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*Cruikshank, E. R. S. C.*

# CAMP NIAGARA

WITH A HISTORICAL SKETCH OF NIAGARA-  
ON-THE-LAKE AND NIAGARA CAMP, BY  
LIEUT.-COL. E. CRUIKSHANK, F. R. S. C.



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FRANK, E.H.



#### HEADQUARTERS STAFF

From left to right of picture. STANDING—Capt. Telford, Maj. Van Nostran, Maj. Langton, Lieut.-Col. Harston, Maj. Macdonald, Capt. Shanly, Capt. Harbottle. SITTING ON CHAIRS— Lieut.-Col. Thairs, Lieut.-Col. Pellatt, Lieut.-Col. Denisen, Gen. Otter, Lieut.-Col. Galloway, Lieut.-Col. Hall, Lieut.-Col. Fotheringham. SITTING ON GROUND—Capt. Bruce, Capt. Benoit.

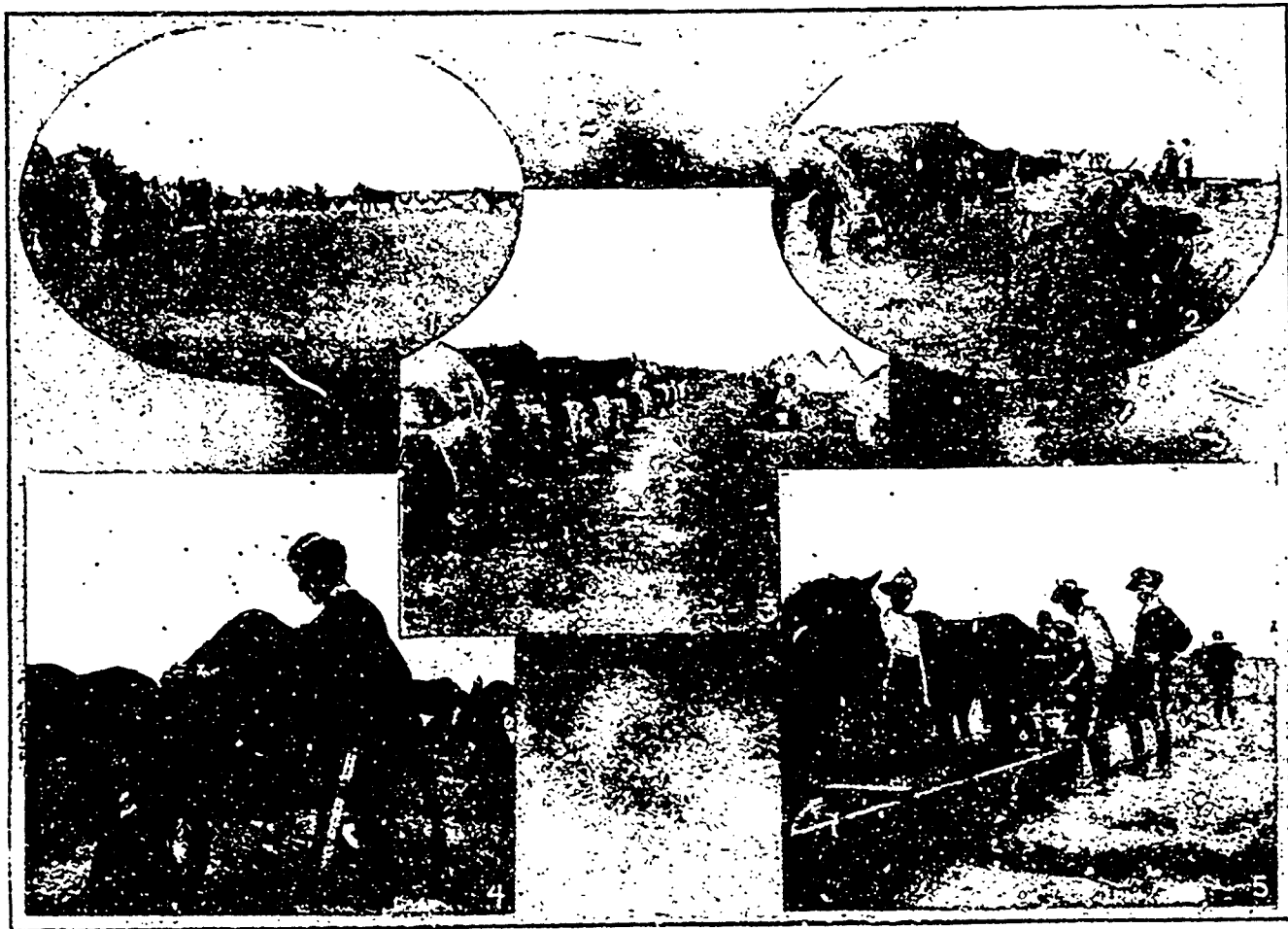
# Historical Sketch of Niagara-on-the-Lake and Niagara Camp.

