



5-1

**LEVERETT GEORGE deVEBER, MD
1849-1925**

LEVERETT GEORGE deVEBER, MD 1849-1925

“...a square shooter, endowed with an abundance of human kindness, always charming, courteous, and hard working. His word was as good as his bond”.⁽¹⁾

Introduction

Dr. Leverett George deVeber was a third generation United Empire Loyalist. His great-great-grandfather, Lieutenant Colonel Gabriel deVeber, served in the British Army during the American War of Independence.⁽²⁾ After the War, Colonel deVeber received a land grant of 1000 acres south of Saint John, New Brunswick on the Musquash river.⁽³⁾ The deVebers remained in the Maritimes for the next one hundred years. Leverett George, however, had a wanderlust. He had studied medicine on two different continents, but not in Canada. His specialty became communicable diseases. His avocation was making friends, enough to enter politics in 1898 and win C.A. Magrath's vacated seat by acclamation. He was never out of politics until his death in 1925. Named to the Senate in 1905, Dr. deVeber's memory was perpetuated by the naming of prominent Mt deVeber in the Rocky Mountains, visible from the town of Grande Cache, north of Jasper.

From Youth to MD 1849-1870

L. George deVeber was the eldest of five children. He was born on February 10, 1849 and attended the Collegiate School and Kings College in Windsor, Nova Scotia.⁽⁴⁾ After graduation, he began his medical studies at Harvard University in Boston. Owing to a “slight difference of opinion between him and the faculty”, he remained there for only one year.⁽⁵⁾ Then he transferred to the St. Bartholomew's Medical

School in London England, where he graduated with his medical diploma in 1864. The next year found Dr. deVeber in the United States, where he studied for another year at the University of Pennsylvania. In 1870 he received his degree in medicine.⁽⁶⁾ Upon graduation he was immediately commandeered into service to help treat patients in the severe epidemic of smallpox in Philadelphia. That outbreak occurred in the same year as the second worst smallpox outbreak on the prairies – the epidemic of 1869/70. Dr. deVeber remained an authority on smallpox the rest of his life.⁽⁷⁾ The smallpox experience stimulated his lifelong interest in public health and communicable diseases.

The New Brunswick years 1871-1882

After his year in Philadelphia, Dr. deVeber returned to Saint John, New Brunswick, where he practiced for the next decade.⁽⁸⁾ DeVeber loved the outdoors, and approached mother nature with considerable natural athletic ability. He excelled at many sports: cricket, rowing, shooting, and hunting. deVeber once rowed against Canadian Rowing Olympian Edward Hanlon of St. Catharines in a practice race. He was beaten but “not outdistanced”. His splendid physique, with its wide shoulders and slim hips accentuated his presence. As one colleague said, he was “an exponent of the most advanced standards of manhood”. Nor was he beyond using these attributes with telling effect.⁽⁹⁾

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1. Campbell, Peter M. “The Life of L.G. deVeber”, Alberta Medical Bulletin 14(3): 43-44, July 1949.
 2. Campbell, Peter M. Obituary, Leverett George deVeber, CMAJ 15: 971, 1925. The first brief obituary appeared in the CMAJ 15: 868, 1925. It was written by Dr. G.E. Learmonth. Dr. deVeber always signed his name L. Geo. DeVeber. The family now prefers the deVeber spelling of the name.
 3. deVeber, George Personal communication with Dr. George deVeber, Dr. L.G. deVeber's grandson, May 6, 2004.
 4. MacRae, Archibald O. Leverett George deVeber M.D., in the *History of the Province of Alberta*, pages 783-784, 1912. Other birth dates given are Feb 11 and Feb 15, 1849. The deVeber family confirmed the Feb 10 date as correct.
 5. Campbell, Peter M. “The Life of L.G. deVeber”, pages 43-44.
 6. Blue, John “Leverett George deVeber, M.D.”, in *Alberta Past and Present*, Vol. III: 267-269, Pioneer Historical Publishing, 1924.
 7. Campbell, Peter M. “The Life of L.G. deVeber”, page 44.
 8. Blue, John “Leverett George deVeber”, page 268. John Blue indicated Dr. deVeber was in practice in New Brunswick for six years before joining the NWMP. All other references: the CMAJ obituary, the Lethbridge Herald Death Notice, the A.O. MacRae biography and G.M. McDougall clinic history are silent on how long he remained in practice in New Brunswick.
 9. Campbell, Peter M. “The Life of L.G. deVeber”, page 44.



