

RECONCILED AFTER 30 YEARS

The spy who loved him

by **BRUCE WARD**
Ottawa Citizen

OTTAWA — John Murray, 81, stood at his wife's bedside in tears as she spoke to him for the first time in 30 years. "I will always love you," whispered Nora Korzhenko Murray, the once-beautiful Stalinist spy codenamed "Swallow."

That deathbed reconciliation a little over four months ago in a London hospital was the final chapter in an extraordinary love story that began in wartime Moscow when Nora, daughter of an NKVD (the forerunner of the KGB) major, was coerced into seducing Murray, a secretary at the British Military Mission.

But the phony seduction grew into a fiery love affair and Nora, her credibility shattered, faced the wrath of the secret service.

With courage and pluck, Nora and John outfoxed the NKVD and she became the first Soviet war-bride in England.

"We were meant to be together," Murray says quietly as he sits at the kitchen table in his son's Ottawa home during a trip to Canada.

"When I heard she had cancer, I knew I had to see her."

As Murray walked into the hospital ward Nora, 70, raised her thin arms to embrace him. "She held me in her arms and I said I loved her too. Then I wept."

Murray had not seen Nora since a bitter separation in 1958.

The spy thriller-love story began when Murray moved to the British Embassy in Moscow in 1941.

He met Nora at an embassy party but a colleague dismissed her as "a Mozno girl" — women permitted by the secret service to fraternize with foreigners and then report on their contacts.

Nora began telephoning the embassy, pleading for an appointment. Finally, on New Year's Eve, Murray gave in.

As he led her into the sitting room, Murray snapped: "I know you are a Mozno girl sent to spy on me, but you'll get nothing out of me . . . so go back to your secret police and tell them I've said so."

Nora's reaction floored Murray, as he recounts in his book *A Spy Called Swallow*.

Instead of denials, Nora broke into sobs and poured out her story. She told how her father had been sent to Lubyanka prison and her stepmother exiled to Tashkent in Asiatic Russia during the purges of 1939.

In April 1940, Nora was picked up by the secret police and told that if she wanted to save her father, she should work against the enemies of Russia.

She was given a photograph of Murray and told: "It will be your duty to contact him and use every means possible to gain his confidence."

Nora said she had been told that if she failed she would be imprisoned.

Murray believed her. He told her she could give him Russian lessons and he would feed "Swallow" trivial but carefully concocted items to keep her bosses happy.

The system worked for several months. But Nora's bosses began pressing for her to make arrangements for Murray to meet one of their staff.

Murray deflected Nora's wheedling until, suddenly, she became seriously ill. Then one day a message came from Nora: "Tomorrow at noon in the park."

When they met, Nora told Murray her boss had accused her of falling in love with the Englishman. He cancelled her passport, then flung it at her saying, "See if your damned Englishman can help you now."

Murray moved Nora to his cottage on the embassy grounds as a housekeeper in defiance of the state bureaucracy.

But in 1941, she was lured away, bundled into a car and taken to a police holding cell, where she was told she would be transported to Lubyanka prison.

Tipped off of the arrest, Murray stormed into the police chief's office let loose all the Russian swear words he knew.

The bluster paid off. "The police in Moscow are used to dealing with abject, cringing wretches who are in fear and terror, and it must have shaken him to have someone address him the way I did."

Nora was released and the couple asked the head of the British Military Mission in Moscow for help in obtaining permission to be married. He appealed directly to Stalin for help.

A permit was approved, and the

couple was married Jan. 23, 1942. Several months later, they moved to Britain.

Nora did not find life there easy. By 1945, she was raising three sons on a soldier's slim wages.

Five years later she completed *I Spied For Stalin*, an account of her life in Russia and her adventures as an inept and unwilling spy.

Nora became a celebrity, seen at glamorous parties. She toured Europe, lecturing on life in the Soviet Union.

But the marriage became strained and the couple separated in 1958.

Although she lived only streets away from Murray, the couple didn't talk again until Murray visited her in hospital this year.

"We took her home for the last few weeks of her life," Murray says. "She often refused to take morphine despite the terrible pain. I would stroke her arms and whisper Russian endearments hour after hour."

Despite their separation, Murray says, "I never stopped loving her — never."

(Distributed by Southam News.)

COCOA WINE POPULAR

LAGOS (Reuter) — Chilled cocoa wines are attracting customers in Nigeria.

For the past year, Ekenem Industries Ltd. of Lagos has been marketing wines made from fermented cocoa beans, using a patented process that removes the chocolate taste and smell to create a beverage almost identical to grape wine.

"It's popular," company co-owner Edet Ekanem agreed in an interview. And the price is right — the equivalent of less than \$18 Cdn for a 12-bottle case.

Ekanem thinks people could develop a taste for cocoa wine, even if their usual tipple may be Beaujolais or Cotes du Rhone.

He said free samples given to the Nigerian presidency and the U.S. Embassy in Lagos got favorable reviews.

"Last year when the U.S. embassy had their wine night they commented that the cocoa wine is good."

