ottawa, was appointed during the year 1926. He has proved himself to be a first rate policeman by the method he adopted in rendering assistance and encouragement to members of all police forces, wherever they were located in their duties of enforcement of the Opium and Narcotics Drug Act and Regulations. And I venture to say that it

was due to his support we obtained the success in prosecuting and bringing to justice the large number of boss traffickers and smugglers of illicit drugs.

Col. Sharman attends meetings of the Opium Advisory Committee at Geneva. He is the Canadian delegate and is one of the best informed officials in Canada in connection with the narcotic situation in this country.

There has been a gradual improvement in the illicit narcotic situation in Canada since 1923. This has been obtained by years of hard work which involved considerable expense.

As Canada does not manufacture narcotics nor grow the raw material, therefore it is obvious that the narcotic problem would not exist in this country were it not for the illicit supplies which are smuggled into Canada from other countries. It is unfortunately not safe to assume that such a good condition will continue indefinitely. Of course it is realized that the Second Great War, 1939 to 1945, practically stopped the smugglers' activities on the Pacific Coast.

Now that hostilities have ceased, ocean going ships will be plying between sea ports in Western Canada and the Far East again. We should be prepared to make every effort to prevent the operations of the smugglers.

However, we know that the potential profits are so enormous that it is almost impossible to completely stop the smuggling and trafficking in opium and narcotic drugs.

During the war years past there has been an almost complete cessation of the introduction of illicit narcotics into Canada, with the results that criminal addicts have been obliged to obtain by fair means or foul, supplies from legitimate sources. They, obviously, have not been able to obtain anything like the quantities they desire, with the result that fantastic prices are paid by addicts for such quantities as they are able to secure. A druggist for example can sell on prescription an ounce of morphine or heroin for something in the vicinity of \$10. There are 437 grains in an ounce, and the steady peddler's price of one single grain on the Pacific Coast is \$20.00. This works out at over \$8,700.00 in illicit value for something worth \$10.00 in legal trade. In Central and Eastern Canada illicit prices are not quite so high, but in Toronto, for example, the price for months past has been \$12.00 per grain, which even then works out at over \$5,000.00 per ounce, or a price more than 100 times that of gold. The money to pay these prices does not come from a successful flutter on the stock market or anything of that sort, but from the criminal activities such as shop-lifting of these gentry in your own community.

However, these terrific prices have created a situation which also interests professional criminals of higher standing in the realms of burglary and hold-up, who are not necessarily addicts and have not hitherto been remotely interested in narcotics matters. But it is a different position when, with such prices obtaining, there are concentrated supplies of narcotics in such places as wholesalers' premises, hospital and some of the larger retail drug stores, which become more interesting to them than a bank, because not only are the rewards at least as great, if they are successful, but their technical difficulties are less, in view of the obvious fact that hospitals, for example are not normally geared to the standard of protection which a bank always finds necessary.

Referring to the actual physical effects of drugs on the human body, I referred to the report of Dr. Anselmino, famous narcotic authority. His report entitled the "ABC of Narcotic Drugs" was published by the Central Control Board of the League of Nations in 1931.

In the hands of the physician, narcotic drugs are indispensable, whilst in the hands of the layman they spell ruin. All habit forming narcotic drugs have this in common - that their continued use and abuse in every case leads sooner or later to loss of moral control, and even to physical and mental collapse.

Whenever, persons who are by constitution and general pre-disposition mentally unstable, the balance of the mental and physical functions is upset, this can be remedied by the use of opium or morphine.

In order, however, that these substances may give relief, these physical conditions must be present; they need not have manifested themselves actively, but may be latent and may be brought into operation by the supply of morphine to the system. The first effect morphine upon such a person is a feeling of extraordinary well-being and vigour, a state of euphoria which a man in an unbalanced physical condition seeks to recreate by further supplies of the drug. Later on, however, the effect of the same dose is only to produce satisfaction at the feeling of "normal health" attained by the use of morphine. The addiction of morphine on the addict may perhaps be conceived of in this way - that it has become a factor in the presence of cell metabolism. If this factor is absent, the function of the cells are thrown out of gear. If the drug is supplied afresh the functions apparently become regular once more.

A distinction is made between "morphine disease" and "morphine addiction." Morphine disease is a condition which nearly always follows a prolonged administration of morphine by a doctor's orders; in these cases, however, there is no psychological factor as there is in the case of the morphine addict. For this reason, morphine can easily be withdrawn as soon as the pain for which it was administered has ceased, and such persons do not as a rule revert to it. In the case of the morphine addict, however, the severity of the pronounced psychical fixation are characteristic.

Cocaine produces an abnormal condition by causing delusions and fantasies; it induces a boat of new and distorted ideas - hallucinations and an excited condition, which belong to the realm of insanity. Cocaine is a poison to the nerves in general. After large doses, symptoms of acute poisoning are observed, with extreme excitement and paralysis of the respiratory center and vascular nerves.

The spread of the cocaine habit has been chiefly due to the method of introduction through the nose (Cocaine sniffing).

When subcutaneously injected, cocaine is resorbed so rapidly that the stage of contentment is scarcely reached before it develops into intoxication and depression - conditions which are not calculated to make cocaine, thus administered, attractive as a means of enjoyment. Resorption through the nasal mucous membrane, however, is so gradual that, provided the dose is moderate, the euphoria lasts longer and the toxic stages are not reached until later.

A distinction must be made between opium and preparation of opium. Prepared opium is defined in Chapter 11 of the Hague Convention as follows:

“By ‘prepared opium’ is understood: the products of raw opium obtained by a series of special operations, especially by dissolving, boiling, roasting and fermentation, designed to transform it into an extractable suitable for consumption. Prepared opium included dross and all other residues remaining when opium has been smoked.”

In order that it may be suitable for smoking purposes, raw opium must be subjected to a series of processes - i.e., manufactured into prepared opium. The manufacturing process consists of boiling raw opium with water, combined with filtering, roasting and fermentation.

Prepared opium for smoking consists of a brownish viscous liquid of varying consistency.

Opium is however, not only smoked but also. In certain countries chewed or eaten. In any case, it is always abused and cannot be regarded as a regular medicant. The daily consumption of opium addicts varies widely, like the daily ration of morphine addicts, some of whom consume ten times as much as others.

Dross is the residue left in the pipe after opium has been smoked. It consists of ash and unbrunt opium and contains morphine, only part of which is absorbed when prepared opium is smoked. Dross is abused in several ways, the principal one being by eating it or by drinking it mixed with tea, coffee or other liquids. It is also reprepared for smoking purposes or mixed with prepared opium to strengthen the effect when smoking.

The eating of opium or dross is considered more harmful than the smoking of prepared opium, because much larger quantities of morphia enter the human system by eating than by smoking.

In concluding this article I would add that I feel confident that there are signs that the work of suppression is steadily gaining momentum. It must not fail or falter. While the cost in human wreckage is appalling, the material cost is also high. Crime and narcotics go hand in hand. The rule for the criminal to take drugs and the drug habit makes a major out of a minor criminal.