

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor:

Your imprudence in publishing Cpl. G. D. Niggins' submission (page 62, of volume 43, No. 2, the Spring 1978 issue of the *Quarterly*), was consistent with your notice that, "The opinions expressed in this magazine are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police." (The Commissioner's Standing Order interdict the profanation of God's name.)

I found it lamentable that the individual who had enough knowledge of the Bible to quote Hebrews 13:8 for this purpose, had not considered Galatians 6:6, 7: "Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things. Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

ex-Cst. L. D. Moore

Dear Mr. Moore:

I am sure it was not the intent of the telex originator, nor was it our intent, to offend anyone. Furthermore, that particular blurb was submitted by Cpl. Wiggins, not Niggins — a typo we missed in proofreading. Nevertheless, we continue to struggle along, ever guided and comforted by the words of that immortal phrase, "To err is human, to forgive — Divine." Ed.

Dear Editor:

Sir, would you be kind enough to answer a question or two in your "Letters to the Editor" column in one of your ensuing issues of the *Quarterly* to settle a controversy. Is there, or has there ever been in the RCMP:

- a) a Coy. Sgt. Major (WO-2)
- b) Corps Sgt. Major (WO-2)

c) Is the present Sgt. Major merely an S/M?

D. G. Scully, Kamloops, B.C.

Dear Mr. Scully:

I consulted our historian, Mr. Stan Horrall, and Commr. L. H. Nicholson (Rtd.), who is also up on these things as well. Here is what they say.

In 1874 during the March West, each troop had a Head Constable (troop Sergeant Major), while one of them, A. H. Griesbach, was a Regimental Chief Constable (Sergeant Major). Apparently there was no S.M. rank established, or any other NCO rank for that matter, but rather Head Constables who acted in that capacity for discipline and other duties, with the Regimental Chief Constable, the highest for rank ordering purposes.

In 1885, Robert Belcher was promoted to Regimental Sergeant Major, but he wore no insignia to indicate his rank. Then in 1904, Frank Church was promoted to R.S.M. and wore a crown on his sleeve to indicate his rank. He was commissioned a few months later and the rank remained vacant until the 1920's. By then it was decided the Force was not a regiment, and that the rank of Corps Sergeant Major would perhaps be more realistic. The person holding this rank was usually stationed at a training division and was either a riding master or the senior drill instructor. Tim Griffin was promoted C.S.M. in 1938, he retired in 1942, and the rank remained unfilled until the early 1950's with "Robby" Robertson's appointment. The rank was occupied by various individuals until May 25, 1975, when C.S.M. Mel Gilbey retired and the rank was declared redundant. Somebody had a change of heart, for on February 16, 1977, Bill Pomfret of Depot Division was promoted C.S.M.