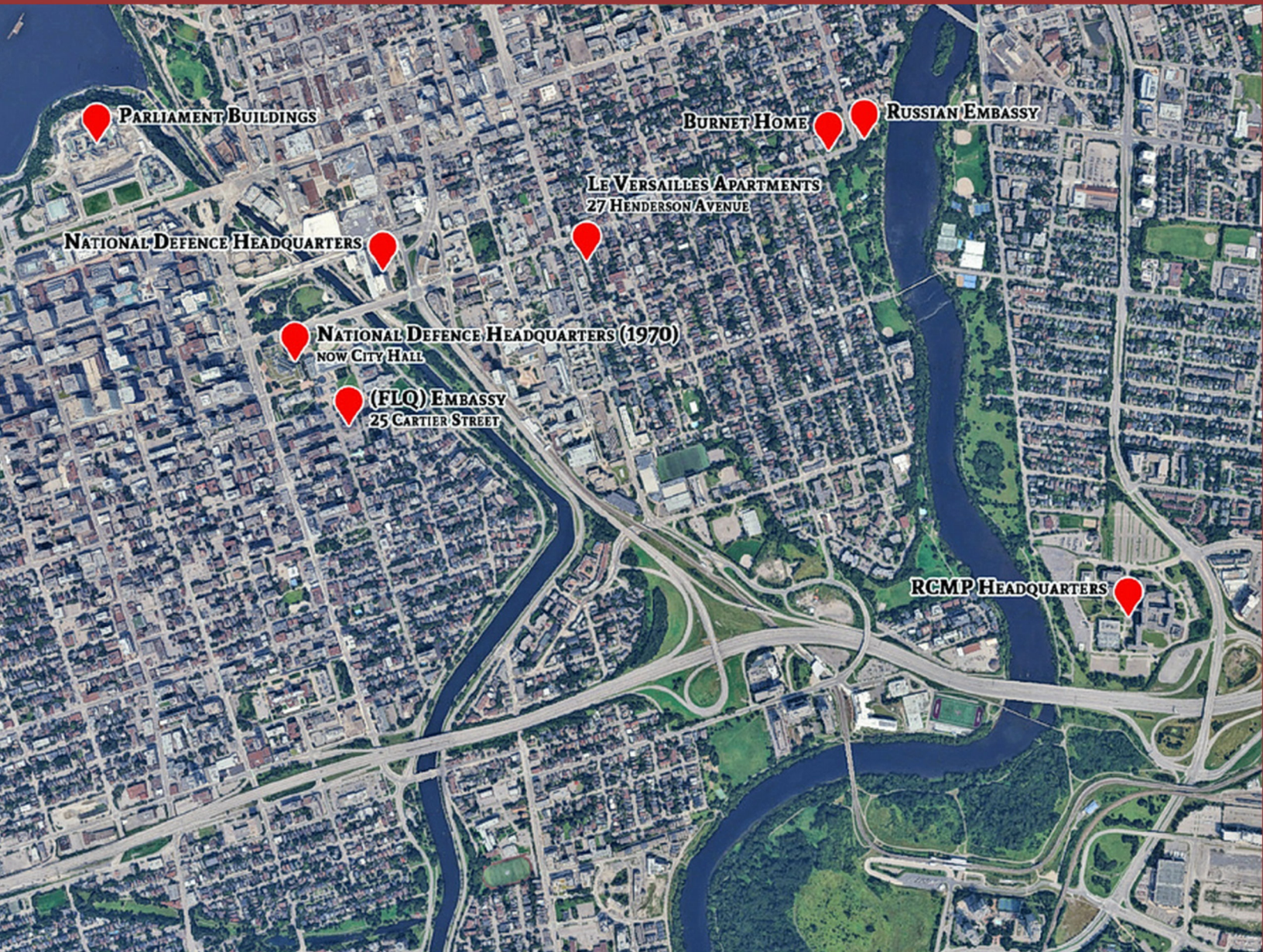


FORENSICS

R.C.M.P. Headquarters Ottawa



A MEMOIR

FORENSICS

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DONALD E. WAITE

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Table of Contents

1 • Ottawa and the Identification Section

Moving to Ottawa
A Cold War Assignment
Surveillance at Les Versailles
Counterintelligence Reflections

2 • Fingerprint Identification

The Six-Week Course
Inside the Fingerprint Bureau
The National Collection
Photographing the Commissioner
An Encounter with Malak Karsh

3 • The FLQ October Crisis, 1970

The Road to Crisis
The Kidnapping of James Cross
The Fingerprint Search
Escalation and Military Deployment
The War Measures Act

4 • Operation Ham

The Assignment
Inside the Embassy Hotel
The Identification
A Moment in Canadian History

5 • Forensic Photography Training

The Map of Canada Assignment
The Calgary Enlargement
Conflict in the Darkroom

6 • The End of a Police Career

The Eye Clinic
The Reprimand
Purchasing My Discharge
Scenes of Crime Branch

7 • **Flashbacks and Operation Molehole**

- Flashbacks
- Returning to Ottawa
- The Gouzenko Connection
- Conversations with Retired Members
- Operation Molehole
- Suspicious About Gilles Brunet

8 • **Files, Assessments, and Unanswered Questions**

- Freedom of Information Records
- Early Assessments

9 • **Vern Bethel and Cold War Connections**

- The Royal Buick
- A Department of National Defence Courier
- Coincidences and Connections
- The Intrepid Society

1 • **Ottawa and the Identification Section**

Moving to Ottawa

Upon moving to Ottawa to take the Identification (Forensics) Branch course in fingerprinting and photography, Carol and I took 10 days to drive from Maple Ridge, giving us time to stop in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, to visit her mother and spend a few days in Renfrew with my mom and dad.

