

## FACTS ABOUT THE EARLY COMING OF THE R.N.W.M. POLICE

Previous to the late autumn of 1874, the Great Middle West of Canada was without law or general government of any kind. Murders and massacres and tribal wars were continuous. Then to intensify these conditions, there would come in from Montana and South of the line, a most nefarious trade in alcohol and "40 rod" whiskey, over which there was no control in its effect upon both the whites and natives who roamed this country at that time.

In the North things were somewhat better. There the mere sentiment of the people, influenced by Christian missionaries, had secured a proclamation from the Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba and the Northwest Territories forbidding the importation or sale of intoxicants in these Territories, and, as the people in the North were behind this, the proclamation was generally obeyed, but as there were no settlements or missionaries or Hudson's Bay posts south of the North Saskatchewan, the whole country south of the 49th parallel was under the curse of a wild traffic in the vilest kinds of alcoholic compounds.

The state of things was at its worst during the later sixties and early seventies. During these years strong representations were being made to the Ottawa government, urging that steps be taken to establish law and order in the wild west. Notably at this time the Rev. John McDougall, then stationed at Victoria, and again at Edmonton, was most persistent in reporting conditions, and in requesting the intervention of the proper authority, and in 1873, himself and son John, made a special tour through what is now Southern Alberta and Northern Montana, and saw for themselves the true state of shameless villany which, in full unbridled force held sway in all this southern country.

In the meanwhile the government began to bestir itself, and during the summer of 1873 a police force was organized and sent west, reaching that fall the banks of the Red River in Manitoba, and completing organization, started across the plains during the summer of 1874.

This force was sent in three directions. One body to Fort Pelly, in what is now the southeast part of Saskatchewan. Another to Fort Edmonton on the North Saskatchewan River, in what is now Central Alberta, and a third into the southern somewhere, and this last portion ultimately came to the Old Man's River, at the mouth of Willow Creek, and this, in the last month of 1874, Fort McLeod was built and occupied. In the meanwhile and during the long march to these several points under rude conditions, and which occupied weeks and months in accomplishing, couriers, with hurry instructions and commissions, were being sent via Forts Carlton and Pitt and Edmonton to Fort McDougall at the base of the mountains in the Bow River country, and as these instructions and commissions were being sent to the Rev. John McDougall, who at this time was out on the plains with a good sized company of Mountain and Wood Stoney Indians for the purpose of provision, making out of the meat of the Buffaloes. His wife immediately sent a relief courier out to hunt him. This courier came up to the Rev. John at a point some fifty miles north-east of the present city of Calgary, and found him having a strenuous