



Teachers' Guide

to

Explosion on the Kettle Valley Line: The Death of Peter Verigin

*A study of contact and conflict
In British Columbia*

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Teachers' Support and The Great Unsolved Mysteries in Canadian History Websites

As the Teachers' Support section of The Great Unsolved Mysteries in Canadian History websites outlines (<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/teachers/indexen.html>), these sites provide five kinds of support for teachers:

- a summary of the Foundational Ideas of history teaching that informs the Mysteries Project;
- a detailed Teachers' Guide for each of the sites;
- short MysteryQuest lesson plans;
- a series of scaffolding activities and briefing sheets to introduce students to Key Concepts in Historical Thinking;
- access to the password protected "Interpretations" portion of the website.

1. Foundational Ideas gives you a thumbnail sketch of the teaching philosophy behind the Great Unsolved Mysteries in Canadian History websites, as well as a more detailed examination of the four different levels at which these sites 'work' as ways to teach and learn about history.

See: <http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/teachers/foundationalideas/indexen.html>

2. Teachers' Guides contain detailed, graduated, multi-lesson, and age-appropriate unit plans as well as free-standing lessons for elementary and secondary students.

See: <http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/teachers/guides/indexen.html>

3. Short, focused, age-specific, single-lesson MysteryQuests include detailed lesson plans and teacher support relating to one or more of the Mystery sites. Each of the MysteryQuest lessons employs the popular and student-friendly Webquest format to present a lesson that uses The Critical Thinking Consortium's "Critical Challenge" approach and a small selection of primary documents from the sites to create short but powerful lessons involving students in thinking critically about history.

See: <http://www.mysteryquests.ca>

4. Concepts in Historical Thinking provides activities and briefing sheets to introduce students to key concepts in historical thinking that they will be using as they work with these Mysteries. This part of the site is in active development at this time and currently includes three exercises: "What are Primary Documents?", "History vs. the Past", and "Testimony vs. Evidence".

See: <http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/teachers/indexen.html>

5. Teachers are also eligible to request access to the password-protected "Interpretations" part of each of the Mysteries Website allowing you to read historians' interpretations of the documents on the site. This section is password protected in order to encourage students to develop their own interpretations of primary documents, rather than relying on other people's interpretations.

See: <http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/teachers/secure/indexen.html>

THE UNIT:

Explosion on the Kettle Valley Line: The death of Peter Verigin

~ A unit of study designed to foster critical thinking
in the intermediate and junior secondary level Canadian history curriculum ~

Fitting This Unit into Your Provincial Curriculum

Our Teachers' Guide team has done some research into provincial curricula across Canada; “Explosion on the Kettle Valley Line: The Death of Peter Verigin” can be used effectively in the following courses. Courses marked with an asterisk (*) are ones where the teacher may need to do a little improvising to ensure that the lessons – designed specifically here for intermediate and junior secondary students – are at the appropriate level.

Alberta

- Social Studies 9 – IOP*
- Social Studies 10: Canada and the Modern World*
- Social Studies 16
- Social Studies 26

British Columbia

- Social Studies 11 – Canadian Identity *
- Law 12
- History 12

Manitoba

- Senior 1 Social Studies – Canada Today*
- Senior 4 Social Studies

New Brunswick

- Grade 11: Modern History 113
- Grade 12: Canadian History 121
- Grade 12: Canadian History 122

Newfoundland

- Grade 9 – Canada: Our Land and Heritage
- Canadian History 1201
- Canadian Issues 1209
- Canadian Law 2104

Nova Scotia

- Canadian History 11

Nunavut & NWT

- Grade 9 – The Growth of Canada*

Ontario

- History 10 – Canadian History in the 20th Century
- Civics 10*
- Grade 11 – Canadian Politics and Citizenship,
- Grade 12 – Canada: History, Identity and Culture,
- Grade 12 – Canadian and World Politics

Prince Edward Island

- Grade 9 – History 300*
- Grade 10: Canadian Studies 401
- Grade 11: Geography of Canada 531
- Grade 12: Canadian History 621

Québec

- 4th Cycle of Secondary School

Saskatchewan

- Social Studies 9 – The Roots of Society*
- Social Studies 10*
- Law 30
- History 30 – Canadian Studies (Grade 12) *
- Social Studies 30 – Grade 12 *

Yukon

(see British Columbia)

Introduction

“Explosion on the Kettle Valley Line:

The Death of Peter Verigin”

Late in the evening of October 28, 1924, Peter Verigin and his 17-year-old companion, Mary Strelaeff, boarded a Canadian Pacific Railway train at Brilliant, BC, the headquarters of his empire, bound for Grand Forks, 140 kilometres to the west. About one in the morning a horrific explosion shattered the coach’s silence. The explosion blew away the roof and sides of the coach. Of the 23 persons in the car, all but two were killed or injured. Verigin, Strelaeff and seven others perished in the explosion. In this unit, students will explore evidence to answer the questions “Was the explosion an accident, or a deliberate act of violence?,” “If it was not an accident, then who was responsible for this event?”

Unit Overview:

Extreme cases of violence leading to death and the destruction of property make headlines in Canadian newspapers. Since the event of September 11, 2001, worldwide attention has been given particularly to violent acts in which “terrorist” activity is suspected. Some people reflect back to simpler times when people lived in small rural villages, intimately aware of the lives of their fellow citizens, where issues of racism, of wanton violence and personal vendettas did not affect Canadian communities. This Website suggests that violence has a long history in Canada, and that communities have had to struggle with ethnic and religious conflicts that have, from time to time, erupted into violence. This unit is intended to focus on the examination and analysis of evidence to culminate in the formation of a historically grounded hypothesis as to what caused the death of Peter Verigin. Students are not only permitted, but required, to question, and then create, historical interpretations.

This unit has been designed to be flexible in its application. Six lessons and one introductory exercise have been provided which make up a “unit” – i.e. a collection of unified lessons. These detailed social sciences lesson plans have been designed to work in connection with each other, and readily lend themselves to an expanded unit at the individual teacher’s discretion.

