

as a musician in the Police Band. He also cherished fond memories of the Sergeant Major in those days, Robert Belcher, one of the "originals", who retired some years later as an Inspector, with whom he enjoyed the best of relations. According to Mr. Nichols not all personnel were so fortunate, for Sergeant Major Belcher was so "tough" that experienced NCOs and recruits alike were known to quail at his very approach.

Once referred to as "the city's (Minneapolis) most entertaining conversationalist" Mr. Nichols' loyalty to the Force was typical of so many of the old-timers and in one of his last letters to *The Quarterly* he said: "Always count on me as a friend of the old outfit which is second to none." (For other items about the late ex-Staff Sergeant Nichols, please refer to *The Quarterly*, October 1940, October 1942, January 1948 and October 1949). ●●

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A Bouquet from a Reader

A letter from an old-time resident of Saskatchewan, W. Robinson, Sr., of Ituna, contains some interesting, and flattering, comments worth passing on. Part of the letter reads as follows:

"It is often said old men forget. I suppose I belong in that category as I am 80, but there are so many things I do not forget about the RCMP. I have a vivid recollection of meeting my first 'Mountie' patrol riding up to our log shack with its sod roof, in the Beaver Hills, north of Ituna. He was a smart-looking young man, riding a splendid horse, not looking for criminals, but just on patrol giving encouragement and advice, especially with respect to prairie fires which were prevalent at that time. That night sitting around the stove, discussing the visit of the patrol, my wife, who was born in Kent, the Garden of England, said to me: 'Well, Will, I feel more content after meeting this "Mountie", his visit seems to have forged a link between our homestead and the law, order and stability of home in Kent.' Then I remember the 'dirty '30s' in Saskatchewan—that dreary period of discouragement, when everybody was hard up and quite an outbreak of petty thievery went through this dis-

trict. Belts were stolen from threshing machines, even magnetos taken from tractors in the field. It got so bad that belts had to be taken from the separators either to the farm home or locked in a granary in the yard each night. In our troubles a very alert member of the RCMP was stationed at Ituna, Cpl. Jack Haddon. In a short time, without fuss or fanfare he cleaned up the situation.

"Then in 1938 I remember a former Reeve, a big bully—who was largely responsible for a lot of the unrest in the district . . . came to a council meeting when I was Reeve. He was well primed with 'Dutch' courage imbibed from a bottle and started to shout and use obscene language. I told him as a ratepayer he was entitled to attend the council meeting, but only if he behaved himself in a proper manner, and if he did not he would have to go out. He replied no SOB on the council could put him out. So after warning him again I picked up the telephone and called Corporal Haddon at the Police barracks. As soon as 'Mr. Big' heard me call Haddon he bolted out of the door like a greased monkey and we had no more bother.

"My most vivid memory of the RCMP was, I think, in 1950, when the new Post Office and Police barracks in Ituna was officially opened by the Rt. Hon. J. G. Gardiner . . . we were able to get the RCMP band from Regina, together with a detachment from Yorkton. We had a very colorful ceremony including a long parade of school children and district residents headed by the RCMP band. During the evening, at a banquet held in the skating rink, the band provided us with a wonderful musical treat, such as is seldom heard in a prairie village. I know those who were fortunate enough to be present will never forget it. I can still see the wide eyes of the children as the band and the Yorkton detachment marched down Main Street.

"So after 52 years of seeing some of the work of the RCMP, my admiration of this wonderful body is boundless. To me they are much more than a police force; to me they are an integral part of the warp and woof of the fabric that has made Canada a nation." ●●