

ANNUAL REPORT ON THE STATE OF
THE MILITIA FOR 1873.

'APPENDIX No. I

(Continued from Page. 363.)

MILITARY DISTRICT NO. 9

HEAD QUARTERS,
HALIFAX, N. S.,

January 1st, 1874.

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 4,284. The total nominal strength of the force in the district, were the respective corps complete to their established strength, as authorized, would be 320 officers, and 4,505 men.

The total actual strength of the force who mustered at the annual drill for 1873 was 244 officers, 3,350 men.

Corps of the established strength 34 of officers and 550 men, have not as yet trained. If these muster at full strength, there would be 42 officers and 605 men wanting to complete.

The Active Militia in this district, consist of the following corps, which at the time of the annual training turned out as under:—

	Officers.	Men.
Halifax Light Battery.....	5	70
1st Halifax B. G. A.....	23	273
2nd " ".....	21	244
Lunenburg B., (not trained)	0	0
Mahone Bay " (not trained)	0	0
Digby " " (not trained)	0	0
63rd Rifles (Halifax).....	20	275
66th Battalion Infantry.....	28	423
68th " ".....	37	498
69th " ".....	34	461
72nd " ".....	23	302
No. 6 Company, 75th Batt.,..	3	41
78th Battalion (Highlanders)	20	304
Victoria Prov. Battalion....	17	265
Cumberland Prov. Battalion.	13	192

The annual drill was performed in accordance with General Orders (12) of 30th May, and (14) of 23rd June, 1873, as in documents (A.) (B.) herewith forwarded. Annual inspection reports, and district target practice returns are also enclosed.

I have the honor to be, Sir,
Your obedient servant,

J. W. LAURIE Lieut.-Colonel.

D. A. G., Commanding,
Military District, No. 9.

(A)

THE HALIFAX BRIGADE.

Consisting of:—

Halifax Light Battery.....	Captain Graham
1st Halifax B. G. A.,.....	Lt. Col. Mitchell
2nd " ".....	Capt. McPherson
63rd " Rifles.....	Lt. Col. Pallister
66th " Infantry.....	Bremner

Performed their annual drill at brigade head quarters. The whole brigade attended two brigade field days, at one of which they were formed in division, with a brigade of Her Majesty's regular troops, under Lieut.-General William O'Grady Haly, C. B.; and the force turned out two additional days.

The whole force also attended one evening brigade drill, drilling from 7.30 until about 10 o'clock in the long summer evening.

The Light Battery practised at 1,500 yards range with their 6-pounder Armstrongs, and made such excellent practice that the target was altogether shot to pieces.

The 1st and 2nd Halifax Brigades Garrison Artillery performed their annual shot and shell practice with 32 pounder guns, at ranges from 1,400 to 1,700 yards, from one of the Halifax harbor batteries kindly placed at my disposal by the Lieut. General Commanding the troops.

The Halifax City Brigade was inspected by me on the 10th October, 1873. The working of the brigade is very satisfactory; both officers and men take an interest in their work, and strive to attain efficiency. The manoeuvring is very fair, and the uniforms well put on, appointments, clean and tidy, and the men present a soldierlike appearance; and at the review in honor of the Governor General, earned high commendation from his Excellency, and also from the Lieut.-General Commanding the troops.

Great difficulty is experienced in horsing the Light Battery; a very large amount is annually contributed by the members of the battery to supplement the Government allowance for horses, which cannot be obtained for less than \$1.00 per hour.

The 68th Battalion went into camp at Kentville. As this was a regimental camp, I know nothing of how the camp economy was carried out, but in the few simple battalion movements performed, the men showed some knowledge of drill.

The 69th Battalion drill at company and battalion head-quarters, but it rained heavily during the inspection, held at Paradise, on 7th October, and I dismissed the men after a close muster and one or two simple battalion movements. In this batt. the belts had been pipe clayed, and there were evidences of a desire to be smart, both in drill and soldierlike appearance, Nos., 7, 8 and 9 companies of this corps were inspected at company head quarters (Bear River), on the 8th October, 1873, by Lieut.-Col. Milsom, B. M.

