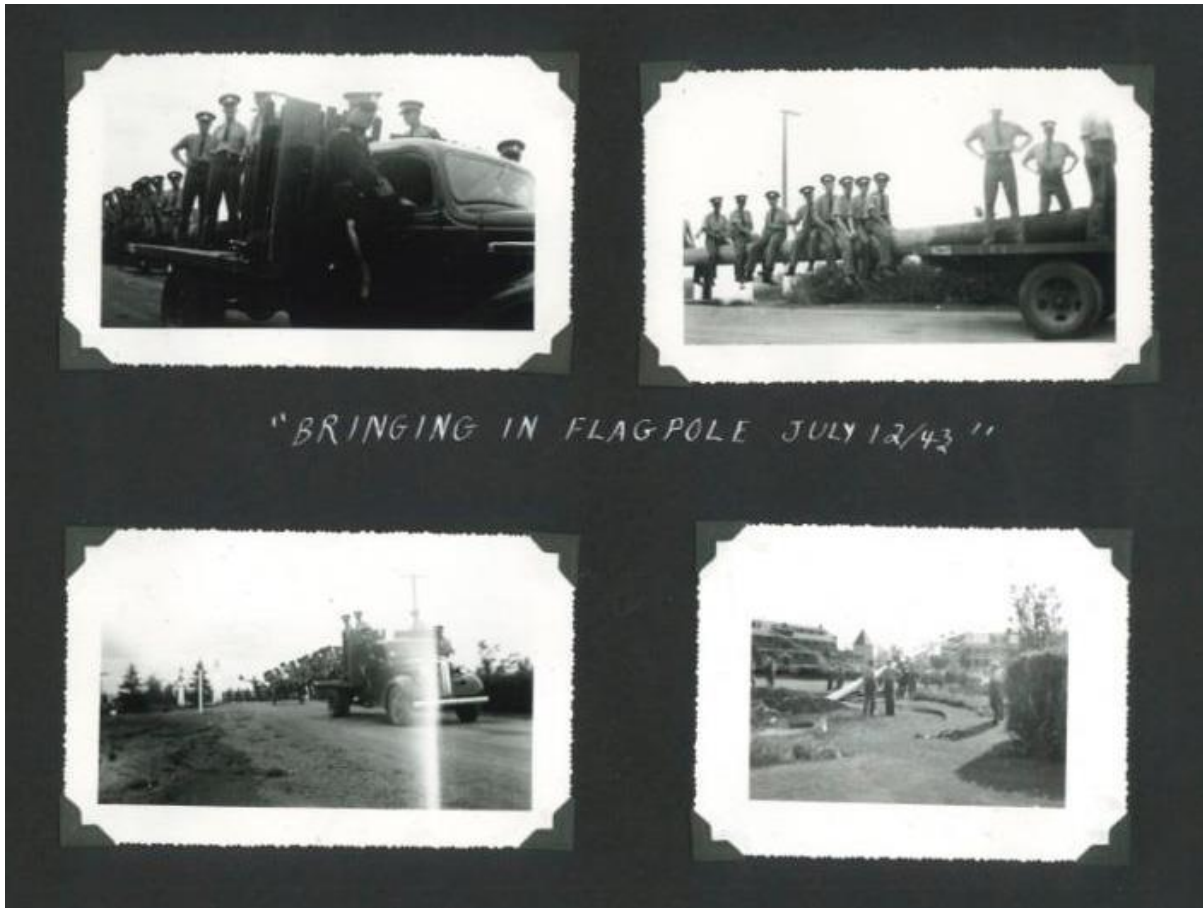# The Silent Sentinels of "Depot" – Part II

Three years ago, I wrote of about the "Silent Sentinels of Depot" (see http://www.rcmpveteransvancouver.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/The-Silent-Sentinels-of-Depot.pdf) universally known in RCMP speak as the "flagpole". It was known that the flagpole that stood from 1943 to sometime in the 1980s was raised by the members of "P" Troop 1943. At the time of writing my story I could not find any photos of that flagpole being raised. All the details of the pole itself, where it came from, are buried in a long-ago archived file. Who were the members of "P" Troop? Long lost to Force history. Until…. September 2023. We now have the name of one of the members of "P" Troop 1943 and photographs.

