THE RIPPLES SET IN MOTION by Albert (Ginger) Goodwin's life and actions continue to flow. His memory is maintained in disparate places.

In Cumberland, Goodwin's distinctive gravestone, erected in July 1937, is the site each June of remembrances at Miners' Memorial Day. It is not unusual to find flowers there at other times of the year. The headstone was carved by Vincenzo Picketti, a miner who knew Goodwin and was among those who suffered destitution in 1914 and 1915, unable to regain employment immediately after the Big Strike.

The gravestone's Communist-tinged insignia has much to do with labour history decades after Goodwin's death. It was commissioned in 1935 by the Cumberland branch of the Canadian Labour Defence League (CLDL), which defended Communists and others before the courts in the 1920s and 1930s, with support from the Mine Workers Union of Canada (MWUC), Cumberland Local 37. The hammer and sickle reflect the politics of the CLDL and MWUC, which was an affiliate of the Communist Party's trade union federation, the Workers Unity League. Goodwin never belonged to the Communist Party of Canada, which was not formed until 1921-22, secretly under its own name and publicly under the name Workers Party of Canada. The Workers Unity League disbanded in late 1935 in favour of its unions joining mainstream labour. The next year, the Mine Workers Union of Canada voted to join the United Mine Workers of America. Goodwin's gravestone was erected with support from the UMWA. The gravesite had become overgrown with weeds since 1918 and was tidied up.

The Red House, where Ginger frequently boarded in Cumberland, still stands at 2725 Penrith Avenue as firmly as its original Douglas fir construction back in 1894. Owners Dean and Linda Wheaton are enthusiastic that they live in the house where Ginger once stayed, upstairs, as a boarder with the family of John and Margaret Clark.

Goodwin is commemorated at the Cumberland Museum and Archives and also at The Home Store on Cumberland Road in a striking mural by Frank Lewis, painted in 1984, in which he shares prominence with coal baron Robert Dunsmuir. A creek near where he was killed, close to the confluence of Rees Creek and the Cruikshank River, has been officially named after him, thanks to Ruth Masters of Courtenay. A nearby mountain has

been officially named Mount Goodwin, thanks to the Cumberland and District Historical Society.

In 1996, the New Democratic Party government of BC named the section of the new Inland Island Highway “Ginger Goodwin Way” where it passes Cumberland. Corky Evans, the minister of highways, said: “The highway will stand as a permanent memorial to those who have worked in Vancouver Island’s coal mines over more than a century, to the hundreds who died in the mines, and to the workers’ struggle to form a union.” But shortly after the new BC Liberal government was elected in 2001 — and just before Labour Day — the Ministry of Transportation and Highways removed the roadside Ginger Goodwin Way signs and refused a request from local councils to name the stretch Miners Way. Ironically, the Dunsmuir name remains on Cumberland’s main street.²

Goodwin’s friends in District 18, United Mine Workers of America, protested his death in 1919. Delegates to the district convention representing miners in the Crowsnest Pass and Alberta said the “slaying” of Goodwin was “contrary to civilized ideas and detrimental to the workers” and they denounced what they said was the action of the government.³

Coal miners won their battle for UMWA recognition in the Cape Breton coalfield in 1919 when a referendum among miners favoured the union that in turn issued a charter for District 26. The first negotiations as part of the UMWA brought the eight-hour workday and substantial wage increases.⁴

Union recognition on Vancouver Island came in 1937 when Canadian Collieries (Dunsmuir) Limited agreed to negotiate with the UMWA. The first contract was signed in 1938. Union recognition replaced the pithead committee system, a form of company unionism introduced by Canadian Collieries after the Big Strike, in which pay rates and some conditions were established between a committee elected by miners and the company, but with no union.⁵

In Denaby Main, where Goodwin spent his teenage years and where he started work in the nearby Cadeby mine, a copy of his employment application in 1915 to the Crow’s Nest Pass Coal Company at Coal Creek, BC, the last mining job he held, has been deposited as part of the Miners Memorial

³ Glenbow Museum and Archives, Calgary, M 2239, File 153 UMWA District 18 Papers.
⁴ Fox, United We Stand (Washington, 1990).
⁵ Comox Argus, 15 July 1937; People’s Advocate (formerly B.C. Workers News), 27 August 1937; Comox District Free Press, Courtenay, 26 August 1937; 10 March, 24 November 1938. For an example of how bad pithead ‘agreements’ could be, see the text of the 1919-1921 ‘agreement,’ Cumberland Islander, 8 November 1919.
Chapel at the Parish Church of All Saints. Goodwin, christened in the Church of England but later an atheist, would doubtless smile. People from the coalfields, however, know there is no contradiction when it comes to recognizing someone who has the interests of workers at heart.

When Goodwin was killed, he had $334.60 in a money belt. This was the equivalent of about sixteen weeks full-time pay as a pony driver in the mines. No one claimed it within the one-year statutory waiting period for claims and it went into British Columbia’s general revenue.6

Goodwin has been the subject of two books, a radio play and a stage play, a labour ballad, as well as numerous newspaper and magazine articles and references in every labour history book of note.

