

FOREWORD



I first met Don at a Koffee Klatch in West Vancouver in the summer of 2009. These informal social gatherings of Royal Canadian Mounted Police retirees took place once a month so we could shoot the breeze about the highlights of our sometimes illustrious 40 year careers as policemen.

On his first visit, Don explained he was working on the writing of two books - 'Vancouver Exposed A History in Photographs' and 'Camp X and the Cold War A History in Photographs'. Luckily for him, a few members had been involved in cloak and dagger exploits between Canadian and Russian spies during and after the famous Russian spy Igor Gouzenko case. The Soviet cypher clerk worked out of the Russian Embassy in Ottawa before defecting to Security and Intelligence members of the force in 1945. It was the very start of espionage in Canada. A former dogged cop, Don seemed to relish chasing down leads for his books.

An ex-member, he fit right in with the group and was happy to share 'war stories' with the gang. On his second or third visit, I invited him back to my place for a chin wag. Right away, he commented on one of the many violins I'd made over the years from planks salvaged from 'The St. Roch', the forces 'Workhorse of the North' made famous for being the first vessel to successfully navigate the Northwest Passage from west to east to lay claim to Canada's north. During one visit, he interviewed a retired Assistant Commissioner who as a rookie babysat Gouzenko. Don used two cigarette-sized digital tape recorders. I know because he used the same recorders to interview me. The force's security members whisked the defector Gouzenko away to Canada's Camp X, a famous spy facility located on the shores of Lake Ontario at Whitby, a town a few miles northeast of Toronto. It was run by William S. Stephenson, the real James Bond.

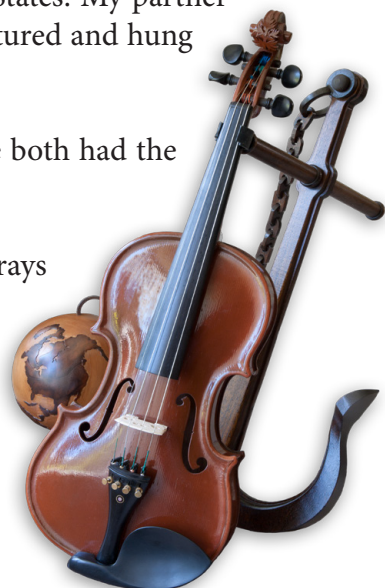
More recently, he interviewed me and made a video about 'Canada's Bonnie and Clyde' and their crime spree across all of North America from Alaska to the southern United States. My partner and I finally interviewed 'Bonnie' and she turned on 'Clyde'. He was captured and hung for murder.

Over several visits, I realized we had something in common. We both had the ability to connect dots and catch crooks.

I found Don a passionate and detailed writer who effectively portrays historic events about a national police force that has faithfully served law and order for Canada since the year 1873.

Don photographed my personal violin for his Vancouver title.

Former RCMP Staff Sergeant Fred Bodnaruk (Retired)
Founder of the Integrated Homicide Investment Team (IHIT)



SEVEN YEARS A HORSEMAN

The Altruistic Life of a Royal Canadian Mounted Policeman



FOREWORD

FRED BODNARUK

RCMP Staff Sergeant (Retired)
Founder of Integrated Homicide Investigative Team (IHIT)

SIR JAMES BOND II: CRAZY GENIUS

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE FORCE

The Dominion of Canada was founded by the British in 1864 inspired by Palm 72 in the Bible which referred to “the dominion from sea to sea to the ends of the earth”. The North-West Mounted Police were the forerunners of Canada’s iconic Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Sir John A. MacDonald, Canada’s first Prime Minister, wanted to end the American whiskey trade with the First Nations communities on the southern prairies. MacDonald with a stroke of a pen changed their name from a military to a police force. With their Stetson hats, high boots, and the dark blue trousers with the yellow stripe down the sides along the signature bright scarlet jackets, he did not want the Canadian police force to resemble the military uniforms of the soldiers south of the Canadian/United States border. The “Mounties” derived their name from their horseback riding. Their main purpose was to maintain law and order in an untamed and lawless vast territory. There was also the issue of settling the West to extend Canadian sovereignty from coast to coast.

The original North-West Mounted Police (NWMP), the precursor to the RCMP, travelled from Lake Superior to Winnipeg by a combination of land and water routes, primarily using the Dawson Trail and the waterways of the Lake of the Woods and Winnipeg River systems. This journey, undertaken in the summer of 1870, was part of the larger effort to establish Canadian sovereignty in the West and was considered a particularly arduous feat.

Passing through Manitoba, the half-French half-First Nations Métis, under the leadership of Louis Riel, didn’t want to be a part of the Dominion of Canada but instead wished to create their own ‘County of Manitoba’. It resulted in two insurrections to separate from the rest of Canada.

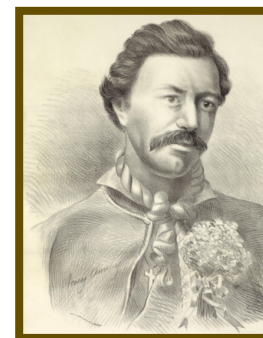
On 8 July 1873, members of the NWMP left Fort Dufferin, Manitoba, to begin their famous “March West”. Fort Dufferin was named for Lord Dufferin, Queen Victoria’s representative for British Royalty in Canada. It was a grand spectacle as a procession of over 200 men with oxen, weaponry, 310 horses, and a three month supply of provisions advanced west with the intent of reaching southern Alberta determined to stop the American whiskey trade infiltrating from south of the Canadian/United States border. Their destination was Fort Whoop-Up (now Lethbridge), one of the earliest, largest, and best known American whiskey trading posts in southern Alberta. Many Americans evaded their country’s ban on illicit liquor sales by relocating across the border to Canada, a country which did not yet have the effective capacity to restrict the trade. At Fort Whoop-Up the illegal whiskey trade jeopardized the Canadian government’s authority over its territories and the NWMP was the solution to the problem.

At La Roche Percée, Saskatchewan, the force split in half, with some diverting north to settle at Batosch. The rest continued on to Fort Whoop-Up, which they reached in October, establishing their presence there. With their westward advance, the NWMP left a lasting impact of law and order to assure their place in the annals of Canadian history.