I am always excited to receive -emails from folks who have read my articles on stories of the Force. They may have been involved or a family member had related events connected to a story. I always refer it to "connecting the dots of the Force's history".

Marla Libke, who lives in Calgary, had found my story about the flagpoles of "Depot" and sent me a message saying her father, Lloyd Libke, Regimental Number 14551, was a member of "P" Troop (they may have been called Squads in the 1940s). Lloyd Libke passed away in 2016. Marla came into possession of her dad's photo album. Recently going through the album, she found photos of the arrival of the new flagpole on July 12, 1943 and the raising of the flagpole on September 14, 1943.

Imagine being a recruit going through training and waking up to face the usual grind of riding horses, PT, Drill, swimming and lectures to be told that you have been selected to load up and bring in the new flagpole. And eventually take down the old one and raise the new one.

The Flagpole Arrival – July 12, 1943 from Lloyd Libke's photo album. We cannot say if Lloyd actually took photos or were taken by someone else. Clearly the quality of cameras used by recruits in 1943 were not as sharp as what cadets use in 2023.

"BRINGING IN FLAGPOLE JULY 12/43"

Sergeant Major Edwin Tutin, Reg # 7576, is in control.

There are always stories within stories. Edwin Tutin M.M. was born at Stockton-On-Tees, England, and joined the Canadian Expeditionary Force at Calgary, December 1915. He served in France and was demobilized March 1919. Meanwhile, he had joined the RNWMP on February 21, 1919. He joined the No. 1 Provost Company, RCMP, November 1, 1939, and served in Canada and overseas until he re-joined the Force in 1942. He retired as a Sergeant Major in November 1945 having been posted at Calgary, Drumheller, Lethbridge, Newgate, Banff, Fernie, Rockcliffe and Pangnirtung, NWT and Regina.

The members of "P" Troop have all their safety equipment on, fatigue pants, uniform shirts, ties and forage caps. Clearly, no Canada Labour Code in effect in 1943.

It would be interesting find out where that tree came from. It does not look like your normal Saskatchewan tree. At this time, it has not been painted white.

"PUTTING UP FLAGPOLE AT DEPOT SEPT./43"