The wine is sold throughout Nigeria, black Africa's most populous country, and has turned up in shops as far afield as Amsterdam.

Ekenem, which adorns its labels with a sketch of a cocoa bean, produces six wine varieties ranging from Harmattan Dry, named for sandy winds that sweep down from the Sahara Desert, to a Sweet Gold.

Ekanem, 64, a former draftsman and builder, said his partner, Okon Ekuere, an electrician who also is 64, hit on the idea of making wine from cocoa after developing a taste for wine in neighboring Cameroon.

"When he came back to Nigeria, he couldn't get wine to drink because in the 1950s Nigerians did not drink wine."

Nigeria's tropical climate does not permit growing grapes, so Ekuere experimented with various fruits without success before trying cocoa beans.

Cocoa wine is one of many new products, ranging from cocoa breads to chocolate-covered corn candy, that Africa's big cocoa-producing countries are studying to boost domestic consumption and reduce a glut that has torpedooed world prices.

However, the wine won't make much of a dent in the hundreds of thousands of tonnes of cocoa produced in Africa. Only about 12 grams of cocoa are needed to make a litre of wine.



The Bank of Canada hopes an optical security device in the top left corner of the new \$50 bill will help it stay one step ahead of counterfeiters.

New bill buys peace for Bank

MONTREAL (CP) — The Bank of Canada hopes to stay one step ahead of counterfeiters with a high-tech addition to the new \$50 bills that go into circulation Friday.

A tiny reflective patch that changes color when seen from different angles will be in the upper left-hand corner on the front of the bill. The square, about the size of an eraser on a pencil, is called an Optical Security Device (OSD) and has the number "50" in the middle.

Made of five layers of zirconium and silesium as thin and durable as the ink on the bill, the square is either gold or green, depending on the angle from which it is viewed.

Counterfeiting isn't a serious problem in Canada, said Louise Vaillancourt-Chatillon, a Bank of

Canada spokesman, and the new technology will help keep it that way because the color-shifting effect can't be reproduced photographically.

"We've bought our peace for a while at least," she told a news conference this week.

The patch was developed by the Ottawa-based National Research Council beginning in 1980. Its appearance on the new bills puts Canada at the leading edge of counterfeit-proofing, Vaillancourt-Chatillon said.

Many countries use special techniques to mark their currency — Australian bank notes, for instance, carry reflective squares — but none are as sophisticated as the new Canadian technology, she added.

As with \$2, \$5 and \$10 bills that are being replaced by new de-

signs, existing \$50 bills will still be legal currency and will be removed from circulation as they wear out. There are about 60 million \$50 notes in circulation, with an average lifespan of 3½ years.

The patch will appear on redesigned \$20, \$100 and \$1,000 notes as they are introduced in the next few years, Vaillancourt-Chatillon said.

There is no plan to put the patch on future pressings of lower-denomination bills, partly because those bills don't attract counterfeiters, she said.

The new \$50 note features former prime minister William Lyon Mackenzie King on the front and the snowy owl, Quebec's provincial bird, on the back.



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Unusual cat the pet for allergy sufferers?

OWEN SOUND, Ont. (CP) — Some say they look like big rats, while others think they're like small greyhounds. And many say they look Egyptian.

But for many allergy sufferers the Cornish Rex may be the perfect cat.

The Rex has a very soft, dense coat with a texture similar to soft wool or down. It doesn't have the long guard hair that other cats have as protection against inclement weather.

When a cat sheds, it's this guard hair that causes many allergy sufferers to head for the tissue box.

Tammie Morrison of Hepworth, Ont., near Owen Sound, has 11 of the "hypo-allergenic" Cornish Rex felines and the cattery she shares with her fiancé Chris Hess is one of only four in Canada which breed the Rex.

"There are two breeders in Toronto and one in Quebec, so it's fairly hard to get a Rex in Canada," Morrison said. "The Toronto dealers are sending lots of people my way because the cats are becoming so popular."

"You see a lot of people who want pets, but are allergic to cat or dog hair."

The Rex has another unusual attribute — the breed is extremely friendly.

"When you're buying a cat, you want one, you can cuddle and hold

and keep with you," Morrison said. "Most cats are very stand-offish and independent. But if you like a cat that will follow you around all day because it wants to be petted, then you'll definitely like the Rex."

This quality is inbred into the cat. Morrison will only breed cats that have an affectionate temperament and she won't sell any "stuck-up" cats. That can be important for anyone contemplating the \$400 price Morrison puts on a Rex.

She says other dealers have sold them for as much as \$600, but Morrison says she doesn't sell cats; she "pets them out."

"I'm sending them out into the world as pets. And not everyone who comes to me for a Rex automatically gets one. I'm not going to send one of my babies away without making sure the person I'm dealing with will make a good owner. So far I've only sold three of them because I want to be sure."

Morrison says she can usually sense if a person will make a good owner 15 minutes after the person walks through her door.

Morrison's home is not a good place for people who hate cats. She's got cat memorabilia in her kitchen, cat pictures on her walls and cat figurines on her shelves. And then there are the 11 live cats that roam the house.

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