Goodwin’s parents died in 1920 within two months of each other. Walter Goodwin never left the West Riding Lunatic Asylum (now Stanley Royd Hospital) in Wakefield, West Yorkshire, which he had entered in 1917 suffering from senile dementia. He died of heart disease and pneumonia, aged 63. Mary Ann Goodwin died of stomach cancer. She was 60. They are buried in unmarked graves at St. Leonard’s and St. Peter’s Parish Church cemetery in the village of Thrybergh near Rotherham, in South Yorkshire.

Church records list the Goodwins with the letter P meaning public burial. It was not uncommon for poor people to be buried in unmarked graves. Walter Goodwin finished his working life at nearby Dalton Main Collieries Limited mine. Opened in 1903, the mine later became Silverwood Colliery. It closed in 1995.7

Arthur Boothman, Goodwin’s friend, fellow miner, draft dodger, and skilled soccer player, remained in Cumberland where he died in 1961, aged 78.

Several weeks after Goodwin’s death, Joe Naylor, friend and mentor, was charged with aiding Goodwin and his fellow deserters by taking groceries to them in early July 1918. The case was dismissed on 8 October 1918 for lack of evidence, by the same grand jury in Nanaimo that would have heard the manslaughter case against Dan Campbell but for the change of trial venue to Victoria. The grand jury, however, did return an indictment against David Aitken, arrested with Naylor, and accused of aiding deserters by taking groceries to them in March 1918. Aitken’s case was put over to the Spring Assize in Nanaimo in 1919, when a jury found him not guilty.

Police spying on labour and left wing groups accelerated in the years following World War I. Naylor found himself on the list of “chief agitators in Canada” compiled by the Public Safety Branch of the Department of Justice. His mail was being monitored.

The Royal North West Mounted Police warned the provincial government in a “Secret and Confidential” letter in July 1919 that miners would hold a demonstration in Cumberland marking the first anniversary of Goodwin’s death and “that the feelings of different factions in Cumberland runs [sic] very high on this matter.” The warning was sent to the acting BC deputy attorney general, William Carter, the man who prosecuted Dan Campbell the previous year for manslaughter of Goodwin. Carter passed the warning on to the BC Provincial Police with the comment: “Would you kindly advise your officers to take the necessary precautions.” The demonstration must have passed quietly because the Cumberland Islander did not report on it.

Naylor went on to play a leading part in the One Big Union which enjoyed meteoric but brief success in the turbulent times just after World War I. The OBU was formally constituted on 11 June 1919 as an outgrowth of the Western Labour Conference in Calgary in March. It sought to organize all wage workers on an industrial basis regardless of craft. By the end of the year, it reported a membership of 41,150 with 19,064 in BC.

Naylor was one of five men on the OBU’s central committee. It was viewed as a Bolshevik plot by BC Premier John Oliver. The OBU specifically said it

7Death certificates, Walter Goodwin, Mary Ann Goodwin; Doris Goodwin research.
“DOES NOT Advocate overthrowing the government by violence” and “DOES NOT Preach bloodshed, riot, anarchy, or sabotage.” However, it went beyond the traditional labour concept of a fair day’s work for a fair day’s pay. Instead, it proposed “that the worker should receive the full product of his toil,” and it defined ‘worker’ in broad terms as “all those who by useful work of hand or brain, feed, clothe or shelter; or contribute towards the health, comfort and education of the human race.” Its preamble called for a two-pronged approach: To carry on the everyday fight over wages and hours; and to “prepare ourselves for the day when production for profit shall be replaced by production for use.” This was exactly Goodwin’s philosophy. Opposed by business, government, and by established unions, and suffering from internal factionalism, the OBU soon began falling apart but continued a minor existence in Winnipeg until the mid-1950s.

Naylor remained in Cumberland where he was able, by the mid-1920s, to get work again in the coal mines. He appears to have played little part in subsequent events, although he spoke at a May Day rally in 1936 and was described as “the veteran fighter.” Miner Jack Horbury, who often visited Naylor at his cabin beside Comox Lake, said Naylor never became a Communist. He lived to see the union win recognition to represent the miners. Naylor, who started work as a boy in the mines of Wigan in Lancashire, died on 5 October 1946 from prostate cancer at the age of 74. His funeral was conducted under the auspices of Cumberland Local 7293 of the United Mine Workers of America, the successor to Local 2299 that he led during the Big Strike. Tribute was paid by local president John Cameron. Naylor is buried beside Goodwin. 8

William Arthur Pritchard went on to play prominent roles in labour and political life. With Naylor, he was part of the five-member central commit-

tee of the One Big Union. Before the OBU got off the ground, mainstream unions called a general strike in Winnipeg in 1919 in support of collective bargaining and recognition issues involving building trades and metal trades unions. Although he was only in Winnipeg for a week on a visit during the six-week general strike, Pritchard was among eight men charged with a number of counts of seditious conspiracy. The charges concerned events both before and during the strike.