To appreciate the fascinating history of the NWMP is to understand the origins of the force. Fort Livingstone, Saskatchewan, was constructed in 1873-74 as the original headquarters and one of the first posts to be built for the newly formed police force. The fort housed 185 men until the headquarters were moved to Fort Macleod, Alberta. Named after James A. MacLeod, the Assistant-Commissioner of the NWM, it was at this post the preliminary negotiations with First Nations communities took place, namely with the Blackfoot Confederacy. It also served as the first capital of the North-West Territories. Macleod, by upholding the First Nations way of life, contributed to the peaceful settlement of the Canadian West. In December, 1874, Macleod introduced Lord Dufferin, Queen Victoria’s representative, to meet with Crowfoot, the Chief of the Blackfoot Federation. Members of the NWMP were in attendance during negotiations between representatives of the Government of Canada and Chiefs of First Nations to negotiate terms to relinquish away their ancestral lands in much of the Western half of Canada. It was achieved with a few X’s by signing Treaty 7. In short, the First Nations were snookered into giving away much of southern Alberta.

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SIR JAMES BOND II: CRAZY GENIUS



Louis Riel (1844-1885)

regal name of Regina in recognition of Queen Victoria, and very quickly, the Canadian government endorsed the extermination of the buffalo. The bison were shot, skinned, their meat left to rot, and their bones shipped east to be used as fertilizer. With the huge herds of buffalo gone, the Canadian government transitioned the First Nations into an agricultural way of life turning the ‘Indians’ into farmers.

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Louis Riel’s 10 year attempt to separate Manitoba from the rest of Canada was not in the grand scheme of plans from the Dominion’s capital in Ottawa. As a consequence, Canadian politicians with their top lawyers charged Riel, the founder of the Country of Manitoba, with treason. The trial took place in Regina. The proceedings at Riel’s trial were swift and final. They took the religious martyr to the gallows and hung him.

Crowfoot Addressing the Marquis of Lorne: Pow-wow at Blackfoot Crossing, on September 10, 1881

Chief Crowfoot, of the Siksika First Nations, addresses the Marquis of Lorne, Queen Victoria’s representative, along with Royal-Northwest Mounted Police Assistant Commissioner James McLeod and other members of the force, at a Pow-wow. By this time the Canadian Government had snookered First Nations Indians of the prairies, through Treaty 7, into relinquishing most of Alberta and Saskatchewan.

Amon Carter Museum, Fort Worth, Texas, USA



SEVEN YEARS A HORSEMAN



Charles M. Russell's "When Law Dulls the Edge of Chance." 28.78

In September, 1919, Russell attended the Calgary Stampede and met His Royal Highness, Prince Edward, the Duke of Sussex, (later King Edward VIII) of Great Britain. Edward and his brother George (later King George VI) both spent time on their Alberta ranch near High River. Edward's neighbours purchased Russell's painting and gift-ed it to the future king. Some of the happiest and most relaxing times for the two brothers were digging fence posts, riding horses and dating cowgirls. In September, 2019, 100 years later to the month, Tina and I took a holiday to Yellowstone National Park and visited Great Rapids in Montana, to visit the Charles M. Russell Museum.



Sir William S. Stephenson
The Real James Bond, Intrepid,
the Boy from Winnipeg



Igor Gouzenko (Right)
The Russian Spy who defected to the
RCMP, 1945.

The Cold War came into existence immediately after the Second World War due to mistrust between Russia and the United States. The Soviet Union participated in the war as a friend of Britain, the United States and Canada in the fight against Nazi Germany but immediately afterwards both sides became suspicious of each other and became enemies.

In Canada, espionage began when Igor Gouzenko, a Soviet intelligence officer, defected to the RCMP in 1945. When Gouzenko switched sides, super spy Bill Stephenson intercepted him and whisked him away to Camp X, a 160-acre training facility for spies located on Lake Ontario at Whitby, to conduct an interrogation. Stephenson, The Real James Bond, was placed in charge of the camp during the war to train Canadian, American and British the art of self-defence - AND how to spy. Sir Bill was the only person alive with 24/7 access to King George VI, Queen Elizabeth II's father, Prime Minister Sir Winston Churchill and American President Franklin S. Roosevelt.

The force's Sergeant George B. McLellan was Sir Bill's assistant assistant. Cliff Harrison was George's boss. Cliff was commissioner from 1960-1963. George from 1963-1964. Bill Higgins from 1969-1973, and Bob Simmons from 1977-1987. They were all in security and intelligence. George was Canada's top cop during my time in training. Bill was Canada's top cop during my time in forensics in Ottawa in 1970. Bob sat as judge and jury at my court marshal in Burnaby. During Bob's time in office, the McDonald Commission recommended a security intelligence be established. It's rather ironic Bob's wife entered into my life as an author. After my retirement in 2004, I took a contract to write the Hope family history from the City of Langley. My sponsor was married to Bob's ex-wife. She told me, "Bob wasn't married to me; he was married to the force."

The Russian rat gave up 22 of his comrades.

RECRUIT TRAINING



Third Class Constable Waite, D.E. - Regimental Number 23661

That I chose to join the police force when it was my turn to pick a career was probably due to the fact the husbands of two of my aunts were policemen. My uncle Tom Wark, married to Dad's sister Verlie, was the Chief of Police for Renfrew, and Uncle Tom Menzies, married to Dad's sister Vivian, was a sergeant with the Peterborough City Police. Both men used to fascinate me with their yarns about policing, especially Uncle Tom, who was a gifted speaker. He was always the master of ceremonies at family functions and was a real Ottawa River Valley storyteller—there was none like him. Police work would be a good career move due to my insatiable curiosity.

My being accepted into the Royal Canadian Mounted Police proved to be more challenging than I had anticipated. On August 10, 1963, I drove up to Pembroke Detachment to pick up an application form to be completed and mailed back the following day accompanied by two letters of recommendation to the force's headquarters in Ottawa. My sponsors

were my high school Principal Clair Seeley and Adam Laird, for whom I had worked the previous summer. In less than a week a registered letter arrived back stating I was to make my way to the Pembroke Detachment on August 17 to write exams and be measure to ensure I met both the chest and height requirements.

On the appointed day, dressed in my only suit, I drove to Pembroke where I met Al Nicholson, another applicant at the front door leading into the detachment office. Because I was 1/16" short of 5' 8", the minimum height required for admission, I had glued cardboard to the bottoms of both feet. This made me extremely nervous when the constable began taking my height measurements. Luckily, although he made me remove my shoes, he did not ask me to remove my socks. Just as we began writing the examination, a call came in over the intercom a boat had capsized in the Ottawa River and help was needed at the scene. The constables rushed out leaving the two of us to write the exam without any supervision. After writing the test, I placed everything in an envelope and left it in the mail basket for incoming correspondence. On the side of the basket were the words, "What I do here and what I say here stays here when I leave here."

