

In consequence of the increase of the force by 200 men, recruiting was commenced early in the year in Toronto, by the late Superintendent McKenzie, at the New Fort. It was originally intended that these recruits should be sent up *via* Winnipeg, then out to the terminus of the Canadian Pacific Railway, and across country to the various posts were they were required. However, owing to the severe floods in Manitoba, which temporarily suspended the railway traffic, as well as the unsettled state of Indian affairs at Fort Walsh, the original intention was changed, and the recruits were brought up *via* Lake Superior and the Northern Pacific Railway to Bismarck, where they embarked on the steamer "Red Cloud," and proceeded up the River Missouri to Coal Banks, where they were met by Superintendent McIllree with transport, and brought by him to Fort Walsh, distant about 120 miles; they arrived on the 11th June. It was with deep regret that I learned of the death of Superintendent McKenzie, who left Toronto in command of the recruits, but was shortly after taken ill and left at Prince Arthur's Landing, where he died in a few days. The command was taken over by Inspector Dowling. In all, 187 recruits arrived with Surgeon Jukes and Inspector Prevost.

A small number of recruits were also engaged at Winnipeg, 37 in all. These recruits were taken on to Qu'Appelle and attached to "B" Division. Later on 12 more were brought up by Inspector Steele. In all, 63 recruits arrived at Qu'Appelle.

The total number of recruits posted to the Force was 250, of whom 200 were the increase of the force, and the remainder to fill vacancies, discharged men, &c.

The recruits who arrived at Fort Walsh were posted to "A," "C" and "E" Divisions. The larger proportion of these recruits were excellent men, but some, I regret to state, were mere lads, physically unfit to perform the services required. I would recommend most strongly that the minimum age at which a recruit be accepted for service be fixed at twenty-one years of age. In speaking on this subject, Surgeon Jukes gives his experience in his Annual Report in the following words: "The examination papers given me when I was examining recruits for admission to the Force in May last, left me no power to reject men otherwise eligible between the ages of 18 and 40 years. This rule applies well to the regular army, where men enlist for a longer period, where the duties ordinarily required are far less severe; but for short periods of service, say 5 years, attended with much exposure, and demanding considerable powers of endurance, the age of 18 is too young."

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"A better limit as to the age for this service would be from 23 to 40, by adopting which, as the regulation, the efficiency of the Force would be materially increased, and the sick reports materially decreased, and the number of men annually required to be invalided reduced to a minimum."

Now that headquarters have been established, with railway communication to the Eastern Provinces, I intend to carry into effect my previous recommendation to form a *dépôt* of instruction. Recruits on arrival will be drilled and instructed in their duties, and, as they become efficient, will be drafted into the different divisions in which they are required. I would recommend that recruits be engaged from time to time to fill vacancies as they occur in the Force.

Heretofore, owing to the difficulty of forwarding recruits to the Territory, except at stated periods, it was necessary to engage them in large bodies in Canada. This was attended with evil consequences. A large number of undisciplined men, associated together for a considerable length of time, naturally formed intimacies which were objectionable, for on arrival at a post they thus formed a distinct *clique*, apart from the older men. The change of life which they experienced, their surroundings, the discipline, the arduous duties they were called upon to perform, gave rise to imaginary grievances, which were nursed and talked over among themselves; not mixing up with the older hands, who would otherwise have imparted a desirable influence, they became dissatisfied. This was in a great measure the cause of so many desertions taking place among the recruits. It is worthy of note that all the desertions have, *without exception*, been men of but a few months' service.