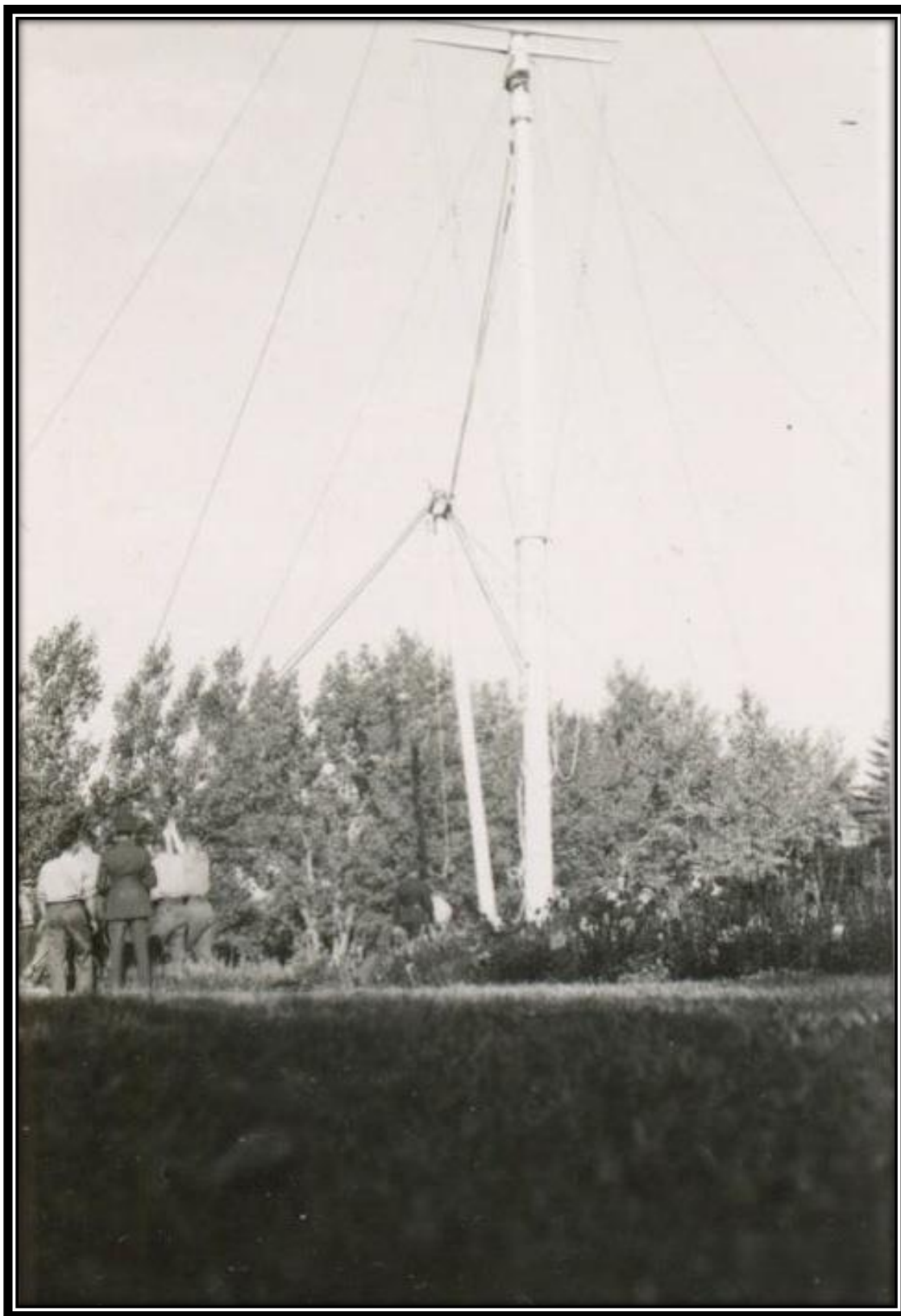**This appears to be the old flagpole coming down.**

Getting ready to raise the new flagpole now painted white. Note the gentleman in the bib overalls I am thinking he was probably in charge of the operation.

"Altogether now, lift!" **Looks like a PT instructor, in the white T-shirt offering encouragement.**

"Keep pulling boys! You are just about there!"

The old flagpole is down and the new one is just about in place.

Mission accomplished!

I can just hear the Sgt. Major after the flagpole was raised and in place. *"Well lads, you have had your fun for today, off you go to the stables they need mucking out!"*

We may never discover the names of all the members of "P" Troop (Squad) 1943. But we now know of one, Lloyd Libke. Members of "P" Troop were probably no different than other troops of that era, mostly 19–20-year-olds, maybe the odd 17-year-old. Their training was taking place during the middle of WW II. Training may have been 9 months to a year long. The war may have impacted the length of training.

Sub-Constable Lloyd Libke – Regimental # 14551

"Sub-Constable" The following is a direct quote from Lloyd's memoirs. *"In late December (1942), I received a letter saying that my application had been approved, and that I was to report to the RCMP detachment in Saskatoon early in January. There I was sworn in as a Sub-Constable for a three-year period with a salary of a dollar fifty per day. I was given a train ticket and instructed to report to the RCMP Training division at "Depot," in Regina, Saskatchewan, on 21 January 1943".*