BY LIEUT.-COLONEL E. CRUIKSHANK, F. R. S. C.

NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE enjoys the distinction of being not only the oldest incorporated town in the Province of Ontario, but also the site of the first permanent British settlement within its limits. By the terms of a treaty negotiated by Sir William Johnson with the Seneca Indians upon the 3rd day of April, 1764, a little more than a year after the cession of the French possessions in North America to the British Empire by the Peace of Paris, a narrow strip of land beginning at Fort Niagara and extending southward to the creek above Fort Schlosser, or Little Niagara as it was then called, "comprehending the whole carrying-place with the lands on both sides the strait, and containing a tract about fourteen miles in length and four in breadth," was transferred to the Crown, together with the right of cutting timber on their lands elsewhere, and the free use of all harbours on Lake Ontario, and of all rivers falling into it. These privileges were evidently sought for purposes of traffic and defence, rather than colonization; but during the summer of 1780, when the wars of the American Revolution were fiercely raging the world over, and Fort Niagara had become a haven of refuge for hundreds of loyalists, who had been mercilessly evicted from their former homes in New York and Pennsylvania, Sir Frederick Haldimand, who was then Governor General of Canada, determined to construct a large log barracks on the west bank of the river for the accommodation of the corps of riflemen enlisted among these refugees by Lieut.-Colonel John Butler of the Indian Department, and at the same time to encourage the settlement of their families upon the adjacent Crown Lands. During the autumn of that year this building, which is still used for military purposes and commonly known as Butler's Barracks, was completed and five or six families were settled in log houses near-by. In three years the number of settlers had increased to forty-six families, who had upwards of seven hundred acres of land under cultivation, well stocked with horses, cattle and swine. In the summer of 1784, Lieut.-Colonel Butler's corps of rangers was disbanded, and nearly five hundred able-bodied men were added to the settlement, which was extended to include the whole Niagara Peninsula by treaty with the Missisauga Indians, and liberal grants of lands were made to all officers and soldiers, as

well as to other loyalists. For nearly seven years Fort Niagara and Butler's Barracks had been the headquarters and base of operations for this renowned body of partisans, whence they had sallied forth upon their raids against the American frontier extending from Oswego on Lake Ontario to the Blue Licks in Kentucky. These operations had been attended with such unvarying success and they were so adroit in selecting the point of attack and the best line of retreat that their baffled enemies were wont to declare that it was as useless to attempt pursuit as if they had been a pack of wolves from the forest.

In 1791 Lieut.-Governor Simcoe brought with him from England the corps known as the Queen's Rangers, also mainly composed of American loyalists, specially enlisted for service in Canada, who were quartered for several years at Queenston and Niagara, but were finally disbanded about five years later, when the majority also became settlers. Niagara was designated as the capital of the new province of Upper Canada, and was soon after incorporated as a town. In 1795 a site was selected on the high ground overlooking the mouth of the river, for a small fieldwork, which was named Fort George in honor of the King. The garrison of Fort Niagara was removed to this place upon the evacuation of that post in the following year. It was occupied successively by detachments of the 5th and 24th Regiments of the Line, and when these troops were withdrawn in 1798 for service elsewhere, by a part of the Second Battalion of the Royal Canadian Volunteers, enlisted in the Province to take their place. In September, 1802, this corps was disbanded and the 49th Regiment occupied the military posts in Upper Canada, for the next ten years, when it was succeeded by the 41st, which held them when war was declared by the United States in June 1812. Fort George was the principal garrison and headquarter station in the province during that time. It is described in an official report as an irregular fieldwork, consisting of six small bastions faced with framed timber and plank, connected by lines of palisades twelve feet in height, and surrounded by a shallow dry ditch. Its situation and construction were alike condemned by the inspecting engineer as being ill-judged and defective. Although partially commanding Fort Niagara it was itself overlooked by high ground on the opposite bank of the river near



