Superintendent James Morrow Walsh
North West Mounted Police.

An Interpretative & Biographical Study.

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An Introduction to the Reader.

This study is designed so readers can choose the level of information they want. Once you have read the text, the Appendices, Endnotes and Bibliography provide additional detail, then the binders of document copies provide a mass of data for the really voracious reader. References to sources are not numbered in the text, but can be found in the "Endnotes".

Introduction.

"Myths are created when accounts which were true when they were written, are reinterpreted in the light of the attitudes of later days". Anon.

"Myths are the means by which we, like Perseus regarding the Gorgon in his shield, can observe the past without being turned to stone".

After Lawrence Durell.

James Morrow Walsh was one of the best known Canadians of his time, and he continues today to attract the interest of historians and writers, though a definitive biography has yet to be written.

This short study is not such a biography. It is an interpretation of surviving documents and secondary sources filtered through my experience as a curator, and as a student of 19th century history and material culture. As such, it is influenced by my own attitudes, which were formed many years ago, though modified since. Therefore, a binder containing many of the documents used has been supplied, so that interested readers can formulate their own conclusions, hopefully remembering that while conclusions may change over the years, human nature remains pretty constant.

This study has been prepared for the use of the guides at Fort Walsh National Historic Site to assist them in their task of interpreting James Walsh in the context of his times to visitors at this important historic site.

James Walsh saw his ten years of service in the North West Mounted Police as intensely interesting, but normal for a person in his position. Later generations have seen him as a mythic Canadian folk hero, performing his duties in the best traditions of the Mounted Police, as the later generations have interpreted them. Myths are not to be despised. They originate as facts, but as time goes by, are adjusted to comply with modern sensibilities, which can be very easily upset.
In effect this sometimes means that persons and events are detached from their original context, and judgements made by today's standards. In this study I have tried to explain the historical context in which James Walsh worked and lived. But also to remember as a person, he did not differ very greatly from ourselves in his reactions to the everyday stimuli of life. He was a flesh and blood man, not a cardboard historical character.

When examining the sources of information available about James Morrow Walsh, it was interesting to discover the majority of the surviving primary sources were documents written by Walsh himself, and most later accounts were based on these documents.

This collection includes the 600 pages of his own papers in the Public Archives of Manitoba; his own reports printed in the Reports of the Commissioner NWMP 1874-83; newspaper reports based largely on interviews with him, and his own, "Report of the Commissioner of the Yukon Territory in 1896-7".

If he had deliberately set out to ensure his own posterity he could not have been more far seeing, or more fortunate, given the haphazard survival of historic records. Although he seemed determined to record his own account of the major events of his life, namely his dealings with Sitting Bull and his work in the Yukon, he never wrote an autobiography.

The survival of his own papers is remarkable. It seems that his papers were stored in the attic of his house in Brockville after his death in 1905. The house passed to his wife Mary and then to his daughter Mrs Cora McGannon. At her death in 1945, or shortly thereafter, it was bought by Captain W.L.Snider. Then the papers were passed, by the Brockville Trust Co. possibly on the death of Captain Snider, to the Public Archives of Manitoba. None of his NWMP contemporaries' papers have survived in anything like the same profusion. In contrast, many of the records of the NWMP of the period 1873-83 were destroyed in a fire in the Parliament Buildings in Ottawa.

James Walsh was also fortunate that he was associated with Sitting Bull, a man of much greater international and historic importance than himself, and was involved in events crucial to the peaceful development of the Canadian West, events which he influenced personally to some extent.

In addition to this, Walsh got along well with journalists, unlike his fellow NWMP officers, who appeared to despise them and who followed the rule not to deal with them. Walsh was a brave, extroverted and romantic figure who was excellent copy for the media. Judging by the extent of his scrapbook of clippings, some 400 pages, journalists responded to him with favourable coverage, with the exception of some Dawson City papers in 1896-7, who had political axes to grind.
Photographs are an essential part of any biographical study. Especially studio portraits, as a key to some aspects of character, but also as evidence of habits and circumstances. For example, the photos of Walsh's wife and daughter give a clear indication, via their expensive clothes, of their financial & social status. Walsh's photos show that he ensured that his uniforms and civilian clothes were well fitted, and he appears to have been meticulous about his grooming and personal appearance. I urge readers to study the photographs as closely as the text.

Acknowledgements.

The major sources of material were found in the Public Archives of Manitoba, the National Archives of Canada, the Glenbow Archives, the Office of the Historian of the RCMP, the Saskatchewan Archives Board, the Parks Canada Library, Winnipeg, and the RCMP Museum. I would like to thank the members of the staffs of these institutions who so efficiently assisted me.

In particular, I would like to specially thank Ms. Betty Tyrchniewicz, Canadian Heritage (Parks Canada) for access to her research on Sitting Bull. Also Ms. Virginia Lockett and Mr David Jenkins of Canadian Heritage, Dr William Behan, RCMP Historian, Mr Malcolm Wake, Director of the RCMP Museum and Mr H.M. Garrett for their varied and most useful help.

David Ross.
Winnipeg, December 1996.

The well known photograph of Walsh in "Prairie Buckskin Dress". The the words,"Your Brother Bob" (Bob was Walsh's family nickname) are in Walsh's hand-writing. The word "Gentile" is probably the signature of the photographer. Taken in a Chicago studio against a painted backdrop, Walsh is wearing a US Army infantry officer's sword, a pattern definitely not used by the NWMP, but may have been a studio prop. The hat is possibly the one now in the RCMP Museum. Walsh appears young in this undated photo, probably circa 1875-76. The jacket may, or may not have been worn by Walsh on NWMP duties, but it seems unlikely, since he relied so often on the scarlet NWMP uniform to identify himself in his dealings with the Native Peoples. RCMP Museum photo.

Walsh/Ross
Beginnings.

His start in life.

Few details of James Morrow Walsh's childhood and early life are known. The available facts are as follows: he was born of Irish parentage in Prescott, Upper Canada (it was soon to become Canada West in the Province of Canada) on 27th May 1840. He was the eldest son of Lewis and Margaret Walsh (daughter of John Morrow). There were six other children, Richard, Phillip, Louis, George, Annie and another sister (later Mrs Paget). The family was Presbyterian.

Lewis Walsh is listed in the census reports as a ship's carpenter. Probably a well paid occupation, much in demand. At this time Prescott, located on the St Lawrence River, 18 km. east of Brockville, was a thriving river port. Shipbuilding & boat repair was an important industry, as was the transshipment of goods because this was the head of navigation above the St Lawrence Rapids.

Prescott was also the site of Fort Wellington, with its memories of the British Army garrison during the War of 1812, guarding the border with the United States. More recently, the fort had been rebuilt in 1838, as a result of the Rebellion of 1837 and was garrisoned until the early 1850's. The military payroll and local purchase of stores would have increased the prosperity of the town.

Confirming Lewis Walsh's financial well being is the substantial size of the house shown in the watercolour circa 1840-50. The white house was built of stone, covered in stucco. With the wooden annex to the left it would have been able to house his wife and seven children in comfortable fashion. That he was able to feed them well, is indicated by the robust physiques of James and his younger brother Phillip (1852-1932), both champion lacrosse players. He was less successful in implanting in James the stricter tenets of the Presbyterian church.

James has been labelled an indifferent student at school. But as a man he was well informed, and judging by the quality of his prose in later reports and letters he learned somewhere to write clearly and grammatically, probably by extensive reading. Like many energetic boys he enjoyed sports and played them well at school.

In mid-19th century Canada, post-secondary education would only have been seen as a necessary qualification for those destined for medicine, university teaching, the church and the law, or for young men whose families could afford the considerable expense. Thus, James would have had a standard education, which together with energy, good looks and excellent health would be
The home of Lewis and Margaret Walsh in Prescott, circa 1850.

Photo of a watercolour by J.M. Brown, once in the possession of the Walsh family, of the home of Lewis and Margaret Walsh on the river bank in Prescott, where James and his brothers and sisters grew up. It was the substantial stone house on the right, painted white over a coat of stucco, and the wooden annex on the left appears to be living quarters as well. The outbuildings include several boathouses. A large home indicative of Lewis Walsh's economic and social position. Fort Walsh N.H.S. photo JD.72.20.2.
The house of Lewis and Margaret Walsh on Water St, Prescott in 1974. Then derelict, the building was demolished a few years later despite efforts of the Grenville Historical Society to preserve it.

This view shows the right hand side and back of the house, compare with the J.M.Brown watercolour of 1850. The stone and stucco construction and the thickness of the walls are clearly shown. Little has changed except the fancy Victorian Gothic style edging to the ends of the roof. Fort Walsh National Historic Site photo JD.74.5.1
adequate to give him as good a start in life as many of his contemporaries in higher social & economic brackets.

Young manhood.

Though well built and stocky, he was not a tall man. His exact height is not shown in NWMP records and he does not appear in any group photos when in the Force from which a comparison can be made. In a group photo taken in the Klondike in 1898 he is the shortest of six men of varying heights. Taking this into account and the measurements of his Militia tunic in the RCMP Museum a reasonable estimate is that he was about 5' 6" or 5' 7", which would have been shorter than average in those days.

In 1860, at age 20, he was Captain of the Prescott Volunteer Fire Company. A tough job since the volunteers had to pull the heavy fire truck themselves.

He excelled at sports, in particular lacrosse to which he contributed the pocket stick. He organized the Prescott Lacrosse Team, which under his management won the Canadian Championship in 1869. On August 16th 1864 he and a friend, V. Jones left Prescott in an open boat 21 feet long and ran the rapids all the way to Montréal, a foolhardy but exciting trip. The general picture in his twenties is of a healthy, energetic, athletic young man who was gregarious and made friends easily.

The level of sexual activity of past generations is always a matter of speculation. The major limitation in the 19th century must have been the difficulty of finding "a place to go". This coupled with the censure a middle class woman would incur for pregnancy outside of marriage would mean that opportunities were limited. However, a full blooded, good looking man like James Walsh would have taken full advantage of whatever opportunities there were, as is confirmed in the case of his hurried marriage which had a negative effect on his Militia career (see below). He continued to do so throughout his life, to the detriment of his reputation in some circles.

Until the age of thirty he held a number of jobs which sound as though he would have found them unsatisfying. They included machinist, railwayman on the St Lawrence and Ottawa Line, dry goods clerk, exchange broker and by 1870 was manager of the North American Hotel in Prescott. At this time he was living at 1 King St East near his work.

Even if Walsh did find these jobs uncongenial he made a good enough living to afford the considerable expense of becoming an officer in the Militia in 1866. Officers had to pay for their own uniforms and take time from their work to attend the Militia Schools to qualify for their commissions. He found this part time occupation much more compatible to his temperament, and one which proved a ladder to improved social and economic status.
Militia Service & Marriage.

Canada's Military Tradition.

In 1860's, Canada had behind it a long history of military activity, which would have been well known to James. There were veterans of the War of 1812 still alive, including prominent politicians such as Sir Étienne-Pascal Taché who was Minister of Militia 1864-65. In 1848, when James was 8 years old, these veterans and the war would have been much in the news when the Military General Service Medal was belatedly awarded to survivors, including a bar for "Chrysler's Farm" an engagement which took place only 40 kilometres from Prescott on Nov.11th 1813.

In 1837 the Patriote Rebellion broke out in Lower Canada (today, Québec) led by Louis-Joseph Papineau. This was followed by the Upper Canada (now, Ontario) Rebellion in 1838, led by William Lyon Mackenzie. In general, both were bids for greater autonomy. A direct result of this was the rebuilding of Fort Wellington in Prescott and its garrisoning by British regulars in 1838. In November of that year a four day battle took place at Windmill Point, just down river from Prescott, to repulse a rebel invasion raid from across the American border. From 1843 to 1854, during James childhood, the fort was garrisoned by the Royal Canadian Rifle Regiment.

Overseas, the British and French fought the Russians in the Crimean War 1854-56, a much publicized campaign. Nearer home, in 1861, when James was 21, one of the major conflicts of the 19th century, the American Civil War started and continued until 1865. Fearing that the victorious Union Army might be used to invade Canada the British stationed more than 11,000 regular troops, many of them veterans of the Crimea, in the Canadas and the Maritime provinces.

Thus James Walsh, like all Canadians of the day was the heir to a long military tradition, evidence of which was close at hand. To mid-19th century Canadians, war and the threat of invasion were things which happened nearby, unlike 20th century Canadians whose wars took place overseas. Canada was not "the peacable kingdom" in that era.

Joining the Militia.

Walsh started his Militia career by attending the School of Military Instruction in May 1865 at Kingston, and obtained a 2nd Class Certificate, which qualified him for an officer's commission.

From 1864 until 1870 the military schools offered month long courses run by British Army officers and provided a basic introduction to the duties of an officer. The instruction was backed up by contact with regular British Army officers who
imparted the military ethos as well as the techniques. After 1870, when the British garrison had been withdrawn, the standards of the schools deteriorated drastically because of the lack of role models and trained instructors.

Walsh was fortunate in attending the schools when they were still run by regular British Army officers.

He joined the 2nd Prescott Rifle Company, which had been originally raised in 1857, and saw active service during the Fenian Raids from March until June 1866. He proved his worth and was promoted Lieutenant in the Company on 20 July 1866.

In April 1867 the 56th Prescott Battalion of Infantry was organized, and absorbed the 2nd Prescott Rifle Company and other existing companies. The unit was re-named in the same year, the 56th Grenville Battalion of Infantry. On the 3rd May 1867 Walsh was promoted Captain. The actual commission document, now in the RCMP Museum, was not issued until 1872 and gives his regiment as the Prescott Volunteer Troop of Cavalry, which is confusing, but will be explained below.

In July 1867 he returned to the Militia School in Kingston and gained a 1st Class Certificate. Here he met Col. G.A. French, the British artillery officer, commanding "B" Battery, Canadian Artillery, who was to become Commissioner of the NWMP in 1873, an undoubtedly useful contact.

On the 26th July 1867 Walsh was appointed Adjutant of the 56th Battalion. This was a tribute to his training and abilities. The Adjutant runs the administration of a battalion, and after the Commanding Officer is the most important cog in the regimental machine.

In February 1869 he completed the one month 1st Class Certificate course at the School of Cavalry in Toronto, with the following glowing commendation from Colonel Jenyns of the 18th Hussars (British Army):

"He is the smartest and most efficient officer that has yet passed through the Cavalry School, he is a good rider & outstandingly quick and confident at drill. I thoroughly recommend him to the note of the Adjutant General".

This also confirms later evidence that Walsh was knowledgeable and skillful with horses. In May 1869 he obtained another 1st Class Certificate, this time at the Militia School of Gunnery in Toronto.

