



Front Street, Fort Macleod, 1878.

Tales about the Winder Ranch abound. Early in the '90's some Winder horses, pending sale to the police, were placed in a corral at Macleod. The corral was beside the livery stable and enclosed on all sides except the north where a cut bank on the Old Man river, between 30 and 40 feet high, seemed "barricade" enough. The officer commanding arrived to make selection of the most suitable horses for remounts, and all went well until Charles Sharples, the rider, mounted a horse which apparently didn't like the proceedings and started acting up. Near the cut bank he balked, and Sharples drove the spurs in up to the rowels. The animal exploded in a dynamic whirl, rushed at the cut bank and leaped straight out into space. On-lookers, who had come to witness the demonstration of bronco busting, raced to the river's edge; all were surprised and delighted to behold the rider still in the saddle and the horse swimming to the opposite shore, none the worse for his crazy leap. Winder horses were good horses.

During a general reshuffle of officers which took place in the N.W.M.P. in 1880, Supt. James Walker was transferred from Battleford to Fort Walsh where he arrived in September to take

command. He had completed six very strenuous years among the Crees and half-breeds in the Carlton and Fort Pitt district on the Saskatchewan.

Tall, erect, with square shoulders, searching eyes, a kindly smile and a firm hand clasp, he was a medallist of the second (1870) Fenian Raid. When "D", "E" and "F" Troops were being recruited in 1874, he was taking a gunnery course at the Royal Military College, Kingston, Ont., and there met Col. G. A. French first Commissioner of the Force.

Walker was appointed superintendent and sub-inspector on Mar. 30, 1874. On the march to the West that summer he was a member of "D" Troop and performed notable service by sketching the route taken. Commissioner French afterwards reported that "the greatest reliance may be placed in him".

A few days after Walker's arrival at Fort Walsh in 1880, Supt. E. Dalrymple Clark, adjutant and paymaster of the Force, died, and in mid-October Asst. Commr. A. G. Irvine instructed Walker to accompany Mrs. Clark, the widow, to Ottawa.

While in the capital city Walker was offered the position of local manager of a large cattle ranch which Senator M. H.