

LEGACY OF HEROES



NO.1



Métis | Athlete | Police Officer | Soldier
WHO WAS ALEX DECOTEAU?

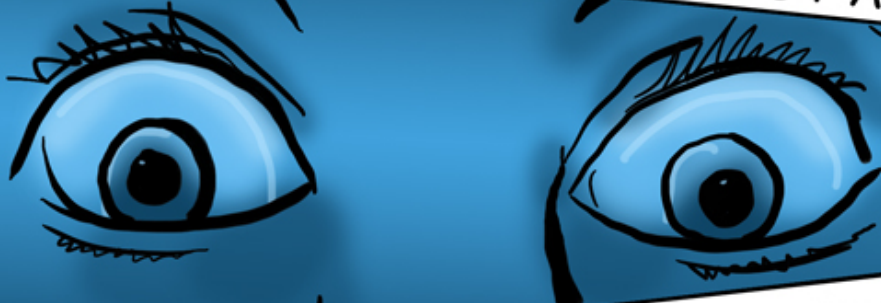
Red Pheasant Indian Reserve. 1891

LEGACY OF HEROES

PAPA!?



ALEX DECOTEAU WAS JUST A BOY...



...WHEN HIS FATHER **DIED.**



UNABLE TO SUPPORT THE CHILDREN ON HER OWN, ALEX'S MOTHER SENT HIM TO THE BATTLEFORD INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL.

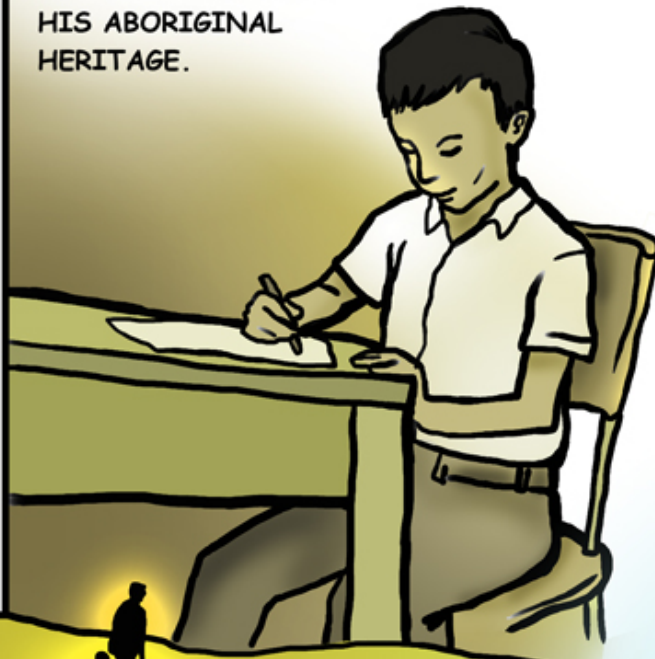
Written by Jeff Awid
Illustrated by Jared Robinson

BATTLEFORD INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL.



ALEX WAS ONE OF THOUSANDS OF ABORIGINAL CHILDREN SENT TO RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS.

EVEN THOUGH HE WAS FAR FROM HOME, ALEX NEVER FORGOT HIS ABORIGINAL HERITAGE.