James Walsh pursued his Militia career seriously, and took advantage of every opportunity to take training which would equip him with military expertise. But an important event conspired to block this promising career, he had to get married unexpectedly.
Marriage.

On 19th April 1870 James Walsh married Mary Elizabeth Mowat (1851-1930), daughter of John Andrew and Mary Mowat. John Andrew Mowat was descended from another John Mowat, a soldier in the British Army, who was demobilized from the Quebec garrison after Waterloo and settled in Kingston in 1818. His descendants moved to Brockville.

James and Mary Elizabeth had one daughter, Cora, born on 23rd October 1870, who at the age of 22 married Dr A.E. McGannon, aged 39, who died two years after their marriage, there were no children and Cora remained a widow until her death on April 6th 1945.

The marriage brought Walsh some financial advantages, but appears to have been unplanned, at least at this particular date, and due to Mary Elizabeth's unforeseen pregnancy which resulted in their daughter's birth seven months later. They lived in Prescott until moving to Brockville in 1873.

This was not an auspicious start to the marriage, which also prevented Walsh from accepting the offer in March of a commission as Ensign in the 2nd Ontario Battalion on the Red River Expedition. Commissions on the expedition were a much sought after prize, and Walsh must have lobbied hard for his.

A number of his future colleagues in the NWMP, such as James Macleod, A.G.Irvine, Sam Steele and A.H. Griesbach served, and benefited from the prestige and personal contacts produced. It was a serious setback to Walsh's potential career in the Militia, and it is naive to think that the disappointment did not affect his relationship with his wife. Whilst there is no reason to believe the couple, like countless others, did not reach an amicable compromise in their relationship, the fact remains that they were separated for long periods, largely by Walsh's choice, not only during his NWMP service, but also during his business career, which was centered in Winnipeg and Port Arthur whilst his wife remained for the most part in Brockville.

Militia Service cont.

In May 1870 he saw active service with the 56th Battalion during the Fenian Raids of that year. In December 1871 he raised the Prescott Troop of Cavalry, which later became a troop of the 4th Hussars.

On 10th May 1872 Walsh was promoted Major, and after his retirement from the Militia on 5th November 1875 he remained on the Reserve of Officers until his death, as "Major, Prescott Troop". In 1899 when the Canada General Service medal was belatedly issued he received the medal with two bars, "Fenian Raids 1866" and "Fenian Raids 1870".
North West Mounted Police, the first phase 1873-75.

Joining the Force.

In 1873 the police force, which Sir John A. MacDonald had been considering for some years, was authorized by Act of Parliament on May 23rd. Named the North West Mounted Police its purpose was to enforce law and order, preparatory to settlement, in the huge area of western Canada which had been ceded/annexed from the Hudsons Bay Company in 1869. Reports of disorder, whiskey trading and general lawlessness emphasised the need for action. Public and political support was galvanized by the murder of 38 Assinaboine Indians in the Cypress Hills Massacre in early May 1873. There was also the need for Canada to ensure its sovereignty over the area in face of expansionist mutterings in the United States.

On the arrival of the police in the West, the whiskey traders were quickly dispersed and law and order established. The task of the Police was transformed into dealing with the desperate plight of the native people seeking the vanishing buffalo along the border. The Force then had to watch over the potentially "explosive mixture forming of restless Indian bands, colonies of Métis settlers, and new Canadian settlements".

Whilst the Bill was still under consideration, Walsh wrote from Prescott to the Prime Minister (who was also Minister of Justice) on May 14th 1873:

"Understanding that it is the intention of the government to form a Corps for Service in the Province of Manitoba, to be termed the Mounted Police Force, I beg leave to apply for appointment therein".

He cited his Militia experience and training, which made him an attractive candidate for a commission in a quasi-military unit. Sir John A. MacDonald was determined to ensure the success of the new Force and kept final approval of appointments in his own hands. In part at least, to make certain that purely patronage considerations would not prevail over competence.

Walsh also marshalled his friends and political contacts to support his application. A letter signed by eight men, stressed his military experience in a letter dated Ottawa May 23rd 1873. Mr W. Manley wrote on May 20th in the same vein, adding "...there is no man in South Grenville whom I am so anxious to do something for, than Major Walsh, or who deserves it more". Both these letters addressed to the Prime Minister have survived in the file, attached to Walsh's application. The docket is marked "Sir J. promised an appt. May 28th".
Superintendent James Morrow Walsh circa 1875 (aged 35) in the full dress uniform of his rank. As can be seen, he was a remarkably handsome man. Though good looks are not a necessary ingredient of charisma, they certainly enhance it. The style of moustache and "imperial" beard was popularized by Colonel Garnet Wolseley, the commander of the Red River Expedition in 1870. RCMP Museum photo.
On September 25th 1873 James Morrow Walsh was appointed a Sub-
Inspector in the North West Mounted Police, with a salary of
$1,000 a year. To equate this with 1996 values, note that the
Commissioner received $2,600 a year, the same salary as a Deputy
Minister. Today, Deputy Ministers are paid $100,000 and up.
This would make Walsh's $1,000 roughly equivalent to $53,000 in
1997 dollars, in addition, he received free quarters and fuel, a
substantial expense. This is surprisingly close to the salary of
an un-housed RCMP Inspector today.

At this time Walsh was a mature man of thirty-three with
considerable experience behind him. The one thing that
characterizes his adult life so far is that he had worked for
himself, been in charge of others (lacrosse team, volunteer fire
company), or been in a senior rank in military units giving the
orders. He was used to deciding and acting independently. He had
not been a subordinate, taking and executing the orders of others.
His future in a hierarchical organization like the NWMP, subject
to political as well as professional subordination, was dependant
on how well he could adapt his temperament and experience to his
new situation as a junior officer expected to obey orders without
question.

In practice, his virtues failed him in the long run. His
habits of independant decision making served him well in the early
days, but later, carried too far, became mere insubordination.

The First Detachment.

Sub-Inspector Walsh received orders dated October 3rd 1873
appointing him temporary commanding officer of the first
detachment, instructing him to proceed to Lower Fort Garry. This
confirmed previous instructions and the detachment consisting of
Walsh, one NCO and 32 constables had already left Ottawa on
October 1st by train at 9.30pm, just one week after receiving his
commission. These men had been largely recruited by Walsh and
included his nephew, William. A Journal was kept of the journey
(see: Appendix III) which followed much the same route as the Red
River Expedition in 1870.

The train stopped at Prescott, where Trumpeter o'Neil was
discharged for drunkeness, and William Walsh, joined. Included in
this group were Sam Steele (and his two younger brothers), Percy
Neale, J.McIlree and Lawrence Fortescue who were all to become
successful and prominent in the Force.

On October 2nd Walsh appointed Steele and Fortescue to be
NCO's and Neale to be Quartermaster Sergeant. The next stop was
Toronto, where greatcoats were issued, and a memo, "...intended
more as a request than a warning" in which "the C.O. hopes the
men will abstain from too free use of intoxicating liquors". A
less than half-hearted plea for sobriety! Walsh, far from a heavy
drinker himself, did not support abstinence.
Then to Collingwood by train and by steamer to Thunder Bay, where wagons were hired to take them over the Dawson Road to Lake Shebandowan and the hardest part of the trip began. They embarked in a series of open boats towed by government tugs to Rainy Lake and Lake of the Woods arriving at the N.W. Angle on October 17th. Then on foot, by wagon and by boat to Lower Fort Garry where they arrived at 4pm on October 22nd. Walsh reported to the Acting-Commissioner Lt.Colonel Osborne Smith.

Walsh had proved himself a competent leader and administrator in his first real command. He also revealed his quick temper in a noisy altercation with George Dixon, captain of a tug which left their string of boats adrift for two hours (Walsh), or 20 minutes (Dixon). Dixon was called a "Goddam black hearted villain" amongst other names during a half hour tirade. A long written complaint by Walsh, and a rebuttal by Dixon resulted in both being put in a file without comment, where they remain to this day in the National Archives.

Training at Lower Fort Garry.

By the end of October 1873 the first contingent had assembled at the Stone Fort, about 146 men in all. On 3rd November Lt.Colonel Osborne Smith paraded the men to sign the articles of engagement, which marked the real beginning of the Force.

On 4th November Sub-Inspector James Walsh was appointed by Osborne Smith to act as Adjutant and Riding Master of the Force. These were two key posts; the Adjutant being in charge of military administration, and the Riding Master vital to a unit which had to turn its mainly unschooled recruits into competent horsemen. He also acted as veterinarian. He was undoubtedly picked for these duties because of his previous experience as Adjutant of the 56th Battalion and his skilled horsemanship, not to mention his energy and determination.

In mid-December Lt.Colonel George A.French took over as Commissioner, and on Christmas Eve 1873 the first nine officers of the Force received their actual commissions.

Walsh's companions in this select group were: W.D.Jarvis, C.F.Young, James F.Macleod, J.E.Carvell, E.A.Briesbois, E.Dalrymple Clarke, W.Winder, J.Breden and Commissioner George A.French. Walsh was the longest serving member of the group. By 1881 he was the only one still in the Force.

Training began at once, Osborne Smith had instructed Walsh to clear an exercise ground near the Fort, about 50 yds by 40 yds. French now instituted a schedule of riding instruction and foot drill, supervised by Walsh and Sam Steele and the other officers and NCO's with past military service. This was impeded by the cold Manitoba weather, complicated by the inadequate clothing available. The men had been outfitted from local Militia stores,
with old infantry and rifle tunics and trousers, in poor, if not ragged condition.

In February French returned to the East to engage recruits to bring the Force up to strength. Inspector Jarvis was left in command. Walsh, as Adjutant would have had increased responsibilities. On January 5th 1874 Walsh issued a detailed General Order which covered the other ranks duties from Reveille at 6.30am to Lights Out at 10.15pm.

In mid-March 1874 the Force received its orders to move west, but the second contingent recruited by French, did not arrive at Dufferin until June 19th, having travelled in civilian clothes by train across the United States to Fargo, N.Dakota. Crossing the border at Pembina they marched to Dufferin. Meanwhile during May and June the first contingent moved to Dufferin. The Force was now assembled together for the first time. Training continued and the Force finally left Dufferin on Wednesday July 8th 1874.

The period of April, May & June must have be one of intense activity for the officers, such as Walsh, who were engaged in the logistics of the forthcoming march into the western plains. French judged Walsh's work to have been efficient and effective, he promoted him to the rank of Superintendant on 1st June 1874.

The March West.

In 1874 a railroad to the West was still a dream. To reach there you had to travel by boat, on horseback or on foot in the same way that the aboriginal people, the fur traders and the explorers had done for centuries. The proposal to send 300 men across the largely uncharted and unknown (to the white man) prairie from Dufferin to Fort Whoop-Up was considered in no way unusual. The British Army was continually sending expeditions across difficult terrain without a second thought. The Red River Expedition to Fort Garry in 1870 under Colonel Garnet Wolseley was an example fresh in everyone's mind.

However, the March West of the NWMP differed from the Red River Expedition in significant ways. Col.Wolseley had the logistical backing of the large, highly trained staff of the British garrison in Canada, and half his force were professional British soldiers. Much of his route could be covered by boat, which, whilst not without hardship, was relatively easy.

Commissioner George French was a professional British officer, an artilleryman, and a trained staff officer, but he had only the inexperienced staff of the Militia and Justice Departments to back him up, in a situation none of them had encountered before. Unlike Wolseley's expedition every mile had to be covered on horseback, or on foot.
None of his officers had been professional soldiers, though men like James Macleod had gained considerable military experience on the Red River Expedition. A few officers like Walsh and W.D. Jarvis had experience in the Militia, but Walsh stands out as one of the few who had set out to train themselves seriously. Even so, Militia experience was strictly an amateur process compared with that of a regular British Army officer. A few NCO's and constables such as Arthur Griesbach (15th Hussars) and Lionel Fortescue (Royal Marines), had seen service in the British forces.

French has been criticised for being unpopular, harsh and overbearing by several diarists in the ranks and by political appointees who he had disciplined or weeded out. But French found himself at Dufferin in command of an undertrained unit, without having the normal powers of discipline of an army officer. The most he could do was fine his men. He had to lead by example. The fact that he brought his command safely to its destination shows that he must have had determination, drive and powers of leadership. That he was not a nice man, or that he might have been unpopular is really irrelevant.

The march involved very hard work, worn out uniforms, poor food and real discomfort at times, but one must avoid judging the level of hardship by present day standards. Men in those days were used to a very different level of comfort, and were considerably tougher and more hardy than today's urban Canadian.

Details of Walsh's activities during the March West can only be surmised, there is virtually no paper record apart from the odd mention of his name in diaries, apart from his being in command of "D" Troop (The Staff Troop). The most significant thing is that he was commended by the Commissioner for his conduct.

One can surmise that his horsemanship and his athletic background had made him physically fit, and that his experience of command in the Militia and with the first detachment, together with his energy and powers of leadership equipped him well for his position. His years in business and being Adjutant at Fort Garry had given him administrative skills. It is likely that he was a significant contributor to the success of the expedition, which reached its objective in the Sweet Grass Hills on September 18th, having travelled 1009 miles.

**Fort Macleod 1874.**

The first priority was now shelter for men and horses, and the first post, named Fort Macleod was hurriedly constructed during October, on an island in the Oldman River. Walsh was entrusted with a variety of duties.

On October 30th 1874 he was ordered by Assistant Commissioner Macleod to take 77 horses in poor condition south to board them for the winter, due to the shortage of fodder. With some constables and Jerry Potts as guide, the party travelled 214 miles...
This map shows what is now southern Saskatchewan in 1886, and includes the progress of the C.P.R. track by this time. It is included here to provide an idea of the distances which James Walsh and NWMP patrols had to cover on horseback.

For example, as the crow flies, Fort Walsh was 160 miles from Wood Mountain. But 190 miles along the trail, five days riding was considered good going. Fort Walsh was 220 miles from Regina. Qu'Appelle was 140 miles from Wood Mountain.
in two weeks to Fort Shaw, Montana, where accommodation was found 
with a rancher close by. Walsh then returned to Fort Macleod. 
During his absence the crucial meeting between Macleod and Chief 
Crowfoot of the Blackfoot Confederacy took place. This was the 
first of many meetings with the aboriginal people in which Macleod 
by force of character and integrity built a relationship of trust 
with the native people on the Canadian side of the 49th Parallel.

On his return Walsh was dispatched to Fort Whoop-Up to 
procure coal from Nick Sheran's mine and horse fodder, he returned 
with the fuel but no hay, none could be spared. Hay was in very 
short supply at Fort Macleod, so Walsh was sent off again with 
most of the remaining horses on December 15th to the Sun River in 
Montana.

