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FRASER HOTELS, LTD.
Carleton Hotel, Halifax, N.S.

Our work was to police the country from the boundary line to the Porcupine Hills and west to the Rockies, to raise horses for the Force, start a farm—and keep our buttons shined.

The early days in Pincher Creek were nothing, if not varied. We had no doctor, the nearest being Doc Kennedy in Macleod; people thought twice before they decided to be sick. All our supplies came by bull team from Fort Benton via Macleod. There was a haphazard mail service up the Missouri by boat from Bismark to Benton, and then on to Macleod. There it stayed until chance sent it to us.

Our food consisted of sowbelly and dried apples—the sowbelly was regular and dried apples a luxury. Whiskey was bootleg, and the people of the north-west were very adept at making it. There were no roads, no schools, hence no taxes.

The horse herd grew at an amazing rate and would have gotten too numerous if the Indians and some of their white brethren, who should have known better, had not formed the habit of stealing from it at times.

The founders of the barracks and farm were Major Shurtliff, Sergeant Parker, Dave Grier, Charlie Kettles, Jack Johnson, J. Bruneau, Peter McEwen, Bill Reid and myself.¹ Long before we came, Father Lacombe was known all over these parts. It was some years before the place was anything but a police post but gradually white men began to drift in.

The first ranch in the district was started by Bruneau, May² and myself, just below the present town. We bought 20 wild cows from Shurtliff and Winder and broke them to milk. Our produce had to be hauled to Macleod. Shurtliff and Winder³ brought the first herd of cattle across the mountains.

Later, the wheat threshing was performed by means of 30 or 40 horses tramping the grain in a hard-bottomed corral. The west wind was then used as a fanning mill.

When his first term of service expired on June 5, 1880 Constable Lynch-Staunton took his discharge and settled down to the life of a rancher. He homesteaded on Pincher Creek, west of the town of that name, and remained there until his death 52 years later.

Originally ex-Constable Lynch-Staunton came from Ontario, and was born in Hamilton. Although official files at RCMP Headquarters show his age to have been 19 when he engaged in the Force, family records indicate that he was two years younger. His family is still a well-known one in Eastern Canada—a brother was Senator George Lynch-Staunton, of Hamilton, who died in 1942.

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¹Personnel who organized the police horse farm at Pincher Creek were probably the following, with their periods of service shown: Insp. Albert Shurtliff (Nov. 4, 1873 to Dec. 31, 1884); Reg. No. 20 Sgt. William F. Parker (Nov. 3, 1873 to Nov. 3, 1879); Reg. No. 102 Cst. William Reid (May 29, 1875 to May 22, 1884); Reg. No. 184 Sub-Cst. Charles Kettles (June 7, 1876 to June 14, 1879); Reg. No. 216 Cst. James Bruneau (June 5, 1877 to June 5, 1880); Reg. No. 226 Cst. David Grier (June 5, 1877 to June 5, 1880); Reg. No. 230 Cst. John Johnson (Mar. 28, 1874 to Oct. 26, 1880); Reg. No. 233 Cst. Peter McEwen (June 5, 1877 to June 5, 1880); Reg. No. 241 Cst. A. H. Lynch-Staunton (June 5, 1877 to June 5, 1880).

²Reg. No. 234 Cst. Isaac May (June 5, 1877 to June 5, 1880).

³Supt. William Winder (Sept. 25, 1873 to Apr. 1, 1880). After retiring from the Force he formed the Winder Ranch Company, and commenced operations on a progressive and ambitious scale. Unfortunately his untimely death in 1885 brought to a close a career that had already earned him an enviable reputation, and promised future success.