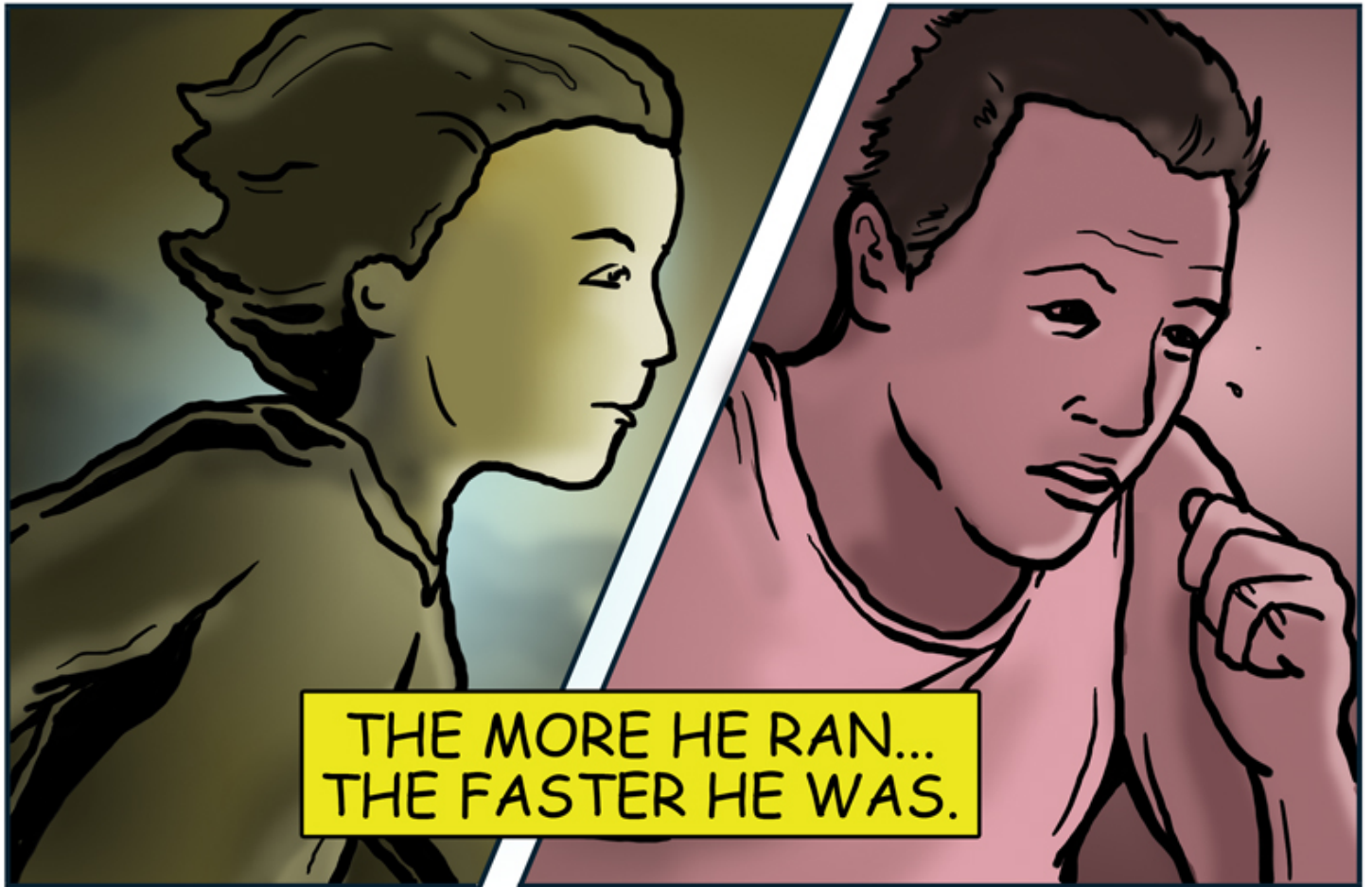
HIS MOTHER MARIE, WAS CREE. SHE WAS A PROUD MEMBER OF THE RED PHEASANT FIRST NATION.



ALEX'S FATHER PIERRE, WAS MÉTIS. BEFORE PIERRE DIED, HE HAD A FARM AND WORKED FOR THE GOVERNMENT.

AT SCHOOL,
ALEX FOUND OUT
HE HAD A SPECIAL GIFT FOR

RUNNING



THE MORE HE RAN...
THE FASTER HE WAS.

THREE CHEERS FOR ALEX!!!