These examples of the duties given to Walsh show something of 
his activities, and also that Macleod saw him as a reliable, 
trusted officer who was capable of traveling under severe winter 
conditions.

Because of his confidence in Walsh, Macleod ordered him to 
take "B" Division south and establish a post in the Cypress Hill 
where the remaining whiskey traders were established.

Building Fort Walsh 1875.

In the spring of 1875 Walsh went south to pick up the horses 
at Sun River, and proceeded to the Cypress Hills. Accompanied by 
Inspectors Edwin Allan and Vernon Welch, with J.H.G. Bray as 
Sergeant Major the party arrived at the valley of Battle Creek, 10 
miles south of the road to Fort Benton, close by the site of the 
Cypress Hills Massacre.

According to Henry McKay, a Métis, whose grandfather, Edward 
was squatting in the area at the time, the detachment cook, Dolly 
Oldham came upon the McKay homestead, where the family included 
the five McKay daughters, the first white women he had seen for a 
long time. He quickly returned to camp and persuaded Walsh that he 
had found a most suitable site. Walsh agreed, and Fort Walsh was 
built nearby. According to Henry McKay's reminiscences, "It is no 
wonder that the police built Fort Walsh right there, as Mr McKay 
had five daughters who were all considered pretty and respectable 
girls".

The first buildings, including a stockade, were completed in 
about six weeks. The very first structures erected were, naturally 
enough, the cookhouse and a toilet according to Coney Campbell, 
one of the men building the fort. Campbell, in 1944, recalled 
Walsh as a cold, quick tempered man, rather obsessed with detail. 
It is unlikely that Walsh was involved in the construction in a 
hands-on fashion, as he had been at Fort Macleod, where the onset 
of winter necessitated everyone, including Macleod himself, 
working on the actual buildings.
Fort Walsh circa 1878, photograph by George Anderton from the collection of the RCMP Museum, Regina (#3752).
Shortly after work started, a band of Sioux appeared who were suspicious that the NWMP were U.S. soldiers, and a confrontation occurred, but the arrival of a large group of friendly Cree and Walsh's cool and determined behaviour diffused the tension.

Walsh started a series of patrols through the Cypress Hills which successfully cleared them of the remaining whiskey traders. These patrols also laid the groundwork for Walsh's remarkable network of friends and informants amongst the aboriginal people.

There was time for some social relaxation, Walsh gave a dance at Fort Walsh on November 1st 1875 to celebrate his daughter's birthday.

During a tour of inspection during the summer Major General Selby Smith recommended that new and distinctive uniforms be provided. Despite his plea for simplicity, the officers were able to ensure that their full dress uniform was based on the elaborate British Hussar tunic, frogged with gold braid, but of scarlet cloth in place of the usual hussar dark blue. For details of this and other items of dress which came into use in 1876 look to Appendix I which includes a transcript of the invoice for Walsh's own uniforms.

Illness.

On December 1st 1875 Walsh wrote to Commissioner Macleod requesting three months leave to go "to Ottawa for my wife and child and on private affairs". Macleod forwarded this request to Ottawa strongly recommending it if Assistant Commissioner Irvine thought he could be spared, adding "Inspector Walsh deserves any indulgence which the exigencies of the service permit".

It was not until February 29th 1876 that Irvine replied to Ottawa saying that Walsh would have to wait for a replacement. It is worth noting the contrast between the attitude of Macleod towards Walsh, to that of Ottawa (Lt.Col.Bernard) and Irvine, and perhaps an early indication of Irvine's disapproval and distrust of Walsh.

By this time Walsh was in the throes of the only serious illness of his life. Surgeon Nevitt, who had been summoned to Cypress Hills telegraphed Irvine from Helena, Montana on March 31st that Walsh was severely ill with erysipelas. "He was in a very low condition. I remained with him a week. He improved but owing to the highly irritated condition of his nervous system .... I brought him to Helena where he can obtain the comforts and necessaries a convalescent needs".

Erysipelas is a severe streptococcal infection causing fever and inflammation involving the lymph glands, and the outer layers of the skin, usually on the face or legs, resulting in raised lesions. It was a serious and painful disease, and medical treatment was limited at that time to prescribing rest and comfort. In this pre-antibiotic era the patient was solely
dependant on his immune system for recovery. The level of stress indicated by "the highly irritated condition of his nervous system" could possibly have exacerbated his illness by depressing his immune system. Later photographs show that Walsh fortunately escaped any facial scarring.

Irvine, Assistant Commissioner since January 1st, turned up in Helena to confirm for himself that Walsh was really ill, and telegraphed on April 1st to the Dept. of Justice that Walsh should be given his leave. Irvine had evidently done nothing yet to find a replacement for Walsh.

If he had known of it at the time, Walsh would have been heartened by a confidential report by Assistant Commissioner Macleod to Hugh Richardson, the Deputy Minister of Justice, dated April 26th 1876, as follows:

"[Inspector Walsh] is an excellent Officer, untiring in his exertions to do his work. He understands the working of men and has I believe got his Division into very good order. He has occupied an important and somewhat difficult position at Cypress Hills on account of the different tribes of Indians and Halfbreeds who frequent the neighbourhood, and he has done his duty well. His knowledge and judgement of Horses also make him a very valuable Officer to the Force".

A long leave was granted, and Walsh was convalescing at Hot Springs, Arkansas in June 1876 with his wife and daughter, when the news of the annihilation of General Custer and the 7th U.S. Cavalry by the Sioux at the Battle of the Little Big Horn arrived.

Walsh was called to Ottawa because the Sioux were reported to be moving north. He was back at Fort Walsh in August. In the meantime James Macleod had taken over as Commissioner from Colonel French on July 22nd, and Inspector L.N.F. Crozier was filling in for Walsh at Fort Walsh.
Mary Elizabeth Walsh, née Mowat (1851-1930) wife of James Morrow Walsh, in later life, probably in the 1920's. She survived her husband by more than 25 years, and judging by her surroundings in this photo was left in very comfortable circumstances after his death. Fort Walsh N.H.S. photo JD.72.20.6A.
James and Mary Elizabeth Walsh's daughter, Cora (1870-1945). This is possibly her wedding photo. She married Dr. A.E. McGannon in 1892, who, sadly, died in 1894 at the age of 41. Fort Walsh N.H.S. photo JD.72.20.5.
James Walsh and The Advent of the Sioux 1876-80.

(NOTE to the reader: These four years of James Walsh's career were so packed with varied duties and activities that it is only possible here to try to give an impression of his crowded life. For a detailed account, consult: "The North West Mounted Police" by J.P.Turner, Volume I, pp.255-561.)

As early as May 26th 1876 Hugh Richardson, Deputy Minister of Justice was writing to Irvine that "confidential information" pointed that the U.S.Army's strategy would probably result in the Sioux being driven across the border in the vicinity of Wood Mountain. Irvine acknowledged receipt of this letter on July 1st, having already ordered Inspector Crozier, acting for Walsh, at Fort Walsh to keep a strict watch. Crozier reported on August 18th that the Sioux had not yet crossed the border.

Shortly after this Walsh returned and assumed command at Fort Walsh and took his place in the large multi-national cast of characters involved in the drama caused by the arrival of the Sioux. He became a part of what might be characterised as Canada's first peacekeeping operation.

International complications.

As soon as the Sioux crossed the border an international situation of considerable complexity arose, involving the relations between Great Britain (who were responsible for Canada's external relations) and the United States.

The U.S. regarded the Sioux as fugitive rebels, upon whom they wanted to be revenged for their defeat at the Little Big Horn. They also had very real fears that the Sioux would use Canada as an inviolable refuge from which they could raid American settlements across the border. As well "bashing the British" was a popular ploy in American Presidential and domestic politics at this time. The policy of the U.S. was to repatriate the Sioux, disarm and neutralize them. But for several years they were unwilling to offer terms acceptable to the Sioux.

The British government wished to maintain good relations with the U.S but were only too aware that the Canadian government was unwilling and, more importantly, quite unable, to use military force to repatriate the Sioux. The British policy was to induce the Americans to persuade the Sioux to return by offering acceptable peace terms to them. The British attitude to the numerous complaints from the American government is expressed in a draft letter from the Foreign Office to Sir Henry Thornton, British Minister (ambassador) in Washington in June 1880:

"In the view of the Canadian Government the Indians are simply disorderly bands of American subjects, who have crossed into Canadian Territory. ........
But in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government it is scarcely to be expected that, with a comparatively small population, they [Canada] should enforce regulations [to close the border] which the United States have shown themselves unable to execute.

Policy of the Canadian Government.

The Canadian government knew that with the resources they had available on the ground (i.e. the NWMP), the only policy they could adopt was one of conciliation and negotiation with the Sioux, and mediation between them and the United States. The government was also concerned about possible clashes between the Sioux and the aboriginal peoples already in Canada, and the potential cost of relief measures.

The Canadian government's policy was summed up in a letter from David Laird Lt.Governor, N.W.Territories to the Minister of the Interior on March 22nd 1877, based in part on reports from Macleod & Walsh:

"When peace is made between the Sioux and the U.S.Government, these Indians should be induced, if possible, to remove to their own territory at once. ....To accomplish this by all peaceable means should, in my opinion, be the policy of the Government, as their continued residence on our territory will be a constant source of trouble & expense, and will, I fear seriously retard the prosperity of the country".

The leaders of the Sioux, in particular Sitting Bull, who distrusted the Americans, saw this situation clearly. He proceeded to negotiate with the Canadian & British governments and defy the United States. He carried out a masterly series of delaying tactics which enabled him and his people to remain in safety in Canada for over three years, in defiance of the wishes of the U.S., British and Canadian governments. He played a very weak hand with great skill, in part by playing on the very real personal sympathy which Walsh and other NWMP members had for his people's suffering. For as the diminishing buffalo herds disappeared, starvation and hardship were the constant companions of the aboriginal peoples.

Thus cabinet ministers in Ottawa, London and Washington, the Governor General and the British Minister (ambassador) in Washington were all involved in these high level diplomatic exchanges, of which even Queen Victoria as kept informed. This correspondence, covering April 1877 to April 1879 was reported in a British government compilation in 1879, covering 200 printed pages. These include the field reports of the NWMP officers on the ground, in particular those of Walsh and Irvine.
Walsh's position in this chain of command must be seen clearly. He was the point man on the ground, reporting the local situation and carrying out orders received. He was not a policy maker, he was the execuant of policy made at a much higher level. He had some freedom of action as to the methods used to persuade the Sioux to behave peacefully in Canada and to eventually return to the U.S. But even this freedom was limited.

The First Sioux cross the border.

The next three years were a period of intense activity for James Walsh, he was continually on the move and all the while sending detailed and informative letters to his superiors. These letters, based on his own observations and those of his network of police, scouts and informants are model intelligence reports of considerable clarity. They show that Walsh was well aware of what was going on, on both sides of the border, and had a firm grasp of the reality of the complex relationships between the aboriginal tribal groupings.

On Sept 16th 1876 Walsh warned Major Guido Inglis, US 7th Infantry at Fort Benton that hostile Sioux were, 10 miles south of the Border assembling at Porcupine Creek, but it was not until Sept 29th that he sent a copy of his warning to the Secretary of State in Ottawa, adding he thought the Sioux would cross the border into Canada shortly.

However, the Sioux were engaged in hunting and did not cross the border until early December, when Inspector Fréchette, sent by Walsh, located them near Wood Mountain. As Walsh reported to Macleod, in considerable detail, on December 31st 1876, these were Uncapapa and other Sioux led by Black Moon and other chiefs who had camped next to the lodges of the Santee under White Eagle, "who has occupied that section for many years past, and is very observant of Canadian laws". Walsh arrived on December 21st. With support from White Eagle he assembled the chiefs of the new arrivals, and firmly explained Canadian laws making it plain that they must be obeyed, and that attacks across the border were forbidden. There was general agreement, and a request for ammunition for hunting which Walsh granted.

Walsh's commanding personality, his sympathy with the plight of the Sioux and his complete lack of fear in a potentially dangerous situation were the catalysts which enabled peaceful agreement to be reached. He was the right man in the right place at the right time. For the next three years Walsh spent much of his time on horseback travelling the region; rough, uncomfortable work especially in the bitterly cold winters.

Walsh set up a post at Wood Mountain in the former Boundary Commission depot of small log cabins. He set up a network of patrols of NWMP and civilian scouts to keep him informed about all movements along the border in this area.
Meanwhile back in November a large band of Sioux were attacked and defeated by U.S. Army units, some surrendered, but Sitting Bull and Gall and their followers escaped and disappeared.

In the early spring reports drifted in that a large body of Sioux were crossing the border. Scouts confirmed this and Walsh moved quickly to a point between Pinto Horse Bluffs and Indian Cliff about 30 miles north of the border, and met up with the incoming Sioux under Four Horns, adoptive father of Sitting Bull at Mud House Ford.

After some initial confusion when the Walsh and his handful of scouts were mistaken for American soldiers, Walsh met with Four Horns and his Teton followers, explained that as they were now in British territory, British laws and authority would have to be recognized.

At this point a new arrival claimed he knew Walsh to be an American soldier, which Walsh strenuously denied. The situation became very tense, but was calmed to some extent when Walsh offered to stay in the camp, if the messenger was prevented from leaving. Walsh spent the night there. In the morning, Black Horn and 200 Yanktons arrived and identified Walsh as his friend and a British Chief. Once again Walsh's preference for direct action produced a peaceful result.

**The Arrival of Sitting Bull.**

On May 25th 1877 Assistant Commissioner Irvine telegraphed Ottawa from Fort Benton:

Sitting Bull on Canadian side with one hundred & thirty five lodges, about sixty miles from Fort Walsh, peaceably inclined. I leave for Cypress in the morning.

This was based on information from Walsh who, in early May, had received news of the approach of Sitting Bull. Walsh had at once set out to meet him.

It was fortunate that, thanks to MacDonald, the NWMP did not have a professional military ethos, but rather the outlook and role of the citizen-soldier/policeman. Professional soldiers are the agents of state sanctioned violence seeing the arrival of the Sioux as a veritable invasion, and the Sioux as potential "enemy savages", amenable only to force. This happened in similar situations all over the British Empire and in the U.S. in the 19th century. The NWMP as policemen saw the Sioux as potentially peaceful refugees, who were to be persuaded to return home.

Macleod, Irvine and Walsh may be said to be the epitome of this attitude, which enabled Walsh to confidently ride with a very small escort into situations fraught with danger. He was personally brave and did not seem to give a second thought to the
When it is realized the Sioux were experienced and war-hardened soldiers very bitter against the white man, it can be seen that these risks were substantial.

