

In 1935 the Royal Society of Canada presented, E. A. CRUIKSHANK the Tyrrell Gold Medal for outstanding work in connection with the History of Canada.

Opposite is an account of J.B. Tyrrell noted Geologist and explorer

**Q**

Could you tell me about the Canadian geologist and explorer J.B. Tyrrell?  
J. Borgatti, Willowdale, Ont.

**A**

Joseph Burr Tyrrell set out to become a lawyer, but his doctor told him to find an outdoors job. As a result, a great many gaps on the then largely blank maps of western and northern Canada were filled in.

Son of an Irish immigrant, Tyrrell was born in 1858 in Weston, now part of Metropolitan Toronto, and graduated from the University of Toronto. Then, because of that medical advice, he joined the Geological Survey of Canada. In 1883 he had his baptism in the field of exploration working under George M. Dawson, who was surveying the Rocky Mountains from the U.S. border to Kicking Horse Pass and the Bow River. The next year Tyrrell was sent out on his own. For three years he led a party surveying and exploring a large slice of Alberta. He discovered the now famous coal seams on the banks of the Red Deer River and, near Drumheller, he also found the first of the scores of dinosaur fossils that were to be dug up in that area.

In his 17 years with the Geological Survey there were two outstanding achievements. First was a trip to Morinville, about 25 miles north of Edmonton,

where he found that reports of oil seepage were true. Wells were promptly drilled in the area, but we would have had an oil boom earlier if they'd been drilled exactly where Tyrrell found the traces. It wasn't until after the Second World War that several rich wells were brought in near that spot.

Tyrrell's most positive achievement, however, was his epic exploration of the desolate tundra lands known even now as the Barren Lands, west of Hudson Bay. Acting on reports about a great river flowing north, Tyrrell — then 34 — headed east from Lake Athabasca with his brother James, six paddlers, three canoes and a vague Indian map. Almost three months later, he had found the long-sought Dubawnt River and had reached Chesterfield Inlet on Hudson Bay. From there, he led his starving, frostbitten party through snowstorms and floating ice to Fort Churchill, 400 miles south — and then another 800 miles by snowshoe and dog team to Winnipeg. Undaunted, Tyrrell crossed the region the following year by a different route. His mapping of the Barren Lands was all we knew of that part of



**J. B. TYRRELL**

Canada until aerial surveys 40 or more years later.

After being sent to the Klondike gold fields, Tyrrell fell out with Clifford Sifton, then Minister of the Interior, and set up in Dawson as a consultant engineer, specializing in gold mining. In 1906, he moved his headquarters to Toronto, and in 1924 became president of the ailing Kirkland Lake Gold Mining Co., which 30 years later had mined almost \$30-million worth of gold.

An academic as well as an explorer, Tyrrell also edited the journals of other explorers, wrote of his own adventures and so left a record of the often for-

# Recall Work And Life Of E. Cruikshank

EDITOR'S NOTE:—The following article on the well-known soldier, Brigadier-General E. A. Cruikshank, recalls his life as an historian and writer of international repute.

By RUTH CLEAVES HAZELTON

Ernest Alexander Cruikshank, the Canadian historian-soldier was born in Bertie Township, Welland County, Ontario June 29, 1853. Ontario was then Upper Canada, since Confederation was not until 1867; and the War of 1812-14 had ended but thirty-nine years before. It is not improbable to assume that, as a boy the future historian heard many accounts of the stirring events on the Niagara Frontier, had been

thrilled by the story of that "last Battle of Chivalry" at Chippawa; knew of General Porter's "Sortie from Fort Erie" described by David Young in his "Historical Facts and Thrilling Incidents of the Niagara Frontier, 1903" as "a detachment to penetrate a passage through the woods. Being perfectly acquainted with the ground, he with his men, trod silently and circuitously along, when arriving at their destined point, they rushed upon the enemy." Even though it was an American ruse, what boy could hear such a story and remain unmoved? Queenston, and Lundy's Lane! The story of the Griffin, and a boy's wonder as to its fate! The trail that Laura Secord took; Heroic sagas, Indian tales! In such a fashion must the blind bard of Chios have gathered some of his Homeric epics; half minstrel, half historian. The later phrase refers to our subject, who was a careful and accurate historian; yet it is possible to see how he came by his love of history when

we examine his early surroundings and environment.

Ernest Alexander Cruikshank was the son of Alexander Cruikshank of Peterhead; and Margaret Munn, also of Aberdeenshire, Scotland. His parents came to Canada in 1835, and settled near Fort Erie. He attended the Fort Erie public school, St. Thomas Grammar School, and Upper Canada College; graduating with honors from each establishment.

He was a noted linguist, having studied and become proficient in the use of some twelve languages. After graduation from the University of Alberta, he worked on several United States newspapers and magazines. Later, he took up farming at Fort Erie.

The list of public offices he held included that of assessor of the township of Bertie (1876-77); treasurer of the Village of Fort Erie, (1877-78); Reeve of the village, 1878, 1879, 1880, 1881, 1882, 1885, 1886) etc. In 1886 he was elected Warden of Welland County. In all, he was Reeve for fifteen years,

and a member of the county council for eight years. In 1882 he was also appointed a Justice of the Peace; and in 1883 served as engineer for the township of Bertie. Later he held several appointive offices, was police magistrate at Niagara Falls (1903-08); and chairman of both the collegiate institute and the general hospital boards.