Once in Ottawa, we quickly found an apartment on the fourth floor of Les Versailles at 27 Henderson Avenue in the city's affluent Sandy Hill district. It was less than a 10-minute drive from RCMP Headquarters, where I worked, as well as the Russian Embassy and the Parliament Buildings.

It was a troubling period in Canadian history. French separatists sought to have Quebec leave Canada and become an independent country. It was also the height of the Cold War, when tensions between the Soviet Union and Western allies—including Canada, the United States, and Britain—remained high.

A Cold War Assignment

On June 8, 1970, I reported to RCMP Headquarters on Vanier Parkway at the Queensway, a section of the Trans-Canada Highway. Before my forensics courses even began, a member of the RCMP Security and Intelligence Section—Canada's counterintelligence branch—visited the Identification Section and asked to speak with me. It was Gilles Brunet.

He told me that two Soviet diplomats from the Russian Embassy lived on the same floor as Carol and me at Les Versailles, only five blocks from the embassy. He wanted me to report anything I observed about them.

Surveillance at Les Versailles

Gilles became my "handler." He instructed me to buy running shoes and two sweatsuits. Once a week we met at a prearranged intersection near our apartment, went for an evening jog, and I debriefed him on anything of interest involving our Russian neighbours.

There was little to report. About all I ever observed was the two diplomats riding the elevator, chatting away in Russian.

Brunet was several years older than me, and he sometimes challenged me to a sprint over the final block of our run. Afterwards, he would disappear into the darkness. Our meetings rarely lasted more than an hour.

One weekend, Carol and I were leaving to visit my parents in Renfrew, about 60 miles away. As we walked out, the two Soviet diplomats parked their cars in front of the apartment and began loading picnic baskets and cameras into the trunks. It looked as though they and their girlfriends were heading out for a picnic.

I reported my observations through a hotline, identifying myself by my regimental number, 23661, and the password "Tippy II." After giving my report, I never heard from anyone again.

Not long after I met Gilles, he invited me to his house for coffee. Large framed black-and-white photographs lined both sides of the hallway. He was an avid amateur photographer with his own darkroom and lived in a house kitty-corner to the Russian Embassy.

Before leaving for Ottawa, I had purchased two cans of an ultra-fine-grain film developer that produced far better results than the developer used by the RCMP. I gave one can to Brunet. On our next run, he told me he was delighted with the quality of the negatives it produced.

During one of my runs with Gilles, I asked, "Why all this cloak-and-dagger stuff? Wouldn't it be easier to break into their suite after they leave for work and photograph anything of interest? I could be in and out within an hour, be at work by ten, and have the film processed and printed before noon."

Counterintelligence Reflections

At the height of the Cold War, the RCMP conducted clandestine counterintelligence operations against suspected Soviet spies. Surveillance teams sometimes included 10 or more members who monitored suspects and searched residences for classified material. More often than not, they came up empty. RCMP officers and Soviet intelligence personnel were well acquainted with each other's methods, making it a constant game of cat and mouse.

Looking back, it seems unlikely that a Soviet intelligence officer or diplomat would have taken sensitive documents home knowing an RCMP member lived less than 50 feet away down the hall. Breaking into their apartment would have made little sense. Even if I had been willing to do so, I assumed they would have taken precautions to reveal any unauthorized entry, even something as simple as placing a tiny piece of toilet paper where it would fall if a drawer or door were opened.

2 • Fingerprint Identification

The Six-Week Course

The very first item on the forensics agenda was an intensive six-week fingerprint identification course. I found it dull and barely worth mentioning.

Inside the Fingerprint Bureau



After completing the course, every trainee spent nearly a year in the Fingerprint Bureau comparing latent fingerprints collected in the field with those in the national collection. New fingerprint sets were first classified before being added to the files.

The bureau occupied much of the second floor of RCMP Headquarters. Each unit consisted of five searchers and a supervisor, with the searchers' desks arranged in a horseshoe around the supervisor's desk. Two four-drawer filing cabinets stood beside each searcher's workstation. Several supervisors worked on the floor, and mine was the chief supervisor.

The National Collection

We learned that whenever an offender was charged with a criminal offence, the arresting officer had to submit photographs, the person's height and weight, and a complete set of fingerprints to the Fingerprint Bureau. Our job was to compare those prints against the bureau's vast national collection.

Fingerprint identification is based on the unique ridge patterns found on human fingertips. No two people share the same arrangement, and those patterns remain unchanged throughout life. The bureau's collection filled countless filing cabinets, and trainees spent their days searching for matches between newly submitted prints and those already on file.

The work was tedious and demanding. Any trainee who missed at least two positive identifications was automatically removed from the course. The task was further complicated by criminals using aliases, with some appearing in the files more than once under different names.

Photographing the Commissioner

At the end of the course, I was assigned to photograph Commissioner Higgitt, seated in the centre of the front row of approximately thirty officers arranged in two rows. Bill asked me to produce thirty prints.

Most members used standard 125 ASA film with course developer but I chose 400 ASA film, whose greater light sensitivity provided increased depth of field, ensuring everyone in the group remained sharply in focus. To preserve fine facial detail despite the faster film, I developed the negatives in my ultra-fine-grain developer.

An Encounter with Malak Karsh

A few days later, I was assigned to photograph Commissioner Higgitt presenting an award to a young Boy Scout. I used a cumbersome 4×5-inch Crown Graphic camera fitted with a long lens. Just as I got into position and the presentation began, another photographer stepped directly in front of me with a wide-angle lens and took the shot. I missed the photograph entirely.