Mount deVeber Complex west of Grande Cache

5-2

The NWMP years 1882-1885

At some stage during his youthful years, deVeber took up horsemanship. This interest, and his love of outdoor adventure, likely led him to submit his application to join the NWMP. On May 9, 1882 he reported to Staff Sergeant (later Sir) Sam Steele in Winnipeg. He was gazetted at Winnipeg's Fort Osborne by Inspector (later Commissioner) A.B. Perry.⁽¹⁰⁾ Multiple postings as a Hospital Sergeant followed. He traveled up the Assiniboine on the paddle wheeler Marquette to Fort Ellice, and then over land to his first posting at Fort Qu'Appelle (1882). Shortly afterwards he was transferred to Fort Walsh, then to Fort Macleod, and finally on November 23, 1882 to Calgary, where he served under Captain McIlree.⁽¹¹⁾ There he replaced "Doc" John Lauder, who had resigned from the Force to become an Indian Agent. Dr. deVeber remained responsible for the NWMP medical care at Fort Calgary, under Dr. G.A. Kennedy of Fort Macleod, until 1885.⁽¹²⁾

In February 1883, Dr. deVeber was temporarily transferred to Fort Macleod to replace Dr. Kennedy, who had taken a sabbatical to Ontario to be married. In April, a snow-blinded NWMP Constable Parker reached Fort Macleod and recorded how very glad he was to see the doctor.⁽¹³⁾ In the spring of 1883,

likely May, there was no physician in Calgary. Dr. Andrew Henderson would not arrive until June. Illness struck the Boyd family of Morley on the Bow River west of Calgary. Mrs. Boyd became seriously ill. One of her boys rode to Calgary to get medical help. When he found Calgary had no doctor, he rode another one hundred miles to Fort Macleod. There he pleaded with Dr. deVeber to make a house call to help his mother. The boy's concern over his mother's welfare, coupled with the urgency of the story, must have convinced Dr. deVeber to make the long house call. Half the time such house calls were false alarms, or made too late.



Interior of the NWMP Hospital, Calgary circa 1879 5-3

10. Stanley, George D. "Honorable L.G. deVeber", CACHB 2(1): 11-12, May 1937.

11. Stanley, George D. "Honorable L.G. deVeber", pages 11-12. Also see Gordon E. Tolton's, *The Rocky Mountain Rangers*, occasional Publication #28, Lethbridge Historical Society 1994, page 44.

12. Kennedy, George A. "Report of Surveyor [sic] Kennedy, Fort Macleod, 4 Dec 1882". Appended to the NWMP Annual Report for 1882. Reprinted in *Settlers and Rebels*, pages 32-33, Coles Canadiana, 1973.

13. (deVeber, L.G.) "Five Terrible Days and Nights: a Mounted Policeman Gets Snow Blinded and Is Lost – a Horse's Instinct Saves his Life." Fort Macleod Gazette, April 14, 1883. "Parker...is now...under Dr. DeVeber's care, who will no doubt bring him around". Reprinted in *Alberta History* 5(15): 5, Autumn 1957.

Dr. deVeber left immediately. He borrowed four horses in succession. It took him eighteen hours to reach Morley. The last horse he secured was at High River. It had not been broken but soon was. On arrival he diagnosed Mrs. Boyd as having typhoid fever. The treatment for typhoid was to give large doses of Quinine. He did not have any. Instead, he produced a small flask of brandy from his saddle pouch and offered it to Mrs. Boyd as a stimulant. She had never taken a drink and said she would not start. He opined that “she was the only tee-totaller whose opinion ever pleased him”. He finished the mickie, slept the night and rode home - another 130 miles. Mrs. Boyd died several days later.⁽¹⁴⁾

Dr. A. Henderson arrived in Calgary on June 9 and was joined by Dr. Neville J. Lindsay, on August 14 of 1883. They covered Dr. deVeber who remained in Fort Macleod for almost a year until Dr. Kennedy returned from his sabbatical. The two NWMP doctors met in Calgary in January 1884 where they visited the newly renovated NWMP Calgary hospital. Dr. deVeber remained in the bustling CPR town as the town's third physician.

Dr. deVeber described how civilization was slowly reaching the West. He told “of being awakened by

the sound of shooting in the streets, with stray bullets splintering through the walls of the shack above his bed, and of how he resolved the problem of safety by standing his mattress on its edge against the wall and returning to sleep in its lee”.⁽¹⁵⁾

While stationed in Fort Macleod, Dr. deVeber fell in love with the town as well as a young lady. He met Rachel Francis Ryan at a NWMP dance.⁽¹⁶⁾ Rachel Ryan and Kate Horan were the only eligible ladies in Pincher Creek and Fort Macleod at the time. Rachel was born in Melbourne, Australia on March 19, 1862. Her father was in the British Army. She lived in New Zealand and Tasmania, before her family moved to England in 1866. The Ryans came to Canada when Rachel was ten, in 1872.

