

From our Archives

For more than 100 years military engineers from communities in the Kootenays have served. Their legacy is perpetuated today by 44 Engineer Squadron with a presence in Trail and Cranbrook. Our archives have

Major A Davis, DSO.

44 Field Engineer Squadron of Trail, BC constructed a bridge over Cottonwood Creek at Nelson, BC and named it for Major Angus-Ward Davis. Maj Davis was the first Commanding Officer of Number 3 Tunnelling Company Canadian of the Expeditionary Force during the First World War. A noted mining engineer in civilian life, Major Davis joined the Canadian Engineers as a sapper in August 1914 and proceeded to France where he was later commissioned a Lieutenant in the Royal Engineers. In 1915 he returned to the Canadian Engineers to command Number 3 Tunnelling Company. Receiving a Distinguished Service Order and several Mentions in Despatches for his work during the war, Major Davis went on to be chief engineer at several mines in British Columbia after the war.

The 90 foot Bailey Bridge is associated with the Trans Canada Trail and was officially opened and dedicated to Major Davis in September 2001 by his son and two daughters.

**FINE RECORDS ESTABLISHED
BY KOOTENAY ENGINEERS**

Of the original party that left Nelson, one has been awarded the D. S. O., and five have won the Military Cross. Three Made Supreme sacrifice, and two were wounded.

A remarkable and probably unique record in the great war has been established by the mining engineers who left the Kootenay in August, 1914, and blazed the trail for others by joining up as simple engineer sappers.

The party has figured in much of the fighting and rendered such distinguished service that high honors have been conferred on no fewer than six members of it, one being awarded the D. S. O., and five the Military Cross, while three made the supreme sacrifice and two were wounded.

Here is the splendid record:

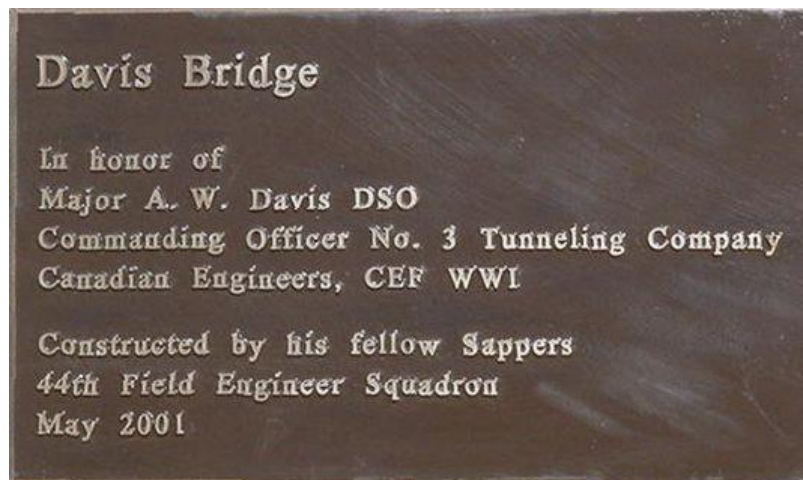
A. W. Davis, major—Distinguished Service Order.
C. O. North, major—Military Cross.

T. Brown, captain—Military Cross.
T. O'Grady, captain—Military Cross.
B. L. Sayers, captain—Military Cross.
George Rivel, killed.
R. G. Macfarlane, killed.
A. J. L. Evans, killed.
G. B. Webster, lieutenant, wounded.
L. B. Reynolds, lieutenant, wounded.

In sending details of the record to The Daily News, J. L. Retallack says:

"I think to have been a member of that first party is an honor itself. Will you kindly permit me to take this opportunity of conveying my best wishes to my old friends in Kootenay."

Nelson News 23rd March 17





MAJOR A. W. DAVIS, D.S.O.

Previous to the war he was mining engineering in British Columbia. Joined up, sailed with the 1st Division in 1914, and went to France in February, 1915, as a Corporal. He was granted a commission in the Royal Engineers, dated 4th May, 1915, and was attached to a Tunnelling Company R.E. On 21st December, 1915, he was re-transferred to the Canadian Engineers, and organized a Tunnelling Company C.E., remaining as O/C. until September, 1917. Mentioned in despatches 14th June, 1916, and 1st June, 1917. Awarded D.S.O. 13th February, 1917.