Word came back from the force stating I had passed everything except English and would have to re-write that portion of the exam. On the second attempt, I managed to obtain a good mark in English. The letter also stated an officer from RCMP Headquarters from Ottawa would give me an oral examination. Although he asked me about family members suffering with mental illness; there was no mention of emotional, physical, verbal, or sexual abuse.

On July 3, 1964, Mom and Dad drove me to a courthouse in downtown Ottawa where I and three other young men swore the oath of allegiance to Queen and Country. I've often wondered if any of us gave so much as a second's thought as to the ramifications of having taken such oaths. Shortly afterwards, we were sworn in as members of Canada's Dominion Police Force. Most recruits arrived at "N" Division, the training depot, by bus and upon arrival were marched over to the dormitory and told we were members of Troop 3 of 1964 and 32 men would be occupying two 20 by 80 foot rooms on the third floor. Members were numbered off in alphabetical order, making me number 31. Consequently, I was assigned a bed in the second dormitory

OATH OF ALLEGIANCE

I, Donald Ender Waite, do swear that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Second, Her heirs and successors according to Law. So help me God.

OATH OF OFFICE

I, Donald Ender Waite, do solemnly swear that I will faithfully, diligently and impartially execute and perform the duties required of me, as a member of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, and will well and truly obey and perform all lawful orders and instructions which I shall receive as such, without fear, favour or affection of or toward any person. So help me God.

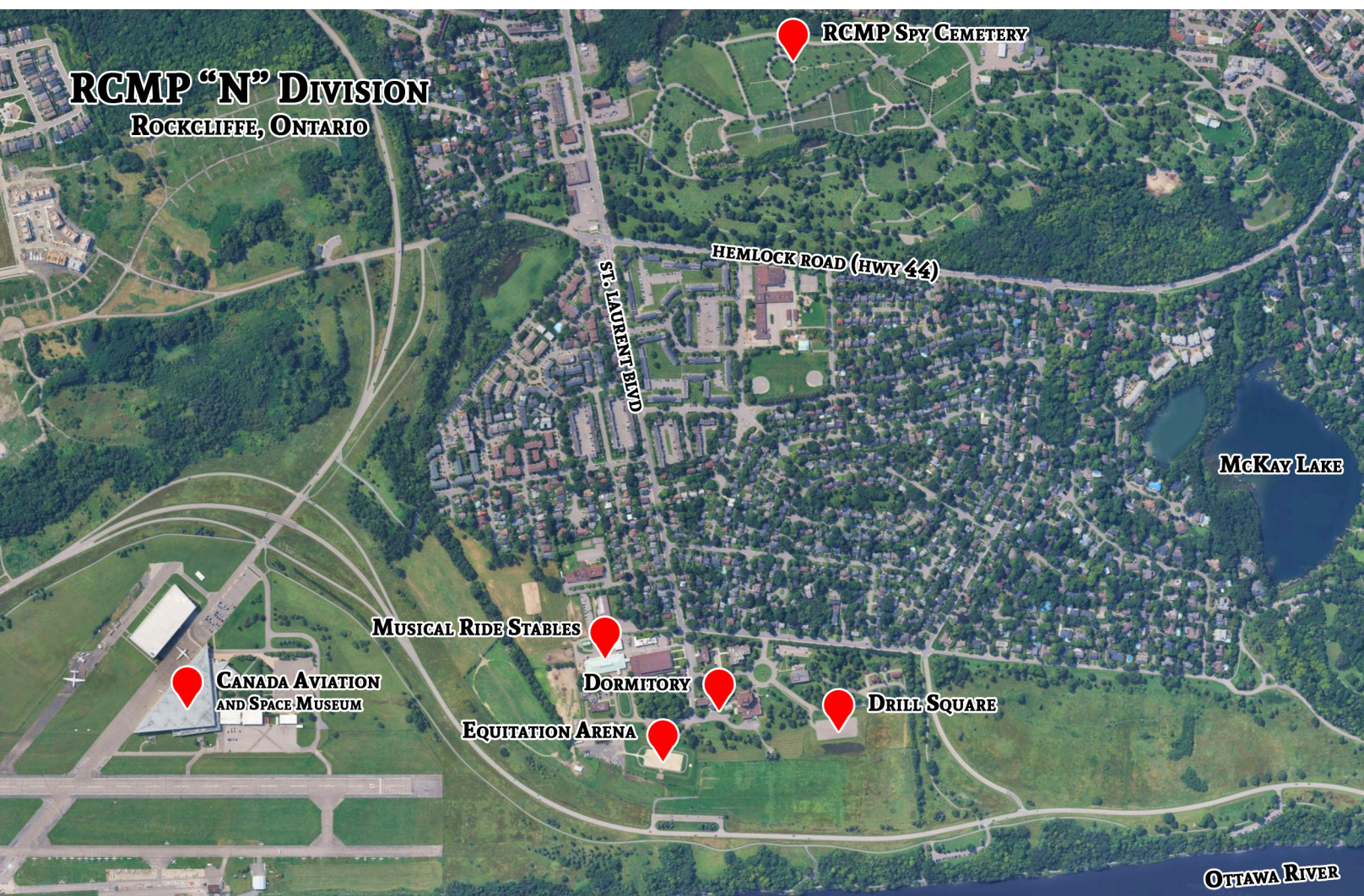
with two neat rows of eight beds each. We were escorted downstairs to the recreation room where a barber did 32 haircuts at 25 cents per head in less than an hour. By the time I took my turn in the seat the clipped hair at the base of the chair was easily a foot deep. We were now referred to as "skinheads." I was 19 years old and my salary was \$3,760 per annum.

The troop's second night in barracks was a never to be forgotten experience. Dead tired, I must have been asleep in 10 minutes. A short time later a senior troop raided our dorms and upended our beds, with us in them, against the walls. It was a rude awakening to be sandwiched upside down between bed springs and a wall. The initiation hazing was kept up most of the night with members of the raiding party frequently warning us to be on the lookout for the Constable Major. The next morning at six a.m. this person suddenly appeared and informed us training was not scheduled to begin until July 13th. This member, with a three-foot-long riding crop tucked under his left armpit, barked out insults left, right, and centre and went to considerable trouble to impress upon the rabble troop he wielded a great deal of power in and around the barracks. Everyone was totally intimidated. He inspected both dorms, and any members with unmade beds were required to drop to the floor and do several push-ups. Several recruits were given mops with instructions to wash down all the toilet stalls in a nearby washroom. After about 15 minutes of inspection the Constable Major instructed us to follow him to the kit room to pick up our brown fatigue or stable uniforms. It was a few days before we realized this member was a regular constable and his surname was Major. We learned he had been pulling the same prank on new recruits for years. We thought Constable Major was a high-ranking member. The raid resulted in a member breaking an arm. The entire troop was interrogated the following day but no one knew anything.

