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taineer should be. His early years in Europe, the school years in the East, and his years in the Northwest, exploring, climbing, traveling by early means, and painting, had all combined to develop in him quiet strength, modesty, charm, and skills which we may not soon again see duplicated in one individual.

HENRY S. HALL

WILLIAM WASBOROUGH FOSTER

1875-1954

In the death December 2, 1954, at Vancouver, British Columbia, of Major General William Wasborough Foster, D. S. O., C. M. G., D. V., of the Canadian Army, recipient of 15 military decorations, Canada lost one of its most distinguished officers and accomplished citizens. His military services and activities in civic, social, and business life were outstanding and, although his leadership has now ceased, the influence of his high standards will endure.

Born in Bristol, England, in 1875 and educated at Wycliff College in Gloucester, he came to British Columbia in 1894 and was employed by the Canadian Pacific Railway at Revelstoke until 1910 when he became Deputy Minister of Public Works of British Columbia. It was under his energetic administration that the Province gained a Dominion-wide reputation for the efficiency of its highway system.

Late in 1913 he was elected a Conservative member of the Legislature and served the Island Riding until 1916 when he was one of the first to volunteer for overseas service in the first World War in the 2nd C. M. R. as a junior officer. A short time later, after heavy fighting began, he was promoted on the battlefield from captain to brigadier because of his great personal bravery and his brilliant leadership, and he was placed in command of the 52nd Infantry Battalion and the 9th Canadian Infantry Brigade throughout the fighting at Passchendalle, Amiens, and Cambrai.

He was twice seriously wounded in action and five times mentioned in dispatches. His record during the four years of almost continuous action at the front was replete with dangerous sorties

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to advanced positions, some of them carrying him behind the enemy lines when the Canadian troops made their brilliant stand at Cambrai against the concentrated effort of the enemy, where there now stands a superb memorial dedicated to the soldiers who fought and died there.

I am glad to vouch for the truth of the report that Foster was recommended for the Victoria Cross because of his desperate work trying to secure reliable information from behind the enemy lines as to their strength and plans of attack, but he insisted that the decoration be passed along to a soldier who had acted as his scout on all of his daring sorties. He felt his recommendation was fully justified because, after making one of their deepest and most successful penetrations, he became suspicious of his scout for having boldly guided him along such an intricate route, so began to question him about it and was much relieved to be told—"Oh, I blazed the trail *last night*." This account was given to me by Foster months before there was any public mention of the incident of the V. C.

Between the two World Wars, Foster took a prominent part in the formation of the Canadian Legion, B. E. S. L., and served as Provincial-President for British Columbia and as President of the Dominion Command. He was Honorary President of the Dominion Command at the time of his death. During this same period, he maintained close connection with the Canadian Armed Forces, commanding the D. C. O. R. and Infantry Brigade at Vancouver; he was Honorary Colonel of the 15th Artillery Brigade and Honorary A. D. C. to the Governor General of Canada.

In private life as well as in the service, Foster was always friendly and considerate of other people and slow to anger, but when he was imposed upon, his determination drove him to resolute action to remedy any bad situation within his jurisdiction. This trait of his was recognized and put to effective use when, in 1935, during the depression, the lawless elements in Vancouver got out of hand and the city authorities requisitioned his services as Chief of the City Police Department. During his four years of administration, the vice-ridden police force was thoroughly reorganized and trained in such an efficient man-

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ner under his uniform policy, "Enforcement of the law without fear or favor," that it finally rid the city of its criminal element and again made the streets safe at night.

Although such vigorous enforcement was resented and criticized by a small political minority, at its annual convention the Canadian Legion unanimously passed a resolution stating that they had "Complete confidence in the integrity and ability of Brigadier Foster, who is known and respected throughout the British Empire as a gallant soldier, a fine gentleman, and a great leader." This demonstration, regarded as one of the most impressive ever witnessed in British Columbia, was later termed by Foster one of the greatest thrills of his life.

In 1936 he was elected president of the Pacific International Association of Law Enforcement Officials, a position closely allied to that as head of the Vancouver Police Department, its chief objective being to rid the north Pacific coast of its lawless element.

At the outbreak of war in 1939, Foster was given leave of absence from the Police Department; he then returned to active service as brigadier and organized the Auxiliary Services of Canada, going overseas with the First Canadian Division. In 1940 he was recalled to Canada and commanded District 12 in the Province of Saskatchewan; in 1942 he took command of District 6 with headquarters in Halifax. He also acted as Chairman in Chief of the Canadian Officers Selection Board, and in March 1943, was promoted to the rank of major general. Appointed Special Commissioner of Defense Projects in Northwestern Canada, he made his reports directly to the War Committee of the Dominion Cabinet. He cooperated with the United States Forces and exercised supervision over the construction and operation of the Canadian portion of the Alcan Highway. In 1944 he was created a Companion of the Order of St. Michael and St. George, and in 1945 was awarded the Legion of Merit, degree of Commander, by the United States.

At the end of hostilities, he was appointed a member of the British Columbia Power Commission, made a member of the Canadian-United States Committee covering Northwest Defense Development, and President of the Electrical Service League of British Columbia.

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Such is a brief history of the very extensive military and governmental activities of Major General Foster during his 60 years of citizenship in his adopted country, Canada, while between wars and threats of war he was also very active in many other interesting projects in which he distinguished himself, such as the highly respected firm of Evans, Coleman & Evans of Vancouver, in which he performed excellent service, and his own corporation, Pacific Engineers, of which he was president.