This unit will develop each component so that it contributes toward the overarching unit goals. In this case, the goal is to exercise critical and informed judgment as to whether this explosion was an act of terrorism, and if so, by whom against what? Additionally, students will be invited to further develop awareness of the constructed nature of historical narratives. In pursuing these goals, students will simultaneously broaden their knowledge of the Canadian past, be introduced to the use of historical primary documents, and learn to exercise skills of critical analysis, evaluation and thinking. This unit is only partially integrated in that not every suggestion offered here directly engages students in resolving the issue. Students at the senior stages of their secondary education cannot be expected to have the time and academic resources to re-examine every proffered piece of evidence from interdisciplinary perspectives. This unit introduces some of these skills and resources. Nevertheless, each exercise and lesson suggested here draws students further into the case itself, encourages a personal engagement with history, and generates an opportunity to examine history and the social sciences in a more critical and informed manner.

Concepts:

- Acquire an understanding of historical thinking through the experience of historical research, and the exposure to historical explanations
- Acquire an understanding of the challenges and issues facing people living in early twentieth-century Western Canada
- Develop a sensitivity to the differing points of view concerning immigrants and people of different ethnicities and religions
- Confront evidentiary challenges, including incompleteness and interpretative errors, differentiate the quality of evidence and observe inconsistencies in testimony
- Acquire an understanding of the broader social and historical contexts of early twentieth-century Western Canada.

Instructional Outcomes

- Identify and clarify a problem, an issue, and an inquiry
- Develop a vocabulary for historical documents analysis
- Plan and conduct research using primary and secondary sources and electronic sources
- Generate and critique different interpretations of primary and secondary sources
- Assess and defend a variety of positions on controversial issues
- Construct a narrative from pieces of evidence that are non-sequential
- Plan, revise, and deliver formal presentations using a variety of media
- Demonstrate leadership by planning, implementing, and assessing a variety of strategies to address the problem, issue, or inquiry initially defined
- Refine abilities to construct and defend an argument

Instructional Strategies

Need for Computer Lab Time:

While this entire unit is fully integrated with the Verigin Website, most tasks can be completed if the requisite documents are printed ahead of time and given to students. In this way, classes with limited access to computer lab time can still complete the unit.

Assessment & Evaluation:

Because assessment and evaluation standards vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction, only generalized guidelines have been included here. Instructors may wish to assign process marks for completion of the various tasks, or not, if their students are sufficiently mature enough to recognize that the successful completion of the various tasks is crucial to successful completion of the culminating activity.

The following skills and habits of mind are ones that should be carefully assessed in the process of evaluating the critical thinking needed in working with this site:

- issues are analyzed seriously and thoughtfully;
- presentations and talks are given carefully, with Material well-prepared and organized, and points well thought out;
- results are expressed cautiously and are supported with reference to appropriate evidence;
- opinions are reasoned
- reports and narratives are written discerningly, reflecting the above

and with care, attention and evident pride in quality work.

Unit Overview:

The Lessons Summarized

Key Question: What Caused the Explosion that Killed Peter “Lordly” Verigin?

Lesson 1:

What Happened to Peter Verigin? Determining the Evidence of the Case

2 classes

Students are introduced to the details of the train explosion that killed Peter Verigin. In the first day of the two-class lesson, after reviewing what primary and secondary documents are, the teacher gives students a variety of primary documents to examine. They are then asked to read a selection of documents (primary sources) relating to the incident, and assess the information they contain and the point of view they represent. In a second class, students work in groups to compile a list of “what happened” that reflects the points of consensus and contradiction among the descriptions. This Master List goes up in the classroom, to be added to throughout the unit.

Lesson 2:

Crime Investigation Team

2 classes

Students read documents providing forensic evidence relating to the explosion, and write a one-page “crime scene report” for the detective in charge of the case. The report summarizes and interprets the most important points from the forensic evidence. This evidence is added to the Master List, in the appropriate categories.

Lesson 3:

Historical Contexts – Learning more about the Doukhobors in Canada

3 classes

In this three-class lesson, students work in groups to explore one of four areas that provide a broader context for understanding the conflicts between the Doukhobors and federal and provincial governments, between the Doukhobors and their neighbours, and within the Doukhobor community itself. Students will research global, political, economic, religious, and ethnic issues affecting the Doukhobors, and how they lived in early twentieth-century Canada. Students create a poster that represents their research by identifying key areas of friction for the Doukhobors at the time of the explosion. Any evidence that supports a particular suspect is added to the Master List.

Lesson 4:

Doukhobor Life from the Inside

3 classes

In this lesson, students research the Website to find detailed evidence about Doukhobor life in Western Canada in the early twentieth century. In a second class, students take on the persona of a member of the Doukhobor community and prepare notes for an oral statement that will be made to the Blakemore Commission examining the Doukhobor community in B.C. in 1912. This statement will provide at least four pieces of evidence about Doukhobor life in Canada to support their reasoning. Students will then

discuss the main conflicts between the Doukhobors and the communities in which they lived.

Lesson 5:

Writing the News

2 classes

Students are asked to come up with a list of criteria for “fair reporting” in the newspaper. They then apply these criteria to a variety of newspaper reports about the Doukhobors around the time of the explosion. In the second class, students use the criteria and the information they have found to write a fair-minded newspaper article about the incident

Lesson 6:

Who Killed Peter Verigin?

4-5 classes

In this culminating activity, students participate in a mock trial. Students explore the question of whether the explosion was a terrorist act, part of a government-led attack on a minority group, the work of extreme nativists, the result of an inner-Doukhobor conflict, or a personal vendetta. Students revisit the Website documents to find the evidence to answer this question. They use this information and the documents on the Website as a whole to create a dramatization of the court case that will settle the matter, assigning roles and writing scripts for a final performance in the last class. As an option or an extension activity, students can write and submit individually their finding on the case.

Lesson 1: Determining the “Facts” of the Case

Days 1 and 2 of unit
(Two classes, assuming 75-minute periods)

Overview:

Students are introduced to the details of the train explosion that killed Peter Verigin. In the first day of the two-class lesson, after reviewing what primary and secondary documents are, the teacher gives students a variety of primary documents from the site to examine. Students are then asked to read a selection of documents (primary sources) relating to the incident, and assess the information they contain and the point of view they represent. In a second class, students work in groups to compile a list of “what happened” that reflects the points of consensus and contradiction among the descriptions. This Master List goes up in the classroom, to be added to throughout the unit.

