

MAJOR GENERAL AYLESWORTH BOWEN PERRY 1860-1956

Aylesworth Bowen Perry was the only man to command the Mounted Police under the three different names by which the force has been known.

Loyalist Robert Perry (1751-1836) was a sergeant in the Loyal Rangers during the American Revolution. He was born in Reboth, Bristol County, Mass. and married Jemima Gary Washburn, daughter of Simeon and Jemima (Gary) Washburn, descendants of Francis Cooke of the Mayflower, Dec. 19, 1772 thus giving two Loyalist connections to their descendants. They came from Reboth Mass. and settled on the E ½ of Lot 2, concession 2 in Ernestown Township, Lennox County ON (Bay of Quinte Loyalists). They are buried in St. John's Cemetery, Perth ON. Their son Daniel Perry was born in 1779 and married Jane (Williams) Perry. They had a son William Hawley Perry born 1810.

Aylesworth Bowen Perry was born in Lennox County, Ontario on 21 August 1860, the son of William Hawley Perry and Eleanor Fraser. He graduated from the Royal Military College at the age of sixteen winning the Governor General's silver and gold medals as the most proficient cadet in his class. He started as a Lieutenant in the Royal Engineers serving in England for a year. In 1881 he resigned from the Army to accept a position with the Geological Survey of Canada. In 1882 he was appointed an Inspector in the NWMP when it was only nine years old. About 1883 he married Emma Derrarty Amy Meikle who was born 18 February 1863 in Quebec of Scottish ancestry. They had three children; their first child, Kenneth M. Perry, was born in Alberta in 1884.

Four years later, shortly before his 25th birthday he was promoted to Superintendent in 1885 for helping the police during the Riel Rebellion. He worked in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia. In 1889, he took command of the Yukon Territory from Sam Steele during the gold rush. He commanded a detachment in 1897 that attended the Golden Jubilee of Queen Victoria's reign in England and returned on a similar mission in 1914 for the coronation of King George V. In 1900, Sir Wilfred Laurier made A. Bowen Perry the Commissioner for the RNWMP, succeeding Lawrence W. Herchmer.

When the force became the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in 1920 and the headquarters were transferred from Regina to Ottawa, Commander Perry remarked that the most important and romantic period of the police force was coming to an end. He retired in Ottawa on March 31, 1923 and was given the title Major General in return for his service to Canada. He died in Ottawa on February 14, 1956.

Although known as a strong disciplinarian he was also able to attend to the most minute concern of those under his command. Perry was awarded the Order of St. Michael and St. George and given the title of Honorary Aide-de-camp to His Excellency the Governor General of Canada in 1920.

His daughters, Jessie and Jean, erected a plaque in the Regina RCMP Chapel in memory of Commissioner Aylesworth Bowen Perry, CMG, UE.

Sources: Regina Leader Post - film #399 15 Feb. 1956
Regina Public Library
Viewing of Regina RCMP Chapel
William Mackay - RCMP Museum, Regina
Ken MacKenzie UE, Regina Branch UELAC