

its strength fell down well under 1,000, and was top-heavy with officers and NCOs. It was not the best time for recruits to join with expectations of a brilliant career.

Superintendent R.Y. Douglas was in charge of "M" Division when Holmes arrived at Fort Macleod in 1920. Douglas had served overseas in Siberia during the First World War, and had northern experience in the Yukon. His inspectors were Townsend, who had written the little red manual for constables, and Lindsay. Fort Macleod was a busy place with about 90 horses, including the teams. In two of the smaller houses lived the Indian scouts, Joe Stump and Mike Mountain Horse, who when they were not out on patrol, were fully employed around the stables. The division had some outstanding NCOs whom Bill remembers with affection and respect: Sergeant Major Bill Armour who had been shot twice in action, once by an Indian named Charcoal, who had murdered Sergeant Wilde, and once by a wild itinerant cowboy; Staff Sergeant Alexander, the farrier, who served for 44 years; Sergeant Shaver, the teamster, and Sergeant Dare, who instructed drill. The pay for constables was \$60 a month, but an extra 25 cents a day could be earned as "working pay for odds jobs such as painting or carpentry. Permission to marry was considered only after 10 years of exemplary service.

With police work curtailed, the horsemen at Fort Macleod had to be kept busy. In addition to patrolling the Piegan and Blood Reserves and outlying ranches, they were always kept on alert, ready to step in as a mobile unit, in case of trouble threatened by unrest among the coal miners in the Crow's Nest Pass. Free discharges were offered because there were still too many men on strength.

In the spring, 1920, "M" Division geared for action. The men packed two horse-drawn wagons with feed and supplies for the horses, and two old Reo trucks with rations, bell tents and bedrolls for the men. Two officers, 50 mounted men and two cooks, one of which was Chinese, took to the trails and headed for Banff in easy stages, camping at Claresholm, High River, Calgary, Cochrane and Morley. When they reached the mountains, they set camp on the site of today's Banff Springs Hotel golf course, where they remained all summer, taking lectures in law enforcement, veterinary care, first aid, and training in riding and emergency drill. In October, they packed their equipment and returned to Fort Macleod, taking a short-cut by fording the Bow River. Holmes was transferred to Lethbridge, where he continued riding, performing escorts and general police work.

In 1921, Sergeant Major Tom Nichols sent for him, said he was up for a transfer and offered him a posting to Calgary or Banff Sub-Division. He selected Banff, which was headed by Inspector Paddy Ryan. The detachment was run by Sergeant Casey Oliver and Corporal Ball. Seven men and horses were kept busy during the summer. Two men were stationed at the busy mining town of Canmore, and single men were posted at Field, Bankhead, Exshaw, Firlands, and Radium Hot Springs.

All patrols were made on horseback through the beautiful Banff scenery, and Insp. Ryan rode "Pete", the same mount he had as a sergeant in 1911, during Guard of Honour duties for the coronation of King George V. If the Force was going through the doldrums as a symbol of Canada's identity, its reputation was maintained and traditions strengthened by, of all places, Hollywood, with the