

information which convinced him that an attempt was to be made to capture the 4,000 stands of arms and ammunition brought from Kingston and stored in the City Hall in charge of a couple of constables. To guard against such a possibility, Colonel Fitzgibbon induced his rifle corps, the members of which he continued to drill with vigilant regularity, to volunteer a nightly guard of fifteen or twenty men to watch the City Hall, and to furnish two sentries to guard the approach to Government House. Considering the class of young fellows forming the rifle corps, they probably did not need much urging to volunteer for this service. The offer was declined by the Governor, however, who ascribed Col. Fitzgibbon's energy to fussiness, and expressed the opinion that the arms would be perfectly safe in the keeping of his own domestics.

When the emergency arose, Colonel Fitzgibbon's "boys," as he delighted to call them, lost no time in making their readiness to serve known. The young men, at the first alarm, went down to offer their services, and they were accepted. Shortly afterwards we find young G. T. Denison and other of his erstwhile comrades of the volunteer company, serving as ensigns in the First Regiment West York Militia. The little corps appears to have provided the militia regiments with the necessary junior officers, and to have given up its individual existence by doing so.

An original order book of the First Regiment West York Militia, May 29th, 1837, to November 26th, 1838, is preserved at the Toronto Public Library, and was some months ago exhibited to the writer by Mr. Bain, the genial librarian. Several names of special interest in the present book, among them those of the officers of the dragoon troop, appeared in the list of officers serving at this time. Among others whose names so appeared were Major George Denison, Captain Thomas Denison, Lieutenants R. L. Denison and George B. Ridout; Ensigns George T. Denison, William J. Coates, and Edwin C. Fisher.

Just what part the York Dragoons bore in the operations culminating in the dispersion of Mackenzie's force at Montgomery's Tavern does not appear, but there certainly was a considerable force of mounted men with the column led out of the city by Colonel Fitzgibbon. Some of these were employed in the fruitless chase after W. L. Mackenzie, and one detachment of forty mounted men was despatched from Montgomery's to destroy Gibson's house and farm buildings four miles further on, under the personal command of Colonel Fitzgibbon, he having no officer of high rank near him to whom he could safely entrust the performance of that duty. (Colonel Fitzgibbon's "Narrative.")

Major George T. Denison, the commanding officer of the troop, was in command that day at the Old Fort at the west end of Toronto, an important charge, considering the fact that there were parties of disaffected within the city, including some of the revolutionary leaders. Probably part, and perhaps all, of his own corps formed part of his garrison. The following incident of the day is chronicled in "Soldiering in Canada":—

"During the day a body of armed men was seen coming from the west, and moving in the direction of the Fort. As they were all in plain clothes, and there were no uniforms on either side, there was considerable excitement as to whether there was to be an attack or not. The ramparts were manned and all preparations made, and the approaching body anxiously watched. Suddenly my grandfather said: 'That man in front looks like my brother Tom.' And so it was. Thomas Denison, who had been an officer in the militia, and had served through the war, fighting at Queenston, and other actions, was living some ten miles west of Toronto, and, hearing of the outbreak, had sent around to his neighbors and raised a good-sized force of farmers, armed with their own rifles, shot-guns, etc., and had marched in to aid the cause of his Sovereign."

This gives us an insight into the way a strong force of loyalists was concentrated in Toronto.