Charles Ryan, Rachel's brother, had come west on the 1874 NWMP trek, two years after his family came to Canada. He retired from the Force to home-stead at Pincher Creek.⁽¹⁷⁾ An independent girl, Rachel Ryan traveled west at the age of twenty, to keep house for her brother Charles. Her trip west in 1882 took from April 1 to May 22. A year later in June 1883, Rachel's parents came to live in Fort Macleod, reuniting the Ryan family.

In January 1885, Dr. deVeber applied for discharge from the NWMP. On January 26, 1885, the Discharge Board at Fort Calgary approved the application of NWMP #185 Constable L.J. deVeber for discharge. The cost of the pay out was \$84, which was paid on February 10, 1885. It coincided with Dr. deVeber's thirty-sixth birthday.⁽¹⁸⁾ Dr. and Mrs. deVeber were married sometime during 1885.⁽¹⁹⁾

Dr. deVeber started the fourth full time private practice in the North West Territories in Fort Macleod. He followed Dr. A.E. Porter in Prince Albert (1878) and Drs. L.J. Munro and H.C. Wilson in Edmonton (1882). Dr. deVeber's practice was the first one that did not rely on government contracts.



NW Rebellion Medal, 1885

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14. Stanley, George D. “Honorable L.G. deVeber”, page 12. The one way distance was variously given as 130, 167, 170, 187 miles. Four or five horses were used. Dr. Stanley's account was based on a reply from Mrs. deVeber, then living in Ottawa. For more variations on the story see P.M. Campbell's CMAJ Obituary on Dr. deVeber; G.M. McDougall's *Medical Clinics and Physicians of Southern Alberta*, pages 114-115; and “The Pioneer Pemmican Club Roundup 1885-1985”, page 92, deposited in the Galt Museum.
15. Campbell, Peter M. Obituary, Leverett George DeVeber, CMAJ, 15:971, 1925. Also see G.E. Learmonth's obituary in the CMAJ 15: 868, 1925.
16. Kells, Edna Pioneer Interview with Mrs. deVeber (n.d.), pages 9, 10, circa 1935. Copy deposited in Glenbow, 1960.
17. Trew, D.E. “An Early Pioneer as related by the late Rachel Frances deVeber”. 8 pages. No date but circa 1947. Deposited in the Alberta Legislative Library, Edmonton.
18. deVeber, L. George NWMP discharge documents, dated February 11, 1885 at Regina, NWT.
19. deVeber, L. Barrie Personal communication, August 17, 2004. Dr. L. Barrie deVeber is Dr. deVeber's grandson.

With the outbreak of the Northwest Rebellion on April 1, 1885, 112 men including Dr. deVeber joined the newly formed Rocky Mountain Rangers under Major John O. Stewart.⁽²⁰⁾ Thirteen Rangers were former members of the NWMP. Dr. deVeber enlisted as the Ranger's regimental Surgeon. Captain Lord Richard Boyle was in charge of the Rangers #1 Troop, ex-British Army Officer Captain Edward G. Brown commanded #2 Troop, and Captain John Herron headed the #3 Troop. Another colorful member of the Rangers was John George (Kootenai) Brown of Waterton. He galloped forty miles in one day to volunteer his twenty years of experience as a plainsman and as the Rangers' Chief Scout.



by Gordon E. Tolton, 1994

5-5

The Rangers' action was limited. Initially they patrolled the plains east of Medicine Hat - roughly along the Fourth meridian - where the Saskatchewan/Alberta border now lies. Scouting parties were sent as far south as the Cypress Hills. Their next responsibility was to police and protect the Foothills ranches and settlements. The last was to guard the telegraph line from Medicine Hat to Fort Macleod and the construction crews on the railway from Coal Banks (Lethbridge) to Dunmore (near Medicine Hat).⁽²¹⁾ The Rangers disbanded between June 10 to July 8, 1885 and the men were released from service. They were paid an average of two hundred dollars each. All the Rangers received the Northwest Rebellion Canada 1885 medal.⁽²²⁾

The Fort Macleod years 1885-1890

After the militia disbanded, Dr. deVeber returned to his Fort Macleod practice. The town welcomed him

back. He was already well known and respected as a physician and surgeon. That fall, both Drs. Kennedy and deVeber made multiple house calls to Lethbridge because it had no physician. Lethbridge would have no doctor until Dr. F.H. Mewburn arrived in January 1886.⁽²³⁾