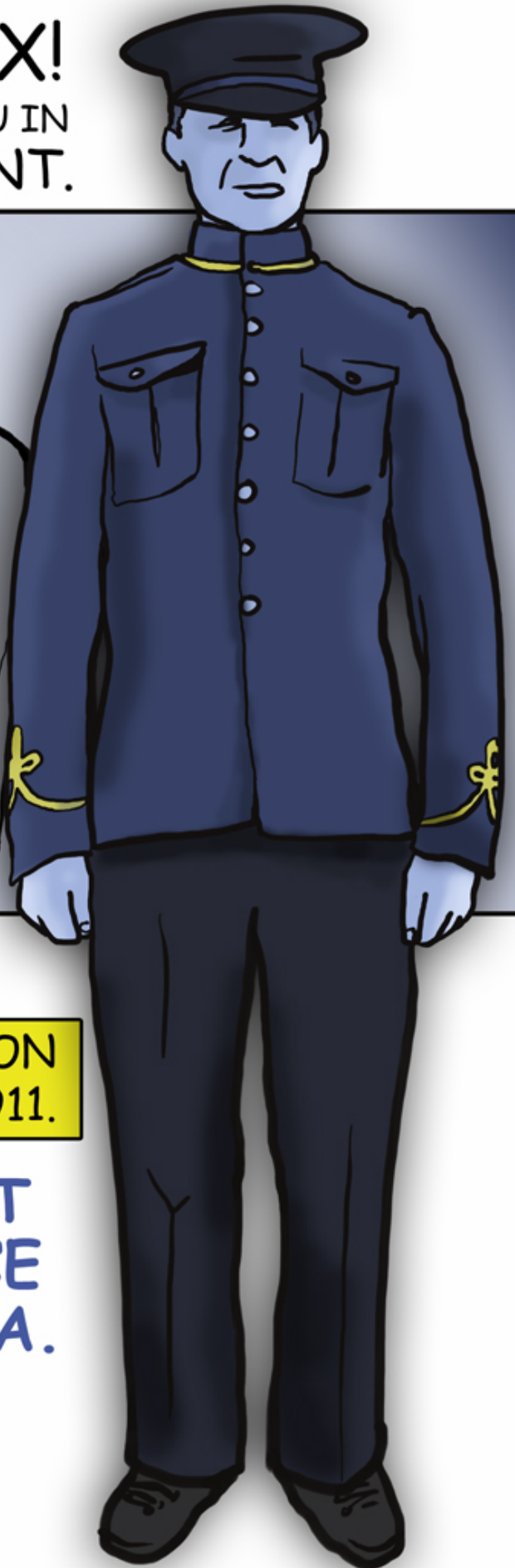


GREAT RACE, ALEX!
WE COULD USE SOMEONE LIKE YOU IN
THE POLICE DEPARTMENT.



ALEX JOINED THE EDMONTON
POLICE DEPARTMENT IN 1911.

HE WAS THE FIRST
ABORIGINAL POLICE
OFFICER IN CANADA.

