Ginger Goodwin, 1887-1918. This photograph was likely taken in 1916 or 1917. The location is uncertain. *Cumberland Museum and Archives, C110-002.*
INTRODUCTION

CUMBERLAND, BC, SATURDAY 27 JULY 1918: The Dominion Police posse left Cumberland, the coal mining city nestled against the Beaufort Mountains on Vancouver Island, early on this bright sunny day under the command of William John Devitt. Vancouver-based Devitt, 49, was a career policeman and BC inspector for the Military Police component of the Dominion Police. With him was hotel proprietor Dan Campbell, 46, of Victoria, a disgraced former constable in the BC Provincial Police in Esquimalt, now a special or temporary constable with the Dominion Police. Lance Corporal George Henry Roe, 48, former customs agent at Union Bay, where Cumberland's coal was loaded on ships for export, now living in Victoria and employed by the Dominion Police, rounded out the posse. They met up with two trappers who led the way into the wild mountainous country west of Cumberland — Thomas Downie (Scabby) Anderson, 58, of Bevan, a small coal mining community near Cumberland, and George Alfred (Dad) Janes, 44, of Victoria, a famous cougar hunter. But the prey this day was human. It was draft dodgers including Albert (Ginger) Goodwin: immigrant, coal miner, smelterman, union organizer, Socialist. A warrant had been issued for his arrest for failing to report for active service as an army conscript.

Not present on that fateful day was Robert Rushford, 38, the BC Provincial Police constable based in Cumberland. He was transporting a prisoner to Oakalla Prison just outside Vancouver. Back in 1914, Rushford, a Cumberland coal miner, volunteered at the start of World War I to rejoin his old regiment in Scotland, the 1st Battalion of The Black Watch (Royal Highlanders).

He was shot through the lung on 11 November 1914 in the First Battle of Ypres. He would later harbour serious doubts about the official version of what was about to happen to Goodwin.

Devitt, Campbell, and Roe were armed. Campbell, the proprietor of the Colwood Hotel near Victoria, carried his personal hunting rifle, a .30-30 calibre 1893 Marlin. He was an outdoorsman and known to be a crack shot. Roe also had a rifle.

Goodwin, 31, was killed by a single bullet from Campbell’s rifle which shattered the spinal column in his neck. There were no witnesses on the trail in dense bush on Alone Mountain, just Goodwin and Campbell.

“The question is, was it a killing in self-defence, as the press reports say, or was it murder,” demanded Jack Kavanagh, a leader of the longshoremen’s and tilesetters’ unions in Vancouver as well as the Vancouver Trades
and Labour Council and the BC Federation of Labour.¹ Or, as Sergeant A.E. Lees, secretary of the Great War Veterans Association in BC, put it: "Whether he was shot in the front or the back, he got his just and due deserts. He was an outcast, an outlaw, and not deserving of sympathy."²

Goodwin's death sparked a partial one-day general strike in Vancouver, the first in Canada. The controversy over his death continues. Kavanagh's key question has echoed through the subsequent decades. Yet regardless of how the circumstances of Goodwin's death may be viewed — murder or self-defence — what he stood for and believed in during his short life remains unchanged by the nature of his death.

Born into a time of political, economic, and social turmoil, Goodwin became a charismatic union leader and Marxist Socialist. He was evading conscription, an issue that divided Canadians during World War I, as a matter of principle. He opposed war believing that workers of one country should not kill fellow workers of another country. He espoused a Socialist philosophy that said wars were the outcome of capitalist conflicts between countries to protect existing markets or to seek new ones. In his own words, written in 1917, just over a year before his death: "Our efforts must be bent to the cause of our enslavement, capitalism; and in that case it precludes the workers from taking action in national wars, that does of necessity undermine the international character of the proletariat." The workers, he pointed out, had nothing to do with the calling of World War I. "The real trouble was that the masters interests were endangered through competition with each other, and they called upon their slaves to fight it out. And that the manufacturers of armaments wax fat at the large profits derived from the sale of the engines of destruction, explains their attitude on war very ably."³ He was a leading member in BC of the Socialist Party of Canada and spent time as an organizer for the party that advocated production for use, not for profit. The party sought this change through peaceful, non-violent, and democratic means at the ballot box. It emphasized education to achieve the political change it advocated.