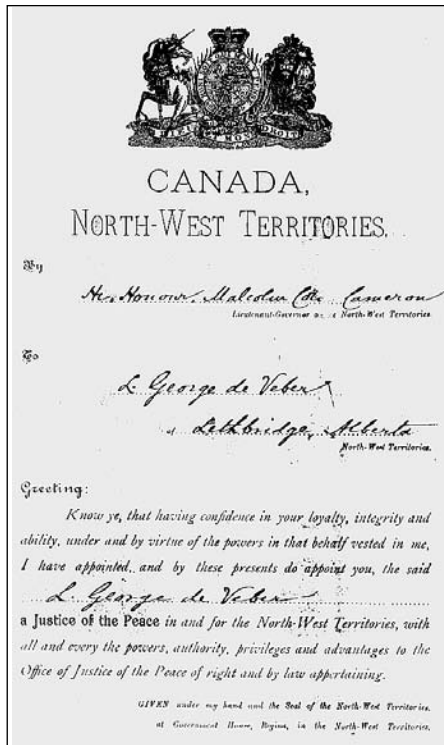
Dr. deVeber's reputation for being practical with his medicinal advice was revealed in a story told by John Kemmis. Apparently Kemmis was a patient of Dr. Mead's in Pincher Creek. He was chagrined when Dr. Mead ordered his medicine "to be taken in drops". The supply only lasted a couple of days. So Kemmis rode seventy miles to see Dr. deVeber. Kemmis was "tickled to death" and his indigestion problem was resolved, when Dr. deVeber prescribed him three quart size bottles of differently colored medications, "to be taken one tablespoon three times per day in rotation".⁽²⁴⁾

From 1883 to 1890 Fort Macleod grew rapidly to become one of the largest towns in the NWT. The deVebers became an integral part of the community. Dr. deVeber located his medical office in the Godsal House. His office hours were from 8-10 am, 12-2 and 6-8 pm. During his seven years in Fort Macleod he contributed actively to his community. He helped initiate or expand, the curling club, the Fair Board, and the Hospital Auxiliary Board. Dr. deVeber was also the secretary of the cricket club, paying the annual membership fee of three dollars.⁽²⁵⁾

In 1888 Dr. deVeber registered as a physician in the NWT under the 1885 NWT Medical Ordinance. It permitted registration on receipt of two testimonials from existing registrants.⁽²⁶⁾ No examination was required until the revised 1888 Ordinance was passed. The second Ordinance created the NWT College of Physicians and Surgeons and a governing NWT Medical Council. The new Council implemented an examination and registration system. It included a grand-fathering clause, and was in place by 1889.

Despite many happy days in Fort Macleod, Dr. deVeber, his wife and family decided to move to

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20. Tolton, Gordon E. *The Rocky Mountain Rangers: Southern Alberta's Cowboy Cavalry in the North West Rebellion – 1885*, pages 43, 44, 50, 68-69, 86. Occasional Publication #28, Lethbridge Historical Society, 1994.
21. Dempsey, Hugh A. "Rocky Mountain Rangers". *Alberta History* 5(2): 3-6, Spring 1957.
22. Tolton, Gordon E. *The Rocky Mountain Rangers*, page 74.
23. Higinbotham, John D. Letter to Dr. P.M. Campbell, February 18, 1930.
24. Stanley, George D. "Herbert Rimington Mead", *CACHB* 6(3): 10-14, November 1941.
25. Fort Macleod History Book Committee *Fort Macleod: Our Colorful Past*, pages 43, 65, 216, 433-435, 1975.
26. Jamieson, Heber C. *Early Medicine in Alberta*, page 43, AMA, 1947.



5-6

deVeber's NWT Justice of the Peace appointment, 1898

Lethbridge in 1890. The deVebers returned to Fort Macleod in May 1890 to a "Thank you" party from an appreciative community. Dr. deVeber was presented with a gift of surgical instruments as a symbol of the esteem in which the deVebers were held by the community.⁽²⁷⁾

The Lethbridge (NWT) years 1890-1905

In Lethbridge, Dr. deVeber joined Drs. A.M. Lafferty and F.H. Mewburn in time to see the Galt Hospital opened in 1891.⁽²⁸⁾ His practice included assisting Dr. Mewburn at surgery and acting as his anesthesiologist.

Dr. deVeber continued his civic contributions in his new community by joining the Lethbridge Board of Trade. He was soon appointed to its Executive committee. In 1895, he acquired the Lethbridge Drug Company and moved his family into the back section of the drugstore.⁽²⁹⁾

In April 1898 Dr. deVeber was appointed the Health Officer (MOH) for Lethbridge.⁽³⁰⁾ In his first presentation to the Chairman of the Health and Relief Committee, Dr. deVeber reported one case of measles and one of diphtheria. The latter he quarantined for six weeks. In July of 1898 he was appointed

Report of Contagious & Infectious Diseases & Typhoid arising within limits of Town of Lethbridge during months of June, July, Aug. Sept. Oct. Nov 1898