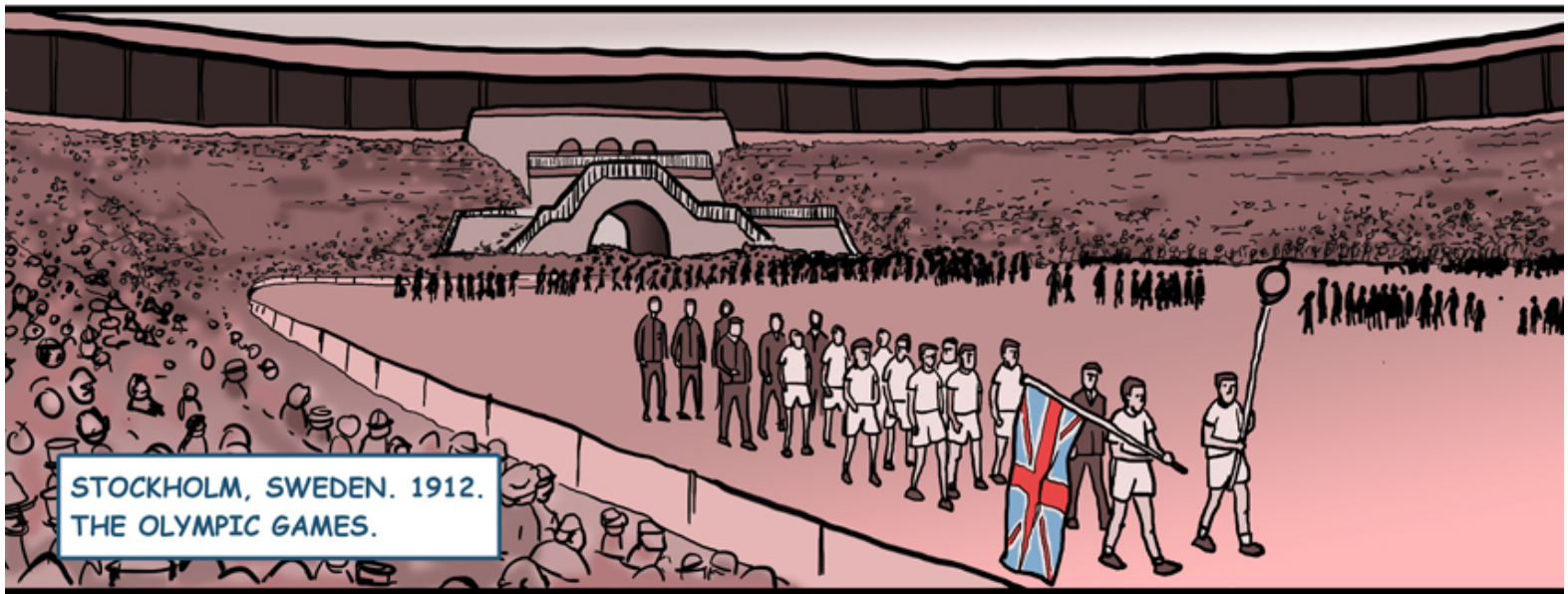




ALEX WAS ONE OF THE FIRST CITY
POLICE OFFICERS TO USE A MOTORCYCLE.

ONE OF HIS JOBS
WAS LOCKING UP
THE HIGH LEVEL
BRIDGE AT NIGHT.

POLICING IN
EDMONTON WAS
EXCITING, BUT
ALEX'S BIGGEST
MOMENT WAS
STILL TO COME...



STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN. 1912.
THE OLYMPIC GAMES.



ALEX WAS THE ONLY ALBERTAN ON THE
CANADIAN OLYMPIC TEAM THAT YEAR.

HE COMPETED AGAINST RUNNERS
FROM AROUND THE WORLD!



TWO YEARS AFTER THE OLYMPICS,
THE FIRST WORLD WAR STARTED.



ALEX JOINED THE CANADIAN ARMY IN 1916, AND WAS SENT TO ENGLAND.



WHILE HE WAS THERE, ALEX TOOK PART IN FOOT RACES AGAINST OTHER SOLDIERS.



BRavo, BRavo!

THE KING OF ENGLAND WATCHED ALEX WIN ONE OF THE RACES...



THEY COULDN'T FIND THE TROPHY...

...SO THE KING GAVE ALEX HIS...



TICK TICK TICK

...POCKET WATCH!

ALEX WAS SENT TO
FIGHT IN BELGIUM.

PASSCHENDAELE. 1917



ON OCTOBER 30th, THE CANADIANS STORMED THE GERMAN LINES.

20,000 CANADIANS DIED AT THE BATTLE
OF PASSCHENDAELE, INCLUDING ALEX.



A DECOTEAU
30TH. OCTOBER. 1917



ALEX IS BURIED IN THE NEW BRITISH CEMETERY IN BELGIUM.

BUT HIS STORY DOESN'T END THERE.

60 YEARS LATER, ALEX WAS INDUCTED INTO THE EDMONTON SPORTS HALL OF FAME.



IN 1985, A SPECIAL CREE CEREMONY WAS HELD TO BRING ALEX'S SPIRIT BACK HOME.

