

The major task of the Force, during the period of emergency, was safeguarding essential industry and implementing anti-sabotage and protective measures. The RCMP not only kept check on draft evaders and deserters but engaged in counter-espionage work, with such success that the authorities were able to announce in 1945 that subversive activities in Canada had been almost wholly disrupted by the speedy arrest of hostile elements. To cope with the tremendous responsibility with which they were faced, the Mounted Police had to improvise. With the assistance of specially-engaged personnel, they guarded vulnerable points and co-operated with all departments in the execution of war-time legislation.

The Reserve, which started as a temporary measure, has become a well-trained, dependable arm of the Force. Part-time workers have been formed into an official unit in which "constable is the only rank". It has done excellent work already and will be called on to perform still greater service for the community.

Geographical obstacles that formerly appeared almost insurmountable have been overcome by means of recent discoveries. RCMP experts have completed an extensive radio network across Canada. All RCMP ships and aircraft are radio-equipped.

Though its character has changed greatly since its formation 90 years ago, the RCMP still reflects much of the glamour of the frontier through its northern and other far-flung detachments. These assignments range from Arctic patrolling and the supervision of Eskimos to ordinary prevention work concerning the contraband of narcotic drugs, counterfeiting, illicit distilling, identification and classification of criminals. The RCMP, on behalf of Canada, holds a membership in the International Criminal Police Organization. It assumes the protection of public buildings, makes reports on migratory birds, furbearing animals and hunting out of season, takes part in the application of customs and excise laws and, to a small extent, of immigration regulations. It investigates naturalization papers and passports, makes enquiries on applicants for civil positions, enforces statutes governing the Indians, and many other federal enactments, as the Commissioner's annual report shows.

For such tasks, men of many types and talents are needed. Yet each candidate must be characterized by personal integrity, a high degree of intelligence and a sense of responsibility. The selection of recruits is carried out by means of the usual form of educational examinations, supplemented by a psychometric test and a patterned interview.

To qualify, an applicant must be a British subject, or Canadian citizen, between the ages of 18 and 30, unmarried, at least five feet eight inches in height, physically fit, and able to speak, read and write either English or French. Members are not permitted to marry until they have served for two years and are 21 years of age. As the enlistment period is five years, they must re-enlist at the expiration of each term to become eligible for a life pension, which is granted under the provisions of the RCMP Act. Careful selection at the recruit level is followed by periodic interviews conducted by the Personnel Branch throughout the entire career of the policeman. The recruit's eight-months initiation includes drill, horsemanship, shooting, study of criminal law, aids to investigation, public relations and much else, including swimming and life saving.

Riding is a very minor and emergency aspect of actual police work but an important item in training. The riding school, with its gruelling routine, is a splendid form of physical culture and of character development. In order to maintain high morale in the Force and to perpetuate in its personnel a model Canadian youth, equitation is retained as an incomparable school of audacity, calmness, perseverance, mental alertness and sportsmanship. L'esprit cavalier helps to maintain l'esprit du corps.