Name	Age	Sex	Residence	Disease	Month	Remarks
Norval Buff	21	Mr	Lethbridge	Typhoid	June	Recovered
Henry Osborn	28	Mr	Lethbridge	Diphtheria	July	Recovered
A. Bowman	23	Mr	Lethbridge	Typhoid	Aug.	Recovered
John Bowman		Mr	Port Hope	Measles	Aug.	"

deVeber's Lethbridge Medical Officer of Health Report, 1898 5-7

a Justice of the Peace. In August 1898 he became the Lethbridge Municipal Sanitary Inspector under the Contagious Disease Ordinance. That appointment paid no stipend.⁽³¹⁾

In 1898 the sitting MLA Mr. C.A. Magrath, resigned as the member of the NWT Legislative Assembly for Lethbridge. Dr. deVeber was nominated to succeed him and was elected by acclamation. During his first term, he participated in the revision of the 1902 NWT Public Ordinance on sanitation.⁽³²⁾

In his 1901 MOH report, Dr. deVeber reported he had supervised the care of fifteen cases of smallpox, eight of scarlet fever, one of typhoid, and one of chickenpox. Three of the Scarlett fever cases proved fatal. He urged the Council of Lethbridge to erect an isolation hospital. The one placed at his disposal was a makeshift one, likely obtained by persuading Mayor (Dr.) F.H. Mewburn of the need for it.⁽³³⁾

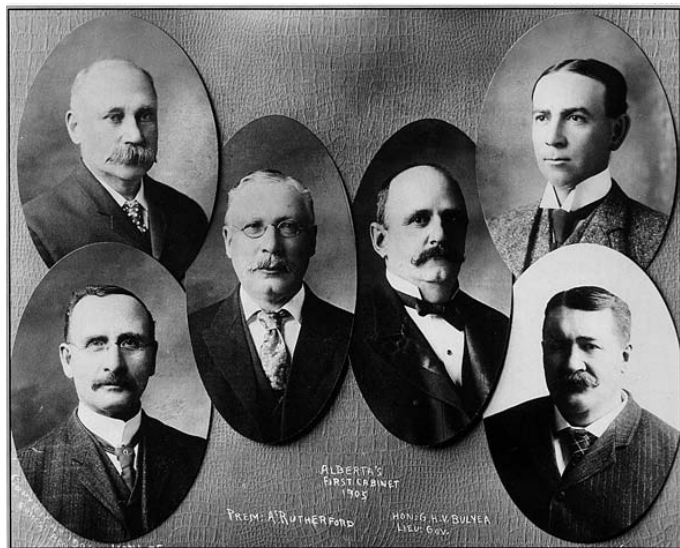
In 1902 Dr. deVeber ran again for the NWT Legislative Assembly. He won the election against Billy (later Justice) Ives.⁽³⁴⁾ During the 1902-1905 session, he was appointed the Government whip. As well, he advised Laurier on how to handle the sepa-

27. (deVeber, L.G.) Lethbridge Herald April 12, 1960. Reprinted May 28, 1991. Also noted in the Macleod Gazette of April 9, 1891.
 28. Johnston, Alex , et al *Lethbridge, Its Doctors, Dentists and Drug Stores*, Occasional Publication #24, pages 6, 19, 24, 32, Lethbridge Historical Society, 1991.
 29. Johnston, Alex , et al *Lethbridge, Its Doctors, Dentists and Drug Stores*, pages 70, 71.
 30. (deVeber, L.G.) Report to the Chairman, Health and Relief Committee, Town of Lethbridge, for April 1898, by the Medical Officer of Health. Jamieson suggested deVeber's appointment started in 1893. deVeber Family Archives.
 31. (deVeber, L.G.) Letter from John A. Rew, Clerk, Executive Council to B. Bowman Secretary-Treasurer, Lethbridge, August 10, 1898. Copy in the deVeber family archives.
 32. Neatby, Hilda "The Medical Profession in the North West Territories", Saskatchewan History 2(2): 1-15, Spring 1949.
 33. (deVeber, L.G.) Medical Officer of Health (MOH) Reports 1898-1901. Copies in the deVeber family archives.
 34. Higinbotham, John D. *When the West was Young*, pages 247-248, Ryerson 1933.

rate school question that had been raised by the Mormons.⁽³⁵⁾ When the province of Alberta was formed in 1905, Dr. deVeber ran for a third time, this time as a Liberal. He was elected to the first Alberta Legislature and was appointed by Premier Rutherford, as the Minister without Portfolio in the first Alberta Cabinet.⁽³⁶⁾

The Lethbridge (Alberta) years 1905-1923

Shortly before the first Legislative Assembly sitting in May 1906, Prime Minister Laurier appointed Dr. deVeber as the first Senator from the province of Alberta. He was joined by veterinarian Dr. Percy