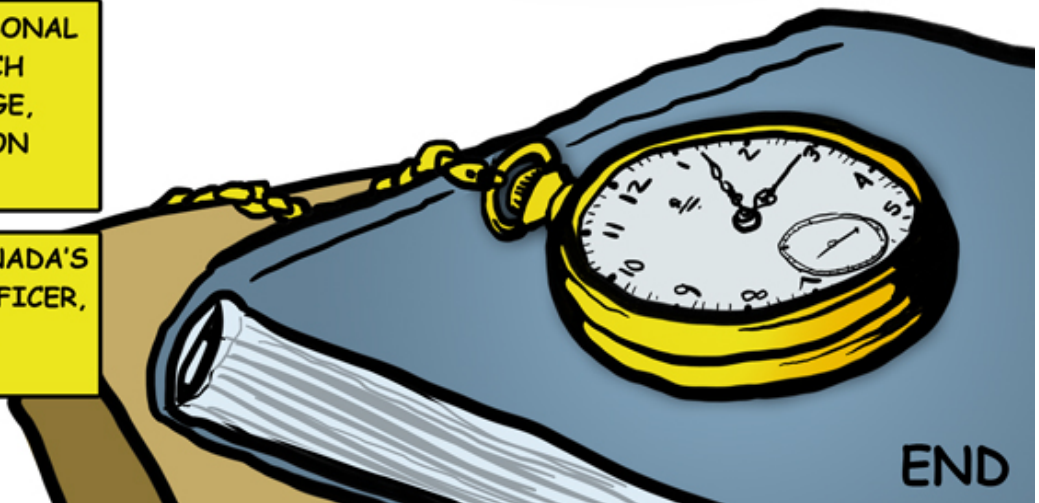


FOR MANY YEARS SCHOOL CHILDREN IN EDMONTON TOOK PART IN THE ALEX DECOTEAU RUN.

THE RUN HELPED PROMOTE PHYSICAL FITNESS, AND INSPIRED A NEW GENERATION OF ATHLETES.

TODAY, MANY OF ALEX'S PERSONAL ITEMS, INCLUDING THE WATCH GIVEN TO HIM BY KING GEORGE, ARE ON DISPLAY AT EDMONTON POLICE HEADQUARTERS.

...A FITTING TRIBUTE TO CANADA'S FIRST ABORIGINAL POLICE OFFICER, AN OLYMPIC ATHLETE, AND A HEROIC SOLDIER.



END



FOR DISCUSSION

- ① After Alex's father died, Alex was sent to a residential school. How would you feel if you were separated from your family?
- ② Alex was a well-known runner who competed in races across Alberta. Why do you think Alex liked to run? What sports or activities do you play? Why is it important to be physically active?
- ③ Alex was the first Aboriginal police officer in Canada. Why is it important that the police are representative of the people in the community? Do you know any police officers?
- ④ How do today's Olympic Games differ from the 1912 Olympic Games that Alex took part in? What is your favorite Olympic sport? Would you like to participate in the Olympic Games?
- ⑤ King George gave his pocket watch to Alex. How would you feel if an important person gave you something?
- ⑥ The First World War was called "the war to end all wars". What year did it start? What year did it end?
- ⑦ The soldiers who fought in the First World War spent a lot of time in muddy holes called trenches. Look up pictures of trenches on the internet. What do you think life would be like in a trench?
- ⑧ Alex was inducted into the Sports Hall of Fame because of his skill as a runner. What would you like to be famous for?
- ⑨ Mementos from Alex's life are on display at the Edmonton Police Service. What is something special that you own, that you would want to share with others? Why is this item important to you? What does it say about you as a person?





ALEX DECOTEAU

READ THE AMAZING
TRUE STORY OF
CANADA'S FIRST
ABORIGINAL
POLICE OFFICER!



© EDMONTON POLICE SERVICE