

Cop in the Closet

by ex-Sgt. Jack Fossum

This is the fourth of five installments of Cop in the Closet, a book chronicling ex-Sgt. Fossum's twenty-one years in the Force. Should anyone wish to buy the book and find it unavailable, it can be purchased directly from the publisher, Hancock House Publishers Ltd., #10 Orwell Street, North Vancouver, B.C. V7J 3K1. Price: \$16.95 in hardcover, check or money order, postage paid by the publisher. Ed.

11. MY FRIEND NORMAN

My friendship with Norman Gleadow had begun when we were recruits together in Vancouver, and it continued into the years to follow as we were being moved from posting to posting. On completion of training he had been posted to Lethbridge where I had joined him a year later. During what I would call the soldiering part of our service, to both of us the least pleasant, we were a source of moral support to each other. His sense of humor, his penchant for seeing the funny side of regimental life, was contagious. With him soldiering could be fun. Between cavalry drill and Musical Ride training there were the exercise rides through the gullies along Oldman River when we could break formation and ride where and as we pleased. On one occasion Norman and I even went for a swim in the river after tethering our horses to a tree.

From Lethbridge I followed him on transfer to Yorkton Sub-Division where for the next few years we were stationed on neighboring detachments and kept in close contact. I came to know his family in Regina where his father was jail warden. Norman was the eldest of four children, two boys and two girls. His "steady" girl friend

Kathleen also lived in Regina. She was a tall, brown-eyed beauty. They had been "going together" for years and planned to marry when Norman had the required seven years of service. In her relationship with her lover she was very possessive and jealous, even of Norman's friendship with me.

As time went on, Norman became increasingly restive and irked by his fiancée's attitude. It therefore came as no surprise when he told me he had fallen in love with a girl in Kelvington, where he was stationed at the time. When I met Mabel I could see why. She was pretty, warm and vivacious, with a sense of humor that matched Norman's. He was now torn between his sense of loyalty to Kathleen and his new-found love for Mabel. When we were together on a refresher course in Regina he was agonizing over his choice between the two. But the break with Kathleen was inevitable and when it came it proved to be a wrenching experience for them both. It ended in a breach of promise suit against Norman, something quite uncommon in Canada at that time.

Fearful that the publicity generated by a court hearing might rub off on the Force and affect his career, Norman consulted with his C.O. The inspector advised him to seek settlement out of court. This he did and a settlement awarding the plaintiff a sum of money in "heart balm" was agreed on. Norman refused to believe the girl had resorted to legal action on her own initiative. He felt that in her emotional state at the time she had yielded to pressure from her parents.

The same year another blow awaited my friend when both his parents died