Alberta First Cabinet, 1905/06. Messrs. 5-8

WH Cushing (LL), WT Findlay (UL), AC Rutherford (Premier), HV Bulyea (Lt. Gov.), C Cross (UR), LG deVeber (LR)

Talbot. They were the third and fourth NWT/Alberta Senators to be appointed and followed William Hardisty (1888-1889) and James Lougheed (1889-1925).⁽³⁷⁾ Dr. deVeber's first speech in the Senate was described as "breezy, and to the point...going straight to the matter of hand, along the line of public improvements". This apparently meant it was about highways and bridges. The local newspaper opined that "his successor will find a high mark set for services rendered".⁽³⁸⁾

In the Senate he was appointed to the Public Health and Food Inspection Committee. During his senate years he industriously represented the west.⁽³⁹⁾ After Prime Minister Laurier came to Edmonton and cut the ribbon to officially dedicate the new Alberta Legislature in 1910, Laurier toured the province. Dr. deVeber and his wife hosted the Lauriers in Lethbridge.

The deVebers made annual trips to Ottawa for many years. Not surprisingly, Dr. deVeber's frequent absences to attend Senate sittings and hearings wrecked havoc with his once flourishing practice. Dr. deVeber approached Dr. Peter Campbell of Cardston in 1905 to entice him to move to Lethbridge. Campbell did his own research. At deVeber's suggestion he met Dr. Mewburn, the well known and widely respected southern Alberta surgeon. "Mewburn was most kind, praised deVeber as a man, said there was room for another white man anywhere, and advised me to come. This I think must be a classical example of two men each trying to stand so straight that they leaned over backwards".⁽⁴⁰⁾

Campbell never changed his mind. He remained of the opinion that deVeber was "a square shooter, endowed with an abundance of human kindness, always charming, courteous, and hard working. His word was as good as his bond."⁽⁴¹⁾

Dr. deVeber remained in partnership with Dr. Campbell for ten years. The clinic they started continued as the Campbell Clinic. Dr. deVeber was also President of the Southern Alberta (Lethbridge) Medical Society and remained active in the Board of Trade and the International Order of Foresters and Elks.

Dr. deVeber was the guest speaker at a post-1913 graduating class of Lethbridge General Hospital nurses. He welcomed them into their profession and congratulated them on their chosen ideal of alleviating the sufferings of humanity. He emphasized that wom

35. (deVeber, L.G.)

Correspondence with Laurier dated October 3, 10, 24, 26, 1905, in the deVeber Family Archives.

36. Babcock, D.R.

Alexander Cameron Rutherford, A Gentleman of Strathcona, pages 26-29, UofC Press, 1989.

37. Fairbairn, Joan

The Canadian Senate, in Lethbridge Historical Society Newsletter #4, July 1992. Also see Gerald M. McDougall and F.C. Harris' *Medical Clinics and Physicians of Southern Alberta*, page 100 and D.R. Babcock's *Alexander Cameron Rutherford*, pages 26-31, 149-154, UofC, 1989.

38. (deVeber, L.G.)

Lethbridge Herald April 12, 1906, reprinted May 28, 1991.

39. Blue, John

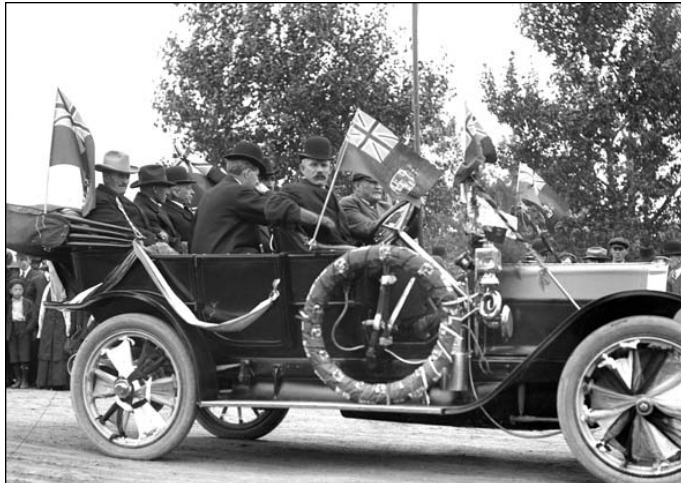
"Leverett George deVeber M.D.", page 269.

40. Campbell, Peter M.

"The Life of L.G. deVeber", AMB 14(3): 43-44, July 1949. The story was recounted, with an excellent summary of Dr. deVeber, in G.M. McDougall and F.C. Harris' *Medical Clinics and Physicians in Southern Alberta*, pages 98-100, UofC, 1991.

41. Campbell, Peter M.

"The Life of L.G. deVeber", page 44.



