

ALBERTA
GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

Relatively Speaking

SPECIAL ISSUE: *Families of the NWMP* – A joint project with the Saskatchewan Genealogical Society and Manitoba Genealogical Society

Major Frederick Augustus Bagley | Inspector Robert Belcher | Staff Sergeant Dr. Frederick Mortimer Gray | Sergeant-Major John Herron | Ernest Kroesing | Sergeant John Joseph Marshall | Staff Sergeant Joseph Harvey Price | Taylor Family Colt Revolver



Constable Fred Bagley, NWMP, ca 1880, see story on page 111

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RELATIVELY SPEAKING

Mission Statement

RELATIVELY SPEAKING is the journal of the Alberta Genealogical Society. Its purpose is to support the objectives of the Society by providing for its readers:

- a regular, attractive, quality periodical
- interesting articles that demonstrate research methodology and resources
- timely, accurate information on family history and genealogy resources and events, and
- a forum to post queries, and exchange information and research tips.

The Publication

RELATIVELY SPEAKING is produced by volunteers, and uses contributions submitted by members and supporters of the Alberta Genealogical Society.

RELATIVELY SPEAKING is published four times a year and mailed on or about the 15th of February, May, August and November. Closing dates for receiving contributions are the 10th of January, April, June and October.

We accept contributions on a wide variety of topics that will be of interest to anyone researching their family history and that are appropriate to our Mission Statement. We especially welcome those with an Alberta connection.

Final authority for acceptance or rejection of material rests with the Editor. Neither the Alberta Genealogical Society nor *RELATIVELY SPEAKING* assumes any responsibility for errors or opinions on the part of contributors.

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In This Issue . . .

. . . we present several stories about the families and activities of members of the North West Mounted Police (NWMP). These were contributed by descendants of the serving officers, including a few by AGS members, as well as by historians of the force.

The stories in this issue of *RELATIVELY SPEAKING* are part of a collection that is also being published, as a joint journal project, by the Saskatchewan Genealogical Society in its August issue of the *Bulletin*, and by the Manitoba Genealogical Society in its September issue of *Generations*.

The articles appearing in the three journals are listed on page 124. Members of all three Societies who have provided an email address will receive copies of each of the three journals.

In our original Call for Papers for this project, we indicated we were looking for stories about the early members of the NWMP, in particular concerning their activities after they had left the service. Many members stayed in Western Canada, marrying local women and raising families here. Their descendants are spread across the country with many of them following in the footprints of their forebears' by joining the Royal Canadian Mounted Police or other military and police services.

Some of the articles were previously published in *The Quarterly*, the official magazine of the RCMP, or in other newspapers and periodicals. We are happy to have received permission from these publications to reprint these very interesting narratives.

Each officer is identified by their Regimental Service Number (R.S.N.). See page 124 for an explanation of these series.

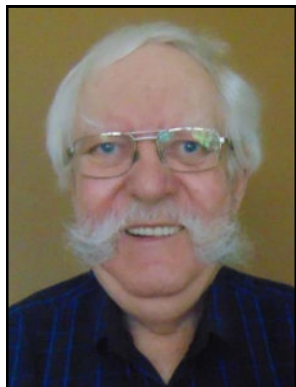
We are pleased to present these bits of history that deal with some of the real people who helped develop Western Canada during the last century.

RS



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President's Message

by Bob Franz

CHANGE AND STRATEGIC PLANNING

This issue of *RELATIVELY SPEAKING* focuses on some of the individuals who joined the North West Mounted Police. The creation of the NWMP was part of a larger strategic plan of the government of Sir John A. Macdonald to settle the vast Northwest Territories recently purchased from the Hudson Bay Company. Its creation meant significant change in the way things were being done. There were those who supported this change for it meant peace, stability, and sovereignty for the area, but there were others, those who were enjoying the lack of law and order and prospering, who strongly opposed any change to the status quo.

In my first President's Message I made reference to the Society's strategic plan. The AGS strategic plan consists of strategies which maintain and support those things we have done in the past that have been successful and have been of proven benefit. That is important, but those strategies do not move us forward. If we are to be progressive we must constantly be on the alert for how to do things better, how to do more, and how to be more effective in the delivery of our services. Those strategies require change. Change does not come by easily. We are creatures of habit. We are also creatures of comfort. Change means we have to change our habits. Change shakes us out of our comfort zone. Change is met with resistance.

Unfortunately organizations that do not or cannot evolve will not survive. They become complacent. They become stagnant. They are redundant. Every organization needs a Doubting Thomas who will question new ideas and new processes. The Doubting Thomases of our organization force us to look carefully at our strategic plan to ensure that we do not lose what we have just for the sake of change. They ensure we do not become swept up by new ideas because they are trendy, or that we do not become blinded by the enthusiasm of embracing something because it is novel. But we also need the Believers, the Dreamers who think outside of the box, who challenge our complacency, who see opportunities where others see misfortune.

People who do not like change will not stay with an organization which does not provide them the security of the familiar. But people who thrive on change, those who are change agents, will not stay with an organization that does not support challenge and progression.

It is the role of the leaders of an organization, its policy makers and executive, to hear and to accommodate both groups of individuals. It is their role to ensure the organization operates from a safe and secure base, but at the same time dares to change and to explore. Unfortunately, those who pick up the gauntlet and agree to lead are quickly damned by those who are resistant to change and feel their comfort threatened, and are just as quickly cursed by those who feel their suggestions for the future are not being heeded. Sadly, those who enjoy the challenge of leadership will not stay with an organization when that opposition becomes excessive or abusive.

All things have a balance, a yin and yang. The challenge for societies today is being able to find that balance. As noted by the ancient sage Lao Tzu, "If you do not change direction, you may end up where you are heading." The question facing members of societies today, and their leaders, is where do we want to head?

This is Bob.

RS

To view the President's monthly reports go to: <http://www.abgenealogy.ca/lets-talk>



Dr. Dale Harold Bent knew his grandfather, Fred Bagley, only as a young boy. His family visited Fred and his wife Lucy May at their retirement home in Banff. Dale fondly remembers Fred playing with him and his cousins as a kindly, loving man. Occasionally Fred would let the boys handle his regalia, and made them paper "admiral's hats" to besiege the family. Dale received a B.Sc. and M.Sc. from the University of Alberta, and a Ph.D. from Stanford University. He returned to Alberta as Professor of Business Administration at the U of A, later becoming the Director of Computing Services. Penny and Dale moved to the University of Western Ontario where Dale was the Assistant Vice-President (Academic Services), and he later taught overseas at the University of Victoria, Wellington, New Zealand.

Cover Photo — Constable Fred Bagley, ca 1880;
Source: Bent family collection

Frederick Augustus Bagley (R.S.N. OS 322, NS 247): Maverick

by Dale H. Bent and Penelope D. Bent

There was his picture, twice life size, at the entrance to the Maverick's Exhibit on the fifth floor of the Glenbow Museum in Calgary! It was Dale's grandfather, Frederick Augustus Bagley! And there he was again – his photo printed in the brochures for the exhibit, and again, it was his picture on the free bookmarks being handed out. A glass case exhibit held some of his treasures: his North West Mounted Police uniform and the front hoof of his favourite police horse. With Fred's other grandsons, we had been invited to the opening ceremony of the Maverick Exhibit and were astonished at the prominence accorded Fred Bagley, chosen as one of about forty people who helped define the Province of Alberta.

Dale remembers him as a kindly, upright old man. Bagley was never rich, and his jobs were always modest. He lived most of his life in Alberta, primarily in Calgary, and retired to Banff in 1921 where he lived in a log house. What did the historians and educators see in him to make him a star of early Alberta history?

An Alberta Maverick was defined by author Aritha Van Herk (2001) as "a unique character, an inspired or determined risk-taker, forward-looking, creative, eager for change, someone who propels Alberta in a new direction or who alters the social, cultural, or political landscape."

So how does Fred Bagley fit in?

According to the Jamaica Church of England Parish Register Transcripts (1664-1879) and the 1871 England census, Bagley was born in the British Fort Charlotte Barracks, Jamaica, on 22 September 1858. His father, Richard Bagley (1829-1894), was Irish, a career enlisted man in the British Royal Artillery, and his mother, Catherine Anne Bland (1830-1908), was of Scottish and Barbadian ancestry. He grew up in the crowded conditions of at least six different British Army barracks with his increasing number of siblings, and was educated by the army until he was 11, when his father became a Chelsea Pensioner. When Fred was 13, all his family immigrated to Canada. It was 1872 and his father had joined the new Canadian army and was posted to Fort Henry, Kingston, Ontario. Two years later, with the family now living in Toronto, Fred persuaded his father to let him join up with the newly-formed North West Mounted Police (NWMP). Records show he was, at 15 years, the youngest enlisted member. A good rider and very musical, Fred was assigned the position of junior bugler. The expedition he took across Canada with the Force is now known as the Trek West. The hardships were great. Many men deserted, horses died, equipment failed and the official plans were mostly unworkable.

During the Trek West, and for the rest of his first year on the Force and occasionally after, Bagley kept a diary and this diary is now in the Glenbow Archives. It is posted online as a research tool by the Glenbow and is used in schools as a teaching reference. It is an interesting contrast to the stuffy official reports to see the Trek from the eyes of a teenager. Bagley ended the

1874 Trek posted to a small detachment in Swan River, in what is now Manitoba. This was a hardship post, with inadequate housing and food and the wrong clothing. Now 16, he spent his spare time learning from the First Nations neighbours how to trap to provide skins and furs to make clothes for himself and his comrades. He also learned at least three First Nation languages fluently. He was always curious and engaged, and was always practising his music.

In 1876 the men at Swan River, who had been playing music all along as one way to provide entertainment, formed the first band west of Winnipeg, with Const. T. H. Lake as bandmaster.

During his time in the force, Bagley participated in many critical moments in western Canadian history. He was stationed at posts across the Prairies, including Forts Edmonton, Saskatchewan, and Battleford. In 1877 he was at the negotiations and signing of Treaty No. 7 with the Blackfoot. This major event was enhanced by a nineteen-gun salute, and a parade, which included many Blackfoot and Mounties, and was led by Lake's Police Band, enriched by Bagley's presence. The date was September 22nd, Fred's 19th birthday.

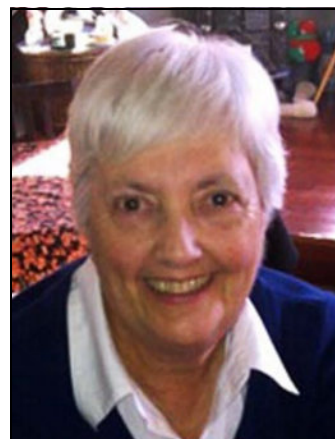
In October 1877, Sitting Bull surrendered to Insp. Crozier at Wood Mountain headquarters, and Bagley was part of Sitting Bull's escort back to the United States.

In 1879 he guarded Swift Runner, a man found guilty of cannibalism of his family, the first person legally hanged under the laws of the Northwest Territories. Bagley helped build the gallows. Swift Runner gave Bagley his breastplate, a treasured possession.

By 1881 Bagley was stationed in Battleford, and from there he was part of the escort for the Marquis of Lorne as he travelled across the west. Curiously, the 1881 Canada Census has him living in a Mountie dormitory in Battleford but the same census also has him in Toronto, as his parents recorded him as still at home.

It was in Battleford that Bagley started the first of his many bands. Bandmaster at 22, his band consisted of Matt Meredith, Billy Williams, Billy Potter, Harry Stoner, Charlie Degear, Tough Gartes, W. Bigson, Paddy Burke, Sandy Grogan and M. Halbhaus (*The Quarterly*, Vol. 1, Nos. 2, 3). There were dances at Battleford two to three times a week, and Bagley was playing the fiddle, banjo and other instruments. He was also well known for always having a dog with him. Many of his photographs include his dog, Patsy.

Witnessing history, on 26 March 1885 Bagley was enroute with a small detachment to Fort Carleton when Louis Riel and the Metis battled the NWMP at Duck Lake. Bagley was ordered back to Battleford, where his troop was ordered to defend the west face of Battleford. He had seen Fort Carleton burning in the distance. He was in Battleford on April 2nd, when the Cree killed nine settlers in what became known as the Frog Lake Massacre. After another fight on April 24th between the Militia and the Metis, on the 27th Bagley was sent out on patrol to find Poundmaker. He located him at Cut Knife, and returned with the information to Battleford, and the Battle of Cut Knife ensued April 30th. In official papers Bagley was



Penelope D. Bent
attended the University of Alberta, getting a B.A. and LL.B. twenty years apart. She practiced law in Edmonton and in London, Ontario. Penny discovered genealogy when she retired. She is a member of the Nanaimo Family History Association and has taught genealogy for Vancouver Island University Elder College.

Sergeant Fred Bagley, NWMP, ca 1890; Source: Ric Hall's Photo Collection, RCMP Veterans' Association





1888 — Banff, Alberta — NWMP Band under the leadership of S/Sgt. Fred Bagley (circled); Source: RCMP Historical Collections Unit, Depot Division

there, but he does not make that claim in his own notes. He said he went to find bodies and bury them.