1. Muster Parade Toronto Light Horse. 2. Horses feeding at noon G. G. B. G. 3. A well-dressed line Squadron "D," G. G. B. G.  
4. Horse grooming in 2nd Dragoon Lines. 5. G. G. B. G. watering horses.

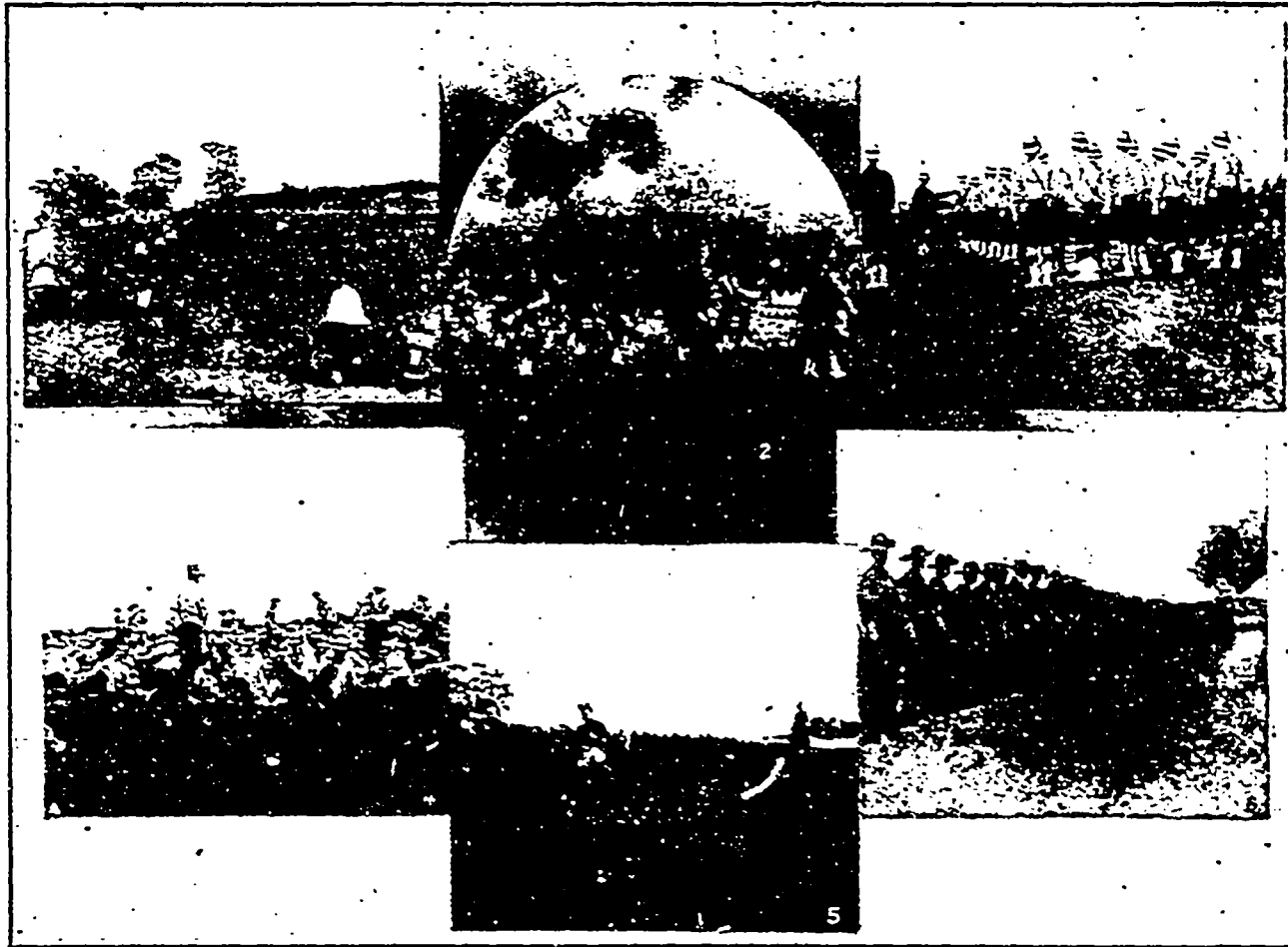
## HISTORICAL SKETCH OF NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE AND NIAGARA CAMP