Dr. deVeber (driver) touring Prime Minister Laurier⁵⁻⁹ (back seat), Lethbridge 1910

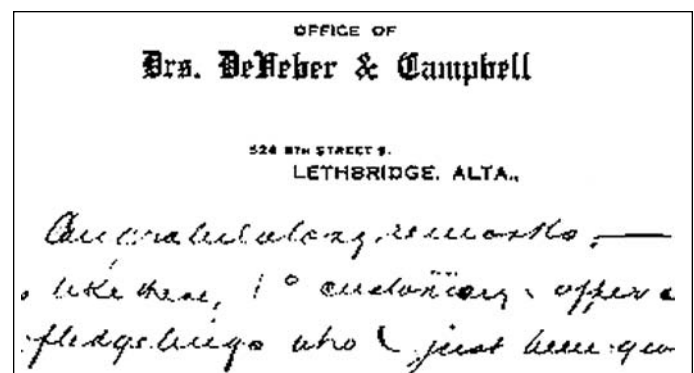
anhood was the best preparation for the ideal nurse.⁽⁴²⁾

Dr. deVeber retired from medical practice and as the Lethbridge MOH in 1915. Three years later he was called back to Lethbridge during the Spanish flu epidemic of 1918/19. He supervised the thirty-five bed emergency hospital, which was set up in the Wesley Methodist Church hall to handle the out of town and referred cases.⁽⁴³⁾ Together with the Galt Hospital and Isolation Hospital (built in 1914) the three facilities handled the 2579 flu cases that were hospitalized. There were 129 deaths.⁽⁴⁴⁾ The deVeber's maintained their home in Lethbridge until 1923. They were well known for their rose garden.

The Ottawa Years and After, 1923-1925

In 1923 the deVebers permanently moved to Alymer, Quebec near Ottawa. Shortly after his death on July 9, 1925 at age seventy-six, Dr. (Senator) deVeber had the distinction of becoming one of Alberta's first six (of seven) Senators, after whom a mountain in the Canadian Rockies was named.⁽⁴⁵⁾ He joined Sir James Lougheed in that acknowledgement. Mount deVeber,

a peak of 8494 feet (2157 m), was the mountain which Dominion Surveyor A.O. Wheeler climbed in 1923. Wheeler took his last circumferential pictures



deVeber's Congratulatory Remarks to the Galt⁵⁻¹⁰ Hospital Nursing Graduates (n.d.)

from the camera platform on its summit. The triangulations from the top of Mt deVeber, were the most northerly survey points recorded during Wheeler's ten year survey of the Alberta/BC border.⁽⁴⁶⁾ Mt deVeber is located twenty miles west of Grand Cache. It was challenged for the first time by members of the deVeber family, on August 9-20, 2002. To commemorate the event, a plaque was deposited at the base of the last buttress.⁽⁴⁷⁾

The deVeber Family

The deVeber's had two children. Marion Francis was born in late 1885 or early 1886. She was raised in England, married a ship builder and remained in England until late in her life. Her brother Leverett Sandys was born in 1894, but was discouraged from entering medicine by his father. Instead he joined the Bank of Montreal. Rachel deVeber lived nineteen years longer than her husband and died on January 17, 1944 in Ottawa. She did not live quite long enough to see two deVeber grandchildren enter medicine. Barrie became a Pediatric Hematologist

42. deVeber, L. George Few Congratulatory Remarks. Speech to the (Lethbridge) Nursing Graduating Class, (n.d.). Deposited in the deVeber family archives.
43. deVeber L. George Public Health report for 1918 and 1919, deposited in the Galt Archives. Personal communication with Greg Ellis, Galt Archivist, August 29, 2006.
44. Johnston, Alex, et al *Lethbridge, Its Doctors, Dentists and Drug Stores*, pages 19-20. In Alberta there were an estimated 38,000 cases (7% of the population) including 4,000 who died from the Spanish Flu.
45. Aubrey, Merrily K. Letter to R. Lampard, April 30, 2002. Ms. Aubrey was the Head of the Geographic Names Program, Alberta Government. The Senators were Hardisty, Talbot, deVeber, Forget, Cote and Lougheed. Dr. Roy was the only one omitted in the program. The originally named Mt. Lougheed was changed to the present Mt. Lougheed one year later in 1926, ostensibly because it couldn't be seen from the CPR. Alpine details of Mt. deVeber are recorded in Pat Holmgren's 2000 Place Names in Alberta, pages 44-45, 1972.
46. Cautley, R.W., Wheeler, A.O. *Report of the Commission appointed to Delineate the boundary between the provinces of Alberta and British Columbia Part III*, pages 33-35, 62, Ottawa, 1925. The reconnaissance station was named deVeber in 1922.
47. Veitch, A. "deVebers make first assault on the Peak with their name on it." *The Grand Cache Mountaineer*, August 27, 2002.