He took part in the Battle of Batoche May 8th to 12th, and after Big Bear was captured on July 2nd was part of his guard. In the fall of 1885 he was transferred from Battleford to accompany Indian Commissioner Hayter Reed on his pacification visits to the various reservations. His band dissolved when two of his musicians died, one at Duck Lake and one at Cut Knife Hill.

In October 1885, a photographer, Edward Kerr Francis, (ca 1833-1900) had arrived in Calgary together with his wife Catherine Anne McLaughlin (1845-1922) and their children. They were on one of the first trains across Canada from Ontario. The railway was to be the great CPR trans-continental link, but it was far behind schedule. The Last Spike would not be driven until 7 November 1885 and because of other problems, the train across the mountains did not go until June 1886.

Francis had come to set up a photo studio partnership in Calgary, bringing his family of six children, including two teen-aged girls. By December 1885 he was in partnership with Mr. A. M. McKinnel and their studio was in business on McTavish St., Calgary. The Francis family, especially the girls,

were a great addition to the Calgary social scene, with so many bachelor policemen around.

Fred Bagley was in Calgary and Banff that year, and it was the beginning of activities that led to him being later recognized as a pioneer of music for Western Canada. In late 1886 he formed a Scottish Pipe Band in Calgary and a NWMP Band, which he only left when he enlisted for WWI, 28 years later. That year there is also mention of a six-man orchestra led by Bagley playing at a ball, and he organized a mounted band as well. We know that Bagley noticed the girls. Also in 1886 construction began on the Banff Springs Hotel, and a special detachment of police were required for control. The first music played at the resort at its opening in 1888 was by a regimental band led by Bagley (*The Quarterly*, Vol. 11, Nos 2-3).

In 1887 Bagley organized and trained the first Mounted Police Band. In 1889, posted back in Calgary, he joined the Calgary Fireman's Band.

The beautiful Francis daughters, Mary Elizabeth (born 1866) and Lucille (Lucy) May (born 1868) both married Mounties. The wedding of Staff Sergeant Frederick Augustus Bagley to Lucille May Francis took place 11 June 1890 in Calgary, NWT. Later Mary Elizabeth (Minnie) married Constable James Joseph Walsh. In their wedding photo, the newly married Fred and Lucy May Bagley had the dog Patsy at their feet.

The young married couple were popular. Father Lacombe (after whom Lacombe, AB was named) wrote the NWMP on 26 October 1890, asking that Bagley get a promotion. Several Calgarians sent a petition on 4 December 1890, to Frederick White, Controller of the NWMP, petitioning for a pay raise for Bagley because of his marriage. It was forwarded by James Lougheed on his letterhead as a Senator.

Bagley continued his career, largely in Banff and Calgary. He and Lucy May had six daughters, only three of whom survived childhood. He was never promoted to officer, but in 1897 was chosen as one of the 20 to go to London to escort Queen Victoria in her Diamond Jubilee Parade (see page 131). Fred was later personally presented to the Queen after a command performance at Windsor Castle.

Fred Bagley retired in 1899, and started his retirement job in the Land Titles Office in Calgary. He was 41, and his pension was very small.

Near the end of 1899 the Boer War broke out, and the 2nd Canadian Mounted Rifles was created. It was led by a NWMP Commissioner Herchmer and made up mostly of Mounties. Bagley signed up. He had been retired less than six months. He gained the rank of Captain, but the Canadian contingent of which he was part arrived in Africa 18 days after the signing of the Treaty of Vereeniging which ended the war.

When he returned to Calgary he started the regimental band of the 15th Light Horse. Fortunately, his job at Land Titles had been saved

*Wedding Party
11 June 1890 (Calgary)
Standing: Lucille May
Francis (bride), Mary
Elizabeth Francis
Seated: S/Sgt. Fred A.
Bagley (groom), S/Sgt.
M. Duchesnay;
Source: Bent family
collection*



for him. This was the beginning of many bands, some regimental and some citizen bands. Whenever he started a new band that was not military, he got to design a new uniform for himself. Some of these were very grand. Many of these bands were playing concurrently. Just after the 15th Light Horse Regimental Band was organized, Bagley started and led the Calgary Citizen's Band, of approximately 40 members, which played for a wide variety of concerts, parades and civic events (*The Quarterly*, Vol. 11, Nos 2, 3). In 1907 the 15th Light Horse band went to Ireland for a tour. It was amazing. In Dublin, the audience rushed the stage and bore him around the hall on their shoulders. In London, he played before royalty. One famous music critic wrote "He is qualified to belong to the guild of capable and artistic conductors." (Glenbow Archives) In 1912 the Calgary Citizen's Band started to do annual performances in Banff.

A crack shot, Bagley had won shooting competitions in the NWMP and in 1903 he won the Calgary Grand challenge. In 1905 he was in two rifle matches, in one of which his daughter Katie placed second in the Ladies Match.

When war broke out in 1914 Bagley was 56 years old, but he still wanted to enlist. A fine, upright man, looking great in a uniform, he was given the rank of Major and served the 82nd Battalion as a Recruitment Officer, and then moved to the 192nd. He reenlisted in 1915 in the Canadian Expeditionary Force, hoping to go overseas. The army realized his age (58) at this point, because there is a letter written to him on 28 October 1916 saying that the "boys

missed him" when he got off the train. A month later he received his "Last Pay Certificate" from the Canadian Contingent Expeditionary Force. The certificate is in the Bagley scrapbooks now in possession of family members. As a result, he relinquished his rank of Major Second in Command of the 192nd Battalion.

In 1919 he founded the Calgary Elks Marching Band, the Bankhead band and the Calgary branch of the Musicians Union. The Bagleys retired to Banff in 1921, where he promptly organized a Mountie Band, founded the Banff Community Band and helped start the Natural History Museum. He found a retirement job wearing a uniform and opening the doors for the Banff Hotel, greeting the world, and playing in his bands.

Fred's legacy was music. The bands he formed carried on in various conformations for years. His love of the Mounties and their early history came out in his many articles for the Mounted Police periodicals, in particular the *Scarlet and Gold*. His love of country came out in his continuing service in the armed forces, including the Boer War and WWI. It is amazing that he was trying to get to the front for active service in 1916 when he was 58 years old. He was rich in talent and rich in friends. When



Fred Bagley, ca 1900
during Boer War;
Source: Ric Hall's Photo
Collection, RCMP
Veterans' Association

you look back on his life, he exactly meets the requirements of the definition of “A Maverick.”

Fred Bagley was honoured many times in his retirement as one of the “Old Timers” of the force, in ceremonies and parades, including the Stampede Parade. He died at 87, and is buried in Banff.

Fred’s daughters all married Alberta men. The oldest, Kathleen Francis Clara (1891-1983), married Joseph E. Hinchliffe in Calgary, in 1916. The second daughter, mother of co-author Dale Bent, was Frederica Leona (1904-1997). She was briefly married to Leslie Stewart Goodfellow, and then to Ronald Ernest Bent. Marian June (1907-1984) married Albert Michael Connelly. Bent and Connelly ran adjoining ranches in the Crowsnest Pass.

Acknowledgements

We are greatly indebted to Fred’s great-granddaughter and our niece, Brenda Wilbee, a well-respected author of many historical books. Her research into Fred Bagley’s life includes a time-line more than 80 pages long which is still growing, and which has helped us a great deal.

For further information

There are a number of interesting histories about the North West Mounted Police, and especially the Great Trek of 1873 and 1874. One of our favorites is *The Great Adventure: How the Mounties Conquered the West*, by David Cruise and Alison Griffiths. Cruise and Griffiths draw upon the official records, of course, but also upon the written personal diaries of several of the enlisted men. Their account is entertaining and accurate to our knowledge. They quote extensively from the diary of Fred Bagley kept during the Trek, and occasionally during his subsequent career with the NWMP.

We have collected writings about Fred’s life and career, which may be of interest to anyone studying the history of the Canadian North West Mounted Police. Since stories about the NWMP are readily available, we concentrate in this article on facts not generally known, including the adventures of Fred and his family before and after his 25 year career in the Force.

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*Fred Bagley,
Bandmaster, ca 1930;
source: Bent family
collection*





Gordon E. Tolton is an amateur historian, re-enactor, author, and raconteur. While working in the agricultural, construction, and service industries, he volunteered for several heritage-related societies and historic sites and became immersed in history while learning the disciplines of writing, archiving, and museum practices. Gord was the history coordinator for the United Farmers of Alberta and has been associated with Fort Whoop-Up National Historic Site for over twenty-two years. His interests centre on the cross-border trade of the late 1800s, the 1885 North-West Rebellion, and the history of agriculture in Alberta. He is the author of four books, including *Cowboy Cavalry and Prairie Warships*. He lives in Coaldale, Alberta, with his wife, Rose.

Honest John Herron (R.S.N. OS 378): Policeman, Plainsman and Politician by Gordon Tolton

(Editor's Note: The following has been excerpted from an article published by the author in Canadian West Magazine in the fall of 1994: volume 10, number 3. The material presented here deals mainly with John Herron's life after he left the service of the NWMP. Some minor changes have been made to the text only to conform to the format of RELATIVELY SPEAKING.)

John Herron, Junior, was born on 15 November 1853 in Ashton, Upper Canada (Ontario), a village twenty-five miles west of Ottawa, in Carleton County. He was the third son in a family of twelve. John Herron the elder was a farmer who had come to Canada from Ireland when he was twenty-one and was a devout Presbyterian and a member of the Orange Society.

Young Herron had very little formal education, and attended public schools in Ashton. At the age of twelve, he went to work in the logging camps of Ontario and Quebec, and at sixteen, was taken to apprentice with a local skilled artisan, as was the custom of the era. For the next five years, he learned and practiced the trade of blacksmithing.

In 1873, the North West Mounted Police was formed under an Order-In-Council, and instructed to march west to establish Canadian authority in the North West Territories and to maintain law and order in the new possessions. In June of 1874, the NWMP left Fort Dufferin in Manitoba to cross the prairies on their much-heralded "Great March" to restore order on the southern plains, and drive the American whiskey traders out of business.

However, Sub-Constable John Herron did not participate in the march. In fact, he did not arrive at Fort Garry, until the fall of 1874, probably in December. John Herron's service records show him as having enrolled in the new force on 24 November 1874 as a farrier, (Regimental Number 378, Old Series). Several accounts like to state that John Herron was one of the Mounties who built Fort Macleod, but this is hardly possible, since Herron's record and his Regimental Number clearly provide evidence that he was not taken on to the Force until late November of 1874, far too late to have gone west with the Force.

Herron and his fellow troops were to cool their heels in Manitoba. The new recruits spent the winter of 1874-75 at Fort Dufferin, the headquarters of the Boundary Commission, and the point where their compatriots had embarked on their western march the previous summer.

In the spring of 1875, Constable Herron was detailed to patrol duty in the town of Winnipeg.

(Editor's Note: From 1875 to 1878, Herron saw a great deal of the Canadian prairies with assignments in Swan River, Blackfoot Crossing, Fort Macleod, Wild Horse Creek and Fort Calgary. He also spent some time in Minnesota, Montana, Utah and Washington.)

John Herron completed his duties with the force in May of 1878. Upon his honourable discharge, he subsequently returned to Ottawa, via Fort Walsh, Fort Benton, and Bismarck, Dakota Territory. In Ottawa, John Herron went

into a wholesale liquor and grocery business with a man named Thomas Bates. The firm of Herron & Bates opened on Wellington Street, in the summer of 1878.

In the fall of that year, Herron was approached by John Stewart, a Bank of Commerce accountant who was also active as the Sergeant-Major commanding the Volunteer Militia Troop of Cavalry. Stewart, at the request of the newly reelected Prime Minister, Sir John A. Macdonald, was in the process of reorganizing the Volunteer Troop into a unit that would serve as an official escort for the incoming Governor-General, the Marquis of Lorne, and his wife, Princess Louise, the daughter of Queen Victoria.

In recognition of his recent Mounted Police service, John Herron was requested to act as Sergeant-Major for the guard unit that Stewart was busy organizing. Herron consented to serve, as did his partner, Tom Bates. On the same day, Stewart also talked to Duncan J. Campbell, a Bank of Montreal employee from St. Hilaire, Quebec (in coming years, Campbell would follow Herron and Stewart west, and become a leading citizen in the frontier town of Fort Macleod). By the end of the day, Stewart had enough recruits, and immediately informed Sir John A. that he was ready to assume command as Captain of the Dragoon Guards. Upon the installation of Lord Lorne as Governor-General, Captain Stewart's Guards were permitted to be known as the Princess Louise Dragoon Guards.

In 1878, John was married to a lady by the name of Ida Lake, a small yet determined young woman who stood only four feet, eleven inches, and barely weighed 100 pounds. Ida hailed from Lindsay, Ontario, but the story of where and how they met has been lost to time. But her spirit and single-mindedness has not gone forgotten by her family. Over the next three years, Herron ran his business and continued to perform as Sergeant-Major at official functions, in the Dragoon Guards. The Guards provided pageantry to the Parliamentary openings, state visits, and as escort to the Vice-Regal authority at any other official duty required of him.

In 1881, John Herron's connections with the Conservative government clicked for him once again, when the Marquis of Lorne went on a tour of western Canada. In preparation for the tour, the Mounted Police required someone to purchase and deliver over one hundred horses to various forts. Remembering his experience with Selby-Smyth's tour, the fact that Herron was coming west anyway led to him accepting the commission. Upon completion of this contract, Herron stayed in the west and entered a new business arrangement with John Stewart.

