

History of Grande Prairie Detachment

by Cst. D.G. Harper

The presence of the Force in the Grande Prairie area in the latter part of the nineteenth century and during the first two decades of the twentieth century was intermittent, to say the least. In fact, Grande Prairie Detachment was opened and closed four times between 1910 and 1929. It reopened again in 1932, and has remained open ever since.

Force history is closely tied to that of the local area. As the population grew, so did the requirements for policing. An early patrol report by Staff Sergeant K.F. Anderson stated that in August, 1909,

"Everything looked very orderly and peaceful, but I should say that the police should be stationed there in the near future, as about 100 settlers have taken up land there. The population, roughly estimated, should be about 300 men, women and children, Indians and all."

Staffed by one corporal, Grande Prairie Detachment was opened the following year. S/Sgt. Anderson's patrol to Grande Prairie was not the first. The area had been patrolled by members from Peace River Crossing (now Peace River). As early as 1892-1893, the North-West



The second RNWMP barracks in Grande Prairie, second building from right with the hip roof, occupied as of November 17, 1913.