

MILITARY DISTRICT NO. 9.

The Militia in this District are under the command of Lt. Colonel J. Winburn Laurie, Deputy Adjutant General, who reports for my information as follows, on the state of his command :

HEAD QUARTERS,
Halifax, N. S.
Oct. 24th, 1872.

Sir,—I have the honor to inform you that the quota of Active Militia required to be furnished from the District under my command is 4,234. The total nominal strength of the force in the District, were the respective corps complete to their established strength, as authorized, would be 303 officers and 4,230 men.

The total actual strength of the force who mustered at the time of the annual drill for 1872-73, was 222 officers, and 2,594 men.

The annual drill was performed in accordance with General Orders No. 14, of 31st May, 1872, as in documents A. B. C. herewith forwarded. Annual inspection reports and district target practice returns are enclosed.

I have the honor to be, Sir,
Your obedient servant,
J. WINBURN LAURIE, Lt. Col.,
D. A. G.

Commanding No. 9 District.

The Adjutant General of Militia,
Ottawa.

THE HALIFAX BRIGADE.

Consisting of

Halifax Light Battery	Capt. Graham.
1st Halifax Gar. Art.	Lt. Col. Mitchell.
2nd "	Belcher.
63rd " Rifles	Fallister.
66th " Infantry	Bremner.

Performed their annual training at brigade headquarters. The whole brigade attended two brigade field days, at one of which they were formed in division with a brigade of H.M.F.'s. Regular troops under Lt. General Sir Hastings Doyle; and the infantry and light battery attended two additional brigade drills.

The whole force also attended three evening brigade drills, drilling from half past seven, until ten in the long summer evenings or moonlights; and more evening drills would have been held, but that partly through sickness and partly through press of other engagements, owing to my being left without a brigade major for this brigade during the whole training season I was unable to spare the time.

The musketry practice was regularly conducted under the superintendence of a field officer of the corps at practice and under Lieut. Col. Sawyer, the Brigade Musketry Instructor.

Bedford range is inconveniently situated for this purpose, as over three hours is lost in travelling to and from the city, but no more accessible range can be obtained.

The 12 Batteries Garrison Artillery performed their great gun practice from a battery belonging to the Royal Artillery, kindly placed at their disposal by Sir Hastings Doyle.

No man was rated effective or received pay unless he had attended the full number of brigade drills in addition to the company and battalion training; had fired his 40 rounds of ammunition at rifle practice, and if an artilleryman had also performed

his great gun drill unless he had obtained special leave of absence from the commanding officer of the corps.

On the 2nd October, I inspected this brigade. Owing to continuous wet weather for several days previously, the ground was too wet to attempt field manoeuvres, I therefore confined the movements to parade drill. The several corps were well handled by their respective commanders, and the men, who are mostly stout, able and well grown, and fit for any service, showed considerable proficiency in their drill manoeuvring; and above all showed that anxiety to do their best, and to appear to advantage. It is, however, desirable this Brigade should have some practice in manoeuvring over broken and rough ground.

The Light Battery practised at 1,800 yards range with their 6 pounder Armstrong's, in the presence of Colonel Gibbon, C. B. commanding the Royal Artillery at Halifax, who expressed his satisfaction at the good practice and efficiency of the battery. This fine battery has now been maintained in a thoroughly effective state since 1799 at great expense to the members, and it is felt as a hardship, that whilst corps are junior to them have received complete issue of harness, the members of this battery have to bear the expense of hiring harness of an inferior kind on all occasions of public parade.

TEVIOTDALE CAMP.

On the 26th June, I went into camp with the 78th Highlanders, and Victoria Provisional Battalion, at Teviotdale, near Truro.

In the 78th Highlanders, several of the companies, many of which had completed their period of service, came to camp very much below strength.

The three companies from Pictou County came in at nearly full strength, mostly strong, hearty men, and were a credit to the battalion.

The 79th possesses a pipe and drum corps and the bagpipes bear out the Highland designation of the corps, and in lieu of a band gave life to the camp.

Some difficulty was experienced in handling the Victoria Provisional Battalion in brigade and battalion drill, as a large proportion of the men speak only Gaelic, and do not understand English. Their extreme willingness and obedience to discipline, however, did much to facilitate the duty of instructing them.

Many of the rank and file who did come into camp with this battalion were very young lads.

Three additional companies have been raised for this battalion, which is largely composed of men from the Western Highlands of Scotland, and they have requested that the regiment may bear the title "91st Argyllshire Highlanders."

As this was the first year of camp training in this portion of the district every exertion was made by the officers, who generally worked most zealously to make it a success; much assistance in working up the interior economy was given by two Sergeants from the line kindly allowed by Colonel Gibbon, C. B., the officer commanding the troops at Halifax, to be attached to these two battalions during the training, and I was more than ever impressed with the necessity of having men of army experience employed as Drill Instructors in the force.

The 78th having had previous practice in battalion drill, under the system followed in former years, and having a few trained non-commissioned officers among them pro-

gressed in drill more rapidly than the Victoria Provisional Battalion which had not these advantages, making all allowances the brigade manoeuvring was fairly performed.

AYLESFORD CAMP.

On the 3rd September, the 68th, 69th, 72nd Battalion, and one company of the 75th went into camp at Aylesford under the command of Lt. Colonel Milson, as through ill health I was prevented assuming command. On the 15th and 17th September I inspected this brigade. The haying season had been very wet and backward, and at the last moment commanding officers reported that it would be more convenient to postpone the date of muster until the 10th, but it was then too late to make arrangements; the officers found much difficulty in getting men to attend, and the companies were very weak numerically. The late harvest was given as a reason for this—but increase of pay was also strongly urged as an inducement to the superior class of men to turn out.

The battalion and brigade drill was fairly performed, thanks to the exertions of Lieut. Colonel Milson and the commanding and other officers who are generally hardworking and well up to their work. The want of trained non-commissioned officers is seriously felt.

No. 6 Company of the 75th Battalion, the captain of which stated that he did not receive orders from his commanding officer to attend at Teviotdale, volunteered to perform training at Aylesford, and were attached for drill and discipline to the 68th Battalion. This company was composed of a sturdy and willing body of men.

CUMBERLAND PROVISIONAL BATTALION.

This battalion was ordered to attend at camp, near Truro on the 26th June, but owing to the non-completion of the Intercolonial Railroad the men could not be brought by rail, and the allowance of 3 cents per mile for waggon hire was far too inadequate to bring a battalion an average distance of between 80 and 90 miles, and Lt. Colonel Stewart reported it was utterly impossible to hire conveyance at that rate. I therefore reported this to headquarters, and directed the battalion to perform their annual training at company headquarters, and ordered a battalion muster at Amherst, where I inspected three companies on the 9th Oct. The men were exercised in battalion and light infantry drill, and performed the movements creditably.

The headquarters of the Parrsboro' Company were changed to Tidnish in June, but the new officers were not appointed, and the clothing was not transferred in time for this company to take part in the battalion parade. I therefore inspected the company at its own headquarters.

This battalion is composed of a fine body of men, respectable and well off, who can always be found when wanted, and who are physically able to stand the fatigues of a campaign.

The Lunenburg, Mahone Bay, and Chester Batteries of Garrison Artillery were directed to attend training in camp near the Forts at Halifax (as laid down in General Orders No. 14, of 31st May last) on the

The captains reported to me through the Brigade Major, that they were unable to get their men to attend. These batteries have consequently remained untrained this year.

I have the honor to be, Sir,
Your obedient servant,
J. W. LAURIE, Colonel,
Commanding District.

(To be Continued)