Together with several other troopmates, I spent most of the first two weeks at "N" Division dressed in brown fatigue attire swinging an eight pound sledgehammer to smash up an old sidewalk. The remaining recruits placed these pieces of heavy concrete into wheelbarrows and hauled them away for use as fill at another project on the division's grounds.

During the very first week, members of Troop 3 learned senior troops sometimes took the law into their own hands rather than involve the non-commissioned officers. Senior members had disciplined a troopmate for stealing two dollars in loose change left on top of a member's desk. He had grabbed the change to use in the communal pay phone to carry on a conversation with a pregnant girlfriend. Rather than report the incident, the troop decided to have the offender run the gauntlet. The enforcers formed two parallel lines in a dormitory and forced the thief to sprint between the lines while they beat him with belts. This humiliation coupled with his girlfriend's pregnancy put the member over the edge, and a day or two later after our arrival at the division, he put his service revolver to his head and took his own life behind the horse barns.

A day began at six a.m. when the entire barracks awoke to the sound of reveille and ended with lights out at 11 p.m. In the first 30 minutes after awakening recruits had to make beds, shave, and dress and by 6:30 a.m. to stand in line for the first inspection of the day. Sergeant Major Gilbey quickly arranged the 32 men into four rows of eight rookies each before addressing the rabble, the dregs of society and the rotten apples in the barrel. Cleaning the horse stables was the least desirable of the three chores. Several members would grab pitchforks and throw horse manure into the main walkway. Other members would grab a wooden scraper to



Home of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police training academy "N" Division at Rockcliffe, located on the Ottawa River a mile northeast of the Dominion's capital of Ottawa.

haul away wet bedding and manure. These contraptions were made from two-inch planks eight feet wide and two feet high. On both sides were ropes that would be pulled by three or four members each. Using two hand-holds in the top plank, about 30 inches apart, the team leader would place the scraper at a pile of horse manure so six or eight members could pull on the two ropes simultaneously and haul the waste from the building. Other members would load the manure into a wagon in summer or a sleigh in winter for transportation out to a manure pile not far from the Ottawa River. Members swept the cement walkways clear of any fresh straw bedding while others fed and watered the horses. A few members were assigned to sweeping the walkways or polishing the brass doorknobs on the buildings and RCMP soon came to mean Rag-Clean-Mop-Polish. Newcomers who did the mile long run usually got back a few minutes early. It was always a race to change out of fatigue attire, shower, dress in blues, and eat breakfast before the 8:00 a.m. morning parade. There was never any time to sit back and relax.

Our academic courses included memory and observation, traffic control, typing, care and handling of prisoners, report writing, fraudulent cheques, explosives, photography, scenes of crime and the history of the force. Typing was a major obstacle for many members as the keys were blacked out and assignments included handing in a page or two of typing every day without absolutely no errors. Some recruits stayed up half the night before they managed to get a page typed without any mistakes. One member made a small fortune on the side typing up mistake free pages for a buck a page.

Recruits had extra duties one or two nights a week and new enlistees had to fall in for parade at 7 p.m.

and march over to the stables to do a final muck-out and feeding of the horses. Anyone who misbehaved was given a week's parade of stable duties. These members were perpetually in trouble, for once a member got behind it was almost impossible to catch up. Some of the luckier guys managed to get through the entire nine months of training without ever being paraded. Unfortunately for me, I was not one of them. Not only did I manage to get paraded, I was the only member to be Court Marshaled.

Corporal Jack Roy was our physical training and first aid instructor. I excelled in PT and for the first two months led the troop in exercises. We did a lot of running on the spot. One exercise required three men of similar build. One member got on his hands and knees, the second sat sideways on the middle of his back, while the third man held onto the sitter's feet. Roy would give the command, "Down" and then "up", and the sitter would begin doing sit ups. This exercise was hard on the man in the hands and knees position as the rocking motion of the sitter pounded his knees into the hardwood floor. It was equally hard on the stomach muscles of the man holding onto the feet of the man doing the sit ups. It was absolute misery for the recruit doing 30 sit ups per minute since he had to bend over backwards with his hands behind his head and touch the floor about twelve inches below his bottom. This exercise rotated between the three members every few minutes.

If the first class happened to be physical training, a troop had to change from blues into sweats and it was not uncommon to make three or four dress changes in a single morning and the same in the afternoon. Recruits had three one hour classes before noon and another three in the afternoon with 15 minute breaks between classes. Classes ended at 4:30 p.m. Supper, or the third meal of the day, was between 5:00 and 6:00 p.m. This meant we'd be starving by lights out at 11 p.m. Often senior members earned extra income by buying fast food that was delivered to the barracks just before lights out. It was always sold to the junior members at inflated prices. Fresh recruits often paid \$1 or \$2 for hamburgers when our wages were only \$10 a day.

Corporal Roy introduced the troop to the art of self-defence and once asked for two volunteers, and when no one answered his call, Dan 'Red' McKay and me into the centre of the gymnasium. We were each told to put on the gloves for three three-minute rounds of boxing. 'Red' was a featherweight and did not have much savvy when it came to boxing. I hit him a few times and in a clinch told him to back off and just get himself through the first round. Instead, he planted a fist right in my eye and I instinctively responded with a shot to his chest followed by another to the head. He went down and was not anxious to get back up. Since the round had not lasted 20 seconds, and since I wasn't even winded, Roy motioned Alfie McKeil to put on the gloves and square off against me. I soon discovered we were very evenly matched and about midway through the second round, Alf managed to give me a good right square on the nose which momentarily put my lights out dropping me to the canvas. No sooner did I hit the floor before springing back onto my feet as if bounced off a trampoline. Anger and rage replaced all common sense. My gloved fists, propelled with every ounce of strength still remaining in my body, went head hunting. When the bell rang indicating the end of the second round, we continued to do battle until being pried apart by Corporal Roy. During the one-minute rest period Roy told me Alf was throwing wild punches and was not protecting his solar plexus. About 10 seconds into the third round I saw my opportunity and punched him below the rib cage and just as Roy predicted, he dropped like a stone onto the canvas. Unfortunately for me, he too sprang right back onto his feet and went back into the fight as if he had never been hit. Almost immediately, Roy jumped between us blowing his whistle and yelling the fight be stopped. Roy then went on to explain there were two kinds of fighters. The first takes a punch, feels pain, and loses the fight. The second takes a punch and feels rage. He qualified both my Alf and me as the second type of fighter and the most dangerous. He explained to the entire troop a street fighter had to be taken out fast and by whatever means possible. He said, "Listen up men. If you get in a street fight, you have to kick the guy square between the legs or between the eyes to make sure the first shot counts. You may not get a second chance because the most innocent looking little runt could be a black belt in karate and be able to kick the living daylight out of you in an instant. Don't assume anything. The word assume when spelt correctly means some low life can make an ass out of you and me." Roy made one additional comment that day. He told us to never under any circumstances take our eyes off the eyes of a combatant in a fight. He con-

cluded by saying, “If you cover up after taking a punch and lose eye contact with your opponent, you’ll lose the fight.”