Support Materials used in this Site:

Support Material 1: “Explosion on the Kettle Valley Line” (Briefing Sheet)
Support Material 2: “Interrogating your Document” (Activity Sheet)
Support Material 3: “What Happened According to Whom?” (Activity Sheet)

(All Support Material can be found at the end of this Unit in the Teacher’s Guide.)

Suggested Documents on the Website to use in this Lesson:

Secondary Sources:

1. Introductory Essay found in “Home/Welcome”
<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/home/indexen.html>

Primary Documents:

1. Newspapers:

— “Kettle Valley Coach Burns; Four Dead”, *Nelson Daily News*, October 29, 1924
<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/archives/newspaperormagazinearticle/1151en.html>

- “High Explosive Found Cause of Train Tragedy”, *Nelson Daily News*, October 30, 1924
<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/archives/newspaperormagazinearticle/1155en.html>

- “Grip Theory Now Shades that of Bomb”, *Nelson Daily News*, November 1, 1924
<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/archives/newspaperormagazinearticle/1200en.html>

- “New Theory of Wreck Cause”, *The Province*, November 1, 1924
<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/archives/newspaperormagazinearticle/1206en.html>
- “Nelson Jury Finds Explosive Death Cause”, *Nelson Daily News*, November 6, 1924
<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/archives/newspaperormagazinearticle/1218en.html>
- “Grand Forks Jury Urge Continue Hunt To Find Assassin”, *Nelson Daily News*, November 3, 1924
<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/archives/newspaperormagazinearticle/1207en.html>

2. Investigator’s Report

- BCPP S/Sergt., BCPP Report Regarding Explosion on Kettle Valley Train, October 30, 1924
<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/explosion/investigators/1159en.html>
- Nick Reiben, Nick Reiben Statement To RCMP
<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/explosion/investigators/1187en.html>
- George Markin, Statement to RCMP
<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/explosion/investigators/1188en.html>
- George Kazikoff, Statement to RCMP
<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/explosion/investigators/1190en.html>
- Nando Singh, Statement to RCMP
<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/explosion/investigators/1195en.html>
- Bud Singh, Statement to RCMP
<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/explosion/investigators/1196en.html>
- Statement of Engineer William Harkness
<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/explosion/investigators/1237en.html>
- Statement of Train Baggage man Brennan
<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/explosion/investigators/1239en.html>
- Statement of Fireman C.G. Munroe
<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/explosion/investigators/1240en.html>
- Statement of Conductor J. Turner
<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/explosion/investigators/1241en.html>

- Statement of Trainman Marquis

<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/explosion/investigators/1242en.html>

- Statement of George Zebroff

<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/explosion/investigators/1243en.html>

- “British Columbia Provincial Police Report, Nelson Detachment, Regarding Explosion on the Kettle Valley Train,” October 30, 1924

<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/explosion/investigators/1159en.html>

- British Columbia Police on Archibald Joseph Blaney’s Statement

<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/explosion/investigators/1412en.html>

3. Inquest documents

— Coroner Inquest At Grand Forks, October 29, 1924

<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/explosion/inquest/1164en.html>

- Ernest Gammon, British Columbia Police Report Regarding Verdict Of Coroner Jury Examining Deaths On Kettle Valley Train, November 7, 1924

<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/explosion/inquest/1255en.html>

- Kootenay Committee on Intergroup Relations, Account of George G. Zebroff, June 19, 1985 <http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/suspects/government/1967en.html>

- Statement from F.W. Shaver

<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/suspects/accident/1269en.html>

4. Forensic report

— Forensic Report by Tom Townsend, Retired post/Blast Expert

<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/interpretations/forensic/indexen.html>

Lesson 1, Class 1

(Day 1 of unit)

Activities:

1. Hook: When students enter the class, ask them to observe very carefully what you are about to do. Over the next minute, perform a sequence of five actions (e.g. Throw a piece of paper across the room, accuse a student (ask for a volunteer ahead of time!) of throwing it, and ask him or her to come to the front of the class, then write three words on the board, give students a list of five words, and ask the student to return to his or her seat). Ask students to tell you what just happened.

2. Emphasize how difficult it is to remember sequences of actions when you don't understand what they mean how it is easier to remember things when they leave a "trace" behind, like the written words on the blackboard, and how different people have slightly different points of view about what "really happened."

3. Discuss as a Class: Provide students with a description of a major event of violence in the news, and describe the event – terrorism, war, rebellion – from differing points of view. (for English-speaking students, suggestions can be found at the Media Awareness Network at <http://www.media-awareness.ca>). Ask the students how they know "what happened" if they were not there to observe an event themselves. Explain that if we are not somewhere ourselves, then all we have are different accounts of "what happened" that are written or created by someone else, or "traces" of evidence they have left behind. And every account is created by a person, and every person has a slightly different point of view. How can we judge what "really" happened?

4. Definitions: Tell students that what they are about to study for the rest of the unit is a horrific act of mass violence. They will be exploring a society divided by ethnicity, immigration and by religion, where deep social and ethnic conflicts erupted into violence. They will need to understand this society in its own terms before trying to quickly judge individual behaviours. Review from preparatory lesson the distinction between primary and secondary sources:

a. Secondary sources are those written or created some time after the event/issues you are studying occurred. Examples include history books, textbooks and movies depicting historical events. They are the attempt of a person or persons to interpret the events/issues etc. that are being studied, usually in the historical context established in part by other historians writing on the same and related topics.

b. Primary sources are the records that are created at or close to the time being studied. Examples include letters, diaries, census reports, newspaper reports, shopping lists, government reports. They may or may not have been created for the benefit of posterity, and they may or may not have been created to answer the questions you might find interesting or relevant (for example, a personal journal may have been written to help an individual clarify their thoughts about their upcoming marriage. As a historian, you

might find and use evidence in this journal about dietary habits of young women, as well as finding evidence of what at least one person thought about marriage. Keeping a record of food was not the journal author's intent, and neither was it their desire to create a record for historians about marriage, but you might read it for either or both kinds of evidence.)