In 1881, Captain Stewart made the decision to enter into the western ranching industry, now blossoming in the foothills of the District of Alberta. Selecting the NWMP remount farm, south of the new settlement of Pincher Creek, as an ideal base, Stewart persuaded Herron to go west with him, and show him the ropes. After the purchase of the farm from the government, (which Herron likely suggested and negotiated) the ex-Sergeant-Major accepted the position of Manager of the Stewart Ranche Cattle Company.

In this capacity, John Herron, now 27 years old, became responsible for cattle and horses ranging over a government lease of over 50,000 acres. Three thousand head of cattle were trailed in from Utah. He was also active in the politics of stock raisers in the area. While Stewart involved himself with mining and real estate investments in the Calgary area, Herron and



*John Herron, NWMP
Constable, ca 1875;
Source : Sir Alexander
Galt Museum & Archives,
Lethbridge, AB*

Stewart's partner, ex-Hudson's Bay man and horse trader James Christie, helped form the South-Western Stock Growers Association.

While the ranch helped to fulfill government beef contracts for the Indian reserves and raise horse for the NWMP, Herron devoted a lot of his time to breeding Clydesdale horses and imported several stallions. He became noted for his horse acumen when he had over a thousand horses transported from Idaho and put them into the Crowsnest Pass to winter, and was reported to not have lost a single head.

In 1882, Herron went back to Ottawa and brought his wife, Ida, and their 2 1/2 year old daughter, Georgina, back to Pincher Creek. Their trip west was taken via steamboat up the Missouri to Fort Benton, and via covered wagon to Pincher Creek, where they took up residence in a one-roomed log cabin, a half-mile southeast of town. Later, they moved into a large frame house at the eastern edge of Pincher Creek (which remained until 1955).

In the fall of 1883, Pincher Creek settlers had their first encounter with natives and stray cattle. A cowboy riding along the Kootenai (Waterton) River found a group of Indians field butchering a fresh beef. Riding back to the town site with his report, the cowboy guided a group of volunteers led by John Herron in search of the perpetrators. In all, a hunting party of fourteen Stony Indians who had drifted south, were taken into custody. In Macleod, they were tried and a few were given two-year sentences.

Despite his reputation as a respected ex-police officer, militiaman, stock-raiser, and budding politician, John Herron retained a certain amount of blue collar temperament. This is evidenced by one of his hobbies: the decidedly "uncivilised" sport of wrestling. In 1884, a wrestling match was widely advertised between John Herron and a man considered to be superior to him in height and weight. At Macleod, during the Dominion Day celebration, citizens from around the area gathered to witness the spectacle. A considerable amount of money had been wagered for the event, the larger man being the favourite and Herron considered the longshot. As the two opponents stripped to the waist and stepped into the ring, a tall, lanky young American newcomer jumped onto the platform, and waved a considerable roll of money and announced it to be placed on, what he called, "the little fellow." Some long faces may have been evident in Macleod that day, as Herron won what has been called by his descendants "the wrestling championship of the North West Territories." However, the champ was soon to "retire undefeated" when his toughest opponent intervened. The diminutive Ida Lake Herron objected strongly to his sporting activity, and demanded the end of his wrestling career. Devoted husband he was, Herron complied with the ban.

Oh, and the mysterious young American with the bank roll? He turned out to be none other than George Lane, then on his way to take over as foreman of the North West Cattle Company. Lane eventually would own the ranch, rechristening it the 'Bar U', and would become one of the most prosperous and successful ranchers in North America.

In 1884, another daughter was born to the Herrons, Katie Carrie. They would later receive another daughter, Edith Maude in 1888. In 1884, Ida Lake Herron became an unwitting early witness to the sort of fear that the entire west would experience in the next year. On a hot day in July, Ida was home alone with three-year old Georgina (Ida may have still been pregnant

with Katie, as she is not mentioned in this account), when she looked up to see an armed Indian, in war paint, standing in the doorway. The visitor then made signs that he wanted something to eat. Ida patiently fed the man and he left as quietly as he had arrived, without a hint of harm to the ranch wife and her child.

Incidents like this would contribute to white settlers' paranoia when Louis Riel returned to Canada and began to contact the Blackfoot leaders of Alberta. In response, John Herron organized a Home Guard for the Pincher Creek area. The volunteer organization was soon to be absorbed into the Canadian Militia, as the Number 3 Troop of the Rocky Mountain Rangers in March and April of 1885. The Rangers had been formed by Captain Stewart in response to Louis Riel and the outbreak of the Northwest Rebellion. The fear in the ranch country was that of an alliance of the Treaty Seven Nations of the Blood, Blackfoot, Stoney, Sarcee, and Piegan tribes, with the rebel Metis of Louis Riel. Blackfoot leaders like Crowfoot, Red Crow and Sitting-On-An-Eagle-Tail were being approached by the messengers of Riel, and the Cree chiefs Big Bear and Poundmaker. Peace in the Calgary, Macleod, and Pincher Creek areas hinged on the neutrality of these nations.

Captain Stewart, now gazetted a Major, made a harried trip to Ottawa and back, as relations between native leaders, the Metis, and the government soured and finally exploded at the battle of Duck Lake. One hundred and fourteen stockmen, farmers, cowboys, ex-Mounties and trappers enlisted in the Rocky Mountain Rangers. Three troops were formed at Fort Macleod, and a Captain assigned to command each. While Lord Richard Boyle and Edward Gilpin Brown took charge of Number One and Two Troop respectively, John Herron took the lead position of the Number Three Troop. While eastern forces were being mobilized in the east, for service at Batoche and Battleford, the Rocky Mountain Rangers fell in for roll call at the Fort Macleod garrison. After two harried weeks of drill, the RMR formed up as Mounted Cavalry. Number One and Two Troops were sent to patrol the narrow gauge railway being built between Lethbridge and Medicine Hat, and watched the Cypress Hills and the American border for hostile Indians headed out for the scene of the fighting.

Meanwhile, Herron's Number Three Troop settled itself in for an uneventful three months as his rough-hewn group of cowboys and former frontiersman found themselves as the foothills country's ranking military authority during the dark days of the Riel Rebellion. Despite being located among the supposedly unsettled Blood and Piegan tribes, John Herron's Rangers had little excitement. The Number Three troop didn't even get a chance to share in the two or three very minor gun battles that some of the other Rangers were involved in. Near Medicine Hat, some of Major Stewart's troopers had exchanged gunfire with a few American Assiniboine, but nothing significant ever came of the incidents.

One of Herron's troopers, (unfortunately his name has been lost to time) did assist a couple of Mounties in apprehending a ring of Montana horse thieves, and tracked the rustlers from Fort Macleod to the Highwood River, where an arrest was made. At the end of the Rebellion, Major Stewart recommended all of the Rangers be awarded the NorthWest Campaign Medal, which also made the recipient eligible for a Homestead Grant of 320 acres. The award was made to the re-united Rangers the following summer at the Pincher Creek sports day.

Herron was well known and respected throughout the Alberta ranching country, both by the British and eastern Canadian "aristocrats" who dominated the industry, and by the settlers who were rapidly taking up homesteads in the region. In May of 1886, the region's first attempts at organizing the cattle industry, the South-West Stock Association gave way to the newly formed Canadian North West Territories Stock Association. John Herron served as delegate to the CNWTSA's first general meeting in Macleod, and was elected as the first President of the Association. The group's function was to act as a political lobby in managing the range, organizing the round-ups, and in attempting to force the federal government to limit the amount of rangeland opened up to homesteaders. Under Herron, the association was able to work a good co-operative agreement with the Montana Stock Association in limiting the activities of rustlers trafficking livestock across the international boundary.

As well as political activity, John Herron continued as the foreman on the Stewart Rancho. In 1888, the Stewart Rancho was sold, and the land and leases were divided. Major Stewart retired to Calgary, contenting himself to his real estate, coal-mining and other business ventures. Finally using his land grant from his NWMP service, Herron started his own ranch operation, and also served as a government Stock Inspector (until 1904). About the same time, John Herron's younger brother Peter Herron, came west and set up a homestead in the Pincher Creek area. In 1892, a young Mountie named Ed Ambrose came to Pincher Creek. Herron took a liking to the lad, often inviting him to the Herron household for dinner. A few years later, Ambrose was courting his daughter, Georgina, and in 1901, he became John Herron's son-in-law, thereby creating a Mounted Police tradition in the family. The second Herron daughter, Katie, also married an ex-Mountie, John L. Jamieson, in 1905. The last daughter, Edith, married a Pincher Creek banker, George Hunter in 1909.

In 1889, oil seepages were located (the discovery is attributed to frontiersman Kootenai Brown) near Cameron Creek, a stream running out of an alpine lake in the Rocky Mountains, in the corner where the borders of Alberta, British Columbia, and Montana meet. A small boom ensued in the area and a number of claimants poured into the area, hoping to cash in on the burgeoning petroleum fields. John Herron was in the thick of it, and represented the business of a number of the claim holders. Based on the favorable comments of a visiting official of the Standard Oil Company, a local corporation was founded to consolidate the efforts of those seeking to exploit the resources of the seepages, the Alberta Petroleum & Prospecting Company. But Herron and the others needn't have bothered, as the remote location of the seepages and the relative low volumes of oil discovered made the development unprofitable.

In 1896, the Macleod-Pincher Creek area was again alarmed by Indian troubles. But this time the trouble came not from a collective tribal threat, but from a single Blood warrior turned outlaw, by the name of Charcoal. For six weeks, Charcoal led a reign of terror that eluded the NWMP at every turn. The chase was taken up by nearly everyone, including the NWMP, the Blood Indian tribe and the local citizenry.

Charcoal fled to the Piegan Reserve, and while in the area attacked the cabin of a Piegan named Commodore. When the NWMP from Fort Macleod arrived to investigate, they were met by another Police patrol from Pincher

Creek, as well as a citizens' posse, led by John Herron.

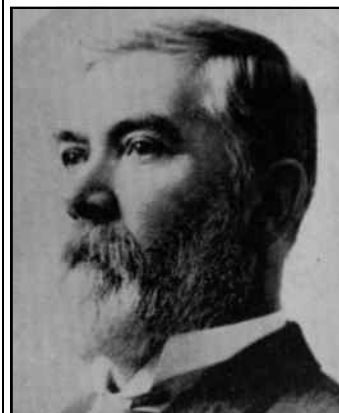
About a week later, Charcoal was seen on the Cochrane Ranche, and fresh tracks were found in the foothills. John Herron again volunteered his services, and his civilian party took to searching and guarding the mountain passes. When Charcoal was finally spotted near the Waterton River, the pursuit was taken up by a patrol headed by Pincher Creek Sergeant William Brock Wilde. The patrol encountered Charcoal a few miles from the Waterton River, and in the ensuing pursuit, the fugitive shot and killed Sergeant Wilde.

When news of the killing of a Mounted Policeman was heard at Pincher Creek, the veteran Mountie in John Herron was incensed. In the wee hours of 11 November 1896, Herron again led the call for volunteers in the manhunt for the outlaw... Charcoal was at the house of his brother, Left Hand, where the sibling convinced him to surrender. The police took him to Fort Macleod, where he was charged with murder, tried and executed.

Herron topped his illustrious career as a Conservative Member of Parliament, first being elected for the federal riding of Alberta in 1904. The riding at that time was in area one of the largest in Canada, taking in the entire area from a point north of Edmonton to the Montana boundary. Herron was only the third representative for the region, having been preceded by ex-Whoop-Up trader, Donald Watson Davis, and later by Edmonton Bulletin editor Frank Oliver. In 1904, the Alberta riding was divided, and Oliver was delegated to the new riding of Edmonton. Subsequently, the Alberta riding was cut to the area south of the Herron's candidacy and election. Herron's staunchly Conservative background is evident in a family anecdote, when Herron spoke of a distant cousin, stating that, "You know, Tom Scott is a pretty decent fellow. What I can't understand is how he can be a Grit!"

In 1908, Herron was re-elected in the re-aligned, renamed riding of Macleod, sitting in the House of Commons on the side of Sir Robert Borden as a member of the opposition. As a Member of Parliament, he was able to lend assistance to a local issue pertaining to his old friend and fellow Rocky Mountain Ranger, John "Kootenai" Brown. In 1895, Brown had begun a fight to have his beloved Kootenay Lakes set aside as a National Park. To this end, he had recruited several allies including John Herron, Cowley rancher F.W. Godsal and Macleod Gazette editor, Charles Wood, to put pressure on William Pearce, the Superintendent of Mines. In that year, the government had set aside the Kootenay Forest Reserve, and in 1901, Kootenai Brown was appointed fishery officer for the Reserve.

When Herron got into office in 1904, he was now in a position to help his old friend Brown in the quest for National Park status. Kootenai Brown and John Herron lobbied in Ottawa to expand the Forest Reserve to include an area reaching to the U.S. border, and to encompass land that was unfit for agriculture. In 1909, Kootenai asked Herron to use his powers to create a position for him, in response to the need for an overseer for the Kootenay Forest Reserve. Herron complied and exerted his influence to have a Forest Ranger installed at the Reserve, and in 1910, at the age of 71, Kootenai became that Ranger. Brown, Herron and Fred Godsal, among others of the community, used their influence and harassed the government constantly to have the Reserve expanded and joined with Glacier National Park as an



*John Herron, ca 1920;
Source : Sir Alexander
Galt Museum & Archives,
Lethbridge, AB*

adjoining national park. Finally in 1911, the Kootenay Forest Reserve was given park status, and Waterton Lakes National Park came into existence after sixteen years of fighting by the locals.