Youngstown. The garrison was lodged in log blockhouses, affording quarters for 220 men, besides which there was a separate building for the officers. The magazine was built of stone, with an arched roof, but was not considered bomb-proof. The whole of this fortification was greatly out of repair, and not deemed capable of much defence. Under General Brock's supervision, however, the fort was considerably strengthened and several detached earthworks were thrown up on commanding points in the vicinity. No attack upon it was attempted until the morning of October 13th, 1812, when, perceiving a column of troops on the march to oppose the passage of the river at Queenston, the garrison of Fort Niagara turned all their guns upon Fort George and the town of Niagara, with such destructive effect that in a few minutes the Courthouse and gaol with fifteen or sixteen other buildings were set on fire by shells or hot shot. While the greater part of the militia who occupied the fort in the absence of the regular garrison, were employed in fighting the flames its guns were worked with such vigor and effect by a detachment of the Lincoln Artillery under Captains Cameron and Powell, assisted by two non-commissioned officers of the 41st Regiment, that in the course of an hour the American batteries were completely silenced. It was then discovered that the roof of the magazine, which contained eight hundred barrels of powder, had been set on fire by a shell. Without an instant's hesitation Captain Vigoreux of the Royal Engineers climbed upon the burning building, and his gallant example being promptly followed by others, the metal covering was soon torn off and the flames extinguished in the timbers underneath. The government storehouse at the water-side near Navy Hall was, however, entirely consumed.

One of the largest guns mounted in Fort Niagara burst while being discharged, wrecking the platform and disabling several men. In consequence of this accident and the heavy fire directed against the place from Fort George, it was evacuated by its garrison, which did not venture to re-occupy their works for several hours after the cannonade had ceased. Next day an armistice was concluded which continued in effect until 9 p.m. on November 20th. At daybreak on the following morning Fort George and the neighboring batteries began a second bombardment of Fort Niagara, which had in the meantime been considerably strengthened, but appears to have been weakly garrisoned. The fire of its guns was irregular and ill-directed, ceasing at times for considerable intervals, while flames, apparently caused by the explosion of shells, could be seen rising

from within. One of these shells penetrated a blockhouse, dismounting the only gun in position there, while another silenced the cannon mounted on the roof of the mess-house for more than an hour. Again a gun burst in the fort with disastrous results, and by five o'clock in the afternoon the whole of its artillery was absolutely silenced. A large building close under the walls, which concealed the landing place from observation, had also been set on fire and burnt. One of the guns in the battery at Youngstown had been dismounted, and the others only fired an occasional shot at great intervals. On the Canadian side the mess-house at Navy Hall was destroyed and seventeen buildings were set on fire by hot shot in the town, while many others were much damaged. At dark the British gun ceased firing, having discharged upwards of two thousand round shot and shells, while the American batteries were supposed to have fired nearly an equal number.

With this cannonade active hostilities in this vicinity may be said to have terminated for the next six months, but on the 8th of May, 1813, the American squadron landed a brigade of infantry, which had captured York (Toronto) ten days before. Large fatigue parties were at once set at work throwing up batteries along the river and building boats, while reinforcements continued to arrive until about seven thousand regular troops, amply supplied with field artillery, were assembled; while their armed vessels, having undisputed control of the lake, were in a position to cover a landing where they pleased. To oppose this formidable force Brigadier General Vincent had only 1080 regular soldiers, with five field pieces, 350 militia and fifty Indians. As it was deemed necessary to watch a front of eleven miles, extending from Queenston to the mouth of the Four Mile Creek on Lake Ontario, this small body was subdivided into three brigades of nearly equal strength, one of which was assigned to the defence of the river and another to the lake front, while the third was held in reserve near Fort George. At that time this post was armed with five guns. Six detached batteries on its left mounted ten guns. All of these, however, were open in the rear and liable to be enfiladed or taken in reverse by vessels upon the lake. At intervals the bank of the river between Fort George and Queenston there were three other batteries, each mounting one gun, and at the latter place there were two batteries mounting three guns. All of these works required small garrisons, and Vincent's weak force was accordingly too much scattered to be quickly concentrated at any point.