Walsh with two scouts and two constables came upon the Sioux camp in the Pinto Bluffs area, where he was greeted by Spotted Eagle. A meeting with Sitting Bull and the other Chiefs took place at which Walsh spelled out once again that Canadian laws must be obeyed. Sitting Bull replied with a long, friendly and flattering oration, promising compliance with Walsh's demands.

At this first meeting the two men could only try to size each other up. Sitting Bull who was a much respected Chief and war leader of his people, was an accomplished orator and immensely experienced in the complex anarchy of aboriginal politics, dependant on his reputation for wisdom and success to maintain his position of leadership. Walsh was apparently impressed by Sitting Bull, but almost certainly underestimated his abilities. Sitting Bull would have seen a brave, "warrior" type of man who wanted peace, as he himself did.

Walsh had a dramatic opportunity to demonstrate how the police upheld the law. As he was leaving the camp next day two of his scouts recognized some horses in the possession of White Dog, a well known Assinaboine warrior, Walsh arrested him and confiscated the stolen animals, before the whole assembly, not a hand was raised against him. Though Walsh enjoyed action, he was not theatrical, an arrest like this was to him, the only course of action. The law had been broken and the offender had to be arrested, whatever the odds. It was also an extremely effective example of what he had said about obeying Canadian laws.

Walsh arranged for Sitting Bull to meet with Assistant Commissioner Irvine and a Council was held at the Sioux camp on June 2nd 1877. Walsh attended with Inspectors Allen and Dalrymple-Clarke who took down a verbatim account of the conversations.

General Terry's Commission.

Diplomatic negotiations between the British & Canadian governments and the United States began this summer. Their aim was to induce the U.S. to offer peace conditions which the Sioux could accept. After considerable delay and much high level haggling Commissioner Macleod met the U.S. negotiator, General A.H. Terry, near Kennedy's Crossing on the Milk River on October 15th, and escorted him to Fort Walsh.

Walsh, having exerted his considerable powers of persuasion escorted Sitting Bull and his fellow chiefs from Pinto Bluffs to Fort Walsh.

The meeting between Terry and Sitting Bull took place in the Officer's Mess at Fort Walsh on October 17th 1877, with Macleod acting as mediator. The Sioux rejected Terry's terms as
"Sitting Bull's Reception of Major Irvine ca. 1876". Pen & Ink drawing by Surgeon Richard Barrington Nevitt, NWMP. Collection of the Glenbow Museum. Major Irvine is clearly the bearded figure wearing a helmet, second from the left of the row of four seated men with their backs to the artist. The man on Irvine's right can be tentatively identified as Walsh, and the kneeling figure wearing a pill box cap as Inspector Dalrymple Clarke, taking notes.
“unconditional surrender” to a government they thoroughly distrusted. Sitting Bull bitterly berated the Americans for broken promises, but firmly expressed his confidence in Macleod and Walsh.

Two journalists, J.B. Stillson of the New York Herald and Charles Dehill of the Chicago Times were present and reported the story to the outside world. Walsh, who had played a large part in the arrangements, was present at the meeting to brief and assist Macleod. He was interviewed by the reporters and figured prominently in their despatches, for which he received a mild rebuke from the Commissioner.

Walsh escorted the American delegation to the border, and then returned with the Sioux to Pinto Horse Bluffs.

On October 22nd Walsh met with a group of destitute Nez Perce in the Sioux camp who had arrived from the south, he repeated to them the necessity to obey Canadian laws and urged them to return to the United States.

Dealings with the Sioux were only one of the duties of the NWMP. Walsh was kept constantly busy with routine police work, patrols, intelligence gathering, Treaty payments, arresting horse thieves and suppressing the persistent whiskey trade, as well as the paperburden of reports, payrolls, records of horses and general administration. This was the quid pro quo for the Sioux respecting Canadian laws. They obeyed the laws and so they benefited from the law’s protection.

At this time Walsh was spending much of his time at the Wood Mountain Post, a cluster of log huts with sod roofs and spartan furnishings, in order to keep in contact with the Sioux. There were now 109 officers and constables, “B” and “E” Divisions, spread between Fort Walsh and the small posts at Pinto Horse Bluffs, East End and Milk River (Kennedy’s Crossing), a major task being the prevention of inter-tribal clashes amongst the thousands of aboriginal people who flocked to the area.

All during the winter of 1877 and through 1878 the American Secretary of State was bombarding the British Foreign Office with complaints of raids and incursions by the Sioux. These incidents all had to be investigated by the NWMP, and were usually found to be either minor hunting expeditions or unfounded rumours. Reports went back up the chain and the British, irritated in private, sent soothing answers to the State Department. Meanwhile Walsh continued his efforts to persuade Sitting Bull to reconsider his position and return to the U.S.

In January 1878 Walsh left for Eastern Canada on compassionate leave, as one of his brothers had died. Also he was instructed to confer with officials in Ottawa and bring back some recruits. On his way he met Macleod in Helena, Montana on Jan 28th/29th, where he gave media interviews in which he strongly
denied rumours that the Sioux were trying to form a confederation of aboriginal peoples, with the aim of attacking the U.S.

Walsh returned in June with a large group of recruits, arriving at Ten Mile Crossing, ten miles from Fort Walsh on June 16th. During the return journey Walsh gave an interview to a reporter for the Chicago Times in which he expressed his belief that the Sioux could be persuaded to return south, but that the process of negotiation would be long, at least a year. He also stated that Sitting Bull had lost his position of power, Spotted Eagle now being the most influential chief. Sitting Bull's followers now consisted mainly of his own family and a few faithful followers.

This use of newspaper publicity was intended by Walsh to assist in explaining, the aboriginal peoples' position and hence enhance the hope of a peaceful reception if they returned to the U.S. But the reporters saw Walsh himself as excellent copy, and much of what was written was seen by his colleagues and the government as self-promotion.

Soon after his return Walsh made a tour of the aboriginal camps, where he was greeted with respect and friendliness.

Walsh moves to Wood Mountain.

In May 1878 Fort Walsh became the headquarters of the NWMP and Walsh took command of "B" Division at Wood Mountain, which became a permanent detachment. During the summer of 1878 it was estimated that 5,000 aboriginals were in the vicinity of the Wood Mountain post.

The influx of Sioux and others from the U.S. meant greater pressure on the fast disappearing buffalo herds, which were now close to extinction. The Canadian government's long term policy was to settle the aboriginal people on reserves where they would, with government assistance, become self-sustaining farmers and ranchers. This policy failed to take into account the enormous difficulty the aboriginal peoples faced in totally changing their traditional way of life, from migrant hunters to settled farmers.

In the meantime the government had to supply food and other supplies to the aboriginal peoples who had in so many cases, no other means of survival. Much of the distribution was done by the NWMP, in 1879 a total of $300,000 was spent on food supplies. But the supply system was precarious and great hardship ensued.

By early 1879 the Wood Mountain post under Walsh's command had become as important as Fort Walsh, and the Force's main point of contact with the Sioux. But Walsh was continually short of men and horses. The workload was considerable, one complaint by a Mr Cooper of stolen horses in May, for example took up the time of Walsh himself, a scout and three constables for 15 days before the 11 horses were recovered. On April 1st 1879 Walsh had to let the
To Inspector Walsh.

B. Troop Commander.

Sir,

We are in receipt of your communication to Mr. Hale bearing date 18th December 1878, in which you express your warm feeling for the detachment at Fort Walsh, and in return we beg you to accept our most heartfelt thanks, not only for the great esteem in which you hold your men here, but also for your liberal and friendly manner as our Commander.

Your wish that our troopers were all together is strongly reciprocated by the men of your troop at this fort, and we trust that the day is not far off when that event will be brought about.

In conclusion we beg to convey to you our best wishes, and hope that next Christmas we may have the honor and pleasure of being with you.

We beg to remain Sir

Your Obedient Servants

Non-Commissioned Officers and Men

of B. Troop

Fort Walsh 29 Dec. 1878

Holiday greetings to Inspector Walsh from the NCO's and men of his former command at Fort Walsh December 1878. An example of the respect and admiration with which his subordinates regarded him.

Walsh/Ross
mail delivery between Wood Mountain and Fort Walsh out to contract, since he could no longer spare constables from other duties.

Walsh was in continuous contact with the Sioux to ensure that the law was obeyed and the peace kept. He spent much of his time trying to persuade them to return to the U.S., in this endeavour he was not helped by the actions of the U.S. Army units under General Nelson A. Miles, who was always on the lookout for parties of Sioux crossing the border to hunt or make contact with other American aboriginal groups. Clashes and casualties occurred and envenomed the feelings on both sides.

During the latter part of 1879 and during 1880 the virtual disappearance of the buffalo and the uncertainty of government food supplies eventually forced many of the Sioux to drift back to the U.S. in groups of varying size. They accepted American peace terms, were disarmed and escorted to reserves.

Sitting Bull and his remaining followers hung on, suffering great hardship until he and 187 men, women and children surrendered at Fort Buford in July 1881.

Aftermath.

Who won and who lost? In hindsight, one can see that, as usual, in situations like this, there were few, if any winners and many losers.

The Canadian and U.S. governments succeeded in getting the Sioux to return to the U.S., but this did nothing to solve the long term problems both governments faced.

The aboriginal peoples, displaced from their territory and way of life were excluded from the mainstream and deprived of their religion and culture. Addressing their problems was postponed for over a century, with the result that the contributions of many thousand potentially valuable and productive citizens were lost, along with the cultural legacy which could have enriched both countries.

Sitting Bull eventually had to return to the United States, but he managed to postpone the move for nearly three years until tempers had cooled and he could cross the border in relative safety.

Walsh himself lost his position in the NWMP whom he had served with dedication. He did gain widespread fame, and valuable experience as an executive and administrator, all of which helped him in his later business career. But he remained lastingly embittered that he had received no official recognition for the major part he had played in keeping the peace and maintaining the law. He felt that he had been made a scapegoat by the government.
Move to Qu'Appelle.

In June 1880 a number NWMP officers were given fresh postings. Walsh was moved from Wood Mountain to Qu'Appelle; Crozier was sent to Wood Mountain from Fort Walsh and Superintendent James Walker took over Fort Walsh. The official reason was that officers should not be left in the same post for too long a period. The underlying reason was that Walsh was seen by MacDonald as being too friendly with Sitting Bull, and because of this had failed to negotiate his return to the U.S. It was thought that Crozier would be capable of exerting heavier pressure by a harsher policy of "divide and rule" amongst Sitting Bull's followers.

Sitting Bull and the Sioux saw Walsh's departure as a blow to their hopes of staying in Canada. They asked Walsh to intercede personally with the President of the United States. Walsh agreed to ask permission to do so, but, during a visit to Ottawa in October 1880, was rebuked and forbidden to go to Washington by the Prime Minister. MacDonald had no intention of allowing a junior police officer, whose intentions he did not trust (see below), mixing in the already complicated negotiations between Ottawa, London and Washington.

On his departure Walsh was presented with his war bonnet by Sitting Bull as a gesture of friendship and respect. This bonnet is now preserved in the collection of the Royal Ontario Museum, a donation by Sir William Van Horn, who had acquired it from Walsh.

On July 15th Walsh left Wood Mountain, arriving at Qu'Appelle on July 19th, where he spent five days with Inspector Sam Steele, who had preceded him there. Steele was to re-build the post during Walsh's coming sick leave, and command in his absence. Walsh then returned to his home in Brockville, where he remained for the next six months.

Irvine's Report.

On Nov 17th 1880, in response to a request from the Minister of Justice, Irvine, newly appointed Commissioner, wrote confidential reports on all his officers. (See Appendix II).

The report on Walsh reads:

"Has a certain amount of natural ability, "sharpness" would perhaps be a better word. Might have made a very fair officer had he been kept at Head Quarters under strict supervision before being sent to an independant command. Is prone to act on his own authority in a manner that cannot be considered subordinate, with a view of making his own name conspicuous. I do not
consider him particularly straightforward. I have little confidence in him".

This was certainly a damning report, (not that Walsh fared any better than most of his brother officers from Irvine's uninhibited pen), but it does show that two men of widely different temperament and outlook, Irvine and Sir John A. MacDonald had similar opinions of Walsh at this time. (See below)

Another aspect of Walsh's conduct, not mentioned in the report, was his liaisons with aboriginal women. Obviously relationships like this developed between members of the Force of all ranks and aboriginal women, and they were usually discreetly conducted and equally discreetly overlooked. But for officers, especially married ones, such behaviour was condemned by their fellow officers. Walsh apparently made little effort to be discreet, and abandoned one women, with whom he was rumoured to have contracted a "country marriage" for another with whom he had a daughter, whose descendants are claimed to be still living in Montana today.

Whatever attitudes may have been in the past, by 1880 such conduct was not longer considered "respectable". As policemen whose duty it was to uphold both written and unwritten laws, Walsh's colleagues undoubtedly felt that he was self-indulgent and tarnishing the image of the Force.

The Prime Minister's opinion of Walsh's conduct.

During his leave after leaving Wood Mountain Walsh appears to have rashly kept in contact with the Sioux leaders, and during his absence, Sitting Bull journeyed to Qu"Appelle to seek Walsh's help, much to the annoyance of the Prime Minister, as shown in some of his correspondence with the Governor General.

By the end of 1880 Sir John A. MacDonald was convinced that Walsh was trying to subvert his government's policy of persuading Sitting Bull to return to the United States. In private letters to the Governor General, Lord Lorne, preserved in the letterbook of Colonel de Winton, Lorne's Military Secretary, MacDonald expresses his feelings very forcibly, as follows:

Ottawa, 24 Nov 1880

Dear Lord Lorne

Mr .... Thompson is a deserter from the Mounted Police and has I am informed....................
He may exercise, and probably does exercise a malign influence on Sitting Bull. We are in daily expectation of hearing from Crozier.
Walsh is now at Brockville on sick leave. His doctors certify that he cannot resume his duties for two months.

Walsh/Ross
Walsh undoubtedly has influence with "Bull" which he tried to monopolize in order to make himself of importance, and is, I fear primarily responsible for the Indians' unwillingness to leave Canada.

John A. Macdonald.

Ottawa 14 Dec 1880

Dear Lord Lorne

I send you a telegram from Col. Irvine showing that Sitting Bull is likely to surrender.

John A. Macdonald

Ottawa 17 Dec 1880

Dear Lord Lorne

You have doubtless seen Col. Irvine's telegraphic report about Sitting Bull.

When all this is over I think we must dispense with Major Walsh's services in the Mounted Police.

John A. Macdonald

Ottawa 25 Jan 1881

Dear Lord Lorne

I send you a telegram received from Col. Irvine as to Sitting Bull's movements.