With that Roy told a Newfoundlander to face off with him so he could demonstrate a couple of ways to take a man out of a fight in a hurry. The Newfie was a most uncoordinated individual, and he was now also very frightened, as Roy was a fine specimen of a man. Roy made a grab for the unfortunate recruit who threw out both his hands in an effort to ward off his instructor. As our instructor’s bad luck would have it, the outstretched fingers of the recruit’s hands caught Roy in both eyes leaving him temporarily blind. He then jumped in behind some of his troop mates apologizing while at the same time trying to become invisible. Corporal Roy took the damage with good humor and wryly commented, “See what I mean.” We all became lean mean fighting machines. Corporal Roy said, “There are two options: flight or fight. You guys have to fight.”

Over the next several months Roy taught us several police holds. One involved placing an arm lock on an opponent from behind so your inside forearm made contact with the subject’s chin. He told us only a small amount of pressure on the man’s chin would pinch a nerve and render the individual unconscious long enough to place the person in handcuffs.

Troops did a lot of training with ropes and a few members were able to go up and down a 20-foot length of rope hand over hand with our bodies in a V or fish hook position with our feet at the same level as our heads. To build up our abdominal muscles even more, some troopmates sometimes went up the rope carrying a two-foot in diameter beanbag between their knees. It was not uncommon for members to place both hands on the floor and do a flip against a wall and do vertical pushups and by training’s end a few of us could walk on our hands almost as easily as on our feet. Little wonder we graduated with a six pack on top of a six pack. Near the end of training, I was one of three chosen from my troop to attempt to break a record for the obstacle course. We had to run the full length of the gymnasium and back. The barriers were a bench horse and the ropes. On the way to the back wall the recruit had to hurl himself over the horse, climb the rope and touch the 20-foot ceiling, descend back down, touch the wall, and then sprint back to the start. I managed to beat the previous best by a couple of seconds.

While Corporal Roy was our physical training instructor, Sergeant Bill Leitch was a PT instructor to the more senior troops. A few times our troop had Leitch for a period of gymnasium. One day he put us through a grueling half hour of exercises before calling us all together for some lessons in wrestling. We sat cross-legged in a semicircle listening to his words of wisdom about survival on the streets.

At the end of his oration, he beckoned Benny Rae Fyfe to confront him pretending he had a knife. Our troopmate made a gesturing lunge, and Leitch grabbed him by the arm and threw him hard onto the canvas. Benny got up slowly only to have Leitch call him a wimp. It was obvious to everyone he had fallen badly and was in a good deal of pain. The sergeant showed no mercy and told him to come at him again but to try to at least give the appearance of being a knife-wielding attacker. He followed up by remarking, “A woman could save herself from the likes of you.” Benny came at Leitch again only to be driven to the canvas harder than the first time. A few weeks later our troop once again had Leitch for a period of physical education and again decided to pick on poor Bennie. This time he was going to teach him how to box. Putting on the gloves, Leitch told him to be aggressive and to fight as if his life depended on the outcome. Benny said he’d try. About 15 seconds into the first round, Leitch got a left and right combination, knocking him halfway across the gymnasium. Bennie chased after him and catching up to him unleashed a second dose of medicine putting our instructor to the floor. Leitch picked himself up and remarked, “You sure as hell can’t wrestle but where did you learn how to box?” Our troopmate explained he’d won the Golden Gloves Championships for the Province of Saskatchewan just before joining the force. On that particular day everyone loved the underdog.

On July 21st, Troop 3 began equitation under the instruction of Corporal Ken Strang and our troop went into the horse arena dressed in brown fatigues. We walked beside our horses without kneehigh riding boots, spurs or breeches. We were not even permitted to saddle up. Our hay burners only had bridles. Corporal Strang sat on his mount in the middle of the arena and began talking about the four legged beast of burden.

His opening remark was, “Welcome to equitation. Remember the outside of a horse is good for the inside of a man. If you can control a horse you can surely control a man.” He then informed us we were to ride bareback. After several minutes, we somehow managed to climb up onto our horses. Almost immediately, Strang barked out, “Walk your horses.” Half a minute later he yelled, “Trot your horses.” I discovered very quickly riding a horse bareback at the trot was similar to sitting astride a two inch by four foot plank on edge.

A dreaded command was, “Stand to your horses” since the rider had to stand at attention in front of his horse while hanging onto the bridle in such a way the horse’s nostril almost touched the rider’s nose. Horses have strong neck muscles and when a gelding decided to raise or lower its head, the rider had to “Stand to” for five to 10 minutes and stay at attention. Arm muscles ached. “Prepare to mount” was even worse. Upon this command the recruit had to throw the horse’s reins over the animal’s head and place his left foot in the stirrup. Since my horse was tall, I had to tiptoe on my right foot which always spooked my mount causing him to fidget. Once mounted, I had to quickly readjust and shorten the left stirrup to be the same as the right to be able to squeeze with the knees to control the horses movements. The hardest thing to earn in equitation are spurs, and a raw recruit learned early without these jingle-jangle ornaments on the heel of their high boots, horses often refused to obey leg pressure commands. It seemed the first month of equitation consisted of riding bareback at the trot, and a newbie had to grip or squeeze with both knees to keep from bouncing up and down against the horse’s rib cage. It left men marching back to barracks in bow-legged fashion. The coarse corduroy material in the breeches sometimes chaffed the inside of the knees so badly long johns were worn under the riding pants, and such rides were akin to sitting in a sauna. After several lessons, Strang gave the order, “Canter your horses.” Sitting on a horse at the canter was very similar to sitting in a rocking chair.