1. Skirmishing drill, No. 7 Company, 44th Regiment. 2. Band, 91st Highlanders, on the march. 3. 48th Highlanders. 4. 77th Regiment taking it easy in field. 5. 23rd Regiment in field. 6. 36th Regiment in field.

## HISTORICAL SKETCH OF NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE AND NIAGARA CAMP.

Before daybreak on May 25 a British picket on the river heard the enemy launching boats at the Five Mile Meadows near Lewiston, and gave the alarm. The gun at Brown's Point began firing in that direction, and at dawn the garrison of Fort George opened fire upon some boats that could be dimly seen coming down the river close to the opposite bank. This immediately drew upon them the concentrated fire of no less than twenty-five heavy guns and mortars mounted in Fort Niagara and adjacent batteries arranged in the form of a crescent at distances varying from seven hundred to one thousand yards. The twelve-pounder in Fort George was soon dismounted by a round shot, which shattered its carriage, and before seven o'clock every barrack and other wooden building inside the fort was set on fire by the incessant shower of hot-shot and shells that rained upon it. The gunners were soon driven by the flames from the twenty-four-pounder near the flagstaff, but the unequal contest was gallantly maintained by a gun of the same calibre in the cavalier, and a smaller piece in the north-western bastion, until Major Holoft, perceiving that the barracks and blockhouse would be totally destroyed, and that shells were bursting in every corner of the works, directed these undaunted artillerymen to abandon their guns and retire under cover. During all this time the guns at Mis-sauga Point and the Cherry Tree had remained silent by the order of Lieutenant-Colonel Myers, who hoped by so doing to deprive the enemy of any excuse for turning their batteries upon the town, and the other detached batteries seem to have taken little part in the action from want of ammunition. The Americans discontinued firing about two o'clock, and during the course of that afternoon and the following day their rowboats closely reconnoitred the shore and took soundings within gun shot without the slightest molestation. As a result of their observations buoys were placed to mark the stations to be occupied by their ships to silence the shore batteries and cover the landing of troops.

Shortly after reveille had sounded on the morning of May 27th a rocket was seen to rise from the rampart of Fort Niagara and a single gun was discharged. This proved to be a signal for all the American batteries to begin a cannonade, which was not returned, and ceased at the end of half an hour. Long after the sun had risen a thick fog hung over the lake and river; but when this rolled away about eight o'clock the American fleet, consisting of sixteen armed vessels was seen standing across the mouth of the river, closely followed by one hundred and thirty-four large boats and scows, filled with men, formed in

three compact divisions, moving with great regularity and precision. Their approach was favored by a gentle breeze from the eastward, which, however, scarcely raised a ripple on the surface of the water. The united broadsides of these vessels amounted to fifty-one guns, mostly of long range and heavy calibre, and they took up the stations assigned them without the slightest opposition, sweeping the shore in every direction with their fire. Their land batteries re-opened at the same time, and the British position in the vicinity of Niagara and Fort George was subjected to a cross-fire from more than seventy guns and mortars, which searched every part of it within range, and easily overwhelmed any attempt to reply. The landing of the troops began about an hour later, near the mouth of the Two Mile Creek, where a level, sandy beach, sheltered by a steep bank afforded a favorable position for them to form up after leaving their boats. As soon as they attempted to gain the plain they were assailed by three companies of the Glengarry Light Infantry, two companies of the 1st Lincoln Militia and the grenadiers of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment and driven back in disorder. The guns of the ships which had ceased firing then reopened and forced the British troops to take shelter in a neighboring ravine, where they were soon joined by three hundred of the 5th Regiment of the Line. The Americans continued to receive reinforcements until the number on shore exceeded two thousand, opposed by not more than five hundred and sixty. A second attempt to ascend the bank was repulsed but a third succeeded, and after forming on the plain above, the hopeless struggle was continued for a quarter of an hour, during which the opposing lines exchanged several volleys at a distance of not more than ten or fifteen yards. Numbers prevailed and the remnant of the British force was obliged to retreat to a second ravine about three hundred yards in the rear, leaving nearly three hundred killed and wounded behind. Five companies of the 99th, with a field gun, came to its support, and after remaining in this position until its flank was threatened by a turning movement, orders were given to retire through the fields in the direction of St. Davids. This was effected without molestation and a junction formed with the troops retreating from the vicinity of Fort George, which was at the same time abandoned and its magazine blown up. General Vincent continued his retreat to Burlington Heights, where he arrived on the last day of May, but on the night of the fifth of June he turned upon his pursuers, and surprising their camp at Stoney Creek, struck such a stinging blow that they fell back in haste