Convicted by a jury, he was sentenced to one year in prison. Of the others, one was sentenced to two years in prison, four got one year, one got six months for conspiracy to commit a common nuisance and one was acquitted. A ninth person was acquitted of seditious libel and a tenth person had the charge effectively dropped. The Crown said the men fomented and led an unlawful general strike against the constituted form of government. Future historians, viewing events through a wider eye than the narrow lens of the Criminal Code, disputed this. They said it was a sympathy strike in support of building and metal unions seeking new contracts, not a revolution. A third verdict came from the public: Of the ten men charged with either seditious conspiracy or seditious libel, three already held elected positions at the municipal or provincial level. After the strike, seven of the ten pursued successful political careers, notably J.S. Woodsworth, the founding leader of the national Co-operative Commonwealth Federation, and John Queen, seven times mayor of Winnipeg. The dropping of the seditious libel charges against Woodsworth saved the Crown from the comedic spectacle of trying to prove, in one charge, that two quotations by the former Methodist minister from the prophet Isaiah in the Old Testament of the Holy Bible were seditious.

Pritchard was elected a councillor in the Vancouver suburb of Burnaby in 1928 and 1929 and was elected reeve (mayor) in 1930, 1931, and 1932. He also served two terms as president of the Union of BC Municipalities.

Pritchard moved politically to the Reconstruction Party (formerly the League for Social Reconstruction) that amalgamated with the CCF Clubs to form the Associated CCF Clubs of BC, with himself as president. In 1936, Pritchard sided with Rev. Robert Connell, the CCF leader in the legislature, in a split with MLA Ernie Winch. The Connell group (including three of the seven CCF MLAs) formed a new party called the Social Constructives. Changing its name to the BC Constructive Party, it was wiped out in the 1937 BC election that restored the CCF representation to seven MLAs.

When he heard later that Communists had put up a gravestone to mark Goodwin's grave, complete with a hammer and sickle, Pritchard (never a Communist) dismissed it as "grotesque statuary." He added that "the commies," who were not even organized as such in 1918, were claiming Goodwin "for themselves as a working-class martyr."
Tragedy struck the Pritchard family in 1938 when his 21-year-old daughter, Mildred, hanged herself from a beam in their house. Pritchard left for Los Angeles where he worked at odd jobs, as a Fuller Brush salesman, and in a restaurant kitchen. Politically, he returned to the left, joining the World Socialist Party of the US, counterpart to the Socialist Party of Canada. He also made several visits to BC, including the 50th anniversary of the Winnipeg General Strike, in 1969. In 1975, he was honoured by Burnaby and made a Freeman of the Municipality. He died in Los Angeles in 1981, aged 93.\(^9\)

In the years following World War I, the Socialist Party of Canada began to disintegrate. Some members (for example, Ernie Winch) moved to social democratic parties like the Co-Operative Commonwealth Federation that later became the New Democratic Party while others (such as Jack Kavanagh) joined the Communist Party. Once, the SPC had held the balance of power in the BC legislature, forcing through some moderate labour reforms, in the early 1900s. In the 1909 election, the SPC polled a record 11.5 per cent of the votes but by 1924 this had dwindled to 1.3 per cent. The SPC disbanded in 1925. In 1931, a second Socialist Party of Canada was organized in Winnipeg. It is the ideological descendant of the first SPC and survives to this day but is a very minor party.\(^10\)

Daniel Campbell and his wife, Florence, sold the Colwood Hotel in 1919 for $7,500 to Harry and Grace Shaw of Victoria and Henry William Duperier of London (from whom they had taken a mortgage in 1913). Mrs. Campbell said later that prohibition “broke us” and the hotel was sold at a loss. The hotel was demolished in 1936 in favour of the Colwood Inn, now


Dan and Florence Campbell, in the back garden of their suburban Victoria home, late in life. Eva Harris.
remodelled as Colwood Corners Pub. The Campbell family moved frequently. Dan Campbell returned to carpentry, moving into Victoria and working at Harbour Marine, a shipyard. The family lived for a time in the 1920s in Vancouver and in Pemberton, where he managed a ranch. He visited Victoria in 1930 and boasted of developing a big deposit of ochre-alum clay for making pottery. It never went into production. He and Florence lived at Kemp Lake, west of Victoria, in the 1930s where they ran a chicken farm and rented boats. He described himself as a prospector, presumably of his ochre-alum deposit. Later, they ran a teashop at Thetis Lake near Victoria. During part of World War II, he worked as a joiner at Victoria Machinery Depot shipyard. He died in 1952, aged 80, and is buried at Colwood Burial Park not far from the site of his old hotel. Florence Campbell died in 1958 aged 83 and is buried beside him.\(^{11}\)

William John Devitt turned from rounding up draft dodgers to spying on trade unions. He was apparently seconded (or at least his reports were) in 1919 from the Dominion Police to the Royal North West Mounted Police (with which the Dominion Police soon merged in the renamed Royal Canadian Mounted Police). He was described, in one RNWMP report about the activities of special agents, as having a good knowledge of the district but “better employed where this knowledge comes into use, than for investigating an important case needing definite information.” He picked up a good reference from Frederick Glover, chief inspector of the Dominion Police in BC, as a “particularly valuable officer .... [I] heartily recommend Mr. Devitt for an executive position ....” But Detective Sergeant Robert Mundy of the RCMP, referring to Devitt’s role as Special Agent No. 11, criticized him as unsuitable, inaccurate, and not showing energy. In November 1919 Devitt became chief of the combined police and fire departments in the Vancouver suburb of Burnaby, a post he held until the municipal police were replaced by the Provincial Police in early 1935. He was then 66 years old and without work. During his term as police chief, in the worst years of the Great Depression, he was noted for his charity works, especially for organizing help for the unemployed. In a curious, boastful letter written after he moved to the West End of Vancouver from Burnaby Devitt sought work with the newly-formed Citizens League of BC ferreting out Communists in unions. In the letter, addressed to Colonel Charles Edgar Edgett, Devitt wrote that before taking over as chief of Burnaby Police, “I was Insp. Dominion