One of Corporal Strang’s favorite exercises was called “Simple Simon”. For periods sometimes for as long as 10 minutes, he would bark out, “Simple Simon says quick as the best mount” or Simple Simon says, “Quick as the best dismount”. Eventually he’d yell, “Simple Simon says “dismount” twice and some unfortunate equestrian would dismount by mistake. When this happened, Strang would shout, “Trot.” This resulted in the dismounted rider having to run alongside his horse. Recruits had to be constantly paying attention because Strang’s motto was, “A doze rider gets a difficult horse”. Once Strang assigned me to Titan, the tallest horse at “N” Division. He was 17 hands. I couldn’t mount him unless I extended my left stirrup out full length. In order to get my left toe into the stirrup, I had to hop with one foot on the ground, all the while trying to steady a fidgeting Titan waiting for the order to mount. Titan had the ability of being able to go from a canter to lying down in the blink of an eye and his favorite trick was to collapse all four legs simultaneously and do a roll over. A rider had to be alert and quick enough to be able to jump clear of the saddle in order not to get pinned down. He did it to me only once and luckily I managed to jump clear.

Titan was the tallest horse but Sinbad was the meanest and about once a month he managed to bite a recruit. A rider would throw a blanket on him prior to the saddle and in between Sinbad would reach over and toss it to the ground. The second the recruit bent to pick up the blanket, Sinbad would poise himself like a cobra ready to strike. He once chomped into the fleshy part of a Larry Hunter’s lower back lifting him tippy-toe right off the ground. Larry’s screams were blood curdling. Sinbad had another trick up his sleeve. When a saddle touched his back he’d inflate like a blowfish and a newbie rider would learn too late his mistake. He’d put his toe into the stirrup only to have the saddle turn turtle and end up under Sinbad’s belly. A member would wait until Strang was out of sight and then give Sinbad a knee in the ribs. When Sinbad deflated the rider would cinch up the bellyband.

One particular recruit often skipped taking a shower after stable duties and had the audacity to come into the lunch room or appear for classes smelling of horse manure. Strang was aware of the situation and even hinted he needed a good horse troughing to smarten up. Many of us naively believed we would have Strang’s blessing for immersing the miscreant into the cold water. One winter afternoon during watering, our instructor became invisible which to us was the clue to carry out the dastardly deed. When the offender approached, totally unsuspecting of what was in store, four of us grabbed him and he went upside down into the horse trough. Just as we did so, Strang appeared from around the corner and caught us and paraded us on the spot. My only

reward was to be in step right behind the victim as we marched from stables back to barracks and watch as in the dead of winter his fatigue pants froze like cardboard onto his frigid frame.

Strang concluded equitation training by introducing the troop to a bamboo sword and lance drill. With these toy-like weapons, the recruits went through an exercise whereby they killed imaginary soldiers. A recruit would swing his bamboo sword over his head and stab at an imaginary foot soldier on his left and then repeat the maneuver and stab another one on his right. One time when swinging my sword, a startled Titan threw up his head and I clubbed him on his right temple. Strang witnessed the accident and immediately rode over on his steed and began whipping Titan on the rump with his riding crop. Titan charged away bucking and farting his way across the arena with Strang in hot pursuit. It was one hell of a ride but I managed to stay in the saddle. Strang roared, "You dumb animal". He was shouting at me and not Titan.

Sergeant Eric Young was our foot drill instructor and during the first month he marched the rabble troop down to his parade square and began instructing, "A left foot, right foot" to the motley troop. Young was an impeccable dresser and excellent role model. Once Young gave our troop an inspection including a little humor. As he inspected each recruit from head to foot, he'd make some remark to see if he could evoke a smile. He stood in front of Pete Jacques and remarked, "My God, you look like a dog humped up on a lawn." He moved down the ranks and stood in front of me and asked, "And what would that dog be doing?" I had a rude response, "Having a crap, Sergeant." Young shot back, "Don't be so vulgar. Call it a bowel movement." He then remarked, "You look like Baby Face Nelson. No, on second thought, you look like Baby Face Nelson's son. Waite, who was Nelson?" I blurted out, "An American gangster, Sergeant." Until that point I had managed not to give him the satisfaction of a smile. Standing at perfect attention, I began to visualize a picture carried in my wallet of my first love and her sister dressed in Girl Guide uniforms. In my mind's eye I could even see the badges on the uniforms of the two young women and the little black dog standing behind the first love of my life. Young stared me right in the eye and said, "Waite, you look more like a Girl Guide than one of Canada's finest." Instead of smiling, I started to laugh, and that totally pleased him. He instructed me to drop down and do 25 pushups.

I have fond memories of Young and the last time I saw him was on television in 1979. He was a pall-bearer of John Diefenbaker, Canada's 13th Prime Minister and was one of six members doing the slow march from the hearse to the grave site. 'Dief the Chief' had been taken by train to his place of burial in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan.

Sometimes we would get into playing childish pranks on each other. One evening, Mike Spurgeon, the tallest member in our troop, and I were alone studying in the lecture hall for some important exams. It was quite warm in the room so he removed his jacket and hung it over the back of a chair. Leaving, I took his coat and draped it over my left arm and marched back to the dormitory. Later, when he tried to sneak back to the barracks improperly dressed, he encountered an instructor who gave him a severe reprimand. He arrived back in the dormitory after lights out and I was already in bed asleep. He grabbed me right out from under the bed sheets and proceeded to place a full nelson strangle hold on me. He was mad and began choking me with every ounce of strength in his body and I felt myself beginning to black out. As a last resort, I grabbed him by his privates, squeezed and after several seconds he released his hold on me. The next morning he was unable to get out of bed and was placed on sick parade.

One Saturday night, I attended a dance alone at the Ottawa Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) and asked a very attractive girl for a dance. She explained three young men had been pestering her all evening and asked if I'd walk her to her apartment a short distance from the dance hall. I did but soon realized we were being followed. Somehow the three blokes managed to get into the apartment building and come up the stairs to the girl's suite. I stood in the doorway and asked her to call a taxi. When it arrived at the entrance, I decided to make a dash for it and get back to the training facility before curfew. But I had to deal with the three men waiting for me. I slammed the door on one fellow's fingers, kicked the second in the groin, and going down the stairs tripped the third while at the same time putting my hand behind his head and slamming it toward the

floor. The taxi took me back to the barracks where I lay awake until the wee hours of the morning expecting to be called out to give a statement of my actions quite sure at least one would have been hospitalized. I never heard anything.