SEEN THE FIRST DAY

1. Pitching tent Army Medical Corps.    2. Regiment at dock ready to march to the Camp Grounds.  
N. N. Co's steamer.    3. Disembarking from  
4. Unloading stores.    5. Baggage coming into camp.

## HISTORICAL SKETCH OF NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE AND NIAGARA CAMP.

to Niagara, leaving two generals and more than two hundred other prisoners in his hands. Another severe check was administered to the invaders at the Beaver Dams in the township of Thorold where an entire column of nearly six hundred men was surrounded and compelled to surrender. These reverses had such a dispiriting effect that they shut themselves up in an intrenched camp adjoining the western flank of Fort George, with their pickets thrown out as far as the line of the Two Mile Creek and McFarland's house on the River Road. Here they were closely watched and virtually blockaded for several months by a much inferior force. During this period many smart skirmishes took place. On July 8th the whole of an American outpost, numbering forty men, was killed or taken at Hall's farm on the Swamp Road, and on August 24th a reconnaissance in force surprised all the American outposts at day-break, driving them into camp with the loss of seventy prisoners. Intelligence of General Procter's defeat on the river Thames compelled Vincent to abandon his advanced position, and again withdraw to Burlington Heights, about the middle of October, but on the seventh of December his advance guard, under Colonel John Murray, was pushed forward to St. Catharines. Three days later what remained of the once flourishing town of Niagara was deliberately burnt by the order of the Commandant at Fort George, preparatory to the evacuation of that post. Murray then advanced with such unforeseen rapidity that the American garrison was forced to retire across the river, leaving their tents standing, and several pieces of artillery lying in the ditch of the fort, which they had not time to remove.

On the morning of December 19th Fort Niagara was taken by assault, and an American force was at the same time driven from the battery on Lewiston Heights, leaving behind their artillery and a number of prisoners. This victorious campaign concluded with the capture of Black Rock and Buffalo on December 30th.

During the spring and early summer of 1814 a small earth-work, surrounded by a dry ditch, and enclosing a brick tower, was constructed on Mississauga Point, named at the time "Fort Riall," in honour of the Major General then in command on the Niagara frontier but which is now known as "Fort Mississauga," and Fort George was repaired and strengthened. After his defeat at Chippawa on July 5th General Riall placed a garrison of nearly twelve hundred men in these forts and retired to the Twenty Mile Creek, but, although they were closely reconnoitred by the victorious Americans, who approached within cannon-shot, no assault was attempted.

After the conclusion of peace they were garrisoned by the 70th Regiment, which was relieved by the 76th. During the Rebellion of 1837-8 they were successively occupied by detachments of the 3rd, 43rd, King's Dragoon Guards and 1st Frontier Light Infantry. In 1841 the Royal Canadian Rifles Regiment was embodied for frontier service, and until its disbandment in 1870 a detachment of that corps was quartered here. From April 1865 to April 1866 the Second Administrative Battalion of

Volunteer Militia was stationed on this frontier, with headquarters at Niagara.