Goodwin joined the militant United Mine Workers of America, the coal miners union in Canada and the United States, after arriving in Nova Scotia in 1906 from his native Yorkshire, at the age of 19. He began his ascendancy as a trade union and Socialist leader during the bitter conflict between coal miners and companies for union recognition on Vancouver Island during the Big Strike of 1912-1914. After working in coal mines in Merritt and Coal Creek in 1915, he went to Trail, BC, in 1916 where he worked for Consolidated Mining and Smelting Company Limited (CM&S), later renamed

¹B.C. Federationist, 2 August 1918.
²Vancouver Sun, 3 August 1918.
³"Nationalism and Internationalism," Western Clarion, Vancouver, June 1917.
Cominco and now TeckCominco Limited. Soon he was elected full-time secretary of the Trail Mill and Smeltermen’s Union, Local 105 of the International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers. He led the 1917 strike that closed the smelter for a month. It was then the world’s largest non-ferrous smelter. Today it is described as one of the world’s largest fully integrated zinc and lead smelting and refining complexes. In World War I, the smelter was an important supplier of raw materials for the armament industries. The strike issue, however, was not war but the eight-hour day.

Goodwin had been granted a temporary reprieve (Category D) from conscription on the basis of ill health. Whether or not the ill health was tuberculosis, as often stated in later years, cannot be confirmed because the conscription records were destroyed. But just eleven days into the strike Goodwin was suddenly recalled for re-examination and placed in Category A — fit to fight in the trenches overseas. This alone was highly suspicious, but there was more. The recall was contrary to public policy. Prime Minister Sir Robert Laird Borden asserted flatly at the time there was “no likelihood” of men in categories such as Goodwin’s being called up. The order for medical re-examination was strongly suggestive of complicity by CM&S officials. They had the necessary motive — to get rid of this troublesome union leader who had started the first strike at the company’s smelter, and in wartime. Goodwin’s opposite number in the management side, Selwyn Blaylock, was pro-war and president of the Trail branch of the Win the War League, a pro-conscription group. He was also a captain in the reserve militia. Nor was it out of character for CM&S to intervene in the conscription process. The company tried to exempt all its employees — Goodwin, of course, was not employed by the company but by the union — on the basis that they were performing their war duties by working in what amounted to a munitions plant. The blanket exemption, however, was rejected. All this was circumstantial evidence of CM&S’s involvement in Goodwin’s call-up for overseas duty. Now, thanks to the research efforts of a retired history teacher, Paul Appleton of Victoria, there is a witness — if his statements in 1919 are to be believed — to complicity by CM&S officials to get Goodwin out of Trail in November 1917 — but not in the killing of Goodwin eight months later.

Did special constable Campbell murder Goodwin, as labour claimed? Or, was it manslaughter, as the police charged? Or, was it self-defence, as Campbell said? Can we even say given the paucity of the record left to us? We can say that justice was short-changed because a grand jury did not send Campbell to trial as ordered by two justices of the peace. In Chapter Nine,

4The company became TeckCominco Limited in 2001 through the merger of Cominco Limited and Teck Corporation. See www.teckcominco.com
Adrian Brooks, a leading criminal lawyer in BC, contributes his review and analysis of the case against Campbell and what he thinks the prosecutor and defence counsel would have told the jury at Campbell's trial — had there been a trial.

Goodwin was an ambitious man as well as an idealist. He sought appointment in 1917 as deputy minister when the BC government created its first labour ministry. The first Minister of Labour was John Wallace deBeque Farris, one of the lawyers who defended the Vancouver Island coal miners following riots in 1913 during the Big Strike, and later a renowned Liberal senator. Goodwin won support from his own union and from the labour councils in Vancouver and Victoria, but he failed to win the Liberal government's favour.

Goodwin was a slightly built man who weighed 150 pounds and stood just five feet six inches. He was an accomplished semi-professional soccer player with a knack for scoring goals. He enjoyed dancing and attending masquerade balls. He was an orator of no mean skill and was personally popular. The world in Goodwin's time was sharply divided between 'haves' and 'have-nots,' the rich and the poor. Economic and social differences produced clear class antagonisms. Said the blunt-spoken Goodwin early in his activity in the Socialist Party of Canada in 1913: "This is no sentimental movement, and the masters can howl; we do not hide our intentions, for we are what they have made us — the dispossessed class that is out to overthrow them."5

This is the story of Albert (Ginger) Goodwin's life and the times in which he lived, as well as his death and its aftermath. Told for the first time are the ugly events that marked his childhood and adolescence in Yorkshire until he left for Canada where they were to be repeated.

5"Capitalism the Leveller," *Western Clarion*, 16 August 1913.