I was surprised to learn the photographer was Malak Karsh, brother of the renowned portrait photographer Yousuf Karsh and one of Canada's most respected photographers. A few days later, Carol and I visited the Karsh Studio on Sparks Street in downtown Ottawa. Its walls were lined with portraits of many of the world's most influential figures, including one of Prime Minister Pierre E. Trudeau that particularly caught my attention. Yousuf Karsh's secretary told me that her employer had recently flown to Washington to photograph U.S. President Richard Nixon.

3 • The FLQ October Crisis, 1970

The Road to Crisis

The most turbulent period in Canadian history unfolded in 1970, when Quebec separatists sought to break away from the rest of Canada. The crisis became known as the FLQ October Crisis, 1970.

During my time in Haney, rookie David Scott worked under my supervision. After completing his training, Dave was assigned to Montreal during Expo 67. While walking through the sprawling exhibition grounds in plain clothes, he unexpectedly found himself near one of the most dramatic political events of the era.

On July 24, French President Charles de Gaulle stood on the balcony of Montreal City Hall and delivered his now-famous declaration: "Vive le Québec libre!"—"Long live free Quebec!" French nationalist supporters arrived with pamphlets and, immediately after the speech, threw them into the air. To many observers, the demonstration appeared carefully organized.

De Gaulle's statement energized Quebec separatists and gave new momentum to the sovereignty movement. Twenty-eight years later, in the 1995 Quebec referendum, voters chose to remain within Canada by the narrowest of margins: 50.5 percent to 49.5 percent—a difference of fewer than 60,000 votes.

The possibility of Canada fragmenting was not entirely unprecedented. Eighty-two years earlier, Louis Riel had led the Red River Resistance, which resulted in the creation of Manitoba and raised fears among some Canadians that the country could divide along regional lines.

The Kidnapping of James Cross

To understand the October Crisis, it is helpful to review the events that unfolded.

On October 5, 1970, British Trade Commissioner James Cross was kidnapped in Montreal by members of the Liberation Cell of the Front de libération du Québec (FLQ). The kidnappers demanded the release of 23 political prisoners, \$500,000 in gold, publication of the FLQ Manifesto, and transportation to communist Cuba. They threatened to execute Cross if their demands were not met by federal and provincial authorities.

The Fingerprint Search

The following morning, Staff Sergeant Chris Tiller, the fingerprint supervisor responsible for our course, briefed us on the situation. Investigators had recovered a partial fingerprint from one of the FLQ communiqués sent to a French-language radio station. For the next several days, normal bureau operations were largely suspended as personnel worked around the clock to identify the print.

The bureau's most experienced searchers were assigned sets of fingerprints belonging to individuals suspected of FLQ involvement. The work was relentless. Searchers were allowed only brief fifteen-minute breaks. At noon, a bell signaled lunch, and hamburgers and milkshakes

were brought in for the staff. Fifteen minutes later, when the second bell rang, everyone returned to their stations. Despite all the hard work, an identification was not made.

Escalation and Military Deployment

On October 7, Quebec Justice Minister Jérôme Choquette announced that he was prepared to negotiate with the kidnappers. The following day, the FLQ Manifesto was broadcast on Radio-Canada's French-language network.

On October 10, the FLQ's Chénier Cell kidnapped Quebec Minister of Labour Pierre Laporte. To prove Laporte was still alive, the kidnappers released photographs showing him with James Cross. Later that evening, they warned both the federal and provincial governments that Cross would be killed if their demands were not met.

The following day, October 11, Quebec Premier Robert Bourassa received a letter from Laporte pleading for his life. Meanwhile, soldiers from Canadian Forces Base Petawawa, about 100 miles west of Ottawa, were deployed to protect Parliament Hill, Ottawa City Hall, and the residences of Governor General Roland Michener and Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau.

On October 13, Prime Minister Trudeau gave his now-famous response to a reporter's question outside Parliament: "Just watch me."

The following day, Carol and I walked around the Parliament Buildings and saw the heightened security firsthand. Soldiers carrying machine guns were stationed throughout the grounds. We watched Trudeau emerge from his limousine and enter Parliament. He appeared exhausted, as though he had not slept properly or shaved in several days.

On October 15, Quebec Premier Bourassa formally requested military assistance to support police efforts in protecting politicians and public buildings. That same day, approximately 3,000 students gathered at Montreal's Paul Sauvé Arena to demonstrate in support of the FLQ. The situation was further complicated by reports that some French-speaking RCMP members and Montreal police officers sympathized with the separatist movement.

The War Measures Act

On October 16, Prime Minister Trudeau invoked the War Measures Act, legislation originally enacted by Parliament in August 1914 at the outbreak of the First World War. The Act gave the federal government sweeping powers to maintain public order during times of war, insurrection, or national emergency. During wartime, individuals classified as "enemy aliens"—including Germans, Italians, and Japanese Canadians—could have certain civil rights suspended. Under the Act, police were authorized to conduct searches, make arrests, and detain individuals without charge.

On October 17, the body of Pierre Laporte was found strangled in the trunk of a car at Saint-Hubert Airport in Quebec.

4 • Operation Ham

The Assignment

At 8:00 p.m. that evening, I met my handler, Giles Brunet, at our usual intersection for a run. Instead, he handed me a camera case containing a camera and flash.

"I have a job for you, Don," he said. "Stand on the snowbank over there. Three men in a car will be there shortly. Don't talk to anyone."