One night several members of Troop 3 took two taxis and went to a dance in Hull on the other side of the Ottawa River across from the nation's capital. It was a stupid thing to do as we were out of our area and were clearly outnumbered by the many local men at the dance. They were Quebecois and around 10 p.m. a real donnybrook broke out and pretty soon our group was fighting our way to the exit with tables over our backs for protection. Troopmate Al Decker took a fist in an eye resulting in questions from our superiors the following morning as everyone lined up at parade.

Corporal Jack Hart gave instruction in small arms and for the first month or two recruits practiced with .22 revolvers instead of the larger .38 Smith and Wesson calibre weapons. He instructed us how to take our time and gently squeeze off each round. Using the smaller calibre revolver for the very first time, I truly amazed myself by not managing to once hit the target. Hart asked, "Are you blind?" I'd hunted most of my life and considered myself a good shot with a rifle. Corporal Hart suggested ignoring his instructions and to fire when ready. The next time all my rounds hit the target before most members had fired their second shot. Surprisingly, I'd hit the target with all five rounds moving from the worst to one of the better shots in the course of five minutes.

When we began using the .38 Smith & Wesson revolvers and high-powered rifles, the troop was bused to a shooting range in downtown Ottawa. One day half of the troop were on the firing line while the other half were horsing around in an adjacent room practicing police holds. I climbed up onto a chair and placed my forearm on Mike Spurgeon's chin. The tallest recruit, he made a grab at both my hands and I instinctively applied pressure on his chin. He collapsed into the chair and popped all four legs. I jumped clear. He regained consciousness seconds later and was furious but by then Corporal Hart had returned to the room.

The swim training culminated in a Red Cross examination with two very difficult exercises. The first exercise involved jumping into the pool fully clothed, removing your boots, and then diving to the bottom to retrieve a 25 pound iron weight. The other exercise involved using the frog kick to carry a fellow member feigning unconsciousness the length of the pool. Mike, the member from the firing range, got his revenge. He let his 225 pound body go both limp and vertical so when I did the frog kick it wasn't possible for me to propel the two of us across the pool. We treaded water and no matter how hard my kick, I was unable to move forward. I finally poked him in the back with my knuckles and forced him to lay horizontal on the top of the water. I resumed the frog kick and hit him in the back with a knee every time he tried to go vertical in the water until eventually managing to get him to the opposite end of the pool and up onto the deck. Climbing out, I collapsed on the deck exhausted. He paid me back!

One night I was on gate duty when a large black sedan pulled up, stopped, and I asked for some identification. It happened to be Commissioner George B. McLellan and Jérôme Choquette, the Minister of Justice, and their presence probably had something to do with the Front de Libération du Québec (FLQ). George asked me my name and my response was, "Waite, Sir". There was a long pregnant pause and he asked, "What am I waiting for?" I responded, "Constable Waite, Sir". He rolled his eyes and tapped the driver to go through the open gate"

In October, Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip visited Ottawa and the Musical Ride gave a performance on a grassy knoll midway between the dormitory and the Ottawa River. The night before, a horse trailer arrived in the middle of the night and we recruits were rudely awakened and told to unload the animals. The following morning our troop was given the privilege of exercising the Musical Ride horses. It was a beautiful sunny day and the depot was overcrowded with tourists and they soon spotted us riding in columns of two and made the mistaken assumption we were 'The Ride'. As we trotted down to the river, I could hear a hound dog on a chase. Suddenly, a rabbit darted amongst the riders and spooked the horses. Troopmate Hugh Hammond was directly in front of me and was thrown clear over his horse's head and landed on the ground still

hanging onto the reins. A second later, I was thrown in such a manner my horse kicked me squarely on the seat my breeches. I landed in burdocks and on getting to my feet discovered two neat mud imprints on the back of my pants. Fortunately, my trajectory from the saddle didn't result in any injury. Troopmate Can Close found himself on a runaway horse. He was thrown and upon getting to his feet was standing on the parade grounds with new recruits marching right past him. Sergeant Young instantly began reprimanding the dazed and disoriented Van for cluttering up his parade square. Young screamed, "You don't see my men marching around your riding areana. Why do you think you can ride all over my parade square?" Initially my troopmate was in total shock and unable to grasp the meaning of the tongue lashing but his predicament amused the drill class. In the next few moments several riders were thrown and the rest of the afternoon was spent chasing down riderless horses. Musical Ride members, before giving a performance, always back combed a stencil of a Maple Leaf on the right rumps of their steeds but once someone back combed a French stencil of a Cœur de Fleurs on one of the ride horses resulting in a witch hunt but the perpetrator was never caught.

On November 6, 1964, I was allowed to return to Renfrew to take part in my grade 13 graduation exercises. Several high school buddies began asking me about my police training and were especially anxious to learn about self-defence. School chum Brian Wainman asked me to show him how to fight so I hit him in the solar plexus with the fingers of my right hand and Brian dropped to the ground like a brick.

Our troop began driver training on the 28 November with a French-Canadian corporal and senior constable. The senior member was a real stickler and sometimes members couldn't even complete a parallel park without being thoroughly reprimanded. After a couple of months of driving through Ottawa on the Queen's Highway the two instructors decided Troop 3 was ready for the final phase of the course and we began doing "dog and rabbit" chase maneuvers on a straight stretch of abandoned highway about 15 miles east of Ottawa. The corporal was teaching me how to overtake a speeding motorist by pulling alongside and with a very authoritative pointing of the right hand instruct the offender to pull off to the shoulder of the highway. I was the driver of the "dog" or police chase vehicle, while troopmate 'Red' McKay was the driver of the "rabbit" or the criminal vehicle. Red's car took off at a high rate of speed with me in hot pursuit and within moments both vehicles had accelerated to speeds in excess of 70 miles an hour. The francophone was in the passenger seat with me, while three troopmates were in the back seat. Since it was winter and there was a lot of ice and snow on the road, I hesitated to move over to the right in order to pull alongside the suspect vehicle and give the authoritative point to the driver. The Frenchman made some comment about me being out for a leisurely afternoon drive instead of being in a police pursuit. Checking the rear view mirror, I saw troopmate Alfie Mckeil grinning like a Cheshire cat so decided to put the pedal to the metal and overtake Red. I pulled alongside and pointed for him to pull over but instead be



Instructors at "N" Division, 1964-1965.

Back Row: *Corporal M. Jack Roy, Corporal John A. Hart, Corporal Ron E. Sparks and Corporal William R.C. Leitch*

Front Row: *Corporal Eric B. Young, Staff Sergeant H. M. (Mel) Gilbert and Sergeant John W. Maguire.*

accelerated. I sped up and instinctively began to force him and his four passengers to the shoulder of the road. Red lost control and went off the highway and into a deep snow-filled ditch. The cruiser came to an abrupt stop with only superficial damage and none of its occupants received injuries. The rest of the afternoon was spent watching a wrecker extract the vehicle from the ravine and bring it back onto the highway. The accident was never reported and once the car was back in the garage an abrasive car polish was applied to take out any scratches before the vehicle was driven up and down the slushy streets of Ottawa to further hide evidence. It was my introduction to police cover-up.