5. Explain that in this unit, thanks to a special project called the Great Unsolved Mysteries in Canadian History, we are going to explore the train explosion that killed Peter Verigin on October 28, 1924. The project has gathered and digitized primary source material relating to his case, including the transcripts of the inquests, and the testimony of witnesses. What evidence is there that this was or was not an accident? If it wasn't an accident, who are the suspects in this crime? In working through this unit, students will also be learning the skills historians use to write history. They will work with the materials historians work with, and will see for themselves the difficult choices historians have to make when they write their histories, including what gets chosen to appear in your textbooks.

6. Explain to Students that our first step, as historians, is to "define the scope of our inquiry" – to figure out what we need to learn more about in order to understand this case, which they will do after they get an Overview of the case. Paraphrase Support Material 1: "Historical Context: Explosion on the Kettle Valley Line" to students in order to set the stage. The students' task will be first to discover what the events of that night were, before moving on in the next class to find out why they occurred (see also the Verigin "Home/Welcome" page at <http://canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/home/indexen.html>).

7. As a Class, students and teacher read one of the first newspaper stories of the tragedy, "Kettle Valley Coach Burns: Four Feared Dead" (see below). The teacher introduces Support Materials 2: Interrogating Your Document and emphasizes that the more we know about where a document or account comes from, who created it and why, the more we can assess what point of view it is representing, and the more we know how to evaluate the kinds of information it contains.

<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/archives/newspaperormagazinearticle/1151en.html>

8. Think/Pair/Share: Students are divided into groups of two and are given one of two documents (primary sources) from the "Investigators' Reports" and "Inquest" sections, pre-selected from the Website. The teacher instructs students to read the documents and complete Support Materials 2: Interrogating Your Document as they do so.

Lesson 1, Class 2

(Day 2 of unit)

Activities:

1. Explain to students that they will be using the same documents they used last class for the entire class as they try to ascertain just “what happened” and according to whom, based on information in their selection of documents. Students return to their pairs from last class and work to complete Support Materials 3: What Happened, According to Whom?
2. Note that in the next class, students will be working in a jigsaw formation to share their description and analysis with students working on the other set of documents, to find similarities and differences to come up with a working consensus of the events surrounding the explosion.

Lesson 1, Class 3

(Day 3 of unit)

Activities:

1. Jigsaw Exercise: Students move from their pairs they were working in during the last class to form new groups of six; three of whom will have read the same document set. They spend the next half hour teaching other students in their group what is in their own document, using Support Materials 3, completed in the last class, as a guide.

2. Compile The Master Chart: (Support Material 4: Master Chart of Evidence). Working as a class, the students and teacher compile a chart that identifies events on which all the sources considered agree, and the points on which people differ. (This should remain at the front of the class throughout the unit.). Most of their evidence at this stage will be written in Column A: Specific Events of the Explosion.

Lesson 2: Writing the Crime Scene Report

Days 4 and 5 of unit

Overview:

Students read the forensic evidence relating to the explosion, and write a one-page “crime scene report” for the detective in charge of the case. The report summarizes and interprets the most important points from the forensic evidence. This evidence is added to the Master List, in the appropriate categories.

Suggested Documents to be used in this lesson:

1. Government Documents

— Gammon Report Regarding Explosion Location, November 27, 1924

<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/explosion/investigators/2005en.html>

- British Columbia Police Report Regarding Explosion on Kettle Valley Train, October 30, 1924

<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/archives/governmentdocument/1159en.html>

- British Columbia Police Report Regarding Verdict Of Coroner Jury Examining Deaths On Kettle Valley Train, November 7, 1924

<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/archives/governmentdocument/1255en.html>

2. Newspaper Reports

— "Bomb Cause of Details is Certain", *The Province*, October 30, 1924

<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/archives/newspaperormagazinearticle/1163en.html>

- "Grip Theory Now Shades that of Bomb", *Nelson Daily News*, November 1, 1924

<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/archives/newspaperormagazinearticle/1200en.html>

- "New Theory of Wreck Cause", *The Province*, November 1, 1924

<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/archives/newspaperormagazinearticle/1206en.html>

- "Nelson Jury Finds Explosive Death Cause", *Nelson Daily News*, November 6, 1924

<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/archives/newspaperormagazinearticle/1218en.html>

3. Interpretations

— Forensic Report by Tom Townsend, Retired post-blast expert

<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/interpretations/forensic/indexen.html>

Lesson 2, Class 1

(Day 4 of unit)

Activities:

1. Explain to students that they have been hired by the detective on the scene to read some of the initial reports about the explosion. Their task will be to write a crime scene report providing evidence for their conclusion that the blast was an accident or deliberately set.
2. Ask student to read the first seven documents again. Their task is to note the specific pieces of evidence for or against a deliberate bomb attack, and to compile this information into the Master List of Evidence.

Lesson 2, Class 2

(Day 5 of unit)

Activities:

1. Introduce Students To The Forensics Report (<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/interpretations/forensic/indexen.html>), written some years after the event by an expert in post-blast forensics; password needed for entry into this part of the site: Username: verigin; Password: Farron (attention: case-sensitive).
2. Add evidence to the Master List.
3. Write Crime Scene Report: On the basis of the evidence, is this event an accident or a deliberate act of terrorism/violence? Explain that the remainder of the unit will be spent in exploring just who, if anyone, was responsible for the explosion, but they need to write an initial report that provides three pieces of convincing evidence to support the theory that a bomb caused the explosion.
4. Write evidence onto Master Chart, in the appropriate columns.
5. Evaluation: students evaluate each other's one-paragraph crime report in terms of the quality of the evidence presented.