In 1911, Herron ran again for the Conservative party on the issue of Reciprocity with the United States (an early form of free trade, the Liberals of the day were for it, the Conservatives against). Herron personally backed Reciprocity, despite his party's stand opposing. Borden came west to campaign, and stopped in Macleod to endorse Herron. The gesture did not help, however, and Herron was defeated by Liberal candidate David Warnock. Borden won the election and formed the government, but without John Herron who never was able to sit in the government.

In 1912, John Herron accepted an invitation from Guy Weadick to attend the first Calgary Stampede as an honoured original member of the North West Mounted Police. The 74s, as they were called, rode in the 2 September 1912, Stampede parade in 1874 uniform, in a mock replica of the wagon box "boat" that the Police had initially crossed the Bow River in to found Fort Calgary. The veteran troop also paraded at the Stampede grounds on horseback, alongside their younger, modern counterparts of the RNWMP.

In the early part of the century, many small communities popped up on the prairies as Sir Wilfred Laurier's plan to populate the plains with farmers took root. One of these small towns popped up east of High River, and was named Herronton, in honor of the pioneer policeman, John Herron.

In 1924, Herron made it to another reunion of the original Policemen, this one in Macleod as the Force celebrated the 50th Anniversary of its arrival at Fort Macleod. Perhaps it was his attendance at these sorts of functions that led his family and historians to believe that he had been on the original Great March that ended with the building of Fort Macleod.

As the Great Depression settled in on the prairies, the Conservatives were swept into power, and Herron's good friend, Calgary lawyer R. B. Bennett became the Prime Minister. Bennett offered John Herron a Senate seat, but he declined, perhaps because of his advanced age. In an earlier time, Herron had watched as the virgin land was turned over, grass side down, as cattle country became wheat country. Like most early ranchers, he had resisted and had used all of his political clout to prevent government grazing leases from being transferred to homesteaders. With the arrival of the railroad, the ranchers' pleas were lost as farmers from around the world filled the plains. Now, in the midst of the Dirty Thirties and the dust storms created by poor farming practices, Herron probably shook his head as he saw several of the settlers' dreams dashed.

In 1935, more than sixty years after arriving on the frontier, Herron sat down and submitted to an interview with Ada Beaton of the *Lethbridge Herald*. The reporter could not help but be struck by the fact that this pioneer and elder statesman of Alberta barely showed his age, despite the fact that in his lifetime the political boundaries of the west had changed several times, and that the thriving towns and cities of the province (indeed even the province) did not even exist at the time of his arrival.

John Herron died at Pincher Creek in 1936, at the age of 83.

RS

Special Joint Journal Project

Families of the NWMP: Distribution of Stories

Stories and articles submitted for this special project have been divided among the journals of the Alberta Genealogical Society, the Manitoba Genealogical Society and the Saskatchewan Genealogical Society. The distribution is shown below.

Relatively Speaking (AGS)

- Frederick Augustus Bagley (R.S.N. OS 322, NS 247): *Maverick* by Dale Bent and Penelope Bent
- Frederick Mortimer Gray (R.S.N. 4218): *People We Meet* by Gori Elder
- Honest John Herron (R.S.N. OS 378): *Policeman, Plainsman and Politician* by Gordon Tolton
- Robert Belcher (R.S.N. OS 13, NS 3, 101): *One of the 'Originals'* by Gail Benjafield
- Sergeant John Joseph Marshall (R.S.N. 1487) by John J. Marshall
- Staff Sergeant Joseph Harvey Price (R.S.N. OS 202, NS 4) by Carol Anne (Price) Marshall
- *The Search for Ernest Kroesing* by Bob Franz

Generations (MGS)

- James Black Brown (R.S.N. 6244): *Memoirs* by Mavis Chalmers
- James Black Brown: *History Unfolds as Mountie Pioneers Meet* by Bob Campbell
- Thomas Henry Waring (R.S.N. 790) by Mary Anne Wright
- William Henry Lowe (R.S.N. 3524):
 The W.H. Lowe Mystery by Isabel Campbell
 William Henry Lowe by Jean (Yates) Lowe

Bulletin (SGS)

- David Paterson (R.S.N. 235): *A Biographical Sketch* by John deCourcy Fletcher
- *History of David (Pry) Paterson* by Frances Gaff Paterson
- George Gordon (R.S.N. 2003) by Dennis Gordon
- Harry Holdsworth Nash (R.S.N. OS 271, NS 399) by Richard Nash
- Richard Elmes Steele (R.S.N. OS 7, NS 18): *One of the Original 300* by Donna Shanks

NWMP Regimental Service Numbers (R.S.N.)

(Explanation taken from NWMP website at Library and Archives Canada <http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/nwmp-personnel-records/pages/north-west-mounted-police.aspx>)

NWMP recruits were assigned a regimental number at the time of engagement. For example, the first contingent to arrive at Lower Fort Garry in the fall of 1873 were assigned numbers beginning with 1; these Old Series (OS) numbers continued, in consecutive order, when the second contingent arrived in the spring of 1874. Within a few years, however, members of the NWMP were scattered throughout the Northwest Territories at Fort Walsh, Fort Calgary, Fort Edmonton and elsewhere. Quick and easy means of communication were lacking and with men joining and leaving on a continual basis, the numbering system was soon in disarray.

To add to the confusion, personnel records were not maintained at a central location. Officials in Ottawa maintained a file, but so did officers at Headquarters in Fort Walsh and, after 1882, at Regina. In the late 1870s, some recruits had been issued numbers formerly allotted to men who had taken their discharge. To further complicate matters, in the early years, members were permitted to leave the Mounted Police by finding a suitable replacement. The replacements assumed the number of the original member thus creating a situation where one number may refer to two (and even three) individuals.

To rectify the situation, it was decided in August 1878 to renumber all members of the Mounted Police then serving, starting again at regimental number 1– the New Series (NS). This consecutive series of numbers is still in use today and now exceeds 50,000.

RS



Gail Benjafield is a retired librarian/archivist living in St. Catharines, Ontario, who would love to hear from any Belcher descendants. By chance, she owns a copy of a 1900 sheet music called *Strathcona's Horse*, lyrics by a Niagara local, music also by a Niagara man.

Robert Belcher (R.S.N. OS 13, NS 3, 101): One of the 'Originals'

by Gail Benjafield

We've always wondered what happened to that great cape. If memory serves it was a huge, heavy serge, draped over overturned chairs and boxes in the dark cottage. Under it my older brothers and I would play whatever version of 'fort' was going. Of course we would only use it on rainy days at the Gull Lake cottage near Lacombe, Alberta. My eldest brother, Malcolm, recalls playing with the 'Sam Browne' belt and other Northwest Mounted Police ephemera left there by the previous owners. He was in ten-year-old-boy heaven. Our infant sister recalls nothing, of course. And my memory is only of that heavy cape. None of us recall its colour, only that it was dark and heavy. My brother Gord recalls it was very cape-like in shape with possibly a clasp of some kind.

When my parents bought the old cottage from Colonel Robert Belcher's widow in the late 1930s, there may well have been more than the cape, belt, mess plates and a picture left from his illustrious career with the NWMP. Both the cottage and our Calgary home were sold in 1949 when our parents moved east to Toronto. Mum told me that in the turmoil of selling up and moving east with four young children, one artifact went missing. A young man with the moving company pointedly admired the framed picture of a NWMP officer with his horse which was about to be put in the moving van. So she just gave it to him. I can only imagine her forthright response to his admiring it. "Take it: one less thing to pack."

Asked later about this event, Mum no longer recalled whether it was a framed painting or a photograph. No matter, with most of our Col. Belcher effects, it is long gone. The only things kept were the plates, which elder brother Malcolm convinced Mum to donate to the RCMP museum in Regina many years ago. When Mal carefully wrapped and took most of the plates to his local RCMP detachment for the museum in Regina, and offered them as our family's donation on behalf of our mother, the Sergeant said, with a wink, "You mean you are returning stolen goods." Our family received formal thanks for the donation.



Caricature of The Old Soldier (Robert Belcher) by Matthew Barrett; used with permission of the artist

As a librarian/archivist I have tried to put a face on Belcher, partly because the Col. Belcher Military Hospital in Calgary was named after him. So I knew he was 'somebody'. But who? I have poured over every manuscript, annual report, book and website I could find on the NWMP, and even dared to contact the RCMP for more information. One senior archivist with the force responded to my insistent email questions some years ago, "I don't like the tone of your inquiries." Does this mean I am on file somewhere for trying to follow up on some interesting yet innocuous Canadian history? The RCMP finally confirmed his renown. Yes, Belcher was indeed one of Louis Riel's jailers. However, according to a story about

widow Margaret Belcher in a 1956 RCMP journal Riel gave 'Bobby' Belcher his crucifix before going to the gallows. The "safe custody of Louis Riel became his personal responsibility all through the long trial and until the day Riel was executed. Just before the condemned man walked to the gallows, he presented the Inspector with his crucifix as a token of respect." (*The Quarterly* magazine, 1956) I can find nothing to support this. Indeed many accounts of the execution have quoted Riel's last words as "Remerciez Madame Forget" as the wife of the clerk lent him her crucifix before he stepped on the scaffold (Beahen & Horral, 1998).

Our family never knew the man, as the cottage was purchased from his widow. But Belcher was indeed one of the 'originals'; his 1873 attestation papers indicate he was one of the first men enlisted in the NWMP. He had been a public school boy in England, then with the 9th Lancers, before immigrating to Canada. He immediately enlisted with the NWMP. With him, he brought his tremendous cavalry experience, his swordsmanship, his love of cricket and rugby, all of which he introduced to others of the NWMP members. Then there was the March West, the Riel Rebellion, the Gold Rush days of the Klondike, where he had his men help recover bodies at Chilkoot Pass when an avalanche killed so many.

Numerous sources credit him with starting the famed RCMP musical ride. Belcher was apparently not without ego. Several records not only confirm his starting the musical ride to instill discipline in his raw recruits but also to get them to handle horses properly. Apparently he was quite the martinet. There are several recorded complaints about his managerial style. Heady stuff!

Belcher's horsemanship was so renowned that he was asked to oversee the shipment of all NWMP horses to London where members of the contingent would be involved with Queen Victoria's Jubilee celebrations.

After active duty with the NWMP peacekeepers, he helped form the Lord Strathcona's Horse regiment and volunteered to serve with them in the Boer War. He was second in command to his friend Sam Steele, and his regiment fought fiercely, losing many men in battle. For his war efforts he was awarded the insignia of the Companionship of the Order of St. Michael and St. George. King Edward awarded Belcher the medal himself. Others from Lord Strathcona's Horse also received honours at that time.

He died in 1919, so his/our Gull Lake cottage must have been built some time before then. My two brothers recall that when our parents purchased the old cottage, it was named Damifino (pronounced Damn If I Know). According to our parents, the Colonel suggested the name inadvertently when his wife Margaret asked, "What should we name the cottage?" The response apparently stuck, although neither historical nor family narratives record whether the widow always took her husband so literally. Mum thought the obvious pronunciation might offend the sensitive ears of her young brood so simply changed the pronunciation to Damif-in-oh. It seemed to have a nice ring. In time, another name was selected entirely.



Robert Belcher,
NWMP Constable 1890;
Source : RCMP Historical
Collections Unit, Depot
Division

Robert Belcher married Margaret McLeod, and they had six children. One son, Percy, died at Passchendaele just days before his father, who was also serving in WWI, returned to Canada. It is said that he presided at a banquet at Calgary's Palliser Hotel to honour old military colleagues. Belcher said he had so enjoyed his military career with the NWMP, the Boer War, even the Great War that he was looking forward to the next opportunity to fight. Ironically, the old soldier died suddenly the next day at the Palliser.

Our sister, who lives in Alberta again, has researched the cottage property at Gull Lake for us; she visited the site of what was to us the old boxy, bat-infested cottage. Of course it is long gone, with a beautiful all-season home in its place. My 'Belcher' file bulges with both documented and anecdotal evidence of one man's remarkable career. One reference notes that 1902 was not a great year for the great man. He apparently was often inebriated, and was sent for some kind of help on that front. This source posits that as Belcher had never had an alcohol problem before the Boer War, perhaps the horrors he saw there might well have caused him a kind of post-traumatic stress.

Yes, he was 'one of the originals'. Several books and several online sources on the NWMP, their uniforms, the Musical Ride and the Klondike have all helped in the writing of this article. The question of the cape we children played with has been the most difficult part to put together. The uniforms were changed in the 1880s and only a few books refer to the cape and greatcoat. Often the word cape and cloak are used interchangeably. Frederic Remington, a famous artist of the west, drew some sketches of the NWMP and show a heavy cape and greatcoat. Diagrams indicate how to lay out a NWMP kit, showing the placement of the rolled cape. One reference is outstanding. Commander Herchmer in the late 1880s made changes: "The members were generally dissatisfied with the issue grey greatcoats that replaced the ones in 1888. Like the old ones they came with a cape that could be attached or detached as the needs required." Officers had to purchase them out of their pay. We wonder if Belcher's cape, belt and other artifacts were of no interest to his widow once she sold the cottage, lock stock and barrel, to our parents.