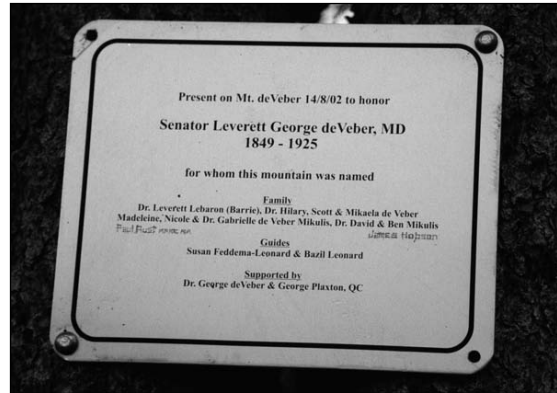
Lethbridge Isolation Hospital circa 1914 5-11

(London) and George a Nephrologist (Toronto). The deVeber medical dynasty continued into the next generation. Two of Dr. deVeber's great-grandchildren chose medicine. Gabrielle deVeber became a Pediatric Neurologist and Hiliary deVeber a Paediatrician. Someday the deVebers' may rival the seven generations of physicians in the Mewburn and eight in the Wilson families.⁽⁴⁸⁾

Related Profiles: Nevitt, Kennedy, Lafferty, Lindsay, Mewburn, Brett

Related Perspectives: Military Medicine and Medical Care in the North-West Rebellions of 1870/71 and 1885, Osler Goes West, The Medical Profession in the North-West Territories (1889-1906), Climate, Calgary and Tuberculosis (c1900)

Key Words: NWMP doctors, NWT Medical Officer of Health, NWT Legislative Assembly MLA, Alberta 1905 Cabinet Minister, Alberta Senator, Mt deVeber



5-12

Mt. deVeber Plaque, placed by the deVeber family, 2002

TUESDAY AUGUST 27, 2002 THE GRANDE CACHE MOUNTAINEER PEOPLE 7

deVebers make first assault on the peak with their name on it



Arthur Veitch
Mountaineer staff

One of the highlights of Barrie deVeber's life was stepping on the rock named for his great grandfather. The 73-year-old Ontario man saw a dream come true when he ventured into Willmore Wilderness Park, Aug. 9, to climb Mount deVeber.

"I didn't get all the way (to the top), and that's disappointing, but the trip was still an experience of a lifetime," he says.

The retired physician became interested in the history of his famous ancestor and struck upon the idea of climbing the mountain named after the prominent Liberal senator.

"We first had to find out exactly where the mountain was... once we found it, we began planning the trip," he explains.

A party of seven adults and four children joined outfitters from High Country Vacations in a 12-day horseback trip into Willmore.

deVeber found riding a horse a "bit of a challenge" and actually gashed his head on a rock after his mount stumbled.

The trail to the upper reaches of the mountain became impassable by horse, however, despite the best attempts of the guides. And it was too much for the elderly deVeber. The rest of the party pressed on.

A plaque commemorating the family's visit was nailed to a tree near an alpine lake and a small ceremony for one of deVeber's deceased sons was staged.

"It was a fantastic trip," deVeber concludes. "Not only did we get to climb the mountain named after my great grandfather, it provided an excellent chance for us (family and friends) to get reacquainted."

Upon coming out of Willmore, deVeber booked a helicopter flight from Pacific Western Helicopters to gain a different view of the mountain.

"That was great because you don't realize how complex in shape it is, almost U-shaped," he says. "And, flying over the lake, we could plainly see our plaque."

The mountain Mount deVeber (pronounced 'de-veb-er' not 'de-vee-ber') is the two peaks Grande Cacheites can see when looking down the Smoky River valley to the southwest.

It was named after Leverett George deVeber, a prominent physician in Alberta at the turn of the last century. He served as a doctor for the Northwest Mounted Police and opened a practice in Lethbridge before entering the North West Territories Legislature by acclamation in 1898. He was reelected in 1902 and appointed Liberal whip.

With the formation of the province of Alberta in 1905, Premier Alexander Rutherford appointed deVeber to the first cabinet as a Minister without Portfolio. Soon after this, Prime Minister Wilfred Laurier appointed him as one of Alberta's first senators.

deVeber retired from medical practice in 1915 but remained the Medical Officer of Health for Lethbridge.

A man who favored the outdoors, the robust deVeber was a noted marksman, hunter, cricket player and a rower.

THE de VEBER family poses with their guides in front of Mount de Veber. The trip had its tribulations, however. Barrie de Veber was fortunate his daughter and son-in-law were physicians and a makeshift operating room was created to stitch up a gash on his head (right). And the wranglers worked overtime to clear the trail of debris deposited by flooding (below).




Photos: Sue Feddemma

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5-13