During all this period he never ceased to be an ardent student of history, both civil and military. He was a most careful gatherer of facts, checking and rechecking the evidence he accumulated for his various papers, and lectures. The late Ernest Green, Niagara Falls historian, was fond of repeating Brigadier-General Cruikshank's axiom: "If it isn't true, it isn't history."

His military career properly begins in 1877 when he was commissioned ensign in the 44th Welland Battalion of Volunteer Infantry. In 1899 he was raised to the rank of lieutenant-colonel of the Lincoln and Welland Regiment, and following this was made brigadier of the 5th Infantry Brigade. In 1911 he was appointed a colonel on the permanent staff, and was assigned to take command of Military District 13, at Calgary. He was here until 1917. Promotions came as a result of his splendid efficiency and thoroughness in all detail, especially in the Alberta training centers for troops destined for service in World War I.

In 1915 his promotion came to the post of Brigadier-General, and he was assigned to special duty in France in 1917, two years later.

At the end of the war, he returned to Ottawa and was appointed Director of the Historical Section of the General Staff, and he remained at this work until his retirement in 1921. In 1908 he was appointed keeper of the military manuscripts in the Archives of Canada. Here he classified the military records and prepared indices and inventories; but he resigned the position during the war years. But in 1919 General Cruikshank was appointed to the board of the newly created Historic Sites and Monuments body, and was elected chairman at the first meeting, and this work he continued until his death in 1939. He was eminently fitted for the task of advising and superintending this work of preservation of the sites of national importance; old fortifications, historic spots and battlefields. He conducted exhaustive research and prepared careful inscriptions for memorial markers; and his studies over the years in his favorite study of history were amply repaid in the accuracy he now brought to his work as chairman. Perhaps even more than careful research was his fine, intelligent enthusiasm for the preservation of all historical data.

The list of his published work articles, books, pamphlets, etc., would be voluminous. He was an outstanding authority, and his work

## BRIG.-GEN. CRUIKSHANK

was widely distributed in military and historical publications; in newspapers and periodicals in the United States, Great Britain and Canada. He was a well-known lecturer, a clear and forceful speaker who knew his subject. He prepared many publications for the Royal Society of Canada's Lundy's Lane Historical Society, the Niagara Historical Society, Welland County Historical Society and the Ontario Historical Society, all of which are greatly indebted to his pen.

In 1935 he was awarded the Tyrrell gold medal for outstanding work in connection with the history of Canada, by the Royal Society of Canada. He was a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada, and of the Royal Historical Society of Great Britain, vice-president of the Canadian Military Institute, and past president of the Ontario Historical Society; as well as being a member of many other similar societies.

His style of writing was terse and factual, but was lit by lines of unusual understanding and sympathy in an historian. He writes, in "The Battle of Lundy's Lane," (page 17): "Major-General Phineas Riall, the British commander, was an officer of twenty years standing, yet had seen little actual warfare. He is described as a short, stout, near-sighted man, of an impetuous temperament, and rashly brave." (page 23): "Scarcely had these sounds died away, when a shell from the British battery struck one of Townson's ammunition wagons, which instantly blew up with a great explosion." In this last line, may we not see the vision of a small boy in Fort Erie some years past hearing of such an instance complete with "a great explosion?"

General Cruikshank was a member of Holy Trinity Church, Ottawa. He was married twice. His first wife was Miss Julia Kennedy of Scranton, Pa., who was the author of that interesting book "Whirlpool Helixes—The Dream House on the Niagara River" (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd. Ruskin House, 1915). His second wife was Miss Matilda Murdie who now resides in Ottawa.

Brigadier-General Cruikshank died in Ottawa, June 23, 1939. He was buried with full military honors in Beachwood Cemetery. Officers and men of the Governor-General's Foot Guards and of the Cameron Highlanders of Ottawa led the cortege. Rev. Canon Robert Turkey conducted the service.

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REVIEW, FRIDAY, JULY 25, 19

er for six years, she has been  
eat deal, and Julia and she get  
ell, and in that respect we have  
fortunate. The doctor only called  
it was merely a case for care-  
being as far he could judge, weak-  
heart's action. The altitude may  
something to do with it and we  
that she ought to go away for  
months at least but she has not  
her mind whether it is best to  
st or return east. Going to the  
s a journey over the mountains  
scarcely venture to take alone  
I shall be obliged to ask Miss  
with her in that case. The jour-  
ry long and tiresome and she

Calgary, 1st March, 1911.

Dear Sister:-

I have duly received your letter dated the 20th February and I am glad to note from the firmer character of your handwriting that you are gaining strength, but the spring is the critical time as season goes on the Niagara and you must particularly careful of yourself until warm weather really returns.

Julia is considerably better, the nurse has gone away a week ago and she is able to go outside a little but appears still very weak and unable to stand much exertion, indeed, I have to help her with the little house work there is to do. Miss Murdie, the nurse, expects to return as soon as her present case is ended, probably to-morrow, and stay with us until she receives another call. We xx

ORIGINAL

Letter IN POSSESSION of MRS. RICHARD MOORE  
GARRISON RD. FORT ERIE  
from "Churchbank Collection".

THIS CONCERNES MISS MURDIE