\(^{11}\)Land Title Office, Victoria, conveyances, 1908, 1913, 1919; Victoria Daily Times, 5 March 1936; Victoria Daily Colonist, 25 August 1957; Victoria Daily Times, 16 August 1930; Victoria Daily Times, 15 April 1952; City Directories, Victoria, Vancouver; Esquimalt constituency voters list, 1933; Author’s interview with Eva Harris, Billy Conway, niece, nephew of Dan Campbell, 7 April 1990; “Verification of Death Particulars: Daniel Campbell,” Division of Vital Statistics, province of BC.
Police (45) men and during the Winnipeg and Vancouver general Strikes [1919] for One Big Union, I sent the Minister of Justice many hundreds of thousands of files on the agitators of the period. I have the endorsement of The Consolidated M& S. Co Ltd and The C.P.R.” While it is certainly interesting to note this approving reference from the smelter company in Trail, this letter seriously tests Devitt’s credibility, even allowing for the usual amount of self-promotion to be found in employment applications. At the very most, he was a Special Agent for one year (November 1918 to November 1919). If he sent 300,000 files in, say, 300 days, he was churning out a prodigious 1,000 files a day, and this from a man commented on by a fellow officer as not energetic in his work. The population of BC was only about 400,000 — men, women, and children.

Colonel Edgett, former chief of the Vancouver Police, was only one of a number of prominent Vancouverites involved in the Citizen’s League, including Mayor Gerry McGreer. In May 1935, three months after Devitt lost his job in the Provincial Police take-over of the Burnaby municipal police, the Citizen’s League began running a series of large advertisements in Vancouver newspapers. The advertisements warned of “Communist subversion,” urged “Citizens Unite to Defend Law and Order,” and spoke of a Red menace in unions. The league promised to identify Communists prominent in unions, a promise it fulfilled in further advertisements. In turn, the Communist-supporting B.C. Workers’ News accused the league of “fascist demagogy.” If Devitt obtained work with the league, it was short-lived. He died in 1937, aged 68.12

George Henry Roe left the Dominion Police and worked as a helper at Harbour Marine shipyard in Victoria, where Campbell also worked briefly as a carpenter, just after World War I. Roe and his wife, Edith Harriett, nicknamed Minnie, retired to a small cottage in the Cadboro Bay district in suburban Victoria and raised poultry. He died in the early 1950s when he would have been in his early 80s.13

George Alfred (Dad) Janes, the famous cougar hunter, ran the Lake Cowichan Hotel, a hunting and fishing lodge, from 1919 to 1922. He trav-

12Labour/Le Travail 21 (Spring 1988); National Archives of Canada, RCMP Papers, RG18, Series G, Volume 3371, File 1918; BC Archives, AddMss 461, Burnaby Police History; UBC Library, Special Collections and University Archives Division, Susan Mayse Research Collection, Box 1, Folder 2; Who’s Who in British Columbia 1942-43 (Vancouver, 1943); Vancouver Sun, 29, 31 May, 4, 6, 7, 8, 12, 15 June 1935; B.C. Workers News, 31 May, 7 June, 6 September 1935.
13Victoria constituency voters lists; Victoria city directories; Author’s interviews with H.B. Smith, Mrs. D.W. Gee, 1988; Anglican Church Records of the Comox Valley, Baptisms, Courtenay and District Museum, letter to author, 5 March 1993; Janette Glover-Geidt, correspondence with author, 1991-93.
Thomas Downie (Scabby) Anderson continued to live in Bevan and trapped in the Forbidden Plateau area until the mid-1920s. He then moved to Grantham, four miles north of Courtenay, where he farmed and drove the school bus. He was known for his punctuality and friendliness. He committed suicide on 10 June 1930 in St. Joseph’s Hospital in Comox. He was 70.15

Robert Rushford resigned as the Provincial Police constable in Cumberland on 15 January 1919 and returned to Scotland two weeks later with his family. The reason he left is not known. He worked in Scotland as a postman. His daughter Louvain Brownlow, who was born in 1916 and later returned to Canada, said her father and Goodwin were friends. Rushford died in 1970, aged 90.16

Cumberland coal production peaked at 898,908 long tons in 1910 and then went into a long, slow decline. Oil was taking over. Coal was difficult and expensive to mine because the seams were small and uneven. By the mid-1930s, production had fallen to less than half the 1910 record. The Extension mines near Nanaimo closed permanently in 1931. The Big Number 1 Mine in downtown Nanaimo, the largest producer on Vancouver Island, closed in 1938. In Cumberland, only two mines were producing after World War II. After the federal government withdrew the wartime subsidy, No. 5 mine, where Goodwin had worked, closed in 1947 putting 300 men out of work. Mechanization fulfilled one of its purposes when the last mule to work underground was brought to the surface in 1949. No. 8 mine, the famous “Million Dollar Mystery” mine which was dug, opened briefly at the time of the Big Strike, then closed until the mid-1930s, was shut down in 1953, leaving 400 men without work. That left only the nearby Tsable River mine that opened in 1949 and employed 400 men: Canadian Collieries closed it in 1960. Reopened by a local syndicate, it operated on a smaller scale and employed fewer than 100 miners, limping on until 1966 when it closed for good. The coalfield had produced 18,500,000 tons and “King Coal” was dead in Cumberland.