Lesson 3: Historical Contexts Learning More about the Doukhobors in Canada

(Days 6, 7, and 8 of unit)

Overview:

In this three-class lesson, students work in groups to explore one of four areas that provides a broader context for understanding the conflicts between the Doukhobors and federal and provincial governments, between the Doukhobors and their neighbours, and within the Doukhobor community itself. Students will research global, political, economic, religious, and ethnic issues affecting the Doukhobors, and how they lived in early twentieth-century Canada. Students create a poster that represents their research by identifying key areas of friction for the Doukhobors at the time of the explosion. Any evidence that supports a particular suspect is added to the Master List.

Group presentations/posters:

Depending on students' background knowledge and level of historical awareness, you may wish to take an extra period for this activity.

Supplies needed:

Bristol board and markers/glue sticks

Lesson 3, Class 1

(Day 6 of Unit)

Activities:

1. Reintroduce Support Material 4: The Master Chart of Evidence with the emphasis on Column B. Explain that historians, like detectives, do not only look at the direct evidence about “what happened” as they investigate a crime, they also examine the contexts in which it occurred for important clues. Go over the description of events from the chart.

2. Have students read Support Material 5: Conflicts Among Doukhobors and with their Neighbours as preparation for this exercise.

3. Organize students into their home groups of four. Each group will research and create a poster on one of the following topics, which will hang in the classroom until the completion of the unit. Primary documents can be found on the Website. As these are senior secondary students, they may need some direction with respect to research strategies and finding their secondary sources. To expedite matters, the instructor/librarian can identify and/or set aside appropriate textbooks and reference works. (*The Canadian Historical Atlas* is invaluable for demographic information.)

Contexts affecting the Doukhobors:

- a. Global issues
- b. Political issues
- c. Economic issues
- d. Religious
- e. Ethnic issues

4. Homework: Complete researching questions assigned to individuals by group members, if necessary.

Lesson 3, Class 2

(Day 7 of unit)

Overview:

Students return to their home groups and assemble their poster on Bristol board for the group. The posters should describe the context area they have researched. Students also need to attach one primary document – picture, chart or written document – that does the best job of explaining how their context area contributed to tensions within the Doukhobor community, or between the community and the outside world.

If available, you can have your students create a PowerPoint presentation instead of the poster. Students can then present their PowerPoint presentation to the rest of the class, as they would have done for the poster.

Lesson 3, Class 3

(Day 8 of unit)

Overview:

1. Student presentations: Presentations are short (eight-minute news flashes) and then the posters are affixed to the classroom walls for the duration of the unit (unless students have made PowerPoint presentations. If needed, they can print their slides and have them set as a poster for the rest of the class).
2. Optional assessment: posters can be assigned a group mark, group members can also evaluate their own and others' contributions to the project.
3. Any evidence that supports a particular suspect or general interpretation is added to the Master List.

Lesson 4: Doukhobor Life from the Inside

(Days 9, 10 and 11 of unit)

Overview:

In this lesson, students research the Website to find detailed evidence about Doukhobor life in Western Canada in the early twentieth century. In a second class, students take on the persona of a member of the Doukhobor community, prepare notes for an oral statement that will be made to the Blakemore Commission examining the Doukhobor community in B.C. in 1912. This statement will provide at least four pieces of evidence about Doukhobor life in Canada to support their reasoning. Students then complete peer reviews of a letter, evaluating the description and the authenticity of the point of view expressed.

Lesson 4, Class 1

(Day 9 of Unit)

Activities:

1. Explain to students that in this three-day Lesson, they will be taking notes that will allow them to take part in the Blakemore Commission of 1912, a commission which compiled information about the Doukhobors in Canada. They will spend two days researching information about the daily life of the Doukhobors of Canada in the first three decades of the twentieth century, and writing up their testimony for the commission.
2. Assign students to one particular issue in Doukhobor Society, such as religion, education, or cultural practices, and give students the opportunity to research the Website and other sites.
3. Research online and in library the daily life of Doukhobors. Any selection from the following short essays and related documents in the Contexts section of the website will be particularly useful. These are secondary sources written by the historians who found the documents relating to the mystery.

Secondary Sources:

— Historical Contexts: Introduction

<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/context/indexen.html>

- Doukhobor Culture and Immigration to Canada:

<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/context/cultureandmigration/indexen.html>

- Peter Verigin: History

<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/context/peterverigin/indexen.html>

- Canadian/Doukhobor Conflict/Interaction

<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/context/interactionconflict/indexen.html>

See also:

— **Letters,**

Alex Sherstobetoff and John Koleenoff, Petition of Independent Doukhobors, July 26, 1913

<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/context/peterverigin/1618en.html>

J.A. Fraser, Doukhobors at Grand Forks, July 22, 1919

<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/context/interactionconflict/2012en.html>

Anastasia F. Holubova, Open Letter from Christian Community of Universal Brotherhood to BC Government, November 5, 1924

<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/suspects/government/1244en.html>

- Book, J.T.M. Anderson, *The Education of the New-Canadian: A Treatise on Canadas Greatest Educational Problem*, 1918

<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/context/interactionconflict/1634en.html>

- Newspaper, A Menace to the District, Grand Forks Gazette, September 14, 1912

<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/context/interactionconflict/1856en.html>

See the Doukhobor Village Museum website as well:

<http://www.doukhobor-museum.org/>

Lesson 4, Class 2

(Day 10 of unit)

1. Finish research and prepare presentation of your testimony.

Lesson 4, Class 3

(Day 11 of unit)

1. Act out the Blackmore Commission with students appointed as the presiding officer, the recorder, and those making presentations.
2. Debriefing: Students will discuss the main conflicts between the Doukhobors and the communities in which they lived.

Lesson 5: Writing the News

(Days 12 and 13 of unit)

Overview:

Students are asked to come up with a list of criteria for “fair reporting” in the newspaper. They then apply these criteria to a variety of newspaper reports about the Doukhobors around the time of the explosion. In the second class, students use the criteria and the information they have found to write a fair-minded newspaper article about the incident.

Preparation:

Students are asked to bring in to class newspaper reports about the same leading story in the news, preferably one dealing with political acts of violence.