The 72nd Battalion also drilled at company head quarters. I inspected the battalion at Aylesford on the 6th October, 1873. The officers seem zealous and anxious to work up the battalion, but much remains to be done.

No. 6 company of 75th, performed training at company head quarters, and were inspected by Lieut.-Col. Milsom, on the 14th Oct. Col. Milsom reports favorable of their willingness and desire to learn.

No. 2 company, 78th Highlanders, was inspected by Lieut. Col. Sawyer, B. M., on the 13th November, 1873. Col. Sawyer reports them fairly drilled.

No. 4 company was inspected by me on the 30th October. This company drilled very creditably.

No. 5 company was inspected by me on the 27th October. This company is smart and well drilled, and does its captain great credit.

No. 6, 7 and 8 Pictou companies were inspected by me, on the 7th November. The day was bitterly cold, and men were under great disadvantages; men were fairly turned out, and officers who are zealous had worked hard at the drill.

Nos. 1, 2, 3, and 4 companies, Victoria Provisional Battalion, trained at company head quarters, and the battalion was inspected by Lieut.-Col. Read, B.M., at Baddeck, on the 15th August, 1873; and No. 5 company was inspected at Sydney, on the 22nd November, 1873. Col. Read reports that the ranks were filled with stout able

men, and not with mere lads, as in camp last year, and that there was a marked improvement in the drill, &c.

The Cumberland Provisional Battalion, also trained at company head-quarters, mustered at Amherst for my inspection. The companies of this battalion have greatly improved in appearance, belts being better cleaned, uniforms more carefully put on, and generally showing greater care in drill and turn out.

The remaining companies, 75th Battalion, as well as the Lunenburg and Mahone Bay Garrison Batteries, have not as yet performed training.

(B)

GENERAL REMARKS.

I may say of all the purely rural corps, that the men are much more careless of their appearance than the city and village corps. They have no pattern to form upon, no one to guide or advise them in military matters, and the presence of an instructor, who has had regular military training in the army, is much required: all ranks are most willing to be taught. The officers are generally in earnest, and do their best, and they mostly have a fair knowledge of drill, &c.; but they come to the annual training after a year's absence, they have no trained non-commissioned officers to assist them, many of their men are recruits, and the utter impossibility of doing everything themselves becomes at last so apparent, that they become discouraged, and find their best and only plan is to gloss over as much as possible, and "get through" the training. If the training is still to be confined to one term of 8 or 16 days annually, and entirely given up for the year, officers, non-commissioned officers, and recruits should have some preliminary drill, otherwise the full advantage of the training to the rest of the corps, cannot be obtained. If it be the intention of the authorities to deal with the volunteer militia as if they are regular soldiers, or on the same footing as the English militia, to be called away from home and avocation, and give up everything else whilst at training, the Government must then be prepared to enter the labour market, and pay the proper price for what it wants; but if the aim is, as I take it to be, to get a body of men who have a stake in the country, and who can be found when wanted at any time throughout the year, and who receive a small money payment more to cover actual outlay than to pay for lost time, more consideration must be given as to how this class can best acquire the greatest amount of training with the least sacrifice of time. Allowance must be made for the varying circumstances of different localities, and actual efficiency, to be shown at semi-annual inspections, should be the test, rather than the compulsory sacrifice of a certain number of days in camp.

UNIFORM.

I will again call attention to the unsuitability for any purpose either of appearance or comfort, of the forage cap still issued, and urge that a smarter and more comfortable head-dress be substituted.

J. WIMBURN LAURIE,

Lieut.-Colonel,

D. A. G., Mil. Dis. No. 9.

The Acting Adjt. General,
Ottawa.

(To be continued.)