Coal, however, proved to be anything but a mineral sunset industry in BC although it stagnated from its heyday production in 1910 of 3,007,074 metric tonnes, a figure not overtaken until 1971 when it reached 4,141,498

14 Del Hall Island Gold: A History of Cougar Hunting on Vancouver Island (Victoria, 1990); Victoria Daily Times, 21 March 1929.
15 Comox Argus, 12 June 1930; Grantham directories; Anderson death certificate, Division of Vital Statistics, BC Ministry of Health, Victoria, BC.
16 Cumberland Islander, 18 January, 1 February 1919; Author’s interview with Louvain Brownlow, 28 February 1995.
tonnes. Spurred by demands from Pacific countries such as Japan, and with huge open pit mines replacing underground mines, coal production in BC peaked at 27,812,000 tonnes in 1997, easing to an estimated 26,482,075 tonnes in 2001. Coal was the province’s most valuable mineral in the 1990s. In 2001, coal production had an estimated value of $1,067,822,909. Copper was next at $687,837,515. The enormous current production of coal is made possible by a workforce estimated to be only 2,869 in 2001 — dramatic testimony to what the BC Ministry of Energy and Mines called “major productivity gains.” Indeed, while 1,881 tonnes of coal were produced per employee in 1970, by 2001 this had rocketed to an estimated 9,230 tonnes per employee. In 1910, the mines employed 7,758 workers — more than twice as many workers then as now to produce one-eighth of current production. On Vancouver Island, Quinsam Coal near Campbell River, which operated both open pit and the last underground mine in BC, conducted a two-year $800,000 exploration-drilling program in the Tsable River area but no mine was opened. 17

In Denaby Main, the crowded row housing and poor sanitation were the focus of a court case in 1920 in which a visiting nurse, Elizabeth Swallow, said the stench from excrement was constant and it was almost possible to “cut through” it. 18 The housing and the above-ground works of the mine were demolished between the late 1960s and mid-1970s and replaced with public housing. Before the old community vanished, however, it was the backdrop for scenes for the movie Women in Love, a United Artists adaptation of D.H. Lawrence’s novel, starring Glenda Jackson. The Denaby Main mine closed in 1968 and Cadeby Main across the River Don, where Goodwin worked, shut down in 1986. All the pitheads and surrounding buildings were levelled. The Cadeby Main mine site was developed as The Earth Centre, a major ‘green’ theme park or environmental museum that opened in 1999. A leisure centre was being planned for the Denaby Main site.

The only reminders of the coal days of Denaby Main are a large pit wheel from Denaby Main colliery, mounted on a plinth alongside Doncaster Road with a plaque in memory of the 203 men and boys who died digging coal; a

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sculpture outside Conisbrough Library depicting a miner, trapped by a roof fall; and the Miners Memorial Chapel adjacent to the Parish Church of All Saints. The chapel was built from bricks salvaged from several mines. Its windows depict mining scenes and it features a massive pit wheel from Cadeby Main No. 2 shaft. Few buildings survive from earlier times but among them are two pubs, the much-remodelled Denaby Main Hotel and Reresby Arms.

The new housing was a great improvement over what it replaced but a sense of community was lost with the change. Old-timers were not always re-located beside their old neighbours. Many new people moved in. The coal mines, previously a common thread among families, were gone. The semi-detached (duplex) style of housing and the open spaces seem to encourage a more insular attitude.

What happened to Denaby Main was repeated in coal mining villages throughout Britain. The industry employed 882,300 workers in 1906. By 1947, when the private mines were nationalized by the Labour government, there were 704,000 workers and 980 mines. This fell to 181,000 men and 170 mines by 1984 when the National Union of Mineworkers staged its last industry strike. By the early 1990s the workforce was down to 41,000 miners and 50 mines and still falling. The South Wales coalfield, which had 272,000 workers at its peak in 1920, was virtually closed by 1990. The last four pit ponies (Goodwin was a driver of pit ponies) were retired in 1994. In 1913, there were 70,000 horses and ponies. What was left of the mines was sold in 1994 by state-owned British Coal to a private company, RJB Mining, for £815 million. In 2001, RJB Mining changed its name to UK Coal. It employed just 7,000 workers at thirteen collieries and half a dozen surface mining sites producing 20 million tonnes of coal a year. In 2002, UK Coal closed one deep mine and announced that three more will be closed. There were four deep mines and half a dozen surface mines outside UK Coal. The membership of the National Union of Mineworkers shrank to 5,000.\(^{19}\)

The mine at Treeton, the village where Goodwin was born and where his father worked as a hewer, closed in 1990. It is now a housing estate. Dominion No. 2 mine in Glace Bay, nicknamed the Big Producer, where Goodwin worked when he first came to Canada, closed in 1949 after an explosion. It produced just over 26,000,000 tons of coal in half a century. The twin towns of Natal and Michel in the Crowsnest Pass (and the community of Middletown in-between them), where Goodwin worked for a year and starred in soccer, were swept away in the late 1960s and early 1970s by the provincial government that created the new town of Sparwood nearby. The manner in which this was done, the compensation paid, and the relocation to Sparwood left much unhappiness in their wake. Despite their heavy covering of dust and grime, looking like something from the 19th century, Natal and Michel, like mining towns everywhere, were warm and friendly communities.