I think I've gone as far as we can go on trying to piece together the very colourful history of a Canadian 'original' with whom my family had only a fleeting and curiously tangential connection. As Canadian heritage becomes more important these days, we wonder why neither my parents nor Belcher's family appreciated that the NWMP artifacts were part of Canada's precious history. If Margaret Belcher and her children kept any NWMP regalia, are they at an RCMP headquarters museum or archives?

My siblings and I will always wonder what happened to the picture of the mounted police officer and where it is now. Or why any NWMP artifacts were left in the cottage by the Colonel's family at all. And I'll always be curious about what happened to that great cape.



Inspector Robert Belcher in his RNWMP uniform wearing his medals: Order of St. Michael and St. George, Queen Victoria Jubilee Medal, Northwest Rebellion Medal & Queen's South African Medal with clasps—1907; Source: RCMP Historical Collections Unit, Depot Division

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Old Timer's Column. (1956). Mrs. Robert Belcher, widow of one of the originals, *The Quarterly*, 22(1). **RS**



Photograph of the Lord Strathcona Horse Regiment Officers and Sergeant Majors for each of the five troops. Robert Belcher is seated in front row, fourth from the right. Source: Pictorial History of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police; Photographer: S. W. Horral



John Joseph (Jack) Marshall, grandson of Sergeant John Joseph Marshall, was born in 1942. Jack attended undergraduate studies in Calgary and studied law at the University of Toronto, graduating in 1966. He articulated at the Macleod Dixon firm and was called to the bar in 1967. Jack continued to practice with that firm until the end of 2011.

Sergeant John Joseph Marshall (R.S.N. 1487)

by John J. Marshall

John Joseph Marshall, known as Jack, or by his nickname “Fanny”, was born in Truro, Nova Scotia on 13 July 1867, the year of Confederation. He was a fourth generation descendant of Captain Joseph Marshall, King’s Carolina Rangers. Captain Marshall was a United Empire Loyalist who came to Nova Scotia with his family in 1783 from Georgia.

Jack enlisted in the NWMP in Regina on 21 July 1885 at the age of 18. This was just after the Riel Rebellion and he was assigned guard duties over Louis David Riel when he was held awaiting execution following his trial. Upon completion of his training, he was transferred to Fort Macleod, AB, where he rose to the rank of Corporal in 1887 and Sergeant on 1 January 1890.

Sgt. Marshall dealt extensively with the Blood Indians in the area south of Fort Macleod along the Belly River. He learned their way of life and their language. Earning their trust and respect he was given the Indian name “Akoasakus Mokawanena,” which apparently means ‘Many Shirts’ Belly River Chief.

He purchased his discharge on 12 April 1893, planning to accept a position as manager of a CPR hotel to be constructed in Fort Macleod. The hotel not being constructed, Jack travelled to New Westminster, BC. He served as a Special Constable before re-enlisting in the NWMP in Calgary on 5 October 1893. On 21 May 1894, he regained his former rank of Sergeant and in 1895 he transferred to Gleichen, AB, as Officer in Charge.

In 1897 Sgt. Marshall was one of 24 Members of the NWMP sent to London, England, to help celebrate Canada’s participation in Queen Victoria’s Diamond Jubilee, for which he received the Queen Victoria Diamond Jubilee Medal. In August that same year he married Marie Cecile Lucie (often “Lucy”) Beaupre (b. St. Norbert, MB, 1875; d. Calgary, AB, 1948), daughter of Victor Beaupre and Philomena Arial, original founders of Gleichen and owners of the town’s first general store. Victor was a contractor for the building of the CPR as far west as the hamlet of Namaka, AB.

In May 1898, having been transferred to Banff, which would take the family away from Lucie’s family, he decided instead to purchase his discharge and remain in Gleichen. He retired with honours. The citizens of the town and surrounding country presented him with a diamond ring and a beautifully painted address, “an expression of the high esteem in which he was held during his long and arduous tenure of office while he was in command of the NWMP station here.”

In 1900 he built the Marshall House, Gleichen’s first hotel, which he operated until 1907. It was an elaborate, three-storey structure complete with bar, balcony and a two-storey outhouse!

After selling the hotel he opened a real estate and insurance business and was head of the Gleichen Board of Trade. During construction of the Bassano Dam and Irrigation Project, Jack was employed by the CPR as a timekeeper.

In 1913 he was appointed Federal Government Stockyard Inspector for Southern Alberta, a position he held until his death in 1932.

In 1917 he moved his family to Calgary, which was in the centre of his inspection duties. In 1924, Jack was one of the founders of the Royal North West Mounted Police Veterans' Association and signed the original charter. He was also a founder of the Southern Alberta Pioneers and Their Descendants and his picture is found in their building in Park Hill, Calgary.

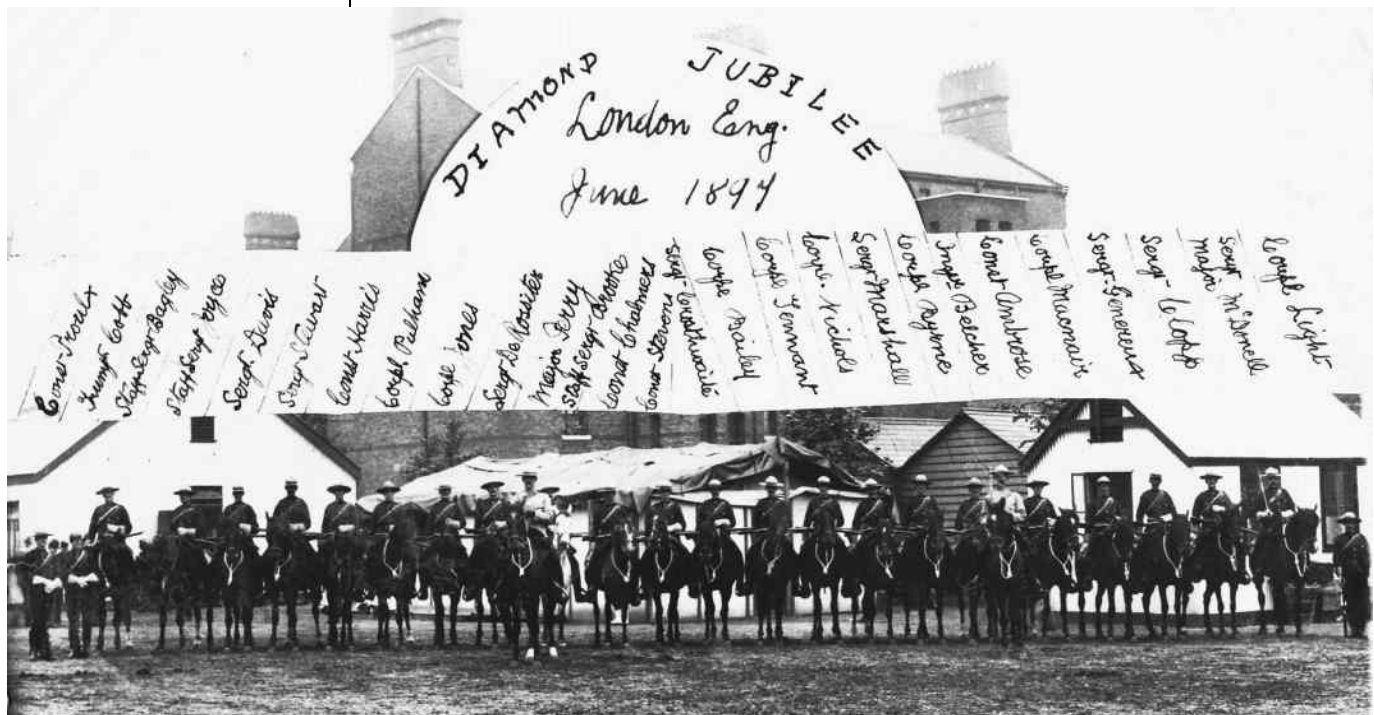
Descendants of Sergeant John Joseph and Lucie Marshall

Jack and Lucie were blessed with six children, all born in Gleichen:

- Joseph Ballaine was born in 1898 and died in 1972. In 1919 he married Mary Elizabeth (Bessie) Holman. They had one daughter, Vivian Marie, born in 1920.
- Marie Lucie Elizabeth (Peggy) was born in 1900 and died in 1986. She married Frank Crockett in 1920 and they had two daughters: Norma Marie, born in 1921 and Natalie Marie, born in 1922. She later married a man named Zeitz and they had a daughter, Nina Marie, born in 1937. Her third husband was Francis Berlin whom she married in Buffalo, NY, in 1959. Following his death in 1960, Peggy moved to California and then to Honolulu, HI, with her daughter, Nina. Nina married Foster Afalava, a Sergeant with the Honolulu Police Department. They had three children, Michael, Natalie and Nina.
- John Joseph was born 14 July 1906. He married Minerva Angeline Ferguson. They had one daughter, Anne Marie, born in 1958, who is married and lives in West Vancouver.
- Eva Fern was born 15 April 1908 and died 20 February 1909. She was a twin sister of Emily.
- Emily Rose was born 15 April 1908 and died 13 June 1979. She married Joseph John Paul Forest in 1930. They had one daughter, Estelle Rose, born in 1931, who died in 2001. Rose married Joseph Arnold. They had four children: Patti Jo, Timothy, Michael and Carol. Michael served with the RCMP in Vancouver.
- Victor George was born in 1910. On 11 July 1939 he married Esther Adeline Donlevy. They had one daughter and three sons: Mary Judith, John Joseph (Jack), Victor William and Paul David. Victor George Marshall and Esther Adeline Donlevy (born in Stavely, Alberta in 1906) were married in Calgary in 1939. Following their marriage, Victor and Esther lived in Calgary. Esther was the daughter and eldest child of William and Teresa Donlevy. Her father was a CPR agent in various towns in Alberta and Saskatchewan. Esther attended school at the St. Joseph's Convent School in Red Deer, Alberta. She graduated from Normal School and taught with the Calgary Separate School Board until her marriage. Esther died in a car accident on 16 March 1977. Victor later married Sara Vernon of Calgary. He died in 1986.



*Sergeant John Joseph
Marshall in 1892*



Delegation to Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in London, England—1894; Sergeant Marshall is ninth from the right; source: Marshall family collection

Note Sergeant Bagley (see story on page 111) is third from the left.

Victor and Esther had four children:

- Mary Judith was born 15 November 1940. Following graduation from St. Mary's Girls' School in 1957, Judy worked in Calgary and Vancouver before moving to Toronto where she met her future husband. On 12 September 1964 she married William Ross Hamilton, of Toronto. Bill had graduated from Ryerson and worked in sales and marketing for a number of years before becoming a broker with CIBC Wood Gundy. They have two children: William Bradley, born 30 March 1967, a banker in Atlanta, GA; and Marcia Lynne, born 10 December 1968, a Teacher's Assistant, in Woodstock, ON.
- John Joseph (Jack) was born 30 May 1942. After attending undergraduate studies in Calgary, he studied law at the University of Toronto, graduating in 1966. He articulated at the Macleod Dixon firm and was called to the bar in 1967. Jack continued to practice with that firm until the end of 2011. On 29 December 1966 he married Carol Anne Price, born 28 December 1943 in Souris, Manitoba, daughter of Leslie and Edna Price of Calgary. They have three sons: Jonas David, born 12 July 1971, an engineer in Calgary; Paul Leslie, born 10 June 1973, an actor and artist in Calgary; and Lucas John, born 11 April 1976, who holds a Ph.D. in Economic Geology and resides in North Vancouver, BC.
- Victor William was born in 1944. Following a brief marriage to Jacqueline Dupont of Calgary, Victor married Joanne Gard on 13 June 1970. They have one daughter, Emily, who has a Ph.D. from UBC and is a member of the faculty of Dalhousie University in Halifax, NS. Victor and Joanne are retired, living in Chapel Hill, NC, following distinguished academic careers. Victor holds a Ph.D. from Princeton University in Sociology. Joanne holds a Ph.D. in Community Health from University of Toronto, and an Honourary doctorate from McGill. She served as Dean of the School of

Information and Library Science at the University of North Carolina. Victor was awarded the Queen Elizabeth Golden Jubilee Medal in 2002 and the Diamond Jubilee Medal in 2012.

- Paul David was born in 1946. He married June Lin of Taiwan on 15 December 1993, in Beijing, China. Paul has been an educator his entire career, having taught in schools around the globe. He has four university degrees including a M.A. degree from Harvard. In addition, he has a Diploma in Education from the University of London, UK. June has a B.A. (Hons) from City University in Hong Kong, and an M.A. from Chinese University of Hong Kong. Paul and June have their permanent home in North Vancouver. They both currently teach at an international school in Seoul, Korea.

RS

*Right: Marshall House Hotel in
Gleichen, Alberta, ca 1905; Source:
Marshall family collection*



*Below: photo used on the cover of a book published
in 1975 titled Mountie, by Dean Charters. Sergeant
Marshall is standing in the second row, left end;
Source: Marshall family collection*



Staff Sergeant Joseph Harvey Price (R.S.N. OS 202, NS 4)

by Carol Anne (Price) Marshall



Carol Anne Marshall (nee Price) was born in Souris, Manitoba in 1943. She is the granddaughter of Joseph Harvey Price Jr. and his wife, Rose (nee Tremblay). In 1966 Carol married John Joseph Marshall of Calgary, grandson of Sergeant John Joseph Marshall, NWMP (see story on page 129). They currently reside in Calgary.