Support Materials Used in this lesson:

Support Materials 6: “Is this fair reporting?” (Activity Sheet)

Suggested Documents used in this lesson:

1. Newspapers

— “Kettle Valley Coach Burns; Four Dead”, *Nelson Daily News*, October 29, 1924

<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/archives/newspaperormagazinearticle/1151en.html>

- “Members Death Affects Legislature”, *The Province*, October 29, 1924

<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/archives/newspaperormagazinearticle/1155en.html>

- “Inquest on Bodies Opens at Grand Forks”, *Nelson Daily News*, October 30, 1924

<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/archives/newspaperormagazinearticle/1157en.html>

- “Great Grief in Brilliant Over Leaders Death”, *Nelson Daily News*, October 30, 1924

<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/archives/newspaperormagazinearticle/1162en.html>

- “Alarm Clock Was Italian Manufacture”, *Nelson Daily News*, November 1, 1924

<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/archives/newspaperormagazinearticle/1193en.html>

- “Many Attend McKie Funeral”, *The Province*, November 3, 1924

<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/archives/newspaperormagazinearticle/1212en.html>

- "Offer Reward In Farron Case", *Nelson Daily News*, December 1, 1924

<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/archives/newspaperormagazinearticle/1227en.html>

Lesson 5, Class 1

(Day 12 of unit)

Activities:

1. In groups or pairs, students examine the newspaper reports and are asked, “How do you know which report is the most reliable?” Legitimate responses might include “must include more than one point of view,” or “must not use exaggerated or inflammatory language.”

2. As a group, students develop criteria for fair reporting. This list is written on the board and should include the following:
 - Is more than one point of view reported?
 - Does the writer use exaggeration and inflammatory language?
 - What is the information-to-opinion ratio (and how do you tell the difference)?

3. Students complete Support Material 6: Is this Fair Reporting? to evaluate their newspaper report.

4. Group discussion: The class discusses which contemporary newspaper reports are fair, and students are told that similar criteria can be applied to incidents in the past.

5. Students use Support Material 6 to describe and then evaluate two of the newspaper reports on the explosion or on the Doukhobors more generally.

6. Working in small groups, students then share their evaluations of the historic reports with others in their group.

Activities:

1. Using the “evidence” part of the chart, students then use these criteria to write a fair-minded newspaper account of the explosion. These are written up in newspaper style. Students use Support Material 6 to provide a peer evaluation of the newspaper story by each group, which can be named the “editor’s test.” Once the newspaper articles have undergone the changes required by the editors, they are compiled into a book of newspaper clippings about the events.

Lesson 6: Who Killed Peter Verigin?

(Four or five classes)

Overview:

In this culminating activity, students participate in a mock trial. Students explore the question of whether the explosion was a terrorist act, part of a government-led attack on a minority group, the work of extreme nativists, the result of an inner-Doukhobor conflict, or a personal vendetta. Students revisit the Website documents to find the evidence to answer this question. They use this information and the documents on the Website as a whole to create a dramatization of the court case that will settle the matter, assigning roles and writing scripts for a final performance in the last class. As an option or an extension activity, students can write and submit individually their finding on the case.

Lesson 6, Classes 1-4

(Days 13-17 of unit)

Activities:

1. Ask the students in a whole-class discussion who they think killed Peter Verigin and why.
2. Divide the class into groups and present each one with one set of documents pertaining to one of the five possible suspects, as provided in the Suspects section of the website: (for the sake of equity have two or three groups read documents selected from Doukhobor factions).

- Accident

<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/suspects/accident/indexen.html>

- Government of Canada/BC

<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/suspects/government/indexen.html>

- KKK/Nativists

<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/suspects/kkk/indexen.html>

- Doukhobor Factions

<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/suspects/factions/indexen.html>

- Soviet Government

<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/suspects/sovietgovernment/indexen.html>

- Peter Petrovich Verigin

<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/suspects/peterverigin/indexen.html>

3. Have students read Support Material 5: Conflicts Among Doukhobors and with their neighbours to provide background information for their explorations.
4. Ask each group to evaluate the theory, using evidence they have found on the site. Each group appoints a leader who summarizes the explanation for the class and gives the group's assessment of it. Each group will prepare both a prosecution and a defence of 'their' suspect, and call witnesses on both sides, after doing research from the site.
5. Introduce the idea of the mock trial to the class. Unlike a regular trial, this one will present evidence about all six main suspects, and will provide a brief statement by the prosecution and the defence, calling

witnesses as needed. Explain that as a class, they will take on the roles of the prosecution, the defence or witnesses. Ask staff, parents, or students from another class to take on the role of jury members during the actual trial. The trial will be based on the documents and biographies of characters on the Website.

6. Witnesses: Their job in each group will be to learn the various roles of potential witnesses and to be prepared to stay in character if they are called to testify. Some students may have to play more than one witness.

7. Prosecution: Their job in each group is to provide the witnesses with a list of who they will call by the end of the second preparation class. The prosecution team will need to prepare questions and assign lawyers to the case.

8. Defence: The defence team must provide a student to play the accused. They must provide the witnesses with a list of who they will call by the end of the second preparation class. The defence team will need to prepare questions and assign lawyers to the case.

9. On the day before the trial, review trial procedure with the class. The teacher or principal can play the judge.

10. On the day of the trial, arrange to have gowns if possible. Limit speaking times to ensure a reasonable resolution. Your panel of jurors may present their findings the same or the following day.

11. As an optional end of unit assignment, students could be asked to submit an individual argument as to who they feel killed Peter Verigin, supported by the appropriate evidence.

Support Materials

Support Material 1, Briefing Sheet

“Explosion on the Kettle Valley Line: The Death of Peter Verigin”

Historical Context

Known by the single name “Lordly,” he was revered as a semi-deity by Doukhobors. Peter Vasilievich Verigin inspired his Doukhobor followers to build a communal empire that spread over three western provinces in the years after 1899, when they arrived in Canada.

But in the early morning of October 29, 1924, an explosion on the remote Kettle Valley Line in southeastern British Columbia ripped apart Canadian Pacific Railroad Car 1586, killing the 65-year-old Lordly, his 17-year-old female companion and seven others.

Not everyone mourned his death. Some Western Canadians were jealous of the success of the communal Doukhobors, while others resented their attachment to their culture and language. Could fanatic nativists have killed him? Or was it, as many felt within the Doukhobor community, the work of the Canadian or Russian governments, as each was thought to want to be rid of Verigin?

