

EDITORIAL . . .

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However, to quote from our esteemed contemporary *The Police Journal* published in London, England, few of its members got by "without personal loss, suffering or inner conflict", and "many a man has as his epitaph, 'Killed in the gallant execution of his duty'". The tragedy of their work was that there was some right on both sides of practically every situation they had to deal with. These rights were as irreconcilable as the wrongs were, and attempts to bring the opposing factions together, no matter how altruistic, almost invariably drew enmity from both sides.

The Palestine Police could have no better farewell than the following words addressed to 300 members of its British Section by His Majesty during an inspection at Buckingham Palace on July 20:

"The conflict between Arab and Jew made it necessary that there should be an impartial force to maintain law and order in Palestine and to assist in carrying out the heavy task laid upon us by the mandate. This has meant that the British police have had to face calumny and provocation as well as murderous attack. I have admired the forbearance and courage with which you have met difficulty and danger. Many of your comrades have given their lives and many others have been injured in that service; their sacrifice will not be forgotten. You can look back on a job well done".

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The late Gen. John J. Pershing once cooperated with the Mounted Police in a matter that subsequently grew into one of those fabulous tales about the Force. While stationed on the frontier at Fort Assiniboine, Mont., he escorted some Cree Indians to the border and turned them over to the Canadian authorities. The legend emanating from this transaction has several versions, but in all of them a solitary N.W.M.P. constable receives a mob of hostile Indians nonchalantly. "I've come for the Indians", he announces. Asked where his regiment is, he says "Beyond that hill washin' the fry pan" or merely "I'm the regiment"—with appropriate comment from the incredulous American.

This bit of folklore is based on a yoking together of two different sets of facts. In 1896 "Blackjack" Pershing, then a lieutenant in command of D Troop of the 10th United States Cavalry, did escort a band of Crees to the Canadian border. He was met at Courtts, in what is now Southern Alberta, by an officer of the Force with a small escort. There the matter ended, and happily.

Fourteen years before, however, Reg. No. 581 Cst. Daniel "Peaches" Davis escorted several hundred Assiniboines from N.W.M.P. Headquarters at Fort Walsh, which was some 70 miles from the boundary, to reservations allotted them further north. The United States military did not enter the picture. Constable Davis, unaided, left with his charges on May 23, 1882, and arrived at his destination near Battleford 25 days later. Similar responsibilities were discharged by members of the Force in their stride and were not considered unique. In this case Peaches was available, knew the country, and could drive a four-horse team. The way his comrades looked at it, so long as the tobacco and rations lasted Davis' Indians would string along with the grub wagons.

Time has merged the separate incidents into one, and popular fancy, abetted by a ready journalism, has inflated that one until Davis' tour of duty has lately been likened to Gideon's defeat of the Midianites. The tall-tale teller likes to picture a thousand renegade Indians being handed over by its powerful American escort to a lone laconic constable, whose wits and dare-devil courage carry him through a perilous trek that all but changed the nation's destiny.

The Quarterly would deprecate these exaggerations if it thought the public drew any inferences from them. But since the former Chief of Staff treated these childish fantasies with adult forbearance, we content ourselves with pointing out the facts of the matter.