

Remember when ....

Sunday Jan. 9, 1994

# The crooks wouldn't fur-get Truaisch

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Strangely enough, despite the apparent preparation by the "advance man" who appeared in Woodley's and Hyman's stores, the thieves mistakenly broke into McKeown's Drugstore next to Woodley's before realizing their mistake and entering the fur store.

Shortly after the burglary, Det. Truaisch went to Mont-

real and began an intensive investigation there. By then information on the theft had been circulated throughout Canada and the United States. All coats and furs had been stamped with a W to identify them as belonging to Woodley's but that part of the pelts bearing the W could be cut away. George T. Woodley, the senior proprietor, lamented to The Daily Intelligencer that he

may someday be buying back his own furs in the form of coats.

On Feb. 27, The Daily Intelligencer reported pelts worth \$4,500 had been recovered. George Woodley then went to Montreal to identify and pick up the goods.

The next breakthrough in the case came Mar. 3 when it was reported 149 muskrat pelts and two fox furs, valued at \$500, had been recovered. Further recoveries were made Mar. 5, Mar. 8 and Mar. 10 from various warehouses and stores in Montreal. George Woodley's livelihood had been saved. Because of the high charge of burglary insurance premiums, he was not covered for such an act. His gratitude to Det. Truaisch, whose hard work was credited with recovering the furs (police officers were given one day off per month in 1924) must have been palpable.

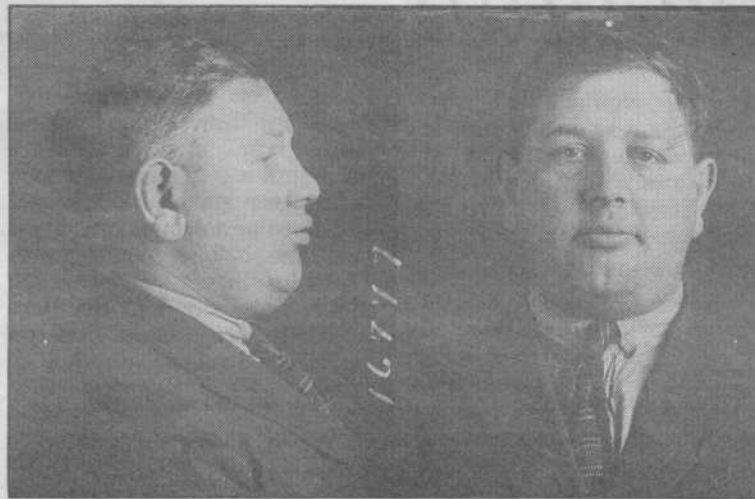
A story told among Truaisch's relatives has George Woodley offering the detective's wife a fur coat for her

husband's efforts but Truaisch felt it was inappropriate to accept it. Mrs. Truaisch's opinion on the matter is unknown.

Two Montreal men were eventually apprehended although it appears to have been sometime after the theft before charges were laid. James Arthur Richards was arrested in Toronto Feb. 20, 1924 in connection with another bur-

glary. He and another man (whose identity could not be discovered by Remember When...) were eventually charged with the crime. Their sentences are unknown but judges didn't possess particularly kind hearts for criminals in those days.

Det. Truaisch was cited by the Belleville force for his exceptional work in solving the case.



Police photographs, name unknown.



Montreal police photographs of James Arthur Richards.

Woodley Furrriers