While loved by most of his faith, even some Doukhobors resented Lordly’s heavy hand and had deserted the commune. Others believed Lordly’s accommodation to government laws was treason to Doukhobor principles. Some, living under very harsh circumstances, resented his exalted status. Was it fellow Doukhobors who caused his death?

Or could it have been a tragic accident: an explosion of the gas used to light the rail car, or dynamite carelessly transported by prospectors?

Assassination or accident? No one has ever been charged and the case remains open. What shattered Verigin and the others on that snowy night has remained locked in the lonely Monashee Mountains where they died. Now, with the benefit of access to archives, a reconstruction of the death scene and a modern forensic report, perhaps you can solve this mystery.

Support Material 2, Activity Sheet Interrogating Your Document

Your Name: _____

Document Title and No.: _____

1. Do you know what type of document this is? How do you know?

Newspaper _____ Diary _____ Letter _____ Inquest Record _____ Other _____

2. Do you know the date this document was created? How do you know?

3. Do you know who wrote this document? (name, title, job, ethnic group). How do you know?

4. Who do you think is the intended audience of this document?

Friends and/or family _____

Legal/justice system officials and/or jurors _____

Government officials _____

Religious officials _____

The general public _____

Other _____

5. What events are described in this document?

(Use point form, chronological order, and the back of this sheet if necessary.)

6. How did the author of this document know about the events he is describing? (e.g., Did he see them himself? Hear about them from others?)

7. What other facts or information do you need to know about the events described here before understanding who and what killed Peter Verigin?

What Happened According to Whom

Events (In order)	First Event	Second Event	Third Event	Fourth Event	Fifth Event
Overview from website Whose point of view?					
Description in Document #1 ~ Whose point of view?					
Description in Document #2 ~ Whose point of view?					
Description in Document #3 ~ Whose point of view?					
Questions?					

Master Chart of Evidence

Column A Specific Events of the Explosion		Column B Contexts and Explanations	
Event:	Source of Evidence:	Source of Evidence about the broader context of Canadian society relevant to the Doukhobors:	Inference about the broader context of society/culture/economy relating to the Doukhobors:

Conflicts among Doukhobors and with their Neighbours

Conflicts with Neighbours

Although they were regarded in Russia primarily as religious dissidents, once in Canada – a much more secular country – religious objections became secondary. What was at issue to mainstream Canadians, who the Doukhobors called Angliki or “English,” was not really their spiritual outlook. Instead, what their neighbours found objectionable was the Doukhobors’ way of life. The complaints centred on the unjust competition provided by the Doukhobor commune, the burning of taxpayer-funded schools, the shock of catching sight of nude Doukhobor zealots, and on what Angliki perceived as highhanded, arbitrary treatment of those within the Doukhobor community by Peter Verigin. In short, people in Western Canada mainly objected to the Doukhobors and their leaders over matters of wealth, culture and power, which were secular rather than religious issues.

Economic competition provided by the Doukhobor commune was one of the key fears expressed by non-Doukhobors. Although it was called a commune and was operated along those lines, the Doukhobors’ Christian Community of Universal Brotherhood Ltd. was also a sizable business machine that put the fear of extinction into the hearts of its small-capitalist farm neighbours. The commune produced or bought wholesale almost everything its members needed, leaving merchants in nearby towns largely shut out. In 1913, the Blakemore Royal Commission in B.C. reported that “The Grand Forks people are extremely jealous of the very successful colonisation ways of the Doukhobors.” When Verigin died in 1924, the commune held thousands of hectares of land spread from Saskatchewan to B.C, and the total value of its property was estimated to be \$6,410,822 – most of it free of debt.

Conflict with Governments

Education was one of the prickliest thorns in the relationship between the Doukhobors on the one hand and, on the other, both mainstream society and provincial governments, especially in British Columbia. In 1982, Nick Nevokshonoff, a Community Doukhobor elder, would explain to a public forum that “We understood from way back, in reality education is ... the forbidden fruit of Adam and Eve. ... [I]t was better not to taste it.” This sentiment marked the

Doukhobors in Russia and would also prevail among many of those who came to Canada and the first generation born in Canada.

Doukhobors complained that Canadian schools taught immoral values. One was the preparation for military service, which in the years before, during and after the First World War, was an integral element of elementary education in most Canadian classrooms. As pacifists, the Doukhobors found this to be highly offensive. No less irritating to the Doukhobors was that education seemed to downplay, if not to denigrate, their guiding principle of "Toil and Peaceful Life." Toil to the Doukhobors primarily meant agricultural labour or other honest toil of "working-class people," which they regarded themselves as. To them, proper education must be practical, intended to teach children useful skills in the home and field. Such useful training could best be done by the Doukhobors themselves.

Finally, education led to children leaving the commune. "Just as soon as the person reached read and write education, then within a short time leaves his parents and relations and undertakes unreturnable journey on all kinds of speculations, depravity and murder life," the Doukhobors advised B.C.'s Blakemore Commission in 1912. For their part, educators and other non-Doukhobors pointed out that the Doukhobors would always remain a foreign population in Canada unless their children were educated, taught English and made familiar with the basic values of mainstream Canadian society. And without exposure to public schooling, the Doukhobor population might forever remain under the thumb of powerful leaders such as Peter Verigin.

Divisions Among the Doukhobors

Despite the impression created by the description of the Doukhobors as a community, they never were a single people, neither in Russia nor in Canada. In Russia, there were rich and powerful families of Doukhobors, like the Verigins, and there were also poor Doukhobors. The communal structure that Verigin was able to introduce in Canada promised equality, but it contained deep-rooted divisions that could not be hidden. In fact, between 1899, when 7500 Doukhobors arrived in Canada, and 1902, when Verigin made his way here from exile in Siberia, as many as 1000 of the immigrants broke from the commune. These Independent Doukhobors believed that it was possible at the same time to follow a way of life consistent with the spiritual and cultural tenets of Doukhoborism and to hold land privately. Peter Verigin regarded them as traitors. During the First World War, for example, he advised the Canadian government that the Independents were not true Doukhobors and therefore did not merit the exemption from military service that the Canadian government had granted to Doukhobors in 1899.