I greatly fear Major Walsh is pulling strings through Thompson the deserter from the Mounted Police, to prevent "Bull" from surrendering. Walsh is still at Brockville, and I have given him two months more leave to keep him here lest he sought (to?) return & personally influence Sitting Bull. I regret ...... being obliged to play with this man Walsh, as he deserves dismissal. But if he were cashiered he would (for he is a bold, desperate fellow) at once go West & from there ...... urge the Indians to hostile measures so as to cause an imbroglio.

When this is over I shall recommend your Excellency to dismiss him most summarily.

John A. Macdonald.
In mid July 1881 Sitting Bull crossed back into the United States as a result of the continuing pressure of Crozier—the danger of starvation, and negotiated peaceful settlement with the US Army. Characteristically, Commissioner Irvine praised Crozier’s work, but omitted to mention Walsh’s vital contribution to this result.

At Qu’Appelle.

James Walsh’s duties and conduct during his command of “B” Division in Qu’Appleelle can best be summarized by the following:

William Van Horne, General Manager of the CPR writes to Major Walsh from Winnipeg on January 12th 1883:

“Our work of construction for the year 1882 has just closed and I cannot let the occasion pass without acknowledging our obligations to the Mounted Police under your command and to yourself particularly for the very vigorous manner in which you have suppressed the liquor traffic and preserved order along the line under construction and without which I do not think it would have been possible to accomplish all that has been done”.

On May 31st 1883 the NCO’s and Men of “B” Division presented a Memorial to Major Walsh expressing their regret at his departure. This elaborate eight page scroll was donated to the RCMP Museum by Walsh’s daughter, Cora McGannon in 1940, and reads in part:

"...having heard with regret of your intention to visit Canada with the probability of not returning again to us as Commanding Officer, [we] take this opportunity of tendering you an address accompanied with a substantial testimonial [a saddle] to show our appreciation of yourself as an able and impartial officer.

"B" Troop has always been the pioneer Division in establishing and building Posts; it has been the first one in every new place, and performed more hard work and seen more active service than any other two Divisions in the Force.

...in saying God-speed and good-bye to you we are not bidding you a long farewell, and trust you may return in a few weeks in company with your good lady and family to settle permanently in the North-West is the unanimous feeling of every man of your command”.

During his posting at Qu’Appelle Walsh energetically carried out his duties to the satisfaction of all concerned. Law and order was imposed on the camps of railway workers, the illegal liquor trade suppressed and the flood of settlers passing through were helped on their way.
James Walsh in his forties, in the full dress uniform of a Superintendant of the NWMP. This is the pattern introduced in 1876, a scarlet tunic with dark blue collar and cuffs. Gold lace and braid with gold & crimson embroidered crowns on the collar indicating his rank. This photo was probably taken sometime in the 1880's, possibly even after he left the Force in 1883. Streaks of grey show in his hair and moustache and lines are beginning to appear under his eyes. This is the best known of the rather few photographs of Walsh and the image by which he is best remembered. RCMP Museum photo.
Leaving the Force.

By 1883 Walsh must have realized, if he had not done so before, that his career prospects in the NWMP were limited to hanging on until he was dismissed. He was distrusted by Commissioner Irvine and was personna non grata to the Prime Minister. His personal conduct and publicity seeking were at best, disapproved of by his fellow officers, and at worst actively disliked. He had been shunted into a small, though busy post at Qu'Appelle with only 12 men to command.

Even if he had been popular and admired, the rank structure of the NWMP would have left him with very slim chances of promotion. There were only four rank levels in the Force, Inspector, Superintendent, Assistant Commissioner and Commissioner and there was only one of each of the top two. The odds against becoming Assistant Commissioner were about 10 to 1. Even if one reached that pinnacle, becoming Commissioner was not automatic, as Superintendent L.N.F.Crozier discovered. Promoted A/Commissioner in 1881 he resigned in 1886 when he was passed over and L.W. Herchmer was appointed Commissioner in 1886 from outside the Force.

It is not clear if James Walsh was directly ordered to resign, or face dismissal. But the indirect force of circumstances, however created, made departure from the Force appear to be in his own best interests. Despite the Prime Minister's earlier threats of dismissal in 1880, and a rumour of unaccounted for stores, tempers cooled and the cracks were papered over.

The result was that he is recorded officially as retiring on 1st September 1883 with a gratuity of $1166, the standard severance package for his rank, (there being no pension plan), i.e. one year's salary. In present day terms (multiply by 50), $58,000 does not seem to be a very handsome reward for ten years hard service, nor adequate capital for a man starting a new career at the age of 43. To put it mildly, Walsh had good reason to feel that he had been forced out and shabbily treated. On the other hand, his superiors felt that they were justified in removing him. His talent for conciliation had proved invaluable, but when this did not produce the results desired, i.e. the return of Sitting Bull and the Sioux to the U.S., he was unable, or unwilling to adopt the harsher methods needed. His superiors felt that he was refusing to obey orders, and was undermining the government's policy through his access to the media, and his personal influence with Sitting Bull.
Life in Business.

Little information about James Walsh's personal and business life between 1884 and 1896 has survived. What data there is indicates that he was a successful businessman and associated in a minor way with some of the big names of the time. Such as William Van Horne, appointed general manager of the C.P.R. in 1883 whom Walsh met in the early eighties in the course of his police duties, and with T.G. Shaughnessy, purchasing agent for the C.P.R. in 1882, and President from 1899.

The financial returns of his business activities cannot be accurately assessed in dollar terms, because of the absence of any surviving records. The only evidence that he was successful and well-off is indirect and photographic. Present day photos of his home, "Indian Cliff", in Brockville show a large brick house appropriate to a business, or professional man with a good income.

The few existing photos after 1890, of Walsh himself, his wife and his daughter show that their clothes were fashionable and expensive. There is anecdotal evidence that his wife and daughter were left comfortably off at his death, and both lived in the family home for the remainder of their lives.

It can be assumed that Walsh was a shrewd and well-to-do businessman, also, that if he had financial setbacks he soon recovered from them.

After leaving the Force he went into private business becoming a partner in Bell, Lewis, Yates & Walsh, in Winnipeg. They were listed as coal dealers in the Henderson Directories of 1884 and 1885, located first at 13 Bannantyne St East, and then in the Dundee Block. As coal merchants they would have to obtain, store and deliver coal to customers, thus the company would be experienced in bulk transportation.

Despite his military and NWMP experience Walsh was not called upon by the government to act in any capacity during the 1885 Uprising. His unpopularity with Sir John A. MacDonald, and his reputation as a difficult subordinate in the NWMP may be the reasons for leaving him on the sidelines, or possibly his business interests had to take priority.

The Militia List for 1885 shows him still on the Reserve of Officers. His abilities would have made him an ideal person to raise and lead a troop of scouts. It was unusual for a man of his qualifications to be left unemployed at this time.

But there is an indication of the partnership's activities in 1885, in the Auditor General's Report on the Rebellion Expenses. Six tons of coal were supplied to the NWMP in Winnipeg for $75.54, plus $9.00 for cartage, and also the large total of $52,774.00 for "teaming", which covered the provision of wagons, draught animals.
and drivers during the Rebellion. This would have been a very profitable venture since transport was at a premium.

In 1885 the Dominion Coal Co. appears for the first time in Henderson's Winnipeg Directory, at 398 Main St, with storage yards at Higgins & Gomez. In the 1887 Henderson Directory, James Walsh is listed as Secretary Treasurer of the Dominion Coal Co. He had left the Bell partnership and purchased an interest in Dominion Coal, which later became the Dominion Coal, Coke and Transportation Co. in which Yates was also a major shareholder.

Walsh is credited with opening up and exploiting the coal deposits in the Souris district. The company became a major player in the fuel trade of western Canada, remaining in business until 1893. After this Walsh and his brothers Phillip and Louis continued in the coal trade, with headquarters in Port Arthur, until Walsh's death in 1905. There seems to be little doubt that he was increasingly well to do in the years after he left the NWMP.

In Winnipeg Walsh cultivated local politicians and was active in politics to the extent that this would help his business. Thirty items in the papers of Thomas Greenway, Liberal Premier of Manitoba, 1888 to 1900, are letters from Walsh, or notes of meetings with him. Not a large number but sufficient to indicate that he had access to the upper level of the provincial government. The letters refer to election matters, the railway, coal and other business topics.

He gave his support to the federal Liberals in bitter reaction to his ill-treatment, as he saw it, by the Conservatives and Sir John A. MacDonald, over his having to leave the Force. In particular he became friends with Clifford Sifton, the Winnipeg business man who became Minister of the Interior when the Liberals came to power in 1896 under Wilfréd Laurier. Laurier delegated to Sifton, amongst other things, responsibility for the NWMP and for rapidly complicating situation in the Yukon, where gold had been discovered.
Commissioner of the Yukon.

The Gold Rush.

The first discovery of gold in the Yukon was at Forty Mile Creek in 1886, at a time when there was no government presence in the area. Reports of liquor trading to the Indians, and the necessity to firmly establish the Canada-Alaska border, resulted in the dispatch of Inspector Charles Constantine NWMP to the district in late 1894. He reported the miners were becoming a law unto themselves and that the liquor trade was growing. He returned to Ottawa to report, and was ordered to introduce a police presence. Constantine arrived back at 40 Mile with 19 men on July 24th 1895 and built an NWMP post, Fort Constantine. By the summer of 1896 the police had established their authority.

On August 17th 1896 George Carmack made a rich strike of coarse gold on Bonanza Creek and the Klondike Gold Rush began as soon as news reached the outside world. An estimated $3 million of gold was taken out in 1897. In 1897 NWMP headquarters were moved to Dawson, and in February 1898 Superintendent Sam Steele relieved Constantine, the police strength being brought up to 100, and by November to 285, plus the military Yukon Field Force of 200 officers and men. Steele established firm control over the rapidly growing mining population, which peaked at 20,000. The police also ran most of the government services, including the mails.

Appointment as Commissioner.

In order to establish civil government, Ottawa decided to appoint a Commissioner of the Yukon with wide powers, including command of the NWMP. A select committee of the Privy Council chose James Walsh for the post. Walsh’s appointment was widely popular, and was due to his sponsorship by his friend Clifford Sifton, Minister of the Interior, in a memo dated August 11th 1897.

The actual appointment was confirmed by an Order in Council on August 11th to take effect on August 15th. Walsh was to report to the Minister of the Interior and have a salary of $5,000 per annum. A further Order in Council on August 26th appointed him a Superintendent of the NWMP with full command of the Force in the Yukon, and relieved the Commissioner of the NWMP of his responsibilities there.

The government needed someone with a well known name and reputation for action, to bring order out of the rapidly growing chaos of the registry of mining claims, the issuing permits of all kinds, royalty payments and all aspects of local administration, except for the police. Everything except the latter was rife with bribery and favouritism. But why did James Walsh accept this thankless post, well paid though it was ? Just getting to Dawson entailed considerable physical hardship for a fifty-four year old. Once there, the new Commissioner could expect heavy pressure from...
This photograph of James Morrow Walsh was taken after he left the NWMP. Tentatively dated 1890-1900. Despite the white moustache, and although at least in his mid-fifties Walsh retains the appearance of a younger man, with a virtually unlined face. RCMP Museum photo.
competing interests from every direction, and find an administration which was a quagmire of incompetence and graft, which he was expected to reform.

There is no evidence to suggest that his business interests were having any financial problems. Possession of his large house "Indian Cliff" on the so-called "Millionaire's Row" in Brockville points to considerable prosperity. But a reliable government salary of $5,000 in a prestigious appointment for a few years would be a pleasant addition to his income and his status.

But there was another compelling reason to accept. As soon as the Liberals came into power under Sir Wilfred Laurier in 1896, Walsh had sent a memorandum urging a drastic reduction in the NWMP:

"I have claimed for some time that the large sum expended on the force for the last ten years, for the duty it had and now has to perform, was, and is, a waste of money and an injustice to the tax payers and that the force should be reduced in numbers and reorganized.

This I said to Sir Richard Cartwright previous to our general elections five years ago, and said it to Ives about a year and a half ago. Ives asked what reduction I would suggest, I replied to cut the force in two, that five hundred men were sufficient to perform the duties and maintain law and order quite as well as is being done. Since that time the force has been reduced and Ives informed me last winter that it was the intention of the Government to bring it down to five hundred men.

The force should be reduced and reorganized for two reasons if for no other. 1st - In the interest of economy and the discontinuing of wasteful expenditure. 2nd - It has for eighteen years been under Tory rule and become what no force of its kind should ever be permitted to be, a political partizan machine which has to a great extent destroyed its usefulness".

In addition to showing how clearly and cogently Walsh could put a case in writing, this also reveals that he had been an active Liberal for some years, and was strongly opposed to the Conservatives who had ousted him from the Force. Dr Roderick Macleod, a noted historian of the NWMP, judges that, "Walsh has waited thirteen years to repair his self-esteem by humbling the organization which had rejected him". Sifton had little use for the Force and exploited Walsh's long festering sense of grievance.

His insistence that he have command over the NWMP in the Yukon confirms this motive. That his motive in criticising the Force was political and personal, rather than to provide for the public good, is shown by the fact that cuts in the Force were
strongly opposed by the population in the West. Also, the key work done by the Force in the Yukon in maintaining law and order proved that Canada could not do without it. Walsh's judgement and advice was clouded by his sense of personal injury.

Journey to the Yukon.

Walsh set out for the Yukon from Ottawa on September 23rd 1897, arriving in Vancouver on October 1st accompanied by Clifford Sifton. His staff consisted of F.C. Wade, to act as Crown Prosecutor, Capt. H.A. Bliss, accountant, mines inspectors, H.H. Norwood and J.D. McGregor, Dufferin Patullo, Walsh's private secretary and Phillip Walsh in charge of Indians and Transport.

They sailed from Vancouver on the 265 ton Quadra, a 175 foot steel hulled ship on October 2nd. Arriving at Skagway on the 8th after an uncomfortable, rainy passage the expected supplies which would enable them to proceed straight to Dawson were not available, so Walsh sent an advance party over the Chilcoot Pass to inspect conditions and return to Skagway via the White Pass.

On October 28th Walsh himself crossed the Chilcoot, but having left so late in the season was caught by the freeze up of the river on November 17th and had to winter on the banks of the Yukon River. In letters to Sifton he glossed over his misjudgement of the need for haste, and claimed that he gathered much useful information about conditions in the goldfields from talking to travellers.