Workers at the Trail smelter got the eight-hour day, the issue in the 1917 strike, in 1919 but by then they were losing their union. An amendment passed by the BC legislature to the Labour Regulation Act extended the eight-hour day to all smelter workers. CM&S assistant general manager Selwyn Blaylock posted this brief notice on 29 March 1919: “Starting April 1st, 1919, all Mechanics and Yard Men will work an eight hour shift instead of nine.”

The Trail Mill and Smeltermen’s Union, Local 105, went over to the One Big Union with the other Mine Mill locals in District 6. They formed District 1, Metalliferous Miners, OBU. The International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers executive board in Denver described the OBU as a dual organization and “a menace to the welfare of the miners, mill and smeltermen” at its 2 May 1919 meeting. One week later, the board endorsed President Charles Moyer’s decision to revoke the Trail local’s charter. By August 1920, Executive Board member William Davidson of Slocan, BC, reported that the union had no men in Trail or Rossland who could be depended on to deal fairly with the international. The possibility of organizing to any great extent was not good at this time, he said. Neither was it much better for the OBU that was disappearing almost as quickly as it had arisen. The Mine Mill local at the CM&S mine in Kimberley, a major supplier

20 Doris Goodwin research; Paul MacEwan, Miners and Steelworkers: Labour in Cape Breton (Toronto, 1976); Victoria Colonist, 19 March 1966; Wayne Norton and Naomi Miller eds., The Forgotten Side of the Border: British Columbia’s Elk Valley and Crowsnest Pass (Kamloops, 1998); That’s The Price, National Film Board videotape; Bruce Ramsey, 100 Years of Coal Mining: The Elk River Valley 1898-1998 (Sparwood, 1997); Arlene B. Gaal, Memoirs of Michel Natal 1899-1971 (unpublished); Gaal, Times to Remember: Michel-Natal 1899-1980 (unpublished, 1980); Sparwood Virtual Museum of Coal Mining — www.sparwood.bc.ca
of lead and zinc to the smelter, changed its name to Goodwin Local Unit of the OBU and 250 miners struck on 11 September 1919. But CM&S refused to negotiate with the OBU and brought in strikebreakers. The strike was called off on 1 March 1920.

Blaylock, meanwhile, was introducing the Workmen’s Co-Operative Committee to the smelter. This was a form of company unionism much recommended by Mackenzie King, the future prime minister of Canada, who had been federal deputy labour minister and then worked as a labour consultant. He mediated a strike at the Western Fuel Company in Nanaimo in 1905 on the basis of an agreement with an employees committee, an idea the other major coal company on Vancouver Island, Canadian Collieries (Dunsmuir) Limited, picked up in the wake of the Big Strike of 1912-14. The employees committee, sometimes called Employee Representation Committee, was promoted by King to John D. Rockefeller, Jr., at his Colorado Fuel and Iron Company. This followed the infamous Ludlow Massacre in 1914 when militia machine-gunned and set afire a tent colony, set up for United Mine Workers Union strikers after they were evicted from company housing. Two women and 11 children died. Rockefeller brought in King and later implemented the Colorado Industrial Plan as a form of consultation with workers. Variants of this theme have included works councils (blue collar) and staff councils (white collar). The underlying object of all of them was the same: keep unions out of the workplace.

At Trail, Blaylock called in two employees from each of nine departments in late December 1918 and initiated the Workmen’s Co-Operative Committee. Subsequently, employees from different departments of the smelter elected representatives and they discussed matters of interest with the company at regular meetings. Soon, the Workmen’s Co-Operative Committee would have an office — ironically, at the Meakin Hotel where Goodwin once lived.

The first attempt by the International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers to reorganize at the smelter failed in 1938. The second attempt in 1943-44 succeeded with Labour Relations Board certifications in Trail and Kimberley, helped in part by new labour legislation in 1943 which effectively outlawed company unionism like the Workmen’s Co-Operative Committee and its brief successor, the Independent Smelter Workers Union. Mine Mill was back as the Trail and District Smelter Workers Union, Local 480, and Kimberley Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers Union, Local 651. Both organizing campaigns were led by well-known Communists — Arthur (Slim) Evans in 1938, leader of the On-to-Ottawa Trek to protest unemployment in 1935, who knew Goodwin when he worked at the smelter in
1917, and in 1944, Harvey Murphy, Mine Mill's BC district regional director. Selwyn Gwillym Blaylock lived to see Mine Mill reborn as the union representing smelter workers. He participated in the negotiations for the first contract but, because of illness, was unable to sign the contract on 16 January 1945. Murphy said that was "indeed regrettable." Blaylock, who came to Trail in 1898 from Quebec, died on 19 November 1945, aged 66. His daughter, Louise Blaylock Beveridge, the first child of his second marriage, who was born in 1920, said there were no files in her father's papers about the 1917 strike or Goodwin. In 2002, Blaylock's 16,000-square-foot mansion set in a 42-acre property on the shore of Kootenay Lake, was advertised as "one of the finest examples of Tudor-revival in Canada." And, with a price tag of $2,850,000, it should be, too.