Joseph Harvey (also Hervey) Price was born about 1853 in England. Census data from 1871 shows him living in Toronto, ON with his parents, William and Jane Price, and his siblings. He was one of the original members of the NWMP, having enlisted in Battleford, NWT, on 28 March 1874. Records indicate that he was a member of the March West in 1874 (*The Albertan*, 1974 and Fort Museum, Fort Macleod, AB.)

He served as a hospital steward at Battleford, eventually rising to the rank of Staff Sergeant. His service records show him being discharged 28 March 1877, the cause of discharge being described as "time expired." On his discharge Price received a land grant on 1 April 1878.

He then re-engaged at Battleford and served until his discharge 28 March 1880 by reason of "expiration of service." He appears to have re-enlisted, as a letter written by him in 1901 indicates that he was honourably discharged from the force in 1883. No known photograph of Staff Sergeant Price has been located. His discharge papers describe him as: 29 years, 5 ft. 6 1/2 in., chest measurement 36 in., fair hair and blue eyes.

He married Nancy Mary Bailey, described in census documents as a "half breed" (mother Cree, father English with the Hudson's Bay Company in Fort Garry, NWT). His son, Joseph Harvey Price Jr., born 28 June 1879, was the first child born to a serving member of the NWMP.

During the Riel Rebellion of 1885 he had the misfortune to lose his home and contents by fire. His discharge papers were among the contents lost, and he wrote the Commissioner in Regina in 1901, from Duck Lake, NWT, seeking replacement documents.

Following his discharge he moved with his family to the Red Pheasant Reserve where he was employed as a farm instructor. He died 11 July 1911 at the age of 58.

Joseph and Nancy had three children: Joseph Hervey, Jr., born 28 June, 1879, Battleford, NWT; William Belcher, born 4 October, 1881, Battleford, NWT; and, Alice Mary, born 7 February, 1883, Battleford, NWT.

Carol Anne Marshall (née Price), b. Souris, MB, 28 December 1943, is the granddaughter of Joseph Hervey Price Jr. and his wife, Rose (née Tremblay, b. 1885, d. 1971) and the daughter of Leslie Herbert Price (b. Duck Lake, SK, 3 September 1915, d. 1986) and Edna Sarah Kalbfleisch (b. Carleton, SK, 29 October 1914, d. 2000). Carol has two sisters: Myrna Leslie (b. 1942) and Norma Elaine (b. 1949).

RS

Spinning Webs

By Denise Daubert

Aligning theme-wise with this issue of *RELATIVELY SPEAKING*, following are two websites that may be helpful to genealogists with ancestors connected in some way to the NWMP in Western Canada.

<http://www.glenbow.org> The Glenbow Museum in Calgary have some amazing records in their archives pertaining to members of the NWMP. Access *Collections & Research* on the home page, then access the *Archives* link to search for “NWMP”. There are 134 records in this database on members who served in the NWMP.

<http://www.rcmpheritagecentre.com> The RCMP Heritage Centre in Regina, Saskatchewan is a non-profit charitable organization showcasing and presenting history of law enforcement during the settlement of Western Canada. The website has an exhibits link showcasing the following exhibits: *Creating A Mounted Police (NWMP)*; *Maintaining Law and Order*; *Protecting the North, Serving All of Canada* and *Preserving the Tradition*.

Here are some websites on a variety of genealogical topics that you may find interesting and worth taking time to browse:

[http://www.chog.ca/.../celebrate%20100%20years%20of%20blessings%20\(ebook%20format\).pdf](http://www.chog.ca/.../celebrate%20100%20years%20of%20blessings%20(ebook%20format).pdf)

For those with ancestral affiliation to the religious group Church of God, this link will lead you to a digitized copy of the book titled *Celebrate 100 Years of Blessings: History of the Church of God in Western Canada 1905-2005*. Chapter 2 is dedicated to churches in Alberta including those in Cherhill, Wetaskiwin, Medicine Hat and Carstairs. There are some amazing historical photographs in this 174-page publication.

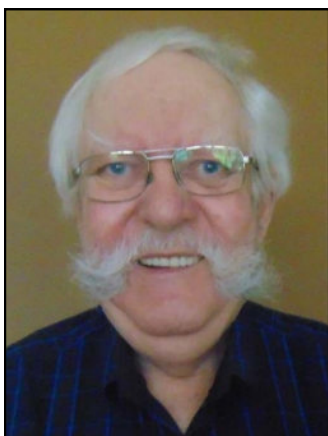
<http://oldcarandtruckpictures.com> Would you like to identify an antique car or truck found in one of the old family photographs you have in your possession? This website is hosted by a classic car and truck enthusiast. Included is information and photographs; you can even learn about old service stations. It will be like taking a trip down a “vehicle memory lane!” And the music is great too – vintage and great to enjoy while exploring the website.

<http://www.sfgenealogy.com> There are many transcribed records on this website to view for free which focus on the geographical area of San Francisco Bay in the State of California. Categories include Churches, Government, Maps, Mortuaries, and Local Historical Societies etcetera.

<http://www.historymuseum.ca> The Canadian Museum of History showcases on-line exhibitions for all to enjoy ... giving genealogists glimpses into of the eras of their ancestors. Access the *Exhibitions* link, then the *On-Line Exhibitions* link. There are many to choose from but you may enjoy viewing these three in particular: *Hold Onto Your Hats!*, *Timeless Treasures: The Stories of Dolls in Canada* and *Old Nova Scotian Quilts*.

<http://abish.byui.edu/specialcollections/westernstates/search.cfm> This website of the David O. McKay Library in Rexburg, Idaho allows researchers to access over 900,000 marriage records currently, with more entries to be added. Most marriage records are from pre-1900 that took place in Idaho, Arizona and Nevada. How to undertake a search is well explained on the website; the Search Tips link is excellent.

RS



Bob Franz, presently living in Brooks, retired after a 40 year career in education in 2005. He was declared President of AGS in April and has been President of the Brooks and District Branch the past three years. Described as a Renaissance man, Bob's other interests include camping, touring, reading, writing, adult literacy, graphite art, Taoism and tai chi chuan and sword. His short stories have appeared in assorted anthologies and assorted Ezines. He has had various shows of his artwork which can be found at <http://sketchesbybob.weebly.com/>

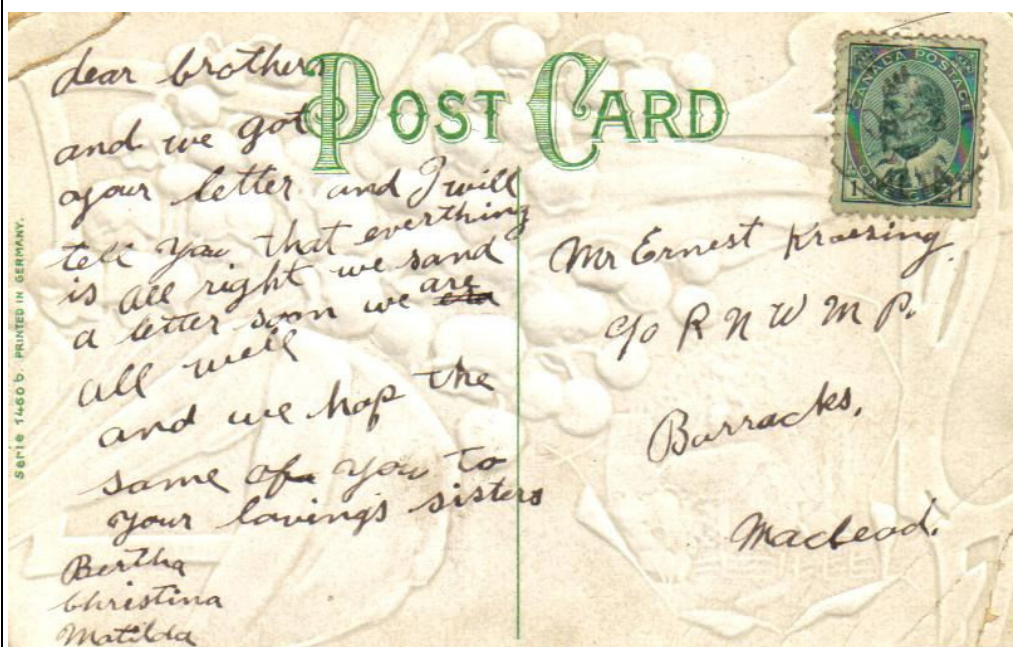
The Search for Ernest Kroesing

by Bob Franz

While sorting a shoebox of photos and assorted cards passed down from generation to generation until it reached my desk — a scenario we can all relate to — I came across a postcard sent to “dear brother” from his three sisters, one of whom was my grandmother. The message was a simple one found in dozens of other cards indicating all was well with the senders and hoping the same for the addressee. What was particularly interesting about this card (shown below) is that it was sent to “Mr. Ernest Kroesing, c/o RNWMP Barracks, Macleod.” There was no date and the postal cancellation was unreadable, but the stamp is of King Edward VII produced between 1903 and 1908.

In the same collection were two blank postcards featuring the North West Mounted Police Barracks in Macleod, AB. Also found was a group photograph on the back of which was written NWMP/Steele's Scouts, and a photograph of a man appearing to be in a uniform and mounted on a horse on the back of which someone had written J.M. Smith, 18 September 1911. I knew from research on other family members Ernest was born 9 January 1889 and had settled with his family in Dry Forks, south of Pincher Creek, in 1902 or 1903. He married 17 May 1916. One of his children, Helen, married a William Smith.

Armed with that information, I did what any genealogist would do: I contacted his surviving nieces and nephews — my aunts and uncles — to determine if anyone had any information. Failing to gain any new knowledge, I went online and searched for the RCMP digital archives, ending up at Library and Archives Canada, but again had no success. Going on to more urgent and pertinent research, I put the pictures and cards back away until I received notice early this year that RELATIVELY SPEAKING was going to focus an issue on the NWMP and the editor was looking for stories



from anyone who had relatives with the force. So once again out came the pictures.

Researching the archives once again, I found there had been no update. An email to the Fort Macleod Museum went unanswered. In discussing my search with Wayne Sheppard, the editor of *RELATIVELY SPEAKING*, he contacted some friends — that is what genealogists do — who in turn contacted me through him with what information they had. Apparently between 1904 and 1920 many records were lost. One resource mentioned was “General Orders of the Mounted Police” at the Library and Archives Canada but it is not on microfilm. Apparently very few of these records are online and one of the correspondents advised that considering priorities, protection of privacy, and limited staffing, corresponding with the archives would likely be unsuccessful.

So I turned back to family and this time located second and third generation descendants of Ernest, his grandchildren and great-grandchildren, who responded with, “Ernest was in the NWMP?” One individual recalled her mother mentioning Ernest’s brother, Johnny, having a saddle with NWMP stamped on it. The saddle was apparently given to a sister whose husband passed it on to his relatives. I did learn that Ernest married a Plains Cree by the name of Florence Gladstone, in 1916. Her father, George Gladstone, was brother to Canadian Senator James Gladstone. From his biography, James appears to have served as a scout for the RNWMP around 1911, the approximate year Ernest is suspected of being in Fort Macleod and family lore that Ernest was also a scout.

As I write this, I am planning to travel to Fort Macleod and will drop in at the museum personally to see if they have any personnel records, and then will be going on to meet with some of my new-found second cousins while at a school reunion in the Crowsnest Pass.

The search goes on. I will find my man!
RS



Some unsigned postcards in the collection of Bob Franz showing Steele's Scouts (above) and the RNWMP Barracks in Macleod, Alberta (left) photographed by Mr. Eshby in 1910



Frederick Mortimer Gray (R.S.N. 4218): People We Meet

by Gori Elder

(Editor's Note: This story was first published in The Estevan Mercury on 8 September 1960. Inclusion of the story here was suggested by Russell Bill, a former neighbour and family friend of Fred Gray.)

Russell related that, "When Doc Gray left the NWMP he established a veterinary practice in Estevan, SK. When I first met Doc Gray, I was a young lad and Doc was more or less fully retired, but he had a small office – dogs, cats and some livestock – at the garage where my dad worked. While I would be waiting for my dad to finish work I would often listen to him and the other old farmers/ranchers who would gather at the garage to hang out and reminisce, and share a few drinks from a whiskey bottle. This would be in the very late 1950s, early 1960s. Doc Gray was one of those people, through his stories, who got me interested in the RCMP which I subsequently joined in 1966 and retired from in 1995. To the best of my knowledge Doc Gray had no family of his own. He considered my dad and a couple of other old timers who hung around the garage to be his close personal friends and when he died in 1962, my dad inherited a good part of his estate. My dad passed away in 2013 and when we were cleaning out his

Sergeant Frederick Gray, ca 1905 (man on right unknown); photo courtesy of Russell Bill



papers I came across the newspaper article. This article was written by my aunt, in 1960, who was a reporter with The Estevan Mercury. She died in 1987."