I wonder how many recruits in training had their photo taken at Trulife Photos of Regina?
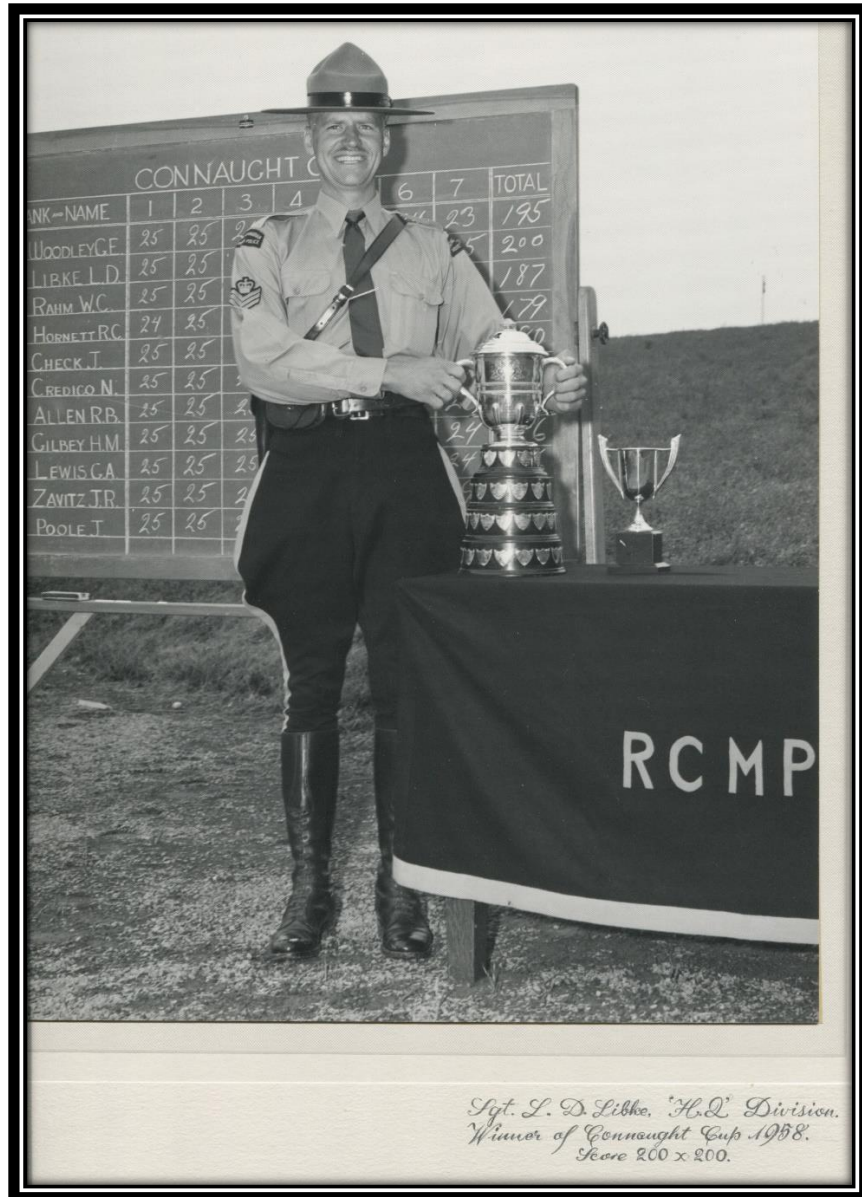
Lloyd David Libke was born January 18, 1924. He passed away August 10, 2016. He was 92 years of age. His obituary detailed a life well lived. I have added his obit below, slightly modified.

He was born on a farm near Dundurn, SK, and was the second youngest of nine children. Lloyd's life was without a doubt a testament to good sportsmanship and outdoorsmanship. An avid hunter and conservationist,his interest in firearms, and the shooting sports remained as one of the common links between five major career changes during his working life. Shortly after graduating from high school in SK, Lloyd joined the RCMP at the age of nineteen. Following basic training in Regina, he was posted to various detachments throughout Ontario, including Toronto, Sudbury, Sault Ste. Marie and Hamilton. He was a member of the Musical Ride in 1949.

Lloyd Libke with his horse from the Musical Ride, became a subject of a postcard.

In 1958, he was stationed as the Commissioner's Orderly at HQ's Ottawa. The same year he won the coveted "Connaught Cup" for the Top Handgun Shot in the RCMP.

On the chalkboard:

CONNAUGHT C...