He also made many common sense recommendations about the administration of the Yukon. Regarding the NWMP he was unwilling to change his prejudiced view. He recommended that the police be replaced by men such as experienced bushmen and river men from the Ottawa Valley with a little police training, & with militia officers, the whole in charge of a competent NWMP officer.
James Walsh's younger brother, Philip (1852-1932) in later life, possibly around 1900. He was a partner of James in his business activities, and was on his staff in the Yukon in 1897-98. Fort Walsh N.H.S photo JD.72.20.3.
Considering that he must have by now received reports of how well the NWMP were coping in the goldfields, his suggestions were outlandish, and due to his personal vendetta against the Force. This recommendation was ignored.

Recall & Aftermath.

Walsh finally arrived in Dawson on May 21st, 1898, only to be recalled three months later. In this short time he made many decisions and many more enemies. He imposed a 10% royalty on gold output, he gave a grant of $5,000 to build a hospital, permitted the opening of non-Anglican churches and limited the import of liquor. He also made himself readily available to all comers, and adjudicated such thorny matters as claim disputes, challenges to the issue of permits and much else. He saw himself as a benevolent autocrat, others strongly resented his decisions.

Autocratic decisions usually please one person, but antagonise many others, especially when favouritism is suspected, as it was in the mining community.

Walsh also clashed with Superintendant Sam Steele, no longer the young, admiring NCO of Fort Garry days, but now a most formidable and incorruptible personage, who no doubt resented the political appointment of a man whom he would regard as a "has-been" who had left the Force under questionable circumstances. Steele, although behaving with absolute correctness, apparently faced him down and Walsh limited his command of the NWMP to such acts as commandeering constables to chop firewood and do other menial chores. Steele was reporting directly to Ottawa at this time and had a pipeline to the government via Fred White, the Comptroller of the NWMP, his reports would not have gone unheard.

Walsh was the target of a great deal of scurrilous local newspaper coverage, a reaction to his support for regulation and order in the goldfields, and the incompetence, disorder and possibly the corruption in the Office of the Gold Commissioner. His name was linked with a young woman whose claim dispute he had decided in her favour.

When the rich Dominion Creek area was opened for staking claims under permit, Walsh's cook Louis Carbeno swore under oath at the subsequent royal commission hearing that he had been given a head start. He also claimed that he had to turn over his claim to Walsh's brother Phillip.

All this filtered back to Ottawa, where Sir Charles Tupper and the opposition put down a motion for the censure of Walsh. After bitter debate it was defeated by the government majority. But Walsh had become a political liability to the government and he was recalled.

Walsh was furiously resentful of his treatment, and defended himself at length in his Report. He defended the favourable
issuance of permits to officials on the grounds that, merely
staking a claim did not mean a profit, the claim needed the
investment of at least $5,000 to work it. He seemed to miss the
point that officials were expect to set a high standard of
conduct, not behave like part time businessmen taking advantage of
political contacts.

More reasonably, he wrote to Sifton saying that, "... if I
were intoxicated in Dawson and ladies were seen going and coming
to my tent, what can you or the government do about it, and what
business is it now of yours ?"

The proceedings of the royal commission filled 300 pages of
the Sessional Papers in 1898 with a great deal of sometimes
irrelevant, and sometimes contradictory testimony. The impression
one receives is that Walsh did his best, but that the government
had appointed the wrong man to the post of Commissioner. Whether
anyone else could have dominated and cleared up the almost
insoluble administrative chaos in the Yukon is open to doubt. But
Walsh's reputation suffered from all the accusations of his
enemies, mostly American miners who were used to the much more
free and easy atmosphere of the goldfields in the U.S.

Walsh returned home a sadder and more bitter man with his
reputation tarnished.

But Walsh was not without his supporters and admirers. Some
years later the Editor of the Dawson Daily News wrote that Walsh's
influence had been mainly beneficial and that appeals against
arbitrary official acts were swiftly upheld.

On a personal level, Walsh aroused considerable devotion,
Duff Pattullo, his young secretary, in a letter on October 31st
1897, to his Father wrote:

"It is fortunate that the command of this expedition
has fallen into such competent hands and on shoulders so
capable of carrying the enormous responsibilities
involved. I have always heard, just as everyone else has
of Major Walsh's indomitable courage, but it seems to me
that he possesses in no less degree another character-
istic equally essential to the success of this
expedition, that is, a complete mastery of detail."

"Another forte of Major Walsh is his confidence. The
other night we were in such grave danger at the foot
of the summit, I must confess that with a man less
confident I should have faltered and felt like turning
back".

As during his years in the NWMP Walsh was able to gain the
confidence and admiration of his subordinates, but still clashed
with his superiors.
Last years.

From 1898 at the age of 58, when he returned from the Yukon until his death in 1905 Walsh continued his business activities, living mainly in Brockville, his brothers Phillip and Louis managing the family's interests in Port Arthur.

He evidently mellowed and put behind him his disappointment and bitterness over his dismissal from the Yukon, for his obituary in 1905 recalls him as:

"... one of the most genial of men - one with whom it was always a pleasure to meet. He was well read, and a most interesting conversationalist, and few had a greater fund of information, especially about Western Canada, than he."

He was still being asked to take on difficult and thankless jobs. In January 1904 Lieutenant Colonel W.C. Hodgins wrote to him from Ottawa asking him to command and reorganize the 41st Regiment (Brockville Rifles). This unit was in such trouble that all the officers had been forced to resign. Walsh politely declined to become involved in this mess, saying that his business interests took up all his time.

Walsh was taken ill on Monday July 24th 1905 and died from heart trouble the next morning at 11.30am. He was given a funeral with full military honours. His coffin, draped with a Union Jack, was drawn on a gun carriage in a long procession through the streets of Brockville with a military escort.

Conclusions.

James Morrow Walsh was a man of charm, intelligence, quick temper and great vitality. Many people admired and respected him, but few would have wanted him as a subordinate. His quick temper and inability to suffer fools gladly probably resulted in his having few close friends.

His drive and energy made him an effective officer in the NWMP, and his contribution to the peaceful ending to the long negotiations with the Sioux was substantial. But this was all undermined by his lack of instinct for self-preservation in the internal and external politics of the NWMP, his indiscreet personal life and his self-promotion in the media.

These flaws, particularly the first, allowed shrewder men, such as Sitting Bull, Sir John A. MacDonald and Clifford Sifton to exploit his abilities and then discard him.

In his dealings with Sitting Bull he allowed sentiment to take precedence over survival, a poor career move for a civil servant. He seemed to have genuinely liked and respected Sitting
Part of the military funeral procession of James Morrow Walsh in Brockville, July 1905, showing the casket, draped with a Union flag being drawn on a gun carriage, followed by a horse with boots reversed in the stirrups. It was a very elaborate funeral, suitably honouring "one of Brockville's most esteemed citizens and one of Canada's noblest sons". (Obituary, Brockville Evening Recorder, 25th July 1905) This is one of six photos which together show the full length of the procession, which included civilian as well as military mourners. Fort Walsh N.H.S. photo JD.72.20.12A.
Bull, who astutely exploited Walsh's friendship and political inexperience to continually delay his return to the U.S.

Clifford Sifton took advantage of Walsh's fame and his dislike of the NWMP to place him in a no-win situation in the Yukon, probably from well-meaning, but political motives.

During the latter part of the 19th century and through most of the 20th James Walsh's fame endured. Its basis was his very real achievements in the NWMP, but it was much enhanced by Canadians' preference to see his myth reflected in the shield of Perseus, rather than being turned to stone by facing the plight of the aboriginal peoples. (see p.2).

James Walsh achieved fame and fortune in his lifetime, he may have been fully satisfied with this result.
APPENDIX I

James Walsh's Uniforms.

Invoice for uniforms 1877.
The original invoice was donated to the RCMP Museum by Walsh's daughter, Mrs Cora McGannon in 1940. Transcribed by David Ross Oct 1996. Words in [ ] not in original text.

London May 1877

The Secretary of State for Canada
N.W. Mounted Police Dept, Ottawa.

TO: Maynard, Harris & Grice
126 Leadenhall St, E.C.

Terms: Nett cash on receipt of Invoice.
5% Discount upon remittances accompanying Orders.
Interest on amounts outstanding beyond 6 mos.

Bankers: Glyn, Mills, Currie & Co.

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<th>Item Description</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Price</th>
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<tr>
<td>Scarlet cloth dress tunic trimmed to Regulation 13th Hussars. Gold lace round top of collar with gold eyeing under Austrian knot on sleeves with gold figuring braid, blue cloth facings.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>£22-0-0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pr. gold crowns on collar</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Pr. Full dress trousers with 1 3/4 inch gold stripes</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>£4-0-0</td>
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<td>New Regulation helmet with...with spike &amp; ornament. Fall chain &amp; plating rim</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>£3-6-6</td>
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<tr>
<td>White hair plume for do.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan case for do.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2-6</td>
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<tr>
<td>do. helmet with lock &amp; nameplate engraved</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gold dress sword knot</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14-0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light cavalry sword with motto, device &amp; initials on blade</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>£2-17-6</td>
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Walsh/Ross 53
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<td>8-0-0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pr embroidered crowns on collar</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pr Undress treble doe trousers with scarlet stripes</td>
<td>2-0-0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pr chain straps</td>
<td>1-0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pr Bedford cord riding breeches</td>
<td>40/-</td>
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<td>Scarlet cloth mess jacket trim'd gold braid all round 1/2 inch Arty. lace. Gold cord Austrian knot on sleeves with gold eyeing, blue cloth facings &amp;c.</td>
<td>6-15-0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pr white buck gloves 7 1/2</td>
<td>8/3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reg'n. blue cloth cavalry cloak lined scarlet shalloon with moveable cape &amp; uniform buttons</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Airtight uniform case, extra strong with lock, handles &amp; name plate engraved</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reg'n. U.P. [Universal Pattern] Cavalry Cloak</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reg'n. U.P. Helmet (Cavalry)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pr do. Leggings</td>
<td>13-0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forage cap with gold lace band emb'd. top &amp; button &amp; oilskin cover [see colour plate]</td>
<td>1-5-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pr steel jack spurs with chains &amp; leather</td>
<td>8-0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pr steel screw spurs</td>
<td>3-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russia leather sword knot with gold acorn end</td>
<td>11-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russia leather shoulder belt with gilt buckle tip &amp; slide</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Black patent leather binocular case with gilt ornaments richly gilt plate &amp; silver mounts</td>
<td>3-13-6</td>
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<td>Aluminum field glass</td>
<td>5-5-0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engraving initials on do.</td>
<td>1-0</td>
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Appendix I - James Walsh's Uniforms.

Undress style military tunic worn by James Walsh.

Although this pattern of undress tunic was introduced between 1880 and 1883 for NWMP Officers, this jacket appears to pre-date this period. The cloth is of coarser quality than other surviving NWMP officers tunics of the same pattern, also the white collar liner, edged with silver braid, was definitely not worn by the NWMP. It seems probable that this tunic was first worn by Walsh during his Militia service, most likely when he commanded the Prescott Troop of Cavalry from 1867 and possibly on military occasions in later life when he was retired, but on the Reserve of Officers. Collection of the RCMP Museum.
Appendix I - James Walsh's Uniforms.

Top: 1876 Pattern NWMP Officer's pill box cap worn with the undress tunic in lower picture. The pouch belt carried a black pouch containing a pair of binoculars. Neither of these items actually belonged to Walsh, but are identical to ones he would have worn. From the collection of Canadian Heritage.
Appendix I - James Walsh's Uniforms.

The 1876 Pattern full dress uniform for NWMP Officers in use during Walsh's service. Although these items are not Walsh's own, they are identical to the ones he would have worn. A number of items of his own uniforms are in the collection of the RCMP Museum.

Clockwise from upper left: Inspector's tunic, scarlet with dark blue collar & cuffs, gold lace & braid; pouch worn by all ranks of Officers, purple velvet background, gold lace & braid, silver metal buffalo head, gilt fittings; helmet with white horsehair plume; Superintendent's tunic, note the additional gold lace on cuffs & collar. From the collections of the RCMP Museum, the Bruce County Museum & the Glenbow Museum.

Walsh/Ross 57
NOTE: Translating historic prices into modern values is fraught with difficulties. But £105-17-6 sterling was a considerable sum of money. Taking the $ exchange rate in the 1870's to be $5 = £1, this equals $530, about half Walsh's $1,000 annual salary.

From another point of view, in 1996 a scarlet patrol jacket (costing £8 or $40 in 1877) was reproduced for Fort Walsh and cost $1,300

APPENDIX II.

This report of Colonel Irvine, drawn up just after he was appointed Commissioner on November 1st 1880, tells us a great deal about the writer as well as about his subordinates. Irvine had been Assistant Commissioner since 1876, and would have been in considerable measure responsible for the training and conduct of the officers he so roundly criticises. The report is perhaps typical of the insecure, newly appointed head of any organization trying to distance himself from the actions of his predecessor.
This being said, there is no reason to think that these were not his true feelings at this time. But keep in mind when reading that Irvine was a conventional gentleman with a military background, conscious of his own superior social status and almost devoid of imagination.

There are certain coded phrases, such as "unsteady in his habits" meaning "he drinks too much", or even "he is an alcoholic".

National Archives of Canada

(Transcribed from holograph original by David Ross, Jan 1996. Notes added in square brackets are not in original).

Covering letter.

Fort Walsh
Cypress Hills
17th Nov 1880

Sir,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of Mr White's telegram of the 8th instant in which I am instructed to provide you with a confidential report on the officers of the Force.

I now have the honour to comply with your instructions and enclose herewith the confidential report asked for.

In each case what I have reported is the result of most careful consideration, and I believe that the conclusions I have arrived at will be found reliable and accurate.

I consider that it is a matter very much to be regretted that (at the time of ?) the organization of the Force that steps were not taken which would have resulted in the proper instruction of officers. Many were placed in positions of independant command with but a very superficial knowledge of their duties. I need hardly point out the evil results that have followed.

I shall always employ every means in my power to instruct officers in all branches of their duty. And I have every reason to hope that by doing so I shall establish an "Esprit-de-Corps" that has not heretofore existed.

In appointing officers to this force I consider that in many cases the selections have not been made from a class of men likely to establish that prestige necessary to a force the Military organization of which should be perfect and the example set exemplary.

I have the honour to be

Sir
Your Obt. Servant

A.G. Irvine.
Commr.
To The Right Honble. the
Minister of the Interior
Ottawa.

WALSH, Supt. J.M. [Aged 40]

Has a certain amount of natural ability, "sharpness" would perhaps be a better word. Might have made a very fair officer had he been kept at Head Quarters under strict supervision before being sent to an independant command. Is prone to act on his own authority in a manner that cannot be considered subordinate, with a view of making his own name conspicuous. I do not consider him particularly straightforward. I have little confidence in him.