A great lover of animals, particularly of horses since early childhood – and one who has been around animals all his life – Fredrick Mortimer Gray, is today at the age of 78 years, the oldest practising veterinarian in the province of Saskatchewan.

Doc Gray was born in Antigonish, NS, 30 August 1882, the only son of the late Mr. and Mrs. K. M. Gray, merchant-tailor. His parents were determined that their only child enter the ministry of the Anglican church, but strong willed and unpersuasive Fred Gray had his heart set on being a veterinarian. At a very young age he helped on the farm of family friends and even then had a way with animals, particularly horses, that was seemingly uncanny.

Receiving his public and high school education in Antigonish, Doc then attended St. Francis Xavier College for two terms and McGill University in Montreal in 1901-1903. In 1904 he graduated from McKillips Veterinary College, Chicago.

At the encouragement of Dr. J. G. Rutherford, veterinarian director-general for Canada, Doc came

west in June 1904 and joined the North West Mounted Police as vet staff sergeant, with the regimental No. 4218. The NWMP, having charge of the health of animals, Doc was posted to Pend-Orcille in K Division, out of Lethbridge. His detachment was on Milk River, a port of entry, and Dr. Gray was inspector of animals there.

He was then transferred from K Division to Depot Division, Regina, in 1905 and was veterinarian inspector at North Portal during the rush of 1905-1906. He travelled extensively throughout the province of Saskatchewan testing horses for glanders. "Our field was all contagious diseases," he said.

His first introduction was tourine in Alberta. Then it was mange. In order to check mange cattle had to be 'dipped.' "We had swimming vats and cage vats," he said. "All animals had to be dipped in a mixture of sulphur, lime and water which had to be kept at a certain degree." Two dippings were required within ten days. They also tested for tuberculosis and in so doing had to ride thousands of miles on a police horse.

While reminiscing about his (time in) the NWMP, Dr. Gray recalled that his superior, Sgt. Skinner asked him if he was related to Dolly Gray – who was a great songstress of the time. "I told him that unfortunately I wasn't." However from that day on he was affectionately known by his NWMP personnel as Dolly Gray rather than Doc Gray.

At the persuasion of Mike Rooney who ran a livery and boarding stable in Estevan, Doc left the North West Mounted Police in 1908 and came to Estevan for general practice.

Shortly thereafter, there was a bad outbreak of hog cholera at Marienthal which reached as far as Lampman. It was imperative that over 1000 hogs be destroyed. At this time it was all horse power on the farms and Doc was dairy and sanitary inspector for the Town of Estevan.

Doc's favorite topic is harness horses and through his experience and knowledge of race horses he has acquired a great many friends. Among them are Bill Linder, whom he worked with while in the ranching country of Maple Creek and who has since retired and Shay Gilchrist who is also retired to Calgary. He has worked very closely with them and has maintained a strong friendship for 53 years.

"Another of the most admirable men I ever worked for was George Rupp of Lampman, who raised pure bred Belgian horses. I helped him fit and show his horses at the various fairs throughout Saskatchewan and Manitoba." He developed and showed the horse "Flashwood" at the Chicago Fat Stock Show and was instrumental in winning the championship Belgian Stallion of North America.

During the outbreak of sleeping sickness in the '30s Doc worked day and night to help his friend the horse. At the same time he also held the position as town engineer.

Doc's medical experiences haven't been limited to the animal world alone. During the flu epidemic of 1918, which was one of the busiest times of his life, Doc acted as chief chauffeur for Doctor Bill Creighton, Dr. Jim Creighton, Dr. Bromley and several strange medical doctors in the country. He drove the doctors night and day on house calls all over the country in his Model T Roadster. He knew exactly where all the farmers lived and was able

to get the physicians to their patients in the shortest possible time. He also assisted the medical doctors in treating the patients.

"I got so that I was an expert at making mustard plasters and pneumonia jackets," he said, "and, you know, fortunately a lot of the patients I nursed are still with us today!"

"The flu epidemic was a tragic thing – many families lost loved ones and one wouldn't know about the passing of a victim until after the burial. It seemed there were burial services conducted daily," he said.

With no rest and sleep for days on end, Doc eventually became a near victim of the epidemic. "I owe my life to Doctor Bromley and to the late Miss Anna Deginnes, who was the upstairs chambermaid at the Clarendon Hotel where I lived, she nursed me constantly until I was better," he said. It took him a year to fully recover from the flu. The home of Mrs. Beckel was the only hospital at the time and with so many sick people they converted Macread's home into a temporary hospital.

"D. L. Irvine, now a retired druggist, was one of the many heroes of this 'flu outbreak. He worked right through even though he himself was very ill. His first thoughts were of the public – and no matter when you needed him he was available," said Doc.

Dr. Gray is pure bred sire inspector for RM No. 5 and 6, and since the power age has come and "my friend the horse disappeared" his practise consists chiefly of cattle and dogs.

Sergeant Frederick Gray, ca 1905 (man on left unknown); Photo courtesy of Russell Bill



As director of Estevan Agricultural Fair (in the early years he had charge of the harness and heavy horses) he has helped extensively with the boys and girls in 4-H work since it was first organized.

A past Noble Grand of Estevan Oddfellows Lodge No. 4. and a past master of the Masonic Lodge.

No. 25 he is also a member of the Wa Wa Shrine Temple, Regina. Doc has been instrumental in helping many crippled children in Estevan and district by sending them to the Shrine Hospital in Winnipeg, Manitoba for treatment. **RS**

Quality Quirks

There was a minor glitch in the last issue. Unfortunately it was not caught before press-time. The electronic version on the AGS website has been corrected, though.

On page 101, the date of GenFair and the AGS Annual General Meeting was shown as 23 May 2016 when, of course, it was held on 23 April 2016.

Readers may wish to download the corrected version on the AGS website.

RS

Some photos from NWMP stories in the *SGS Bulletin* and the *MGS Generations* journals



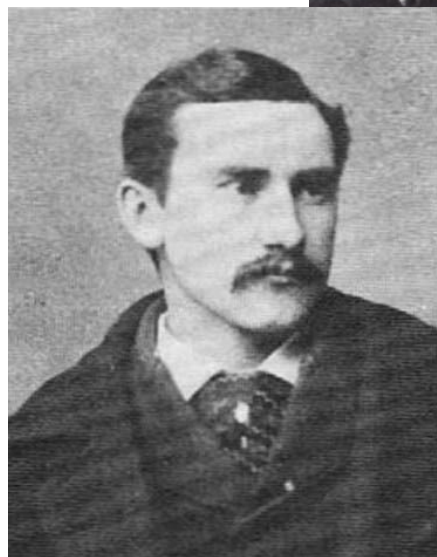
*Left: Richard Elmes Steele
(see the Bulletin)*

*Right: Harry Holdsworth
Nash (see the Bulletin)*

*Below: George Gordon
(see the Bulletin)*



*Below: David
Paterson (see the
Bulletin)*



*Right: James
Black Brown
(see
Generations)*



From the Little Bighorn to Alberta and Back

by Michael Peters



Michael (Mike) Peters is a retired attorney who lives with his wife, Sharon, in Topeka, Kansas. One of Mike's hobbies is the collecting of antique Colt firearms which resulted in the search for authenticating material that is the background for this article. Mike is a life-long Kansan whose ancestors came to Kansas from Europe in the 1870s. Mike and Sharon are both interested in their family genealogies and have both travelled to Europe in search of family roots. Mike has material identifying an ancestor born in 1480 in Holland and Sharon has found roots going back to a German landowner born in about 1525.

This story is about how my search for background on a Custer battlefield Colt revolver led to a genealogical examination of the William Northcote Taylor family in Canada.

I am a collector of antique Colt firearms. In March 2014, I acquired a Colt Single Action Army revolver (serial number 12364) that had been sold by a Canadian individual to a Canadian arms collector. From the Canadian arms collector it eventually came to me. This gun had hints of possible use in the United States Indian Wars of the 1870s. I undertook to seek additional information about this gun and its history both in the United States and in Canada. Little did I know how extensively I would become involved in a genealogical search to obtain the information I desired.

I obtained confirmation of the gun's association with the Battle of the Little Big Horn from Wendell Grangaard of Sioux Falls, South Dakota. I first came into contact with Mr. Grangaard in 2015. He is a dedicated scholar of the Sioux and their history, including their languages, and their involvement in the infamous Indian Wars of the 1870s. Mr. Grangaard, based on his research and examination of the marks put on this gun by its Sioux captor, concluded that a Sans Arc Sioux chief named Buffalo Hump had taken this gun as a spoil of war from the body of a dead soldier at the famous Battle of the Little Big Horn (in modern day Montana) on 25 June 1876, at which George Armstrong Custer and his entire command were killed.

My research into western Canada begins with the migration of a large number of Sioux Indians to Canada after the United States Indian Wars. As related to me by Mr. Grangaard, in the aftermath of the Indian Wars, many Sioux made their way to Canada, which they called "Grandmother's Country." By 1878, Buffalo Hump and some 240 lodges of the Crazy Horse band made their way into Canada and to Sitting Bull's camp which was situated between the Wood Mountain Post and Willow Bunch Trading Post in the Northwest Territories. Wood Mountain and Willow Bunch still exist as towns or villages east of the present day small Wood Mountain Indian Reserve, only about 40 km north of the U.S. border in present day southern Saskatchewan. The Wood Mountain Indian Reserve was created for several hundred of the followers of Sitting Bull who stayed behind when Sitting Bull finally left Canada.

Buffalo Hump said they were welcomed when they arrived and Sitting Bull instructed the chiefs on the rules of living in Grandmother's Country. Not long after the group arrived, some of their horses were stolen by a local tribe. Nicholas Black Elk was in the camp the day of the Buffalo Hump 'incident' and he told this story to his son, Benjamin Black Elk, who conveyed it to Mr. Grangaard:

I was only 15 years old but I can remember what happened that day. Our camp had lost some horses during the night. One of the horses belonged to Chief Buffalo Hump. Sitting Bull sent for the Grandmother police as he was told to do by Paddy (Supt. James Morrow Walsh from

the Northwest Mounted Police (NWMP)). *Paddy didn't come himself but sent Big Bull* (Assistant Mounted Police Commissioner Acheson G. Irvine of the NWMP) *and two policemen to settle the matter.*

As Big Bull rode into the camp, Buffalo Hump ran up to him to tell him about his stolen horse. Buffalo Hump was carrying his revolver in one hand and a knife in the other. Big Bull grabbed the revolver out of Buffalo Hump's hand and Buffalo Hump just stopped and stood there. We didn't know what he was going to do. Sitting Bull walked up behind Buffalo Hump, put his hand on his shoulder and said, 'Austan' (cease, finish, stop). Buffalo Hump turned and said to Sitting Bull, 'How can you argue with such a great warrior?' (meaning Big Bull who was brave enough to simply take his gun away in the middle of a large camp of Sioux).

Big Bull was able to find the horses and return them to Buffalo Hump, but he did not return the revolver. Days later Buffalo Hump asked Big Bull if he could have his gun back, but Big Bull said he had given it to the Commissioner of the NWMP (James Farquharson Macleod) as evidence.

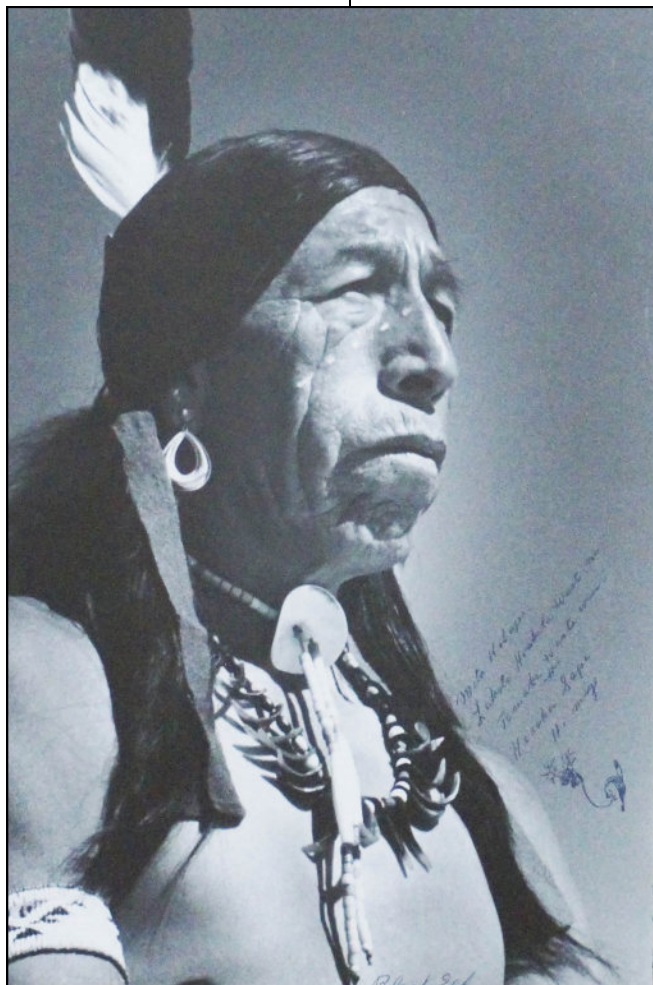
Buffalo Hump and his Sans Arc band left Canada in 1881 and he never retrieved his revolver.