From the date of the earliest organization of the militia of Upper Canada the town had been the headquarters of the First Regiment of Lincoln Militia, which assembled here annually upon the 4th of June, the birthday of King George the Third, for muster and enrollment, until the accession of Queen Victoria in 1837. It was not, however, until 1871 that the Common was definitely selected as a training-ground for a considerable body of troops. In June of that year the first divisional camp of instruction for Military District No. 2 was formed, and attended by 4705 officers and men. The Camp in June 1872 was still larger, being composed of 435 officers and 5438 non-commissioned officers and privates. With the exception of a very few years since, camps have been formed here annually, varying in size from less than two thousand to nearly six thousand men, and have been attended at some time not only by all the corps in Military District No. 2, but by most of those in the two adjoining districts.

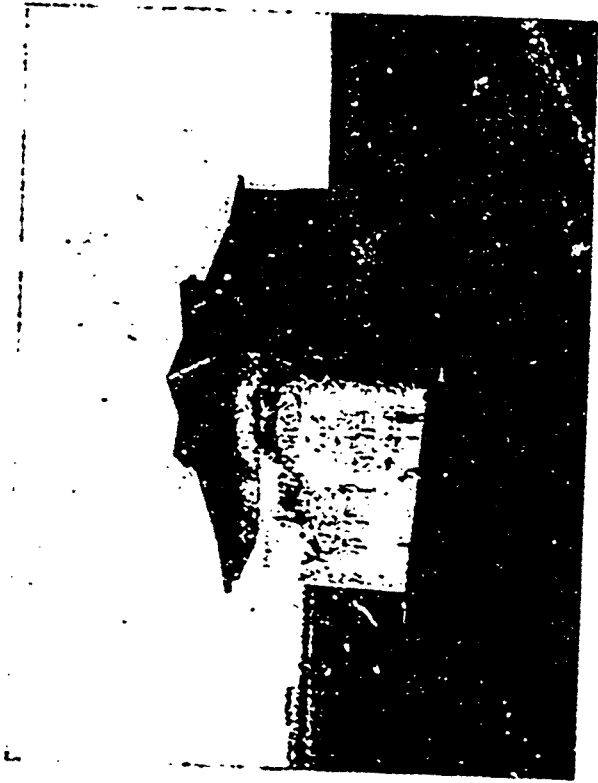
### LIST OF CORPS OF THE CANADIAN MILITIA WHICH HAVE BEEN IN CAMP AT NIAGARA BETWEEN 1871 AND 1906:

Royal Canadian Dragoons, Royal Canadian Regiment, Governor-General's Body Guard, 1st Hussars, 2nd Dragoons, 3rd Prince of Wales Canadian Dragoons, 9th Toronto Light Horse, 4th, 7th, 9th, 10th and 16th Field Batteries, Canadian Engineers 2 Field Co., Corps of Guides; INFANTRY: 2nd Queen's Own Rifles, 10th Royal Grenadiers, 12th Regiment, 13th, 16th, 19th, 20th, 22nd, 23rd, 26th, 27th, 28th, 29th, 30th, 31st, 32nd, 33rd, 34th, 35th, 36th, 37th, 38th, 39th, 40th, 42nd, 44th, 45th, 46th, 47th, 48th, 49th, 56th, 57th, 59th, 77th, 91st, 97th, Canadian Army Service Corps, Army Medical Corps, Field Ambulance Nos. X, XI and XII, Niagara Falls Cadet Company.



The Niagara Historical Society possesses an extensive and unique collection of books, papers, documents and objects of historical interest, for the accommodation of which a handsome building has recently been erected in the immediate vicinity of the camp-ground.

The following localities have also been appropriately marked by the Society with stone monuments: The grave of General Brock at Fort George; The battlefield of May 27th, 1813; The site of the Indian Council House; The site of the Gleaner printing office and Masonic Hall, built in 1792; The site of Navy Hall; The house of Comte de Puisaye; The site of Lieut.-Governor Simcoe's residence.