The memory of Albert Goodwin resurfaced in Trail in 1949. It cost four shop stewards their jobs at the smelter in a case that raised questions about what employees can say about their employer in their off hours. The dismissals occurred at a time of Red hysteria generally and in the midst of a fractious Mine Mill election in BC, which involved a left-right split between

21 BC Archives, AddMss 15, Volume 3-1, Eight Hour Day Notice; Labour Regulation Act, Statutes of the Province of B.C., 1918; Minutes, Executive Board, International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers, Western Historical Collection, University of Colorado, Norlin Library, Boulder, Colorado; BC Deputy Minister of Labour, annual reports for the years ending 31 December 1919 and 1920; Phillips, No Power Greater; Fox, United We Stand; Mike Solski and John Smaller, Mine Mill: The History of the International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers in Canada Since 1895 (Ottawa, 1987); Turnbull, Trail Between Two Wars; Jean Evans Sheils and Ben Swankey, "Work and Wages!" Semi-Documentary Account of the Life and Times of Arthur H. (Slim) Evans (Vancouver, 1977); David Michael Roth, "A Union on the Hill: The International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers and the Organization of Trail Smelter and Chemical Workers 1938-1945," MA thesis, Simon Fraser University, 1991; Trail Daily Times, 3, 5 June 1944; 16 Jan. 1945; B.C. District News, 10 June 1944; 25 January 1945; Reg Whitaker, "The Liberal Corporatist Ideas of Mackenzie King," Labour/Le Travailleur 2 (1977). Company unionism was effectively outlawed by the definition of a trade union in the 1943 Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration (Amendment) Act: "Trade union means a national or international organization of employees, or a local branch chartered and in good standing with any such body." The 1937 Industrial Conciliation Act was softer, defining "Organization" as "any organization or association of employees formed for the purpose of regulating relations between employers and employees, and includes a trade union." Before that, the federal Industrial Disputes Investigation Act, which applied in BC, was even softer, defining a trade union as "any organization of employees formed for the purpose of regulating relations between employers and employees."

opposing candidates. Shop stewards Jack Scott, Garfield Belanger, Tiny Noakes, and Ernie Weed, all members of the Labour Progressive Party (as the Communist Party was then called), distributed a reprint of an article in the party's *Pacific Tribune* newspaper written by Bruce Mickleburgh. It was headlined "Consolidated Prepares an Inside Job." The four men distributed the reprint at the company's smelter gates but stood on public property and were on their own time. They were fired.

Mine Mill Local 480, then led by rightists, immediately denied any part in the distribution and soon condemned the article as "malicious and slanderous." The company said: "These men were dismissed for distributing to employees of the company a leaflet containing maliciously untrue statements regarding the actions and motives of the company."

The offending article was a trenchant left-wing view of historic and contemporary labour-management events in Trail. Blaylock, for example, was accused of combining "terrorism and paternalism to maintain the open shop for a generation." The company was said to now support a union, but only a good union with responsible leaders, not Communists, implying it was taking sides in the left-right union election (won by the left in the important contest for BC president). The article also referred to an upcoming (and unsuccessful) raid by the United Steelworkers of America (with which Mine Mill voted to merge in 1967). It included a photograph of union officers in 1917, with Goodwin on horseback, and said Goodwin "was martyred by the company for his leadership of the victorious 1917 strike in which 3,000 workers walked solidly off 'the hill,' and for his firm stand against imperialist war." An optimistic, if by no means accurate, account of the 1917 strike to be sure.

Although disowning and condemning distribution of the "Consolidated Prepares an Inside Job" article, Mine Mill took the dismissals to arbitration. The majority of the three-member arbitration board, chairman and Nelson County Court Judge Eric Dawson and company representative Ralph Perry, ruled the company had the right to dismiss the men for distributing "a scurrilous and malicious attack upon the Consolidated Mining and Smelting Company of Canada Limited and certain officers thereof. The purpose is clearly to stir up discontent and ill-feeling between the employer and employees."

In dissenting from the decision, union nominee Harvey Murphy commented that the company could have sued for libel, but chose not to. The point is pertinent: Truth is a defence to any claim of libel, and so is fair comment on a matter of public interest. The article was not judged independently in this context but within the employer-employee relationship. This involved different considerations and obligations.
Scott said later he had been sent from Vancouver to Trail by Murphy, the union’s regional director and a well-known Communist, to get a job at the smelter and “get the party in shape,” referring to the Labour Progressive Party. Scott did so and became a shop steward. Scott gave an inside glimpse at the casual way in which party members decided to hand out the offending article which had been run off in the thousands by the party and sent to them for distribution. A meeting was called to discuss the two Mickleburgh articles. Said Scott: “The one about union leadership we wouldn’t distribute at all and decided to destroy it. The other one — on the company — we thought, ‘Ah, what the hell. It’s the company. Who cares?’ We thought, even though we didn’t like it much, we would distribute it. It had stuff in it that the company was sure not to like, such as that the CM&S was implicated in the murder of Ginger Goodwin and on and on.”

