

Luxton, the Brewsters and Jim Simpson. One colourful character, in more ways than one, was James William Davie. Born in the deep south, big and powerful, Davie had drifted north and arrived in Banff on a freight train from Saskatchewan. He started working for the Brewsters, who paid him double wages, for he could load a truck with sand or gravel as fast as two men. The Brewsters had a contract with the CPR which included harvesting ice from the Bow River. Davie was the only one who could slide 800-lb. blocks of ice into the cars. With his reputation solidly established as a respectable member of the community, he branched out into business and ran a shoe-shine parlor beside Brewsters' Mount Royal Hotel. He was always ready to oblige thirsty customers with a discreet drink of liquor. His customers, reportedly from the cream of pioneer society, included the clergy and, it was rumored, off-duty policemen. One of his proposals did not sit well with Insp. Ryan, whom he stopped on Banff Avenue one day, suggesting that he be hired to patrol at night. His clincher was, "They wouldn't see me coming!"

In 1922, Holmes was transferred to Canmore, and served there with Corporal Knobby Clark. It was a lively community,

demanding strenuous police work rather than tourist duties. The coal mine deep under the mountain was busy supplying steam coal for the CPR. Its miners, an international mix from Europe included Welsh, Scandinavian, Finn, Belgian, Ukrainian, and French miners who worked on contract teams. The rivalry between them erupted when they came back to the surface on pay days. It was a great training ground for police work.

After five years of active service, Holmes purchased his discharge for \$50 and found a more peaceful career with the Park Warden's Service. From the sidelines, he watched the Force grow and gain national status in 1932.

Today, 87-year-old Bill lives on Vancouver Island with his fond memories of the friendships he developed in the services. He served as a sergeant in the RCAF during the Second World War and is presently a life member of the RCMP Veterans' Association, Vancouver Division. ■