Inspector Meale.[Aged 30]

Have always found him a most efficient and hard working officer. Has had considerable experience in the Quarter Master Branch. Some years ago I found the Quarter Master's Department at Fort Walsh kept in a very slack manner, during the time Supt. Walsh was in command. On ascertaining this I placed Inspector Meale in charge and the manner in which this office changed the system for the better reflects greatly to his credit. He has been for some time employed in the Department in Ottawa. I have no doubt a favourable opportunity has been offered to judge of his ability.

Supt. Crosier. [Aged 34]

A tremendously hardworking and good officer. He has profited much by his experience in the North West Mounted Police. And by diligent application has become a very efficient officer. He takes a praiseworthy and conscientious interest in his work. Where holding responsible command has shown considerable tact and ability. The utmost confidence can safely be placed in him.

Supt. Walker. [Aged 34]

This officer has never served directly under me. But from an inspection of his Post last year I was by no means favourably impressed. I am quite satisfied that his administrative ability or knowledge of discipline is not great. Is very indifferently educated. He is I understand a good practical farmer.

Inspector Steele. [Aged 39]

I consider a fair officer, has but a moderate amount of natural ability. Is somewhat slow in the performance of his duties. Has but little experience as regards command.

Walsh/Ross 60
Supt. [W.D.] Jarvis. [Aged 44]

An officer who has had service in the regular Army. I have never had this officer serving under me. But cannot say I have much confidence in his judgement or that I consider him a good disciplinarian. Is somewhat unsteady in his habits.

Supt. Winder.

This officer takes little interest in his work and does not appear to like the service. As an instance, he was ordered from Fort Macleod to this post and was here for some two months during the past summer. While here he was posted to A Troop, the command of which he never took over, showing the utmost disregard as to its well being and efficiency. A great portion of his time is devoted to outside speculation. He knows nothing whatever of discipline. Suffers greatly from "piles" and is unfit to perform the duties to which officers of the Force are often subject.

Superintendent [W.M.] Herchmer. [Aged 36]

Has a thorough knowledge of discipline, taking much interest in his work and always has his Post in good order. I consider him a good officer in many respects, he is however somewhat lacking in tact and administrative ability otherwise I have confidence in him. Has not always been particularly steady in his habits.

Inspector Shurtleff. [Aged 38]

This officer served under me at Fort Macleod, I always found him hardworking & trustworthy. I have every confidence in his integrity. His manner with men is not particularly good nor is his knowledge or experience great.

Inspector Gagnon.

I have seen very little of this officer. He appears to have performed his duties satisfactory [sic.] at Edmonton. He is a lawyer. Doubtless I shall soon be in a position to judge of this officer's ability and usefulness, if so, I shall lose no time in forwarding a more detailed report.

Inspector Griesbach. [Aged 41]

I know really nothing of this officer.
Inspector French.

Is an officer who I believe does his best towards the satisfactory performance of his duty. I cannot say I have much confidence in his judgement. His manner with men is bad. He is very indifferently educated. His knowledge of discipline is not great.

Inspector McIlree. [Aged 31]

Is I consider the making [?] of a good officer. I have every confidence in his integrity. I cannot however say that I consider him particularly energetic. Is I understand a graduate of the Royal Military College Sandhurst, England. Is well educated.

Inspector Denny. [Aged 30]

Is a hard working, energetic and trustworthy officer. His natural ability however is not great. Is somewhat "boyish" in manner and habits. He is not particularly well educated.

Inspector Antrobus.

Has sufficient ability to carry out his duties satisfactorily and has in many cases done so. He is not steady in his habits and I cannot say that I have entire confidence in him. He speaks French.

Inspector Dickens. [Aged 36]

I consider this officer unfit for the Force. He is lazy and takes no interest whatever in his work. He is unsteady in his habits. I am of the opinion that his brain is slightly effected.

Inspector Dowling.

Served under me here for some time. I consider him too old for active work on the prairie, so I transferred him to Port Macleod as Acting Quarter Master. As far as I know he has performed these duties very satisfactorily. Has had no experience as regards command.

Inspector Frechette.

This officer does not take what I consider a true interest in his work. Has no fitness for command. His knowledge of discipline and administration is not great. I have no faith in his judgement. Has suffered from "fistula" and is unfit to undertake any hard duty which necessitates constant riding. Speaks French and English fluently.

Has been a very useful officer on the prairie and the duties he has been called upon to do he has performed most efficiently. He is somewhat old, but of strong and powerful build. His knowledge of discipline is not great. I have little faith in his judgement.

Inspector Cotton. [Aged 27]

Is an active intelligent and well educated officer. He holds a first class "Long Course" certificate from the Royal School of Gunnery, Kingston, also first class certificated from Cavalry & Infantry Schools. Is well up in interior economy, drill & discipline. Takes a great interest in his work, in fact I may say he is a "born soldier". I have the greatest confidence in him. He speaks French. He is a valuable officer to the Police Force.

Surgeon Kittson. [Aged 36]

Is I understand (& believe) a very clever Surgeon, kind and most attentive. Speaks French and is very much liked by the Indians and Half Breeds. I regret to say that he is very unsteady in his habits.

Surgeon Miller.

I have not had much opportunity of judging this officer's character. But the little I know of him I was by no means favourably impressed.

Surgeon Kennedy. [Aged 22]

Is I understand and believe a very clever young surgeon. Takes a sincere interest in his work and is most kind and attentive. Has a fair knowledge of French. Before this officer worked under me I was informed that he was of unsteady habits, I do not however credit this, I have always found just the reverse, and at all times fit to perform his professional duties.
APPENDIX III

Public Archives of Manitoba

Journal of the Progress of a Detachment of Mounted Police under the command of Major J.M. Walsh from the 1st to the 22nd October 1873. [Public Archives of Manitoba MG 6 A1 pp.211-225 in the papers of James Morrow Walsh, transcribed by David Ross Feb 19961.

This Journal was kept as an official record of the journey of the first detachment of the then newly formed North West Mounted Police, from Ottawa to Lower Fort Garry, under the command of Inspector James Morrow Walsh. Note that words in square brackets [] are not part of the original document. Alternative place names in square brackets are taken from Colonel Garnet Wolseley’s official Report on the Red River Expedition, which covered roughly the same route in 1870, and from STANLEY, G.F.C. Toll & Trouble: Military Expeditions to the Red River.

Journal of the Progress of a Detachment of Mounted Police under the command of Major J.M. Walsh from the 1st to the 22nd October 1873.

The Detachment of Mounted Police consisting of one officer, one non-com Officer & 32 privates proceeded from Ottawa by train at 9.30pm on the 1st October 1873, arriving at Prescott Junction at 1.10am 2nd instant.

T.O’Neil, trumpeter was there discharged & sent to Ottawa for being drunk & riotous. One Pte., Wm.Walsh[1] joined.


The Detachment left Brockville at 4.30am and arrived at Kingston at 6.45am where the men breakfasted, proceeded at 7.5am arriving at Toronto at 1.10, dined and left for Collingwood at 4pm one Pte. J. Nelson[8] being absent. The following order was posted during the day.

Ptes. Lawrence Fortescue[9], Ret. Lieut. Royal Marine Lt. Inff. & S.B.Steele late Sgt. A. Battery Domn. Artillery to act as non com officers of the Detachment from this date.

Pte. P.R. Neale late Sergt, A Battery Domn. Artillery to act as Qr.Mr.Sgt.

At Toronto Lt.Col. Richardson[10], Ottawa & Major McDonald[11], Collingwood were communicated with by telegraph. Arrived at Collingwood at 9.45pm where Major McDonald met the Detachment which was marched to billets at the Railway Hotel.

On the morning of the 3rd Pte.J.Todd[12] accidentally shot himself in the fore-arm, with his revolver while practicing on the shore of the lake.
The Detachment paraded at 9am after which they received greatcoats, towel, soap, tin plate & cup, knife, fork & spoon. Pte Wm. Walsh took the Oath of Allegiance before the Mayor (Mr Mobcrley).

Pte. Nelson rejoined in the morning having come on from Toronto by night train. In the afternoon blankets were served out.

The steamer not being ready to start the Detachment remained at Collingwood.

The following memo was issued on the 3rd instant:

"The C.O. hopes the men will abstain from too free an use of intoxicating liquors. While he is no advocate for wholly abstaining, still it will be his duty to report to the Commissioner on his arrival at Lower Fort Garry cases of drunkenness that may be brought before him. All having received certificates of good moral character they should bear in mind that if they abuse them, it reflects not only on themselves but also on their ...... [sponsors?] who vouched for them. The C.O. wishes it to be distinctly understood that this memo is intended more as a request than as a warning. The C.O. hopes that in passing thro the country the men will bear in mind that this is not a mere Volunteer Militia Force which has only to obey orders but that each man will be liable at any time to be called to exercise his own judgement and trusts that by their conduct they will show themselves worthy of the trust placed in them.

By Order.

On the morning of the 4th the detachment paraded at 9.30am and marched to the Volunteer drill shed for squad drill returning at 11.45, dined, paraded again at 1pm and marched aboard the Steamer Cumberland. Left Collingwood at 3pm.

The following Ptes. were appointed as Corporals of the Detachment vis.

Pte. J. McIlree[13]
" R.E. Steele
" R. Killaly[14]

A Guard was mounted & sentries posted to prevent the men from leaving the ship at the various ports. At Collingwood Lt. Col. Richardson was communicated with by letter & telegraph. The Detachment arrived at Thunder Bay at 3.50am 8th October and landed at once, breakfast at 6.45am. Landed[?] baggage at 7am leaving themselves in waggons at 7.30am. Arrived and dined at 16 Mile shanty at 12.45. Proceeded 1.15pm Arrived at Brown's Lane at 5pm.

9th October. Left Brown's Lane at 2am & arrived at Lake Shebandowan at 6am. We[?] were unable to proceed further there being no steamer to enable them to connect.
10th October. Left Shebandowan at 6.30pm arriving at Kashaboiwe Portage at 9.40am, crossed the portage (3/4 mile) & started on Kashaboiwe Lake at 10.30am arriving at Height of Land Portage at 12 noon. Crossed the Portage (1 3/4 miles) & started on Lac des Milles Lac at 12.45. Arrived at Baril Portage 5.30pm. Crossed the Portage (3/4 mile) and started on Baril Lake at 6.30 arriving at Baril Portage at 8.45pm. Crossed the portage 1/2 mile & halted for the night.

11th October. Breakfast at 6am. Left on Lake Windegooshcan [Windeqooatiqou] at 7am. in open boats arriving at French Portage at 10am. Crossed the Portage (2 m) and started on Lake Koagasikok [Pickerel] at 12 noon arriving at Pine Portage 2.45pm. Crossed the Portage (3 m) dined & started on Sturgeon Lake at 5.40 arriving at Sturgeon Portage at 10.30 pitched tents for the first time and halted for the night.

12th October. Breakfast at 7.30am. Started across Sturgeon Portage at 8.50. Indians at first refused to row the boats on account of its being Sunday. Embarked on Me...ie[?] River 10.30am and arrived at the Portage at 12.45, one boat having stuck at the Rapids on the way. On account of the scarcity of boats one boat was portaged. Proceeded at 1.40pm. & arrived at Island Portage at 3pm. where the Detachment was detained for want of steamer to connect. Pitched camp at 3.30pm.


14th October. Struck Camp 6.30am. & started on Neqnachon [Namekan] Lake at 7.35am. arriving at Kettle Falls at 11.15am. Left on Rainy River at 12noon arriving at Fort Francis at 5.25. Crossed the Portage (2m) & pitched camp at 7.30pm.

15 October. Struck tents at 6.30am & proceeded on Rainy River at 8.40am. Arrived at the Long Irvinx[?] 3pm. Delayed on account of went of communication. Pitched camp 3.20pm.

16 October. Delayed all day for want of communications until 9.30pm. when the steamer having arrived, struck Camp & proceeded on board.

17 October. Left Long Irvinx[?] at 6am arriving at N.W. Angle at 5.30pm. While being conveyed from the steamer to the Angle in tow boats the engineer in charge of the steamer cast the barges off & left for the shore. The Detachment was left adrift in the barge for 2 hours but assistance having arrived from the shore they arrived at the Station at 9.45pm.

18 October. Started to march to 30 Mile Shanty at 9.45am, baggage following in 3 wagons & 4 Bullock Carts. At mid-day left Baggage Guard consisting of 1 Act. Corpl. & 4 Ptes.to bring up the baggage. Arrived at Birch River at 7pm.
19 October. Delayed on account of the non-arrival of the Baggage train. The men were unable to march further on account of the condition of their boots. Baggage arrived at 6pm. Left behind Baggage Guard of 1 Corpl. & 6 privates. Remainder proceeded in 5 waggons & arrived at White Mouth River at 7pm.

20 October. Left White Mouth River at 6am in 5 waggons arriving at Oak Point at 4pm. Sent letter to Col. Smith reporting arrival & received order from him to proceed next day to the Seine River.

21 October. Left Oak Point at 6.30am & arrived at Seine River at 3.20pm & pitched Camp. Communicated arrival to Col. Smith.[15]


[Footnotes:]
1. Wm. Walsh, Reg. No.50, aged 21, from Prescott, occupation "Carpenter". Nephew of Major James Morrow Walsh.
3. Samuel Benfield Steele, Reg. No.5, aged 24, from Simcoe, occupation given as "Sailor", which should have read "Soldier". Sub Inspector 1873, Inspector 1880, Superintendent 1885. Famous for his work in the Klondike and for raising and commanding Strathcona's Horse in the Boer War. Later Major General Sir Sam, KCMG. CB. MVO. d.1919.
5. G.M. Stoele, Reg. No.43, aged 18, from Simcoe, occupation "Farmer". Brother of S.B. Steele.
6. J.G. Harding, Reg. No.26, aged 23, from Toronto, occupation "Groom".
10. L. Col. Richardson
11. Major McDonald
14. R. Killaly, Reg. No.3, aged 26, from Toronto, occupation "Clerk".
15. Lieutenant Colonel W. Osborne Smith, temporary Commissioner of the NWMP 25.9.73 to 17.10.73.
Endnotes.

Beginnings.

His start in life.

Birth date is given as 22nd May in all sources, but the year varies from 1840 (MACLEOD), to 1841 (OBITUARY), to 1843 (MORGAN). Macleod has been assessed as the most reliable.

Young manhood.

The account of James Walsh's civilian activities until he was 30 are based on MACLEOD & MACEWAN. For lacrosse prowess see, MORTON, Desmond, The Canadian General, Hakkert, Toronto, 1974. p.85 quoting the Toronto World of Dec 23rd 1923.

Militia Service and Marriage.

Canada's Military Tradition.