Wherever Foster went and in whatever he did, he left a record of fine accomplishment. This is true of his service on the British Columbia Power Commission which started with little in assets and now owns many millions of dollars worth of power plants and vast miles of distribution lines that have opened up and are supplying power and light at profit to vast areas of valuable lands in the Province.

In 1911 my wife and I had the good fortune to meet Colonel Foster, then Deputy Minister of Public Works of British Columbia, at the Sherbrook Lake Camp of the Alpine Club of Canada. Together we climbed Mt. Daly and several other peaks in the locality, after which we made our first pack trip with him and his engineer, Mr. J. R. Ford, Vice-President of the A.C.C., on their inspection trip over an extremely rugged and lightly blazed trail that is now the scenic highway from Banff to Lake Windermere at the source of the Columbia River. In spite of five days and nights of almost continuous fog and rain, which shut out the view of everything but the innumerable stretches of burnt, dead, or down timber and the many creeks and large streams that had to be forded from one wet camp site to the next, we still had a very happy time and finally were rewarded with a delicious swim, under brilliant moonlight, in the picturesque Sinclair Hot Springs. This stimulated us to go on up the Columbia River nearby to the houseboat on Lake Windermere, arriving there at midnight. This difficult and tiresome trip was a real test of the congenial companionship between us during the 43 years of our meetings at the Alpine Club camps in the various climbing centers in the Canadian Rockies, Selkirks, and Purcell mountains and during one summer of exploratory climbing in the Yukon, all of which helped me to really know Billy Foster perhaps better than any other man knew and appreciated him.

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Our first serious test of climbing came in 1913, with our excellent Austrian guide, Conrad Kain, when, in good weather, we were fortunate to make the first ascent and traverse of Mt. Robson from a bivouac at the "Extinguisher," a rock on Robson Glacier. We went up the northeast shoulder route and down to a 9,000-foot bivouac on the southwest ledges, then downward again by Kinney Lake and back to the Club camp near Berg Lake in 37 hours and 45 minutes. It was this climb that the celebrated English climber Mr. A. L. Mumm, with his lifelong Swiss guide, Inderbinen, tried twice to make and failed, his guide remarking, "I never before saw death so near." Conrad Kain declared it the most difficult and dangerous expedition he had made. Foster took this climb in his stride, apparently with quiet enjoyment and satisfaction.

Then in later years, when the English Alpine Club was busy with its plans for the first attempt on Mt. Everest, the Alpine Club of Canada began to consider an expedition to attempt the climb of "the world's most massive peak, Mt. Logan." At the 1923 Canadian Alpine Club camp at Larch Valley a Mt. Logan Committee was appointed to investigate the feasibility of organizing and sending out an expedition to try to climb the peak in 1924. In absentia, I was named on that committee and, after Colonel Foster felt forced to decline the assignment as leader of the party because of the uncertainty of his plans for 1924, again in absentia I was drafted as leader of the expedition. However, after the committee's study of the charts and the meager information available about the mountain, I refused the assignment unless the date were postponed for a year, during which, on my own, I agreed to make a reconnaissance of the approaches and a possible route up to its 18,000-foot plateau. This offer was accepted and the reconnaissance was made up to 10,000 feet, from which point a further ascent of at least four or five thousand feet appeared feasible up the trench between the massif and its outlier, King Peak.

During the following winter, three months of provisions and equipment for eight men were freighted in by dog teams and at 7,000 feet a cache was made on the Ogilvie Glacier, and in May the climbing party of eight men went in to the mountain and on May 31st established the base camp near the foot of the

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trench at 7,800 feet; then on June 1st the 23-day assault of Logan began and six men of the party stood on the summit at 8:00 P.M., June 23rd, two having turned back earlier because the toes of one had been frostbitten.

The detailed story of the Mt. Logan Expedition is fully told in the 1925 *Canadian Alpine Journal*, but the foregoing brief account is given to complete the outstanding climbing record of Billy Foster. It was the climax and swan song of our serious climbing together and, true to all his activities about which I had personal knowledge, his presence in the party was essential to the success of the expedition for, although I was officially designated the leader of the party, I made no important or vital decision, after we had begun the climb, without first seeking his advice and approval and, as he well realized, his mere presence was a great stimulus in keeping up my strength and courage.

William Wasborough Foster will best be remembered by his casual acquaintances for his good humor and ready wit that always lightened the cares of the day and were so appropriate around the campfire. At the meetings of his various clubs and organizations, he could always be depended upon to make valuable contributions to the discussion of any subject under consideration.

The following are the memberships he prized most highly: Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society, Director of the Canadian Geographical Society, life member of the American and Canadian Alpine Clubs, member of the Alpine Club, and Honorary President of the Alpine Club of Canada at the time of his death.

His intimate friends will remember him best as an outstanding man whom it was a rare privilege to know.

ALBERT H. MACCARTHY

GEORGE MacGOWAN 1902-1954

Friends of George MacGowan were saddened at his passing on November 26, 1954. His death resulted from a coronary thrombosis while playing a game of handball, a sport which he had actively followed for many years. George leaves a wife, Jane, and two children; a son, Douglas Hugh, and daughter, Laurie.