

# THE CANADIAN MILITIA GAZETTE

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MISCELLANEOUS.

## The Quebec Cavalry School.

A perusal of the report made by the commandant of the Royal School of Cavalry at Quebec, contained in the annual report of the Minister of Militia, reveals the fact that that school, and the troop of cavalry upon which it is based, are in a condition none too flourishing.

"The difficulty," says Col. Turnbull, "of conducting this school with so small an establishment is now greater than ever—thirty-one privates being the established strength. These men are overtaken; they have not only to take charge of the thirty horses, but also supply officers' servants and batmen, cooks, mess waiters, orderlies, clerks, guards, stable picquets, saddler, carpenter, veterinary and other employed men. Deducting the sick in hospital, prisoners and recruits, and considering the very heavy fatigues, such as sawing and splitting firewood, snow shovelling, etc., it becomes little wonder that the loss of trained men this year has been unusually large, and that one-half of the total strength are recruits. I therefore again beg that an additional 20 men may be added to the establishment of the Quebec school, which is really in the interest of economy, because each recruit enlisted to replace a deserter costs \$100 simply for his outfit.

There has been a marked decrease in the attendance at the school this year, the totals being 8 officers and 36 non-coms and men. It is noted that a riding school has been supplied during the year, but no riding instructor has yet been appointed, though such an official forms part of the strength of 'A' and 'B' Batteries of Artillery and the Mounted Infantry Corps." Here are other requests similar in nature:

"The daily duties and monthly returns and books connected with the Quartermaster's department certainly require that a quartermaster sergeant should form part of the establishment of this school in common with all the other Military Schools of Instruction, while all the duties and returns are expected to be performed like the other schools who each have a quartermaster sergeant, and four of them have in addition also a quartermaster."

"I desire to point out how impossible it is to carry out a proper system of regimental instruction unless a sufficient number of duty officers be given me. The greater part of this year there have been no attached officers, so that I have had only the establishment of two sub-alterns to do everything with. One of these officers has to act as the adjutant and quartermaster, which duties fully occupy his time, and the other officer therefore is all I have left to hold regimental court martials, boards, courts of inquiry, orderly officers duties, and all the multitude of duties and regulations comprised in the Queen's Regulations for the internal economy of a regiment, in addition to all the orders laid down in the R. & O. Mil., which are to be observed in the government of these Military Schools of Instruction. As each of these officers too becomes entitled to his leave of absence at certain periods, these difficulties are increased. I hope, therefore, an increase in duty officers will be given to this school."

The astonishing statement is made that there has been *no target practice* by the men of the corps in the year under review, the apology

being that "much of the daily routine of barrack duties has to be left undone for want of a sufficient establishment of men to do more than take care of and exercise the horses."

It is now in contemplation to establish another cavalry school, this one in Toronto. But if the new institution is not to be any more serviceable than its commandant reports the school at Quebec to be, it would be well to pause and consider whether one well equipped and thoroughly serviceable school would not be more useful and much less costly than two institutions so sadly lacking in many of the most important requirements.

## The Artillery Schools.

In the annual report on the Regiment of Canadian Artillery, we find many valuable suggestions, some appearing for the first time, but a great many reiterations of recommendations of previous years which have been passed over in silence.

The present strength of the regiment is 25 officers and 367 n.c.o. and gunners, this latter class being 45 below the authorized establishment. The desertions in the year reached the very great total of 97. As for the school part, 31 officers and 109 n.c.o. and gunners joined for instruction during the year, and 30 officers and 58 n.c.o. and gunners obtained certificates. Lieut.-Col. D. T. Irwin, writing as officer commanding the Regiment of Canadian Artillery, says:

"There is annually a very considerable change amongst the non-commissioned officers and men of 'A' and 'B' batteries, the average number of recruits being at least 50 per cent. of the establishment. In order to bring the batteries up to the state of efficiency which as schools of instruction they should attain, these recruits must be carefully and thoroughly trained, but as during the courses of instruction, which last nine months in each year, the energies of all ranks are taxed to the utmost, not only to furnish squads for instruction, but also to provide for the guards, duties and various employments necessitated by the maintenance of these large establishments, it is strongly recommended that unless the changes already recommended in the organization of these schools be effected, only two courses of instruction be provided for during the year, so that the batteries themselves may have sufficient time for their own drills and instruction."

The Commandant next touches upon a subject time and again called attention to in this paper. He says:

"There are now 17 horses in 'A' battery, and a similar number in 'B' Battery. Taken together, this number would be amply sufficient for one complete field battery at Kingston, which, if fully organized, would afford a very much better means of instruction to all other field batteries than can possibly be now attained by the partial field battery organization at both schools. On the other hand there are 34 garrison batteries which send officers and men for instruction to Quebec only. To provide for their thorough and efficient instruction in something more than the elementary garrison artillery course, hitherto only found practicable, an increase in the garrison strength of the school at Quebec would be very desirable, and might without expense be obtained from the Kingston school, where garrison artillery duties are seldom, if ever, required to be taught."

Lt.-Col. W. H. Cotton, the officer commanding 'A' Battery, Kingston, notes that owing to the reduction caused by the heavy draft to 'C' Battery, the number of recruits has been exceptionally large, and with in many cases, not very happy results. The desertions also were in