One day the entire troop marched down to a treed area not far from the dormitory and took turns climbing up onto a former Musical Ride horse for a graduation portrait. Leaving the barracks, I heard a radio broadcast two young men from Renfrew had been in a fatal car crash. They were T-boned because pranksters removed a stop sign. One was school chum Brian Wainman. He was the one I'd done the solar plexus maneuver on three months earlier. I had a second reason to be sad. My Uncle John informed me my high school sweetheart had just become engaged to a shirt tail relative.

On February 15th, Sergeant Young marched our troop over to the main entrance. We were the senior troop and dressed in our high boots, breeches and red serge tunics. In nine long months, the troop had evolved from rabble to being some of Canada's finest policemen and able to walk on water. We stood at attention as the British Union Jack was replaced with the new National flag of Canada with the red leaf on a pure white background. We stood proud and happy to be Canadians.

Our exercises for equitation took place some months before the troop actually graduated and Mom and Grandpa McBride made the ceremonies. I was given a push button Musical Ride horse instead of the unpredictable Titan. All I had to do was sit in the saddle and look like the best rider in the troop. The ceremony went smoothly with one exception. One troopmate forgot to properly cinch his horse's bellyband and when Corporal Strang gave the command to mount his saddle turned upside down. The embarrassed member had to remove the saddle and reposition the blanket before placing it back on his mount. The rest of us had to stand to attention nose to nose with the horses and several began to fidget. Eventually, the member managed to put the saddle back on his horse's back properly. After the graduation ended and the audience left, Commanding Officer Roy told us it was the very worst pass out he'd seen in recent history.

Young had heard about the equitation fiasco and wanted to ensure the drill passout at the very end of training would take place without any embarrassing footwork. One morning a few members appeared hung over on his parade square and for punishment he made us run on a cloudless day to teach us to pay attention. We were all wearing high boots and breeches and after half an hour the troop was sweating profusely and several members were on the verge of collapsing. Young finally told us to halt but by this time the perspiration was coming through the top portion of our riding boots. After the boots dried, a white salt residue appeared on the tops of the boots and no amount of polish could make the leather take a shine.

I had the distinction of being the only member in my troop to be given a Court Marshall. The incident occurred on a slight incline not far from Parliament Hill. We were practicing complete stops. I had shifted down from drive and into second gear as I had been taught to do prior to making the final shift into low gear but instead of the car moving forward there was a terrible grinding sound as I tried to complete the final movement. My French instructor began shouting at me to shift into low gear and get going. Out of frustration I yelled, "Jesus Christ, I can't get this thing into gear." It was the "Jesus Christ" that got me into more hot water than I ever believed possible and for years I blamed the outburst as a subconscious mimicking of my Dad's "Jesus, Jesus, German-hearted Christ" orations. My swearing outburst offended my Roman Catholic instructor. The court procedure was swift and on March 26th two members of the Musical Ride escorted me, stripped on my spurs and Sam Browne, before Superintendent Roy. He was judge and jury. I was terrified and stood at attention as the only witness marched into the room and brought himself to attention squarely in front of Roy's desk. He was wearing his Stetson. Roy glanced up and asked him to remove his hat. He should have gone from standing at attention to standing at ease before removing his head cover. Instead, he stayed at attention,

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removed the headpiece, and tried to toss it onto a nearby chair. He missed and the Stetson rolled around the floor for what seemed to be an eternity before coming to a stop. Roy was annoyed and told the witness to pick up his headpiece and place it on the chair. Perspiring profusely, the star witness was about a minute into his testimony when one of my escorts fainted and dropped to the floor. I managed to get out of the courtroom with only a reprimand. When the trial ended, Roy everyone leave the room except me. He gave me a fatherly dressing-down ending with a remark, "No policeman was worth anything ever got through a career without at least a couple of court marshals". Troop 3 graduated on March 15, and I was posted to Headquarters in Ottawa to do clerical duties. It was not a happy occasion as the day before the troop learned five members had failed to make the grade and were being discharged immediately, so we graduated with only 27 members.

I was not posted to a detachment like the other members of my troop but was instead posted to Orderly Room at Headquarters in Ottawa where I did clerical duties. It was certainly not why I wanted to become a policeman. My transfer was because of my incident with my French-Canadian driver training instructor. My primary task was to record members' holidays and the job was very time consuming and monotonous as senior members often took several days off each year to take advantage of long weekends. They'd do this several times a year as senior members were given 28 and sometimes even more holidays a year. Sometimes they even took four days off on a long weekend to turn it into a nine day holiday. There were several members at "HQ" and with so many short holidays they were submitting requests for holidays almost every weekend during the summer months. When I first started working in the Orderly Room the records were stored numerically by regimental numbers in envelopes. I suggested to the Staff Sergeant we use a large Rolodex wheel, something

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that is today obsolete, and cut the amount of time in half. I'd keep going to my superior and asking for something to do to take up time. Finally, he responded, "Do me a big favour and get lost". Often my afternoons were spent in the library reading National Geographic magazines. Finally, a senior driving instructor at Headquarters took me on two tests and passed me concluding my troubles had more to do with personality issues.



Royal Canadian Mounted Police Troop No. 3

"N" Division Ottawa, Ontario - From 13 July 1964 to 15 March 1965.

Back Row: 3/Csts. Norm A. Degirolamo, L. Dan Hickey, Larry R. Ball; Ernie E. Best, Mike K. Spurgeon, F.D.F. "Pete" Von Hausen, Hans R. Burki, S. Mike Showers, Ray P. Haslam, Robert W. Mow.

Middle Row: 3/Csts. Ray A. Forgeron, Al K. Decker, P. Paul Cote, Don G. Fraser, Pete A. Jacques, Dan J.H. McKay, Hugh A. Hammond, Van A. Close, Alfie Mackeil, Bernie F. Cooper.

Front Row: 3/Csts. Don E. Waite, Guy P. Levesque, Wayne N. Tremble, Sergeant Major H.M. Gilbey, Superintendent Josphe Romeau Roy, Commanding Officer "N" Division; 3/Csts. Al E. Nicholson, Benny Rae Fyfe, Larry A. Hunter, Grant D. Gulkiwich.