The shocking pollution levels from the Trail smelter sparked international environmental and legal complaint. By the mid-1920s, a staggering total of more than 10,000 tons of sulphides a month were being discharged into the air. According to one study, emission levels of sulphur dioxide peaked at 662 tons a day in 1930. The smelter pollution caused a major environmental complaint brought by the United States against Canada after downwind farmers in Washington State said their crops were being ruined. Damages of $350,000 were assessed. But by the end of the legal battle, one study said the company was much richer and the farmers were a lot poorer. Selwyn Blaylock “brought the same brand of arrogant paternalism to his approach to the smoke problem” as he had done to labour relations, producing 25 years of social conflict, said the study. The company did install pollution control devices to recover the sulphur that was then transformed into a new product – fertilizer. It also led to the “greening of Trail” and slowly the bleak landscape began to regain its health. It cost CM&S almost $20,000,000 by the end of World War II to recover the air pollutants and turn them into fertilizer. Within a decade, the costs were not only recovered but a handsome profit was being made. By the early 1990s, aerial discharge of lead was down to 118 metric tonnes a year and falling.


Pollution problems haunted Teck Cominco and its Trail smelter into the 21st century. The US Environmental Protection Agency and Teck Cominco were locked in a dispute over studies and cleanup of the smelter’s past pollution of the Columbia River. The EPA has contended that Teck Cominco is responsible for much of the Columbia’s worst pollution because, from 1894 to 1994, it dumped about 363 tonnes of smelter slag daily into the river. Earlier studies showed that the slag contained mercury, lead, arsenic, and metals that can be dangerous to human health.25

A FINAL NOTE

If Goodwin was not murdered and there was no conspiracy to murder him, this does not diminish his place in history though it may well — and properly — change the focus to his life rather than his death.

Indeed, freed of the narrow perspectives of conspiracy paranoia, Goodwin’s life may be seen in a fuller and richer context: As the effort of one man (and there were others, of course) to redress wrongs and provide some dignity in the workplace by immediate trade union action on the one hand and, on the other hand, by addressing the bigger picture of the political, economic, and social order of life in modern society.

Liberal democrat cries for a just society can be seen as confirming the criticism of the old Marxist Socialists: We live in an unjust society.

Goodwin’s criticisms of war as an instrument of national policy can be seen as just as relevant today as yesterday. Profiteering by corporations and banks today is little different than that of Goodwin’s time. The motivation, greed, is the same. The nature of the ownership is unchanged.

Callous dismissals by corporations of their management employees and workers alike, not in the name of necessary cost-cutting for the survival of the corporation itself but for profit maximization and to increase the value of shares traded on the stock exchanges, have become a hallmark of the work world.

Rough treatment of the blue-collar work force is not new, as Goodwin himself well knew and experienced. But now supervisory staffs also know that they are no longer safe. Long ago, the working classes (reformists and revolutionaries) learned that political action must be married to trade union action for self-defence as well as for progress. Perhaps the middle classes will find out the same way. As historian Mark Leier has noted, the

conspiracy theory surrounding Goodwin’s death has obscured the real workings of capitalism and the state, “an exploitive system.”

Labour leader Ken Georgetti discussed Goodwin as hero and Goodwin as martyr at the dedication in 1989 of a mountain west of Cumberland as Mount Goodwin. Georgetti’s forbears were among the pioneer Italians to reach Trail just before the turn of the 20th century. He worked at the Trail smelter and headed the union there before being elected president of the BC Federation of Labour and then president of the Canadian Labour Congress.

“Some people say we should remember him as a hero,” said Georgetti. “And while he was a brave man, I don’t think he would want us to elevate him above the struggle of many other trade unionists in that time. Nor should we try to put his achievements out of the reach of all of us today.

“Some call him a martyr because he suffered for his cause and indeed he did.

“And yet others describe him as an example of the kind of unity we need, of the strength of ideas and the commitment to fight for them, of the way power is used against us, and of the contribution we can all make.

“Today, our struggle may be more polite. We may have more legal protections. We may be more sophisticated. But the challenges we face now, as then, remain unchanged. We still have to take on powerful, well-organized forces, that are still controlling the government and the media. We still see the use of racism and other tactics of division that prey on our fears and on our differences. And our objectives remain the same: Safe workplaces, better working conditions, fair wages, and a better life for our families. These may be goals we have progressed toward in the last 75 years but are still not goals we have achieved.

“So, when we remember Ginger Goodwin, and when we look at the mountain named for him, we should think not of the hero or the martyr but as the epitaph reads, a friend. A fallen comrade who gave everything in this struggle and paid the ultimate price for what he believed in.”

The struggle for dignity and justice, said Georgetti, will go on.

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26 Mark Leier, “Plots, Shots and Liberal Thoughts”; “Goodwin, Albert (Ginger)” Dictionary of Canadian Biography, Volume XIV, 1911 to 1920 (Toronto, 1996).