Commissioner Macleod served from 22 July 1876 to 31 October 1880. He oversaw the moving of police headquarters to Fort Macleod and has been credited more than any other individual with establishing the peaceful policies followed by the NWMP in their dealings with First Nations people. Fort Macleod was built in 1874 in the southwest corner of Alberta. It is almost certain that Commissioner Macleod would have held the Buffalo Hump Colt revolver at this location.

When I received the Colt revolver, it was accompanied by material that identified the seller of the gun in 1990 as Karen Taylor, the daughter of William Northcote Taylor (W. N. Taylor), an RCMP veteran. It was also accompanied by material that inferred that the gun may have come to W. N. Taylor from his father, William Richard Taylor (W. R. Taylor), who was an Indian Agent in the Northwest Territories. He was made famous as the

Colt Single Action Army Revolver (serial number 12364) from Custer battlefield purchased by the author





*Benjamin Black Elk —
courtesy of original
photographer; with
personal inscription to
Wendell Grangaard*

*1935 Wedding
announcement from
Winnipeg Free Press*

TAYLOR—TWEDDELL

A quiet wedding took place Saturday, Aug. 31, when Ethel Vivian, youngest daughter of Mrs. E. M. Tweddell, 396 Arlington street, and the late Sgt. C. H. Tweddell, was united in marriage to Mr. William Northcote Taylor, only son of Mr. and Mrs. W. R. Taylor, of The Pas, Man. It was a civil marriage at which Judge J. G. Cory officiated.

The bride looked charming in an ensemble of pearl grey silk crepe, with three-quarter length poudre blue coat, trimmed with matching cut-work and black accessories. The bride and bridegroom were unattended. After the wedding breakfast, Mr. and Mrs. Taylor left on a short trip to the States.

Indian Agent with whom Dr. Claude Lewis and his brother, Sinclair Lewis, made a trip by canoe to make treaty payments to Northwest First Nations tribes. This trip was memorialized in the book *Treaty Trip (an abridgment of Dr. Claude Lewis's journal of an expedition made by himself & his brother Sinclair Lewis to northern Saskatchewan & Manitoba in 1924, University of Minnesota Press, 2014.)*

My working hypothesis was that W. N. Taylor received the gun from his father, W. R. Taylor, so my first effort was to establish by genealogical records that W. R. and W. N. Taylor were father and son. The first evidence, obtained with the invaluable help of AGS member Gloria Cathcart, was a page of the 1911 census for Manitoba District 16 which showed W. R. Taylor, born in Manitoba, to have a son, born in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, in 1902, whose name was shown as "Northcote W." Since this did not completely match the information I had, I sought for more evidence. I found it. Through newspaper searches, I found a 1935 wedding announcement for William Northcote Taylor, identifying him as "the only son of Mr. and Mrs. W. R. Taylor, of The Pas, Manitoba." I have found that W. R. Taylor was born in Lower Fort Garry and likely spent the majority of his life in the Northwest. Indeed, he was part Cree.

What I did not have was confirmation (or denial, as we shall see) of the passing of this gun from father to

son. I needed to find and talk to the seller, Karen Taylor, the granddaughter of W. R. Taylor, her sister, Sandra, or some other family member who might have known the story of this gun.

I first tried to contact the seller, who, in 1990, was heading to Guatemala, and left her address with the purchaser of the gun. I wrote to her at that address and several months later the letter had neither been answered nor returned. I needed, I believed, another source.

My thought was to obtain the obituary for W. N. Taylor, and see who was listed as survivors. I did find his obituary in the *Winnipeg Free Press*, and learned that he had died in 1979, was a member of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Veteran's Association, and that he left two daughters, Karen and Sandra, and four grandchildren, two apparently from each daughter. To my dismay, the obituary did not list last names for any of these six people! I believed I was stuck.

I noticed that the obituary also listed pallbearers, and did use last names there. I reasoned that a pallbearer would have known the family well, or even been a relative, and perhaps I could obtain contact information for the seller or her sister from one of these. Through Internet research, I did find a phone number in Winnipeg for one of the pallbearers. He turned out to be a cousin of the seller, being the son of one of W. N. Taylor's sisters, Gertrude. I called him and he was willing

to help but had misplaced the phone number of Karen in Guatemala. He did confirm that she was still in Guatemala, now 26 years after the sale! He assured me that she telephoned him around the holidays and he would regain her number and convey it to me, with her consent, of course. A couple of months later, he did call and gave me the number. I called Karen and she was happy to talk to me. She was pleased that someone was interested in their family history. No doubt the service of W. R. Taylor as an Indian Agent in Manitoba and Saskatchewan had an influence on the decision of the young W. N. Taylor to join the RCMP. The family is justifiably proud of the service of both generations of Taylor men.

What she told me concerning the Colt revolver was something of a surprise. She said that her father had not obtained the gun from her grandfather, but, instead, had won it in a poker game! In about 1920, at the age of 18, W. N. Taylor joined the RCMP. He was stationed at Fort Macleod in Alberta and won the gun there in about 1922. So the circle has been closed, albeit with a little gap.

It is likely that, after Commissioner Macleod confiscated Buffalo Hump's revolver, it remained in Fort Macleod in some form of lock up, perhaps as "evidence" for some indeterminate amount of time and, as government matters go, perhaps a long time. Because NWMP troops were already armed with double action revolvers, the Colt would have been considered obsolete and it is very doubtful that it was ever formally issued to anyone. It would be more likely that at some time after 1881, when most of the Sioux, including Buffalo Hump's group, returned to the States and the gun had no more relevance as evidence, it was declared surplus and some NWMP officer obtained it. I doubt that it ever strayed very far from Fort Macleod in the 40 years or so between its confiscation and W. N. Taylor winning it in a poker game. Any reader of this article who has information on records of the NWMP at Fort Macleod or the release of surplus arms would have my gratitude for a contact regarding such information. The search goes on for more information on this 40-year gap in the record on the gun.

At any rate, the gun stayed in the Taylor family from 1922 until 1990. It was held from 1990 until 2008 by the Canadian arms collector to whom it was sold and was then sold again in his estate sale by Bud Haynes Auction of Red Deer, AB. At that sale it was purchased by a collector from Red Lodge, MT, bringing it back to the area from which it was lost in battle. Red Lodge is only about 125 miles from the Little Bighorn battlefield. The Montana collector then sold it to a mutual acquaintance from whom I purchased it in 2014.

The very interesting Canadian history of this gun would have been completely unavailable to me without the tools of genealogical research and people such as Gloria Cathcart with the skills to use them well. For this I am grateful. I also owe a great deal to the help and cooperation I received from Karen



*Nicholas Black Elk;
courtesy of original
photographer and
Wendell Grangaard*

Taylor, a daughter of the RCMP officer who obtained the gun in the 1920s, as well as assistance from her sister, Sandra Taylor.

The fascinating tale of the acquisition and retention of this revolver by the W. N. Taylor family for nearly 70 years and the story of W. R. Taylor as told by Dr. Claude Lewis in *Treaty Trip* impelled me to further and deeper research into this family and their connections with western Canada.



*Drusilla (Child) Taylor
ca 1890; Source: Taylor
family collection,
courtesy Sandra Taylor*

I had already learned that W. N. Taylor, born in Saskatchewan in 1902, was the son of W. R. Taylor, who was born on 16 December 1871 in St. Andrews, MB. W. R. Taylor married Drusilla Child, who, according to her obituary upon her death in 1943, came to Canada in about 1888 as a governess with a Hudson's Bay Company family. She was born in Aldershot, England.

W. R. Taylor, in addition to his time as Indian Agent, also had travelled through the north as a prospector. He spent his later years as a teacher in Big Eddy, Manitoba, and was so beloved by his First Nations students that, according to his granddaughter, Karen Taylor, they made him an honorary chief.

According to records obtained from Library and Archives Canada, W. R. Taylor began his service as an Indian Agent in 1912 in the Province of Saskatchewan. I also obtained the WWI service record of W. R. Taylor from Library and Archives Canada and learned that W. R. Taylor, at the age of 46, when his youngest child, W. N. Taylor was 15 years old, enlisted in the Canadian Expeditionary Force and spent a short time in England in the Canadian Forestry Corps. He was discharged on 18 September 1919. He then apparently returned to his work as an Indian Agent as he was so employed in 1924 when the trip featured in *Treaty Trip* took place.

From the service record I also learned the names and place of residence of W. R. Taylor's parents at the time of his enlistment. They were identified as George Simpson Taylor and Adeline Taylor of Edgerton, AB. George S. Taylor appears, with Adeline Taylor as spouse, in the 1901, 1911 and 1916 Canada Census records. In the 1901 census he is listed as a trapper and as being of English and Cree ancestry. He is stated to have been born in MB. His great granddaughter Sandra confirmed that he was born in York Factory, Manitoba. In 1901 he was residing in Ochre River, MB; in 1911 in Strathcona, AB; and in 1916, in Battle River, AB.

The record on Karen and Sandra's 2nd great-grandfather is conflicting and uncertain. One version states that a George Taylor Sr. was a sloop master born in 1759 in England. He married a Cree native and their son George, 'half-breed', was born around 1800 at York Factory. There is other and conflicting information which I will not attempt to reconcile for this article. Suffice it to say that the Taylor family has had a long connection with western Canada and the attachment to the West remains in the living descendants.

I have been delighted to get to know something about this very interesting western Canadian family. Their history has become intertwined with the

story behind an important item in my collection and the process of digging this information out of the records available to a genealogical researcher has taught me a great deal about this very important area of historical research.

I appreciate the opportunity to share this story with the *RELATIVELY SPEAKING* readers. **RS**



Above: W. N. Taylor, ca 1924
Top right: W. N. Taylor in RCMP uniform,
ca 1920
Right: W. R. Taylor in Winnipeg, ca 1941
All photos from Taylor family collection,
courtesy of Karen Taylor



The AGS Alberta Homestead Index: Reformatted

by Lyn Meehan

Some of the most heavily used resources in genealogy are land records. Immigration agents between 1896 and 1905 led an ambitious marketing campaign by flooding Europe with advertisements such as: posters, notices and pamphlets promoting “free land” in Western Canada. It was a strong incentive for many of our ancestors to immigrate. Today, homestead records are a valuable resource in family research. These gems can hold clues to family members, neighbors and previous residences leading to citizenship, probate records, vital statistics and many more sources.

On the 10 November 2001, the Alberta Genealogical Society (AGS) endorsed a proposal to produce a comprehensive index to Alberta's homestead records with the cooperation of the Provincial Archives of Alberta (PAA). Through the dedication of Society members and friends, the first stage in developing this all-inclusive name index was achieved and presented as a birthday gift for Alberta's Centennial in 2005. In continuing efforts, the index has increased to include the *Applications for Alberta Land Patents, 1885-1897* and the ongoing project for the post-1930 homestead files.

What generated this labour of love was the cumbersome process in finding a homestead file in the microfilm collection at PAA. Staff at the archives spent considerable time guiding researchers through its multiple steps. Little-by-little industrious AGS Members added more entries to their online index for the world to access, in three different collections:

- ***Applications for Alberta Land Patents, 1885-1897***
- ***Alberta Homestead Records, 1870-1930***
- ***Alberta Homestead Records, post-1930***

By December 2015, all three indexes had been merged into a unified database consisting of over 520,000 entries. This newly-formatted, alphabetical list allows one-stop shopping for a homestead record by family researchers. Readers will notice the AGS webpage has been redesigned, yet all the former information is still there.

In the online article, *The Benefits of Using the AGS Alberta Homestead Index*, Norma Wolowyk, AGS Research Services Committee Chair, discusses the advantages in using the AGS homestead data over the databases at Library and Archives Canada, *Land Grants of Western Canada, 1870-1930*, or the recent addition to the Ancestry website, *Alberta, Canada, Homestead Records, 1870-1930*.

With the above information, AGS Communications would like to emphasize that the *AGS Alberta Homestead Index* is superior to other homestead indexes for Alberta on the Internet. We invite researchers to use the free *AGS Alberta Homestead Index* and test the quality of indexing themselves.

Important Websites:

AGS Alberta Homestead Index

<http://www.abgenealogy.ca/alberta-homestead-index>

The Benefits of Using the AGS Alberta Homestead Index

<http://www.abgenealogy.ca/benefits-of-using-the-ags-alberta-homestead-database?id=1155>

Ancestry

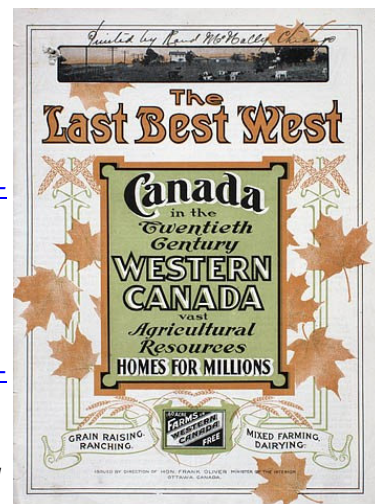
<http://www.ancestry.com>

LAC – Land Grants of Western Canada, 1870-1930

<http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/land/land-grants-western-canada-1870-1930/Pages/land-grants-western-canada.aspx>

Provincial Archives of Alberta

<http://provincialarchives.alberta.ca/>



RS

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Church, 5410-36 Avenue

