

THE 9TH MISSISSAUGA HORSE

AND ITS CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE CANADIAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES

VERY shortly after the termination of the South African War a new cavalry unit of one squadron was formed in Toronto, under the command of Major (afterwards Lieut.-Colonel) George Peters, one of Toronto's most distinguished surgeons, and was given the name of the Toronto Mounted Rifles. The four original troop commanders of the squadron were Captain Hume Blake and Lieutenants D. L. McCarthy, John H. Moss and John R. Meredith.

The original intention of the Militia Department, which was shortly abandoned, was to form a mounted rifle regiment, with the Toronto Mounted Rifles forming one of its squadrons, and with the three others distributed at different centres through the country.

The Toronto Mounted Rifles went into camp at Niagara for the first time in June, 1901, and after their return the Department consented to increase the local establishment to two squadrons.

At that time the cavalry wing of the Armouries had not been built. There was no accommodation available for the new unit in that already overcrowded building, and quarters were found in an old stable off University Avenue.

The difficulties and discouragements occasioned by the use of such unsuitable accommodation were very great, but the enthusiasm and energy of Major Peters carried the regiment through them, and in 1905 he was rewarded by having his command increased to the strength of a complete cavalry regiment, under the name of the 9th Toronto Light Horse, he himself being made a lieutenant-colonel.

After the death of Lieut.-Col. Peters, in 1906, the organization of the regiment underwent another change, the headquarters of "A" Squadron being removed to Barrie, and of "C" Squadron to Oakville. This departure rendered it necessary to re-christen the regiment, as it had ceased to be exclusively a Toronto unit, and the name 9th Mississauga Horse was selected by Lieut.-Colonel Vaux Chadwick, who took over the command.

In 1911 Mr. H. C. Cox was appointed Honorary Lieutenant-Colonel of the regiment and still retains that post. Lieut.-Col. Chadwick was succeeded in 1913 by Lieut.-Col. H. D. Lockhart Gordon, who held the command at the outbreak of the war, and who, with the assistance of Hon. Lieut.-Col. Cox, organized a voluntary mobilization of the regiment at Long Branch in September, 1914, and offered its services to the Government.

This offer was, however, declined, and the regiment was demobilized towards the end of October.

In November, 1914, Lieut.-Col. Gordon became attached for overseas service to the 4th Canadian Mounted Rifles, and Major Beckett became commanding officer of the 9th Mississauga Horse, with Major John H. Moss as second in command.

When Major Beckett received his appointment as O.C. of the 75th Overseas Battalion, in August, 1915, the command of the militia regiment devolved upon Major Moss, the present C. O., who was gazetted Lieutenant-colonel in December, 1915.

The outbreak of the war found the 9th M. H. a militia unit with a peace establishment of 333 officers and 312 N.C.O.'s and men.

The regiment had recently returned from its annual summer training of 12 days in camp at Niagara, under Lieut.-Col. H. D. Lockhart Gordon.

The camp had been very successful and the regiment was well supported both by officers and men, and was in as advanced a stage of efficiency as could be expected with the very limited amount of training afforded under then existing militia regulations.

When the first overseas contingent was organized, the 9th M. H. was called upon for half a company of infantry, and this quota was immediately furnished and became part of the 2nd Battalion. Its officers were Major Sidney Thorne and Lieutenants Leslie Gordon and Herbert Klotz, all since killed in action.

In the autumn of 1914 the 4th Canadian Mounted Rifles was authorized under command of Lieut.-Col. Vaux Chadwick, former C.O. of the 9th M.H. This regiment, to which the 9th M.H. contributed largely, numbered 32 officers and 475 N.C.O.'s and men. Lieut.-Col. Gordon, the O.C. of the 9th M.H., accepted a reduction of rank and went on service as major in command of "A" Squadron.

Before the regiment left Valcartier, Lieut.-Col. Chadwick was given a staff appointment, and Lt.-Col. S. F. Smith took over the command, with Lieut.-Col. Gordon second in command. Lieut.-Col. Smith subsequently was appointed O.C., Divisional Cavalry, and Lieut.-Col. Gordon being temporarily invalided. Major Ussher, of the 9th M. H., took command.

Major Ussher was taken prisoner at the battle of Zillebeke, and the 4th C.M.R., which suffered severely in that action, were withdrawn and reorganized under Lieut.-Col. Gordon, who now commands the unit in the field.

Early in 1915 the 9th M. H. were called on to furnish a quota to another mounted unit. Major Walter Brown was the commanding officer, with Captain T. D. Archibald as second in command and four lieutenants and 135 non-commissioned officers and men from the 9th M. H. formed "C" Squadron of the 84th C. M. R. and went overseas with that regiment.

In the summer of 1915 the 9th M. H. was asked to provide a platoon with one officer for an infantry battalion. The platoon called for was quickly formed, but instead of relaxing its efforts when this goal was reached, an intensive recruiting campaign was inaugurated, which resulted, in the course of a few



LIEUT.-COL. GEO. A. PETERS