Verigin was also plagued by another Doukhobor faction, the Svobodniki or Freedomites. This small faction would make its first appearance in 1903 in spectacular fashion by parading in the nude and symbolically burning part of a piece of agricultural equipment owned by the Doukhobor commune. Although nudity was not previously practiced in Doukhobor culture, the Freedomites quickly observed its dramatic effect on Canadians. Justified as a return to the ways of Adam and Eve, nudity could thus be “clothed” as a form of religious protest. After the protests, Verigin expelled some of the Svobodniki from the commune, but their criticism of what they perceived as his excessive drive to modernize was shared, in muted fashion, by others inside the commune.

Even among the Doukhobors who remained within the commune, there was resentment about Verigin’s high-handedness. Just weeks before Verigin’s death, newspaper reports about the trial of a young Doukhobor who had wounded a commune official who was attempting to prevent the boy from leaving the commune seemed to confirm that Verigin and his communal lieutenants used coercion and petty violence to enforce their will.

In the summer and early fall of 1924, Verigin received several threats on his life, and rumours circulated that he had actually been killed. Given the array of those who disliked him, there was no doubt sadness but also a certain number of knowing nods on October 29, when the rumours proved to be true.

Is this Fair Reporting?

Criteria for fair reporting: Point of view <i>Is there more than one point of view reported?</i>	What is the “evidence” that is being reported?	Evidence of fair or unfair reporting	Score:
Exaggerated or inflammatory language <i>Does the writer use this kind of language?</i>			(1 point for every point of view expressed)
Information-to-opinion ratio <i>Is every opinion supported by appropriate information?</i>			(1 point taken off for every example of exaggerated language)
TOTAL Score			(1 point taken off for each opinion not supported by information)
			<i>Add and subtract points</i>

Suggestions for Single Lessons

Lesson 1: Nation Building: Were the Doukhobors Good Canadians?

Students use a guided discussion approach to develop a shared set of criteria for evaluating what constitutes the behaviour of a “Good Canadian” in the early twenty-first century. Moving from the personal to the political, they research discriminatory policies and practices in effect in Canada in the early twentieth century. Students then read (or re-read) a selection of documents describing the relationship between the Government of British Columbia and the Doukhobors. Were Verigin and the Doukhobors concerned at all about being citizens of Canada? What kind of “citizens” did Verigin and the Doukhobors see themselves as?

Lesson 2: Reconstructing the Scene of the Crime

Using Evidence from the Verigin site, reconstruct the coach, its occupants, and the location of the bomb when the explosion occurred. The Investigator’s Reports portion of the Website contains most of the relevant details, but see particularly the following documents:

- Statement of Trainman Marquis

<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/explosion/investigators/1242en.html>

- Statement of George Zebroff

<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/explosion/investigators/1243en.html>

- Gammon Report Regarding Explosion Location, November 27, 1924

<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/explosion/investigators/2005en.html>

- Forensic Report by Tom Townsend, Retired post/Blast Expert

<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/interpretations/forensic/indexen.html>

- Jury Visits Tragedy Scene; Views Coach, Nelson Daily News, November 4, 1924

<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/archives/newspaperormagazinearticle/1216en.html>

Coroner Inquest At Grand Forks, October 29, 1924

<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/explosion/inquest/1164en.html>

Lesson 3: Criminal Investigation in the 1920s.

Using evidence in the police and CPR records, and the newspapers, reconstruct the process of investigation into this crime to help answer the question, “Why was no one ever convicted of this crime?”

Using evidence provided in the documents, discover what investigatory techniques were used by the police and CPR officials. What barriers, such as language, did they face? What evidence is there to support this writer's accusations?

— See “Investigators’ reports” <http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/verigin/explosion/investigators/indexen.html>

“The investigation into the explosion on Canadian Pacific Car 1586 speaks volumes about the limitations of policing and police techniques in the 1920s and the remoteness of the Kootenay region of British Columbia. Police were few in this frontier region. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police had become a national police force only in 1920, and throughout that decade its main Activities were enforcement of narcotics laws and security and intelligence work. At the time of Verigin’s death, the RCMP had some 1,000 members spread across the country. In B.C., routine criminal investigation was in the hands of the B.C. Provincial Police, formed in 1858 and with a complement in 1924 of about 200 officers. Today, investigation of the death of nine people in an explosion on the country’s primary transportation system would bring forth hundreds of police officers. The 1924 explosion called up a dozen police and CPR investigators, most of them devoting no more than a day or two to the task.

And what a task they had. You can see one of the obstacles by tracing the route to the crime scene of two of the principal investigators, RCMP Detective Staff Sergeant G.O. Reid, and BCPP Constable G.F. Killam.

For reasons discernable from the reports, the police investigation hit a dead end, and the inquiry into Verigin’s death just petered out. Then, inadvertently, in 1931-32 there was a revival of interest, resulting in the addition of one important piece of testimony and the most thorough summation of the case. But by the mid-1930s both the BCPP and the CPR had what they regarded as more pressing issues to pursue with the Doukhobors, with the mass arrest of over 600 adults for nudity and the seizure of 357 Doukhobor children. In such a circumstance, pursuing a seven-year-old mystery could wait. Wait it did.”

Lesson 4: Doukhobors and Education

Using documents from the site, explore why the Doukhobor community was so opposed to sending their children to Canadian schools. Do you think they were justified in their fears and hopes about education for their community?

Suggestions for College and University Classes

- Compare primary records from your own province, or other areas of Canada, regarding ethnic violence, to ascertain whether the Doukhobors were unique in the conflict and violence within and among a variety of communities.

- Ask students to explore a selection of documents from a specific part of the site to draw some inferences about Doukhobor life at this time. Students present a brief report to their fellow students who have used documents from a different part of the site. Similarities and differences are described, and then explained.

- Ask students to explore the site to document, and then explain the conflicts within the Doukhobor community.

- Ask students to debate whether the explosion was an accident, an act of personal vengeance or an act of terrorism.