Joining the Militia

Militia Lists 1865-1904 give ranks, dates of promotions and units in which Walsh served. Medal award from "Canada General Service Medal Roll", MAC. Copies of Militia School Certificates are in the Walsh Historic Personnel File, RCMP Historian's Office. Original Commissions as Captain and Major are in the collection of the RCMP Museum. Deterioration of the Militia Schools after 1870 is detailed in HARRIS,S.J. Canadian Brass. U of T Press, Toronto, 1988,p.16 et seq.

Marriage.

Details from MACLEOD which gives dates of marriage and of the birth of their daughter Cora. MACLEOD is the source of Walsh having to refuse commission in 2nd Ontario Rifles.

Militia Service cont.

See "Militia Service" above.

North West Mounted Police, the first phase 1873-76.

Joining the Force.

Need for raising the NWMP taken from HERRALL, S. Pictorial History of the RCMP, McGraw Hill Ryerson, Toronto, 1973 and

Walsh/Ross

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The quote "explosive mixture..." is from, Zazlow, Morris, The Opening of the Canadian North 1870-1914 p.17.

The calculation of the present day value of Walsh's salary coincides with the formula, "Multiply by 50" which is put forward by the British historian, Roy Jenkins in Gladstone. MacMillan, London 1995 p.4.

The First Detachment.

Orders to Walsh as C.O. First Detachment in NAC RG18 Al Vol 1 No.22. Details of journey to Fort Garry from Walsh Papers, PAM MG6 Al pp.211-225, "Journal of the Progress of a Detachment of Mounted Police under the Command of Major J.M. Walsh from 1st to 22nd Oct 1873". See transcript in DOCUMENTS C-13 & Appendix III. For row with George Dixon see, both letters, Walsh to Richardson and Dixon to Dawson in NAC RG18 Al Vol 1 File 22-74.

Training at Lower Fort Garry.


The March West.

For details of daily events & routine in the ranks, see BAGLEY and FINDLAYSON diaries. For detailed account of the March see John Peter TURNER and, Henri JULIEN diary, Glenbow Archives #A.J94.

Fort Macleod 1874.

For journeys to Montana see, J.P.TURNER, Vol I, pp.192-197.

Building Fort Walsh 1875.

Illness 1876.


James Walsh and the Advent of the Sioux.

International Complications.

The report is entitled "Printed Confidentially for the use of Ministers of the Crown. Papers relating to the Sioux Indians of the United States who have taken refuge in Canadian Territory". NAC RG7 G21 No. 2001 Vol 319 Vol 3(d) (henceforward referred to as "SIOUX PAPERS") A copy is in DOCUMENTS C3. For Foreign Office to Thornton June 1880 see NAC RG10 Vol 3652, file 8589 Pt 1 & DOCUMENTS C4.

Policy of the Canadian Government.

See references in text.

The First Sioux cross the Border.
The Arrival of Sitting Bull.
General Terry’s Commission.
Walsh Moves to Wood Mountain

The sources are J. P. TURNER, SIOUX PAPERS (Documents C3), REPORTS TO THE COMMISSIONER 1877-80 (Documents C7-10) and HORRALL. These sources provide a great deal of additional detail, as well as material not directly related to Walsh. Documents in these sources are in date order and can be accessed from dates in their texts. Further details are taken from DOCUMENTS section C.

North West Mounted Police, last phase 1880-83

Move to Qu’Appelle.

Irvine’s Report.

For Irvine’s confidential report, see, NAC RG18 Vol 12 File 460-1880 & Appendix II.

The Prime Minister’s opinion of Walsh’s conduct.

de Winton’s Letter Book NAC MG27 B4 Vol. 1. (DOCUMENTS C2.)
At Qu'Appelle

Van Horne letter in PAM Walsh papers pp.407-8 (DOCUMENTS C15)
Walsh's offer to go to Washington & MacDonald's prohibition, see
Sask.Archives, Edgar Dewdney Papers, M320: Box 2, File 33.
(DOCUMENTS C20)

Leaving the Force.

For de Winton's letterbook, MacDonald to Lorne letters see, PAM
MG27 B4 Vol 1. Irvine's distrust is clear in his Confidential
Report, Appendix II. For date of retirement and amount of gratuity
see, NAC RG18 Vol 2719, Mounted Police Records 1873-1922 -
J.M.Walsh & (DOCUMENTS C-1.)

Life in Business.

For contact with Van Horne see, Walsh Papers PAM MG6 A1 p.410, and
Shaughnessy on p.610.

Commissioner of the Yukon.

See, MACLEOD, HORRALL, BERTON, and BUSH for story of the Gold
Rush. For Report of the Privy Council Committee, see, DOCUMENTS
E28. For Walsh's Commissions see, Sessional Papers, Canada, No.13,
For Walsh Memorandum, see, NAC Laurier Papers, Vol 19 p.7089,
Walsh to Laurier, 15 Sept 1896. For Macleod quote see his, "North
West Mounted Police 1873-1905: Law enforcement and the social
p.111. For facts of arrival, stay and departure in the Yukon, see
in particular, BUSH, Edward, "Commissioners of the Yukon 1897
-1918", Cdn. Historic Sites: Occ. Papers in Archaeology &
For Patullo letter see, PAM, Walsh Papers, MG6 A1, pp.419-427, a
vivid account of the hardships involved in crossing the Chilkoot
and travel up to Lake Lindeman.

Last Years.

Brockville Rifles invitation see PAM MG6 A1 pp.431-434, also in
DOCUMENTS Part F.

ADNEY, Edwin Tappan *The Klondike Stampede of 1897-98*. New York, 1900
Adney was correspondent for Harper’s Illustrated Weekly in the Yukon.

BEAL, Bob Biography of Assistant Commissioner Lief Newry Fitzroy Crozier. Dictionary of Canadian Biography. No mention of Walsh, but the description of Crozier’s dealings with Sitting Bull is useful to compare with Walsh’s methods.


BUSH, Edward F. Commissioners of the Yukon 1897-1918. Canadian Historic Sites: Occasional Papers in Archaeology & History No. 10. Parks Canada, Ottawa, 1974 Includes detailed account of Walsh’s tenure as Commissioner of the Yukon. Useful for chronology of his activities. Hints at autocratic methods. Gives Walsh considerable credit for work of others. Even handed account Walsh’s conduct and Tupper’s accusations and denies Walsh’s ill-health. Notes he was recalled and did not resign.


CANADA


CHAMBERS, Ernest J.

DEANE, R. Burton
A Mounted Police Life in Canada. London, 1916. Deane joined the NWMP in 1883 after Walsh's departure. Many candid comments about events and people. Refers to an Ottawa comment that the NWMP were an "armed mob" in 1883 p.3. Comment on Irvine, "a gallant & honourable gentleman". p.31.

DENNY, Insp. Cecil E.

DENNY, Insp. Cecil E.

DEMPSEY, Hugh A. (Editor)

DEMPSEY, Hugh A. (Ed)
A Winter at Fort Macleod. Diaries of Surgeon R.B. Nevitt. Glenbow-Alberta Institute, Calgary 1976. Walsh mentioned only in passing. No comments on Walsh. Illustrated with Nevitt's watercolours & drawings which show meeting with Sitting Bull, Fort Calgary and views of the prairie landscape. See also Nevitt letters.

EVENING TIMES RECORDER, Brockville
An interesting example of how well regarded James Walsh was at the time of his death in his home town, his popularity and celebrity
had not dimmed over the years. It is worth noting that his dealings with Sitting Bull take up only one 3-line sentence in a two page account. Gives birth date as 1841.

FITZPATRICK, Frank Joseph Emile

Sergeant 331; personal recollections of a member of the Canadian North West Mounted Police from 1879-1885. -- , New York, 1921

Fitzpatrick was at Qu'Appelle during Sitting Bull's time there.

GOLDRING, Phillip


A meticulously researched and fully documented account of the origins and early history of the NWMP (1873-74) mainly from primary sources. The importance of Walsh's contribution to training and administration is clearly shown. Required reading.

HAYDON, A.L.


A standard interpretation for the date it was written.

HILDBRANDE, Walter & HUBNER, Brian


A thoughtful assessment of the relations and actions of the NWMP and the Sioux (and other native people) in the Cypress Hills 1873-83, by two historians very well versed in the history of this period and area. Some perceptive analysis of Walsh's actions. Required reading for this period.

HORRALL, S.


Standard mentions of Walsh in NWMP chronology.

HUBNER, Brian & PAYMENT, Diane


JENNINGS, John

LOEW, Franklin M. & Edward Wood  
Useful data on veterinary practice to complement Walsh’s expert knowledge of horses.

MacEWAN, Grant  
Based in part on Walsh Papers. Lionizes Walsh to some extent. Explores Walsh’s problems in dealing with his NWMP & political masters. An example of the “Walsh as Canadian hero” genre.

McKay, W.H.  
McKay was squatting in 1875 at the site where Fort Walsh was built. Suggestions as to why Fort was located there.

MACLEOD, Roderick C  
Lucid & authoritative analysis of the early years of the NWMP. Excellent bibliography and sources. Outlines Walsh’s role & difficulties in his dealings with Sitting Bull. Interesting chapter on the social position & status of officers. Sees a benevolent police despotism as the key to stability in the West. Sees Walsh’s report to Laurier recommending disbandment of the Force in the Yukon as the result of Walsh’s bitterness about his forced resignation. Required reading.

MACLEOD, Roderick C.  
*Biography of James Morrow Walsh.* Dictionary of Canadian Biography Vol XIII.  
Good analysis of Walsh’s NWMP life & career. A few details of early and later life. Discerning comments on his character.

MANZINE, Joseph  
Covers Walsh/Sitting Bull relationship. Interesting information on media coverage.

MCCULLOUGH, A.B  
Useful information about the Fort itself. Slight mention of Walsh in passing.
McCULLOUGH, Alan B. & Others.


No details of Walsh's role in the building of the Fort. Long quote of Walsh's account of Little Child-Crow's Dance incident, May 27th 1877. Also biographical sketches of officers & analysis of occupations, ages, religion etc of all ranks.

MORGAN, Edward Charles


MORGAN, Henry

Canadian Men & Women of their Time 1898. Wm. Briggs, Toronto, 1898.

Short account but useful for small details. Gives birth date as 1843.

MORTON, Desmond

Cavalry or Police: Keeping the peace on two adjacent frontiers, 1870-1900. Journal of Canadian Studies Vol XII, Spring 1977.

Compares Canadian & US treatment of the Native Peoples, argues that although Canada avoided use of violence, the outcome in both countries by 1977 was the same, namely, "poverty and dependance" for the Indians. Refers to the "self-congratulatory mythology of the NWMP" in connection with Walsh/Sitting Bull dealings.

PENNANEN, Gary


Good coverage of government records.

ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE

RCMP Quarterly. 1940. p.122 Note of donation by Cora McGannon, Walsh's daughter of some papers to RCMPM, including, Memorial to Walsh from Members of "B" Div. 31 May 1883, on pp.168-9.

ROSS, David


Covers the uniforms of the NWMP during Walsh's service. Prepared as a guide for interpreters at Fort Battleford & Fort Walsh Historic Sites

ROSS, David & Robin May


Deals with the uniforms of the Force, including types worn by Walsh. Short basic history of the Force. Includes brief, concise account of the March West.
STEELE, Samuel B. Forty Years in Canada: McGraw-Hill Ryerson Ltd Toronto, 1972 (reprint). (Glenbow - 1915 edition 364.971 S8141). Steele's own memoirs, many tantalizing gaps, virtually no comments on his colleagues, though he is thought to have had strong views about many of them.


TURNER, John Peter The North West Mounted Police. 2 vols. King's Printer, Ottawa, 1950. The standard history, good chronology of events, No documentation of sources or index, but clearly based on archival material and author's contact with old-timers.


ZASLOW, Morris The Opening of the Canadian North 1870-1914. McClelland and Stewart, Toronto/Montreal, 1971 Brief but useful data on Walsh as Commissioner of the Yukon.
Documentary Sources.

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Militia Lists, 1865-1904.
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II,B1 Vol 521 Sept-Oct 1873 AG & NWMP organization
II,B5, Vol 36,p.666 & 672 Walsh's Militia service
II,B4 or A5 Red River Officer's Service
II,B2 (60) Schools of Instruction
II, J2 Candidates for schools

National Archives of Canada MG 27, B4, Vol 1, Letter Book of Col. de Winton, Military Secretary to the Governor General.

Sir John A. MacDonald (PM) to Lord Lorne (GG)

p.186 24 Nov 1880 MacDonald's criticism of Walsh.
p.188 14 Dec 1880 Sitting Bull likely to surrender according to Col. Irvine.
p.189 17 Dec 1880 MacDonald suggests Walsh's dismissal.
p.195-6 25 Jan 1881 MacDonald states that Walsh is influencing Sitting Bull not to surrender. Reiterates that Walsh should be dismissed.

MG29 E7 5163 Diary of Constable James Findlayson 1874.


A compilation of all the correspondence between the British Ambassador in Washington, the British Foreign Secretary, the British Colonial Secretary, the U.S. Secretary of State, Foreign Office, The Governor General, the Prime Minister, the Minister of Justice and the Minister of the Interior in Ottawa. As well as reports and correspondence from innumerable other bureaucrats, officials and politicians on both sides of the Atlantic, including Commissioners Macleod & Irvine and NWMP officers including Walsh, and relevant newspaper articles.
This file takes over, with some overlap, where the RG 7, G.21, No. 2001, Vol 319, Vol 3(d) leaves off.

Copies of reports and letters from James Walsh to the Commissioner and others, 1879-80.

Sir John A. Macdonald to Lord Lorne, May 15th 1880. Sir John points out the impossibility of either the Canadians or the Americans being able to control the coming and going of the Sioux, and notes the usual attempts of US Presidential candidates to wave the flag by trying to bully Great Britain in election years.

1 Jan 1878 Commissioner Macleod to Walsh, reprimanding Walsh for newspaper interviews.

October 1873 Walsh appointed to be Superintendent and Sub Inspector with rank of Lieutenant.

Nov 4th 1874 Walsh appointed to be Adjutant.

14 May 1873 Walsh's application for an appointment in the Mounted Police.

23 May 1873 Joint letter of recommendation from 8 citizens,

20 May 1873 Letter of recommendation from W. Manley.

Docket is marked "Sir J. promised an appt. May 28".

Vol 1 3 Oct 1873 Walsh's Orders as temp. Commanding Officer of first NWMP detachment.

Vol 1 Walsh to Richardson, Deputy Minister of Justice, report on trip to Fort Garry.

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Laurier Papers.

Vol 19, p. 7089 Walsh to Laurier 15 Sept 1896 advising the disbandment of the NWMP

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