Inside the Embassy Hotel

Within 10 minutes, a car arrived, and the driver took us to a high-rise building in downtown Ottawa. The entire trip took less than 10 minutes. We travelled along Laurier Avenue, crossed the Laurier Avenue Bridge over the Rideau Canal, and arrived at the Embassy Hotel at 25 Cartier Street in Ottawa's downtown core.

The driver parked beside the building and remained in the car. Another member positioned himself near the hotel entrance in case he was needed, while a third member accompanied me up the elevator. He forced the lock, and we entered the office.

We searched for documents containing the names of FLQ sympathizers. I took some correspondence into the bathroom, closed the door, and photographed it using a 35-millimetre camera fitted with an inexpensive flash. We were inside for approximately 20 minutes.

I did not see what the other member did, but he may have removed correspondence that could later be examined by fingerprint specialists using chemical techniques. I had been the last person picked up and the first dropped off at the snowbank. I gave my film to Gilles.

As I left, he looked at me and said, "This never happened."

From the time I left the apartment, I was back home in less than an hour. The film was processed using the ultra-fine-grain developer, revealing the names of key French separatist sympathizers. It was also possible that a fingerprint had been recovered from one of the letters taken during the operation. The FLQ operation became known as "Operation Ham."

The Identification

The following morning, members of the Fingerprint Bureau were given photographs of a smudged partial fingerprint recovered from a letter and asked to compare it with prints already in the collection. A positive identification required 10 matching ridge characteristics. This was extremely difficult because crime-scene fingerprints were often incomplete, distorted, or smeared.

Before noon, Sergeant Dick Mockler approached my supervisor with a possible match. She examined the print and nodded that he had made an identification. Within minutes, senior bureau members gathered around the table to verify the finding.

When the identification was confirmed, the entire second floor of headquarters erupted in celebration. Members cheered at the tops of their lungs and threw items toward the 30-foot

ceiling. Rolls of toilet paper appeared, and soon white streamers stretched across the bureau floor. Everyone was ecstatic.

A Moment in Canadian History

I was sitting at my desk when we heard the loud whir of a helicopter approaching. We rushed to the window and saw Prime Minister Trudeau step from the helicopter onto the lawn, where he was greeted by Commissioner Bill Higgitt and other senior members of the force.

I was witnessing a moment in Canadian history.

The key FLQ figures involved in the crisis eventually negotiated agreements and were allowed to go into exile into communist Cuba. Ironically, years later, some returned to Quebec and entered politics.

Royal Canadian Mounted Police Technicians's (Fingerprint) Course No. 4 - June 15 - July 17, 1970

Back Row: Constable Gordon A. Smith, Constable J. Chris St. Onge, Sonstable J. Keith McMurchy, Miss Kim M. Norberg, Constable H.J.R. Murray Goldstein, and Constable Ken W. Baird.

Front Row: Constable Robert P. Cockrell, Mr. H.G. Tuthill, Corporal Jim D. Walker, Constable Jacques P. Labrecque, and Constable Donald E. Waite



5 • Forensic Photography Training

The Map of Canada Assignment

After completing my time in the bureau, we began the photography portion of the course. One assignment required us to photograph a four-foot-by-five-foot map of Canada using a four-inch-by-five-inch large-format camera.

It was a challenging task. Four floodlights of equal intensity had to be positioned at each corner of the map to provide even illumination. The class worked as a team, and after two days of testing, we finally positioned the camera on a tripod at the correct height and distance from the map mounted on the wall.

Using a long lens to achieve the proper perspective, each member took a turn placing an assigned number in the lower-right corner of the map and photographing it using red, orange, yellow, and no filter. We compensated for the loss of light caused by the filters by adjusting the lens aperture or changing the shutter speed.

The camera and tripod remained in position for several days while members processed their film to ensure they obtained acceptable prints. Some even photographed the map during the early morning hours, believing that truck traffic on the nearby freeway might cause vibrations in the building during long exposures.

The Calgary Enlargement

Our next task was to crop the city of Calgary from the large negative and enlarge that tiny section into an 8×10-inch print. Members who had taken the course earlier recommended using a fine-grain developer rather than the coarser developer specified for the assignment. I asked my partner to process my film. Unfortunately he used the coarser developer, and my Calgary print came out grainy. His mistake meant I had to redo the entire assignment after everything had already been dismantled.

Conflict in the Darkroom

It took the entire weekend to complete the project again, leaving me far behind in my other assignments. My relationship with my partner deteriorated, and one morning, while working in a room adjacent to the darkroom, I overheard him say that there was going to be a "bloodbath" between us. When I confronted him, the situation quickly escalated into a shoving match that ended with him on the floor.

The incident quickly travelled through the "moccasin telegraph" to our superiors. My confrontation with my partner was followed by an act of one tactless remark that ended my police career.

6 • The End of a Police Career

The Eye Clinic

I had been experiencing problems with my eyes and took time off to have them examined at an eye clinic a few blocks from headquarters. I drove myself there, intending to return home afterward. The doctor examined my eyes, placed drops in both, and sent me back to the waiting room. I picked up a magazine, but within minutes my vision began to blur as the drops took effect.

I was completely preoccupied with figuring out how I was going to get home. Carol was heavily pregnant, and I wondered whether she had enough cash for a taxi. Just then, a gentleman sitting nearby complimented me on my shiny black boots. Without thinking or looking at him, I made a flippant remark. I told him they would certainly come in handy in a fight.

I looked up and realized, to my horror, that the man speaking to me was a priest. He was visibly offended and immediately left the room.

Although my vision was blurred, I could still make out the outline of another distinguished, well-dressed man nearby. After the priest departed, this gentleman made several attempts to engage me in conversation. I began to suspect he might be a member of the force. His questions seemed designed to determine who I was without directly asking my name.