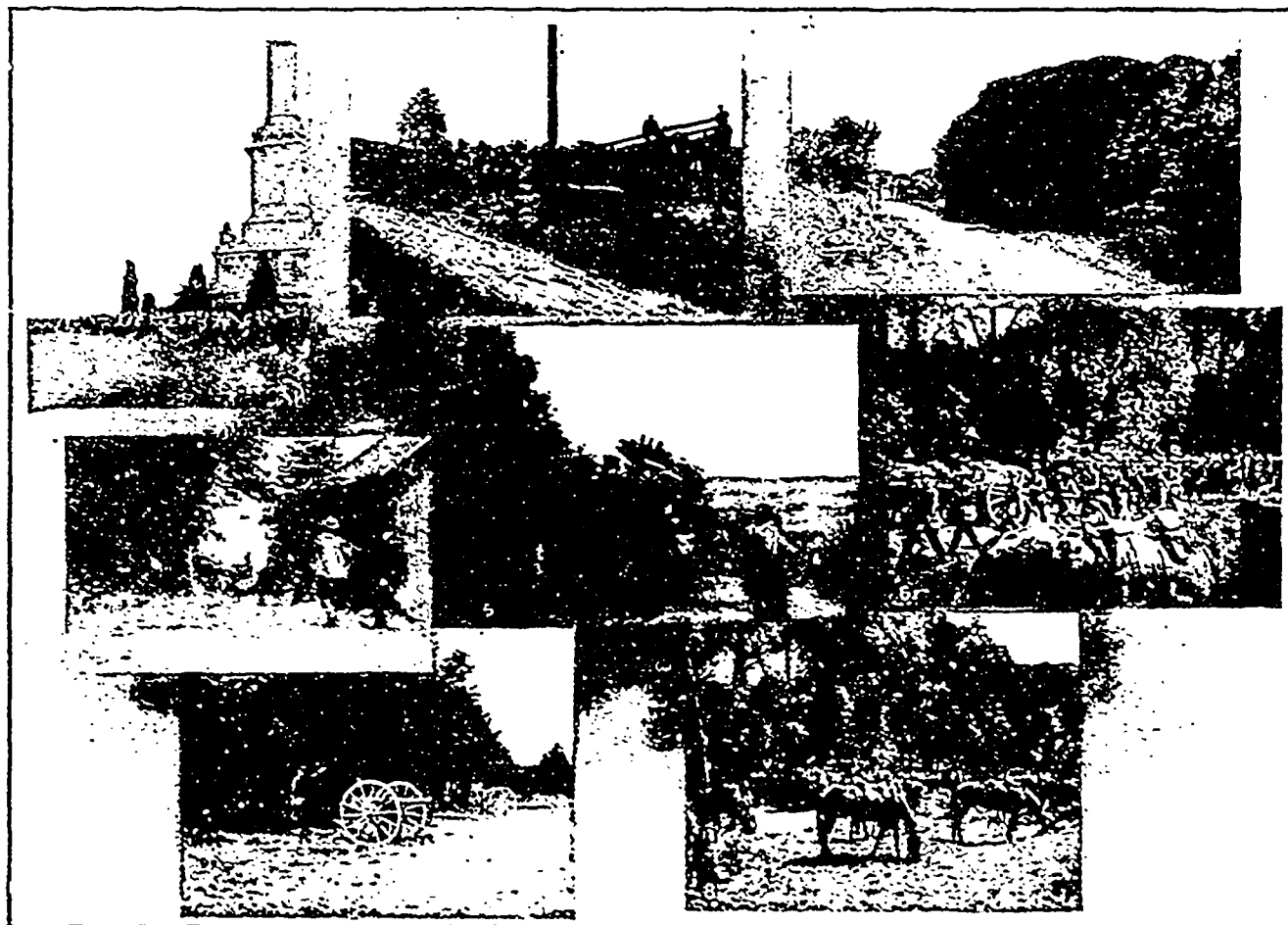
FORT MISSISSAUGA



ST. MARK'S

CHURCHES AT OLD NIAGARA.

ST. PAUL



THE SHAM FIGHT.

1. 48th Highlanders stacking arms at Brock's Monument. 2. Guarding road 44th Reg't. 3. Scene at Queenston quarries. 4. At Queenston quarries "Fire!" 5. Gen. Otter and amputees near Brock's Monument. 6. 36th Peel marching to camp after the fight. 7. Near Brock's Monument "Ready!" 8. G. G. B. G. hearse led by Lieut-Col. Merritt on road south of St. Davids.



