

possibilities until by the process of elimination he forms suspicions that focus his attention along the channel which leads to solution of the crime and discovery of the motive.

On Jan. 11, 1947, Carl Bertil Johnson, a painter and plasterer, reported to the R.C.M.P. at Edmonton, Alta., that one, Mike Binisky, had swindled him with a bogus cheque in the amount of \$234.25. He alleged that in October, 1946, Binisky bought \$154.50 worth of paints and brushes from him, which he paid for with a cheque made out in his (Binisky's) favour and signed by Theodor Brkovich. As Brkovich was known to him personally, Johnson said, he accepted the cheque in good faith and, deducting the price of the paints and brushes, gave Binisky the balance in cash. Then, on Jan. 3, 1947, the bank advised Johnson that the cheque was bad.

An intensive inquiry failed to locate Binisky, but among a number of cancelled cheques signed by Brkovich, an investigator noted one for \$600 made

out to Johnson on which the signature had been "inked over". Brkovich's signature and that on the fraudulent instrument were somewhat similar, so with the discovery of the traced signature on the good cheque suspicion naturally swung toward the complainant.

Specimens of handwriting executed by Johnson with both his right and left hand, along with the questioned document and other exhibits, were examined in the R.C.M.P. Crime Detection Laboratory, Regina, Sask., and the document examiner there gave it as his opinion that the body of the spurious cheque had been written by Johnson's left hand, also that the signature was a drawing.

Faced with this evidence the suspect confessed. Lack of funds to pay a bill that had to be met without delay if he were to maintain a credit standing essential to his business caused him, he said, to forge the cheque and send it to a creditor of his. He invented the mythical Binisky to forestall any future legal action against him for fraud.

R. v. Minarz

Arson—R.C.M.P. Highway Patrol—Incendiarist Caught Practically Flagrante Delicto

Early in the morning of Sept. 26, 1947, members of an R.C.M.P. highway patrol operating in the Dauphin, Man., district noticed a fire some distance away which seemed to be more than a burning straw stack. That there should be any fire at all struck them as being odd, for they had been within three-quarters of a mile of the spot not 20 minutes previously and there had been no sign of one then.

They sped toward the scene and shortly came upon another patrol car driven by a constable from the R.C.M.P. Dauphin Detachment who had also seen the fire and was rushing to investigate it. Upon arrival they found a number of farm buildings all ablaze while the owner of the farm, Walter Minarz, who for several months had been on the farm

alone during week days, was lying face-down on the ground in front of his burning house.

Apparently in a semi-dazed condition, Minarz was helped into one of the police cars and made as comfortable as possible in a back seat where he started groaning. His eyes were not bloodshot as might be expected in a person who had been exposed to fire and smoke for any length of time, and he was fully dressed in two pairs of pants, a shirt, smock, cap, felt socks and rubbers. There were no signs of burns on his clothes, but they gave off a heavy odour of kerosene, and his hands were moist with an oily substance that smelt the same.

His actions too were rather queer; for one thing he kept up his groaning as