ANK—NAME	1	2	3	4		6	7	TOTAL
						23		195
Woodley G.E.	25	25	2				25	200
Libke L.D.	25	25						187
Rahm W.C.	25	25						179
Hornett R.C.	24	25						
Check J.	25	25						
Credico N.	25	25						
Allen R.B.	25	25					24	
Gilbey H.M.	25	25	25				24	
Lewis G.A.	25	25	25					
Zavitz J.R.	25	25	2					
Poole J.	25	25						

Sgt. L. D. Libke. "H.Q." Division.
Winner of Connaught Cup 1958.
Score 200 x 200.

How many members have tried, and not succeeded, in winning the Connaught Cup?
Lloyd Libke won it!

When he retired at the rank of Staff Sergeant January 1965, he had devoted twenty-two years to the Force, with service to general policing work, narcotics, intelligence and counter espionage work. In 1960 he escorted Prime Minister Diefenbaker, as his personal escort, to the United Nations. Lloyd accepted a position as sales manager with Winchester Western (Canada), based in Cobourg, Ontario. From 1971 to 1973, he took a leave of absence to join the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) as number two-man of a nine-man team to set up security on the Williamson Diamond Mine in Tanzania, East Africa.

When he returned in 1974, he became the Manager of Advertising and Public Relations for Winchester in Canada. In his capacity as an employee with Winchester Western he interacted

closely with many outdoor professional organizations. In 1980 Lloyd joined as a staff member of the Canadian Wildlife Federation after the Canadian branch of Winchester closed down.

In 1983, he formed his own company Loyd Libke Police Sales, which provided firearms and ammunition to police services across the country. This successful company ran for twenty years and Lloyd retired in 2003.

In 2015, Lloyd published his memoirs, "Get The Hell Back on Your Horse" an account of his growing up, his varied careers and adventures.

The members of "P" Troop 1943

Lloyd Libke is in the second row, second from the right. The officer's names were recorded in the front row starting fourth from the left were: Staff Sergeant Robertson, Inspector Nichols, Superintendent Cooper (the Commanding Officer), and Sergeant Major Tutin. Unfortunately, the names of members of troop were not recorded.

The C.O. of "Depot" at the time this photo was take was Arthur Stafford Cooper, M.C., Regimental # 4878-O.226, is another story within the story. He was born in Ashbourne, Derbyshire, England, after moving to Canada he joined the RNWMP, May 13, 1909. He was promoted to corporal May 1, 1911 and to Sergeant April 1, 1914. He purchased his discharge Feb 12, 1915 to enlist two days later with the 13th Canadian Mounted Rifles. He was commissioned August 4, 1915 and served in France with the Lord Strathcona's Horse. He was demobilized with the rank of Lieutenant June 5, 1919. Cooper rejoined the RNWMP April 14, 1920 at Regina with the rank of Sergeant and promoted to Sergeant Major June 25, 1921. He was commissioned an Inspector (O.226) September 1, 1928 and given command of Weyburn Sub-District in SK that December. He was transferred to Vancouver in March 1931 and to Whitehorse in October 1932. He was appointed Adjutant at "Depot" in July 1933 and transferred to "N" Division, Rockcliffe five years later to take command. He was promoted to Superintendent on August 1, 1938. September 1940, he was made CO of "E" Division and in October 1941 he returned to "Depot" as Commanding Officer. He again took command of "N" Division in September 1943. He was promoted to Assistant Commissioner and given command of "A" Division in Ottawa. He retired to pension September 30, 1946. During his early service, he had been posted at Regina, Craik, and Indian Head, SK., MacLeod, Frank, Coleman, Granum, Carmangay and Pincher Creek, AB. I tried to find out how he received the Military Cross (M.C.), however I had no luck.

Little did Lloyd Libke, and his fellow troopmates of "P" Troop 1943, realize that their efforts in raising the flagpole would become part of the history of the Force. A tip of the Stetson to "P" Troop 1943!

A special thank you to Marla Libke for providing her father's photographs.

Ric Hall 24394-O.1330

2023-11- 02