Eventually, my vision returned, and I was able to drive myself home. I told Carol what had happened and that my careless remark would likely lead to trouble.

The Reprimand

The following day, I was ordered to report to an officer who had prepared a letter for me to sign acknowledging an official reprimand for my conduct at the eye clinic. I read every word describing my remarks to a member of the clergy in a medical facility.

During the reprimand, the officer had me sit in a low chair while he sat on a high desk and delivered a verbal dressing-down. He told me, "You're not a team player."

I stood up and told him he had not done his homework. He told me to sit back down. In that instant, I made a decision. I told him, "I just quit." It was May 20th, Carol's birthday.

He clearly knew nothing about my previous police work in British Columbia or my involvement with the Security and Intelligence Section in the national capital.

Purchasing My Discharge

A month after submitting my request to purchase my discharge, the officer called me in for a second interview. He admitted he had been misinformed about my being "not a team player." He also acknowledged that the force had invested a great deal of money training me for a specialized career.

He tried to talk me out of buying my way out of the force and made it clear that he believed my chances of succeeding in any business venture were minimal. My pregnant wife and my parents shared the same opinion. Dad wrote me an impassioned letter pleading with me to

change my mind. He pointed out that government employees could retire with a pension after only 20 years of service and then move into another line of work.

Upset, I tore up his letter.

I had seven years of service and had reached the point where I was becoming a real asset to the force. It was an expensive decision, but the bridges behind me had been burned and there was no turning back. An unfortunate chain of events had brought my police career to a premature end.

I had joined the force with the best of intentions, but had become disillusioned, concluding that the organization was excessively militant in its operations from top to bottom.

Scenes of Crime Branch

Although I had submitted my request to purchase my discharge, I was assigned to the Scenes of Crime Branch at RCMP Headquarters, where I assisted with investigations into bombings of government buildings in Ottawa and Hull.

7 • Flashbacks and Operation Molehole

Flashbacks

I experienced a severe bipolar breakdown in 2007 that was triggered by my photography of a family of birds. Three years later, in 2010, I experienced another episode that led me to believe I was some kind of James Bond figure.

The experience was bizarre. I began having vivid flashbacks in which I believed I had been involved in the October 1970 FLQ Crisis, including the kidnapping of James Cross, the British Trade Commissioner to Canada, and the murder of Quebec Labour Minister Pierre Laporte.

As these memories intensified, I came to believe that I had played a significant role in both the FLQ crisis and the Cold War. I also became convinced that the force had a source who was providing sensitive documents to the Russians.

Returning to Ottawa

In 2009, Tina and I travelled across Canada collecting photographs and material for my book, *Espionage in Canada*. During a stop in Ottawa, we spent a day revisiting places from my past—the training base at "N" Division, Les Versailles, the Russian Embassy, and Gouzenko Park.

At Gouzenko Park, I set up my camera on a tripod and focused across the street on the apartment building where Igor Gouzenko had lived. I waited for the traffic to clear so I could capture the perfect photograph.

The Gouzenko Connection

Gouzenko was the Soviet cipher clerk who defected to Canada in 1945 and exposed a Soviet espionage network operating in the West. He ratted out 22 Russian spies operating in Canada. This was the moment the Cold War started.

He was interrogated by William S. Stephenson, the Winnipeg-born intelligence officer known as "Intrepid," who is cited as the inspiration for the fictional James Bond. Espionage was still a new field for the RCMP, and the force's representative in the Gouzenko investigation was Sergeant George McLellan. British intelligence officers, including Roger Hollis, then head of MI6 assisted with the interrogation.

Ironically Hollis was the head of M16 and a Russian Spy.

Conversations with Retired Members

After the trip with Tina, I started to attend Koffee Klatche lunches, gatherings for retired RCMP members.

There I spoke with Raoul Carriere, who had served in the Special I (Intelligence) Branch at RCMP Headquarters during the FLQ Crisis. He had been involved in Operation Ham. His father had been an Assistant Commissioner. He suggested I contact Dan Mulvenna.

"He's the RCMP's spy master. He lives in Langley, Virginia," Raoul told me.

It took me 15 years before I finally spoke with Dan. We discussed my time in Ottawa during the October Crisis and the Cold War. His response was measured:

"It's plausible you did those things, but it's highly unlikely."

During the same Ottawa trip, while visiting my younger brother Bill in Dunrobin, I experienced a mild bipolar episode. The word "Molehole" kept recurring in my thoughts.

A few days earlier, I had purchased a copy of *Spycatcher* by former MI5 officer Peter Wright from a small bookstore in Eganville. I gave the book to my niece Robyn and wrote inside the cover:

"With best wishes from Uncle Donnie, OMH." August 12, 2009.

Tina and I had planned to visit Svetlana and Igor Gouzenko's grave at Springcreek Cemetery in Mississauga, but we simply ran out of time. I had also hoped to rent a plane and photograph Camp X at Whitby, but my commitments and poor weather prevented that.

The trip down memory lane brought back long-dormant memories. Later, Robyn emailed to ask what OMH meant. I replied:

"Operation Molehole."

Operation Molehole

During a major bipolar episode in 2010, I began to believe that I had played a significant role in the FLQ Crisis and the RCMP operation known as "Operation Ham."

Eventually, in my mind, the pieces seemed to come together. I began to see myself as the force's accidental Cold War spy. The scenario I imagined was that my handler, Sergeant Gilles Brunet, was secretly connected to Soviet intelligence and that my seemingly routine assignments had been part of something much larger.

