



LIEUT.-COL. BLAINE.

## LIEUT.-COL.-BLAINE, 62ND ST. JOHN FUSILIERS.

In the retirement from the force of Lieut.-Col. Arbuthnot Blaine, of the 62nd St. John Fusiliers, the service loses another old and efficient officer and one who has given a large share of his time to the call of his military duties, as shown by the following sketch of his life :

Lieut.-Col. Blaine comes from Ireland, having been born in the town of Kilibeg, County Donegal. He came to this country with his parents in the early part of 1842, and after the usual ups and downs of boyhood entered the employ of J. & A. Macmillan, bookbinders and stationers, in June, 1845, and has been continually in their employ ever since, with the exception of a few months spent in the United States, to perfect himself in the higher finishing branches of his trade. In the year 1848 he became foreman of their large bindery and is still in that responsible position.

He commenced his long and honourable military career very early in life, before the real embodiment of any militia was attempted in the Province of New Brunswick, when the only effort towards military drill was what was then called the three days "training" of all between the ages of 18 and 60, and when only a few of the officers pretended to have a uniform of any kind, and knew very little drill, although making the most of the opportunities they had for instruction.

The first authentic mention of his appearance as a military man being a turn out of these "Flat Feet," as they were called, under command of Capt. B———, when they drilled on what is now King Square in the year 1847 or '49. Capt. B——— thinking he knew something of drill undertook to extend the company for skirmishing; and the Colonel has often been heard to remark, "Do you know we are still extended; for from that time to this we have never been closed." But his real military life did not commence until some years later when in the fall of 1863 he joined "The Queen's Own" in No. 1 Co., under Captain (now Col.) R. W. Crookshank, the uniformed companies of the county having being on the 12th of August of that year formed into the St. John Volunteer Battalion, under command of Lieut.-Col. Hon. John Robertson; from that date to the present he has never been out of the corps, but has risen step by step until now he retires with the highest regimental rank. After serving in the ranks of this company for three years, we find him passing a board for qualification as a non-commissioned officer, which he did in a very satisfactory manner, beating several competitors in his company, and on April 16th, 1866, the following appeared in Regimental Orders :

"The following non-commissioned officers having passed

"a satisfactory examination are taken on the strength as follows :—Sergt. Blaine to No. 1 Co. Special attention is drawn to this non-commissioned officer having passed so satisfactory an examination."

During the Fenian Raid of this year the battalion was ordered to the front and quartered at St. Andrews, Sergt. Blaine being with his company.

In 1868, upon the promotion of Sergt.-Major Mackenzie to the rank of Ensign and appointment as Adjutant, we find Sergeant Blaine appointed Sergt.-Major (July 15th), which position he held until August 4th, 1871, when the corps was disbanded for the purposes of reorganization, Sergt.-Major Blaine at once took steps to organize a company, and within a few weeks had completed his organization and forwarded his papers for acceptance, being the first to do so; but by some misadventure his roll did not reach headquarters until later, and he was gazetted to No. 2 instead of No. 1 Company, his commission as Captain dating Nov. 24th, 1871; Capt. Blaine, however, retained the actual command of a company a very short time, as upon the completion of the reorganization of the corps he was appointed Acting Adjutant and almost immediately confirmed in that rank.

Capt. Blaine while Adjutant of the corps was called upon to command a detachment of the regiment called out in aid of the civil power in the spring of 1875 (May 5) in consequence of a labour strike, and the dispositions then made by him called forth the hearty commendation of the military and civil authorities. Capt. Blaine also served as a member and president of the Band Committee of the corps from 1872 to the close of 1874.

On the 17th of Sept, 1875, Capt. Blaine received his promotion to the Majority upon the appointment of Lt.-Col. MacShane to the District Staff as Brigade Major. Shortly after his promotion, and mainly by his exertions, leave was obtained to form a branch of the School of Instruction to enable Officers and N. C. O.'s, who could not spare the time necessary to go to Fredericton, to qualify, they to go to the main School at Fredericton for final examinations.

The corps was again called upon in the summer of 1876 to furnish a detachment in aid of the civil power, this time in fear of trouble on July 12th, during the Orange procession of that day, and the command was again placed in the hands of Major Blaine.

On the 8th of Sept. of this year Major Blaine succeeded to the command of the corps upon the retirement of Lt.-Col. Sullivan, upon which occasion the D. A. G. used the following words in his report: "The corps has secured a worthy successor in Lt.-Col. Blaine, of whose zeal and energy I have already had occasion to bear testimony. He has served in almost every capacity in the Force, from Private to Lt.-Col., and while he has shown himself willing to obey, he has proved himself fitted to command."

The great fire of June 20th, 1877, next called forth his energies, when, while his own house and property were being consumed, he with the D. A. G., Brigade Major, and others, devoted his time to a vain endeavour to save the Armories and other Government property, for which he received special mention in reports to Head Quarters. He also commanded a detachment of 100 men of the corps (all that could be uniformed and armed after the fire) for about 12 days, to aid the civil power in maintaining order.

Nothing further out of the usual routine of a commanding officer's duties occurred until March, 1885, when he received orders to hold the corps in readiness for the Northwest, and when the New Brunswick Battalion was formed Lt.-Col. Blaine was ordered to furnish four companies and was himself appointed senior Major.

During the celebration of the Queen's Jubilee in 1887 Lt.-Col. Blaine commanded the whole of the city force, as Brigadier, during the movements of a field-day review and afterwards acted as field officer in the ceremony of trooping the Queen's Colour.

Col. Blaine has several times acted on the Staff of the Province, being Brigade Major of Camp Sussex in 1886 and Musketry Instructor at Camp Chatham in 1888, and again at Camp Moncton in 1890.

Col.-Blaine also had the honour which seldom falls to an officer of the Canadian Militia, that of commanding a force, as Brigadier, composed of the N. B. B. Garrison Artillery, 62nd Fusiliers, St. John Rifles, and a detachment from H. M. S. "Tourmaline," in the summer of 1891.

The last few years of his military career have been un-