Suspicious About Gilles Brunet

I remembered leaving my apartment to meet Gilles for one of our weekly debriefings and seeing him talking with one of the Russian diplomats on the steps of his own home. My radar immediately went up. I didn't trust what I was seeing. The irony was impossible to ignore. Gilles had assigned me to keep an eye on the Russian diplomats who lived down the hall from me, yet I had just caught him meeting privately with one of them on the steps of his own home. The encounter immediately heightened my suspicions.

Rather than reporting my concerns through official channels, I contacted my Haney mentor, Tony Beecroft. Through an unusual chain of circumstances, Tony had once been connected to RCMP Commissioner George B. McLellan.

Shortly after my transfer to Haney, Joe Healy, my footbeat partner from Burnaby, arrived at the detachment in charge of traffic. Joe and Tony were both devout Roman Catholics. When I was stationed in Burnaby, Joe and I roomed and boarded with Angela and Tom Dempsey and their two daughters. Tom was also a devout Catholic and an intellectual who, through Tony,

became a ghostwriter for Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau on matters involving Canada's West Coast.

I can still picture Tom sitting in the living room with a cigarette hanging from his mouth, writing draft after draft. It was only years later that I realised these pages would eventually be sent to Trudeau. If so, Tony would have been the intermediary man.

In retrospect, I wondered whether information about my concerns had eventually reached senior members of the force, including Commissioner Bill Higgitt in Ottawa.

I later considered the possibility that, rather than exposing Brunet, senior members of the RCMP may have chosen to manage the situation by providing him with controlled information knowing he was acting as a Soviet agent.

My thinking was influenced by the Gouzenko Affair and the controversies surrounding British intelligence during the Cold War. I wondered whether lessons learned from earlier espionage cases had shaped how the RCMP handled potential security threats within its own ranks.

These experiences, memories, and interpretations became part of the puzzle I was trying to understand decades later.

When Gilles Brunet was eventually exposed as a Soviet agent, he never served jail time and was allowed to walk free, seemingly thumbing his nose at Canada's justice system. In my view, he should have faced charges of treason.

It was a difficult time to be a police officer in Ottawa. Members did not know whether everyone within the force was loyal to Canada or sympathetic to the separatist cause. In addition to "Operation Ham," I began thinking about what I later called "Operation Molehole" (OMH).

In my mind, OMH involved a group of former members and associates, including former Commissioner George McLellan and others connected with the B.C. Coroners Service. I came to believe that senior figures may have been aware of information that was not shared with Prime Minister Trudeau or the broader public.

8 • Files, Assessments, and Unanswered Questions

Freedom of Information Records

I had always believed there was a missing block of time from my Ottawa years, so I eventually requested my "discipline" and "history" files under the Freedom of Information Act. Some of the comments were surprisingly humorous.

Early Assessments

On May 19, 1965, a driving instructor wrote:

"It is my opinion this member is intellectually incapable of correcting these errors. Prior to giving him further driving tests, etcetera, it is suggested that the time, financial, and potential aspects involved should be given full consideration."

Two weeks later, the same instructor's assessment had changed dramatically:

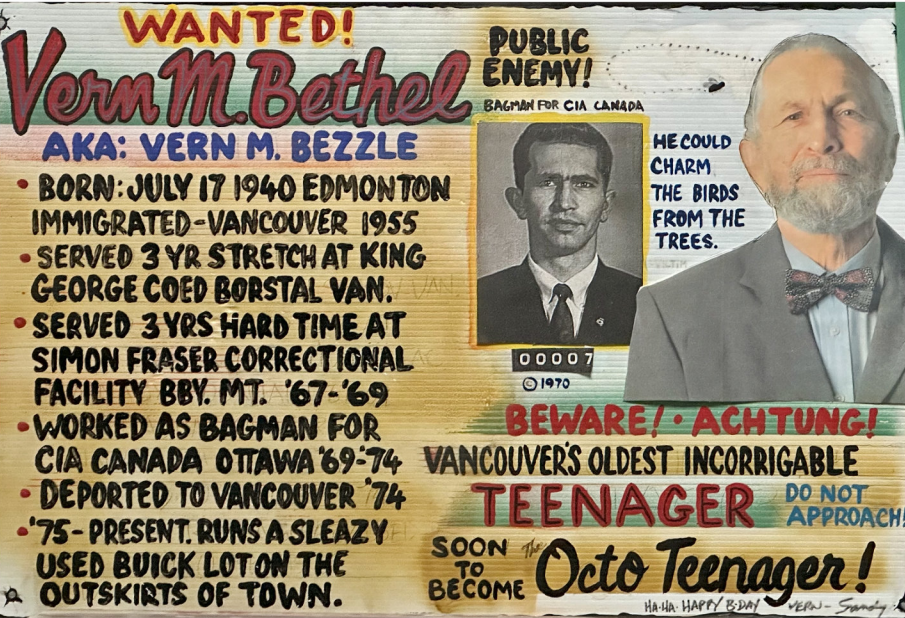
"I am unable to explain the seemingly unbelievable improvements in this member's driving considering only a two-week period lapsed between the time he was tested by a senior NCO of 'A' Division Traffic Branch, unless, of course, he was finally able to grasp the instructions he had received during the testing period."

Training instructor Sergeant E. Cosstick also left an interesting impression:

"This is a small timid-looking man who has a sleepy look about him. This is usually an illusion."

9 • Vern Bethel and Cold War Connections

The Royal Buick



2010, I met Vern Bethel, who had worked for the Department of National Defence in Ottawa. We became friends. Vern owned one of two McLaughlin-Buick automobiles specially built for visits by British royalty to Canada. The vehicle was stored at the Squamish Railway Museum.

One day, Vern and I pushed the car out of the storage building into the daylight so we could photograph it, with a female RCMP member in red serge and breeches posing beside it.

I told Vern, "You know, when I was at Rockcliffe in Ottawa, I had to babysit the royal carriage. No one was around, so I climbed in and sat on all four seats, knowing the Queen would occupy at least one of them shortly afterward. I'm going to do the same thing with your Buick."

A Department of National Defence Courier

Vern and I often reminisced about our time in Ottawa during 1970. On one occasion, I jokingly asked, "Didn't you once mention having the code name 00007?"

Vern replied, "It's okay to talk about it now that the 30-year rule has long passed. How should I put it? I was a courier for the Department of National Defence. We had to move large amounts of money and carefully scrutinize the people involved. I would meet someone at a motel and hand over a manila envelope containing cash. Sometimes I was assigned to escort foreign officials, including the Deputy Minister of Malaysia, without being told the full reason why. The security level was that high."

He explained that these events took place during the Cold War, when concerns about Soviet influence and intelligence gathering were widespread.

During the interview, I said, "I'm recording this, just so you know. You said a couple of million dollars?"

My conversations with Vern Bethel added another piece to the puzzle I was trying to understand. Although he never claimed to know anything about my theories, his descriptions of Cold War security work reinforced my appreciation of the atmosphere that existed in Ottawa at the time.

During my research for my book on the history of Vancouver in

His response was simple.

"Well, yeah."

I asked, "And some of this took place at the embassy?"

“It was a very convenient place. It was only half a block from defense headquarters. I lived right around the corner. Actually twice. The second apartment building was considered the second loveliest hotel apartment in the city.”

I asked, “And would all this have taken place during the FLQ crisis?”

“Yes, a bomb went off at defense headquarters and somebody got killed. It was the FLQ. A friend of mine lived down the street and was sleeping under some venetian blinds and the explosion blew the windows right out. The blinds probably saved his life. He did get badly cut up. The blast broke a lot of windows.”

Me, “Just for the record. You said your code name was 00007?”

Vern, “Well, that was on my passport and when we went across the border we didn’t answer any questions. Somebody phoned and talked and they let us through. No questions asked. You know. CEO stands for Canadian Eyes Only. Look at the spies that were getting into Canada. You know, my director general was the head of the DEW line.” Vern told me he worked in the National Archives and sat in the chair of Yuil Loughead, his boss and the head of the DEW line. It was during the time the beautiful wood from the old Department of Defense furniture was being repurposed and moved to the brand new headquarters. Vern remarked, “I sat in Yuil’s chair and by fluke discovered a long lost film about the DEW line.”

Coincidences and Connections

I said to Vern, “You know that’s downright weird because as a kid, I used to pick dew worms. My initials are DEW. And then the RCMP had ‘Operation Dew Worm’ spying on the Russian Embassy way back in the fifties. There were two embassies. The Russian Embassy and then there was the (FLQ) Embassy. Here’s another one. When chosen to go into dentistry, I was invited to the University of Toronto’s Faculty of Dentistry and dined at the Casa Loma Castle. Its basement, during the war, had ‘Camp M’. It was for spies. When Camp X closed, all the artifacts were moved to ‘Camp M’. When I was a cop in Burnaby, my partner was dating Miss Burnaby. Her parents owned the Casa Loma Motel on Kingsway. And there’s another one. It’s the town of Vegreville. When stationed at New Westminster Subdivision, I used to go out on patrol with Sergeant Skip Wheatley. He was in charge of the Identification Branch from Vancouver to Chilliwack. He was from Vegreville.

When my Maple Ridge book came out, I gave a talk to Rotary. Afterwards Ed Rusnak, a rotarian, invited me to lunch. He had just invented an encryption device and thought I might have access to FBI and RCMP security. I talked to a few members but nothing ever happened. He mentioned being from Vegreville. Jim Stanton came up in the conversation. I knew him from RUSI. Ed said Jim lived on Diaper Lane in Vegreville. I called Jim and surprised him by asking if he’d ever lived on Diaper Lane. During one of my several breakdowns, I sent out a bulk e-mail. Jim got right back to me, “You’re cracked.” I replied, “Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall,

Humpty Dumpty had a great fall and all the king’s horses and all the king’s men couldn’t put poor Humpety together again.”

Learning of my bipolar, Jim apologized. Ed then asked if I knew Skip Wheatley. He was a RCMP member from Vegreville. Realizing Skip was years older than me, Ed was surprised when I told him Skip had written a letter of recommendation for my application into the Forensics Branch. At a Koffee Klatch, I interviewed Assistant Commissioner George Paquette.

As a rookie cop, he babysat Gouzenko. He was the officer in charge of Montreal during the 1970 FLQ crisis. He gave me a picture and told me to use it in a book on Canadian espionage. He grew up in Vegreville.

During a breakdown in 2010, Carl McLeod contacted me saying he’d found my ‘The Boy from Renfrew’ book on my globalairphotos.com website. He said he’d written a book, ‘A Master of Deception Working Undercover for the RCMP’. It was published in my hometown, Renfrew ON. My brother-in-law couriered me the book. Carl called himself, ‘The Boy from P.E.I. (Prince Edward Island)’. Super spy William S. Stephenson was ‘The Boy from Winnipeg’. There are other connections but they involve National Security. And, I was the ‘Boy from Renfrew’.

Vern and I talked about the University of Manitoba and Canada’s NORAD. the facility where most of the artifacts to do with Bill Stephenson, the ‘Boy from Winnipeg’ and the Real James Bond, are stored.

The Intrepid Society

During a breakdown in 2010, Colonel Gary Solar, invited me to the Intrepid Society awards. The society was founded to honour the achievements of William S. Stephenson, the world’s greatest spy, and the only man that had 24/7 access to Britain’s King George VI, Britain’s Prime Minister Winston Churchill and US President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Just for the record, I did more concerning espionage and national security in Canada long after leaving the force.

	Officer of the Year	Regimental #	Rank
1932	Nicholson, Leonard Hanson Headed up the Igor Gouzenko Russian defector investigation	10049	Commissioner
1935	Brunet, Josaphat Father of #18998 / G. Gilles Brunet - RCMP ‘mole’ rat Last day 1973-12-07	9952	Deputy Commissioner
1938	Harvison, Clifford Walter ‘Slim’ Participated in the Gouzenko investigation	8758	Commissioner
1939	McClellan, George Briton Participated in the Gouzenko investigation	11757	Commissioner
1952	Higgitt, William Leonard Headed the force during the FLQ investigation.	12979	Commissioner
1959	Paquette, George J.A.P. Rookie out of training babysat Russian defector Igor Gouzenko Headed the investigation in Montreal during the FLQ crisis. During Coffee Klatches in North Vancouver, talked about his participation during the FLQ crisis.	14243	Assistant Commissioner
1960	Gibbon, John ‘Jack’ E. The officer in charge of Burnaby Detachment in 1965.	14324	Assistant Commissioner
1961	McAffie, Alexander Taylor Acted as prosecutor at my charge of my conduct unbecoming in training by swearing	18697	Assistant Commissioner
1962	Wright, Peter Officer i/c Chilliwack Sub/Division in 1967-68 When Peter did my annual interview, most of the conversation centered on my court marshalls while in training and in Burnaby. It did not go well.	15225	Assistant Commissioner
1964	Simmonds, Robert Henry Acted as Judge and Jury at my charge of false statements when in Burnaby	14885	Commissioner
1966	Moffatt, R.G. Acted as my defence at my charge of conduct unbecoming for swearing	17307	Deputy Commissioner
1967	Proke, Larry Russell Knew Larry briefly from my time at New Westminster Sub/Division Headquarters. Larry and Les Holmes headed up the investigation of Otto Joseph Horvath in 1978.	20329	Deputy Commissioner

1969	Cain, John Vincent 'Vince'	19396	Chief Superintendent
	With Les Holmes was involved in the interrogation of Civilian Member Les Bennett, suspected of being a "mole" in the force feeding intelligence to the Russian Embassy in Ottawa. Turned out to be RCMP member Sergeant Gillies Brunet		
1971	Tiller, Christopher Douglas 'Chris'	19960	Chief Superintendent
	Staff/Sergeant i/c Identification 'Forensics' course in 1970-71		
1971	Schmidt, Florian	16010	Superintendent
	When a Staff Sergeant in Burnaby charged me with false statements in a police report.		
1971	Northrop, Bruce L.	16630	Superintendent
	My boss in GIS Burnaby Detachment's Burglary Detail in 1965 With Les Holmes headed the notorious serial killer Robert Clifford Olson. With Les Holmes co-authored "Where Shadows Linger The Untold Story of the RCMP's Olson Murders Investigation"		
1972	Galbraith, Robert W. 'Bob'	19100	Inspector
	Worked under Bob during his time as Chief Coroner for BC. Officer i/c Langley Detachment during my time writing "The Langley Story A History in Photographs".		
1973	Les Holmes	19209	Superintendent
	Worked with Les briefly at Burnaby Detachment. Les took the first polygraph (lie) detector course in New York in 1972. With Vince Cain used a polygraph lie detector of suspected civilian member Les Bennett as a suspect as a possible "mole" within the force. He passed the test and afterwards RCMP Sergeant Gillies Brunet was charged with the crime. Les Holmes headed up the Otto Joseph Horvath for murder case. Horvath, 17 years old, was charged with first degree murder. Les used the lie detector to aid in Horvath's conviction. With Bruce Northrop co-authored the book 'Where Shadows Linger'.		
1973	White, John 'Jack' Lesley	16721	Chief Superintendent
	Investigated the Anna Caroline Whitby murder, 1966. After 3 members were killed at Kamloops, Jack shot and killed George Booth.		
1974	Tiller, Chris D.	16960	Chief Superintendent
	Officer in charge of the Identification course		
1974	Kenneth Eugene Hollas	17562	Superintendent
	Involved in barn burning during the October 1970 FLQ crisis Testified under oath at the MacDonald enquiry		
1975	Walker, James D. 'Jim'	20881	Chief Superintendent
	Jim was an instructor at the Forensics course in 1970-71		
1975	Pickell, Roy	19569	Superintendent
	My boss, Roy headed up Burglary Detail in 1966.		

1975	Larry Proke	20329	Deputy Commissioner
	Worked with Les Holmes to extract a confession of 17 year-old Otto Joseph Horvath. Worked with Bruce Northrop and Les Holmes on Robert Clifford Olson.		
1976	Rivers, Robert W.	18144	Inspector
	1976		
1976	Hart, John A.	20290	Inspector
	Arms instructor at 'N' Division training facility in Rockcliffe, 1964-65		
1989	Joseph James Healy	23685	Superintendent
	Joe was my foot beat patrol partner at Burnaby Detachment in 1965-66 Joe founded the web site rcmpgraves.com		
1992	Busson, Beverly A.	31796	Commissioner
	Bev was a pallbearers at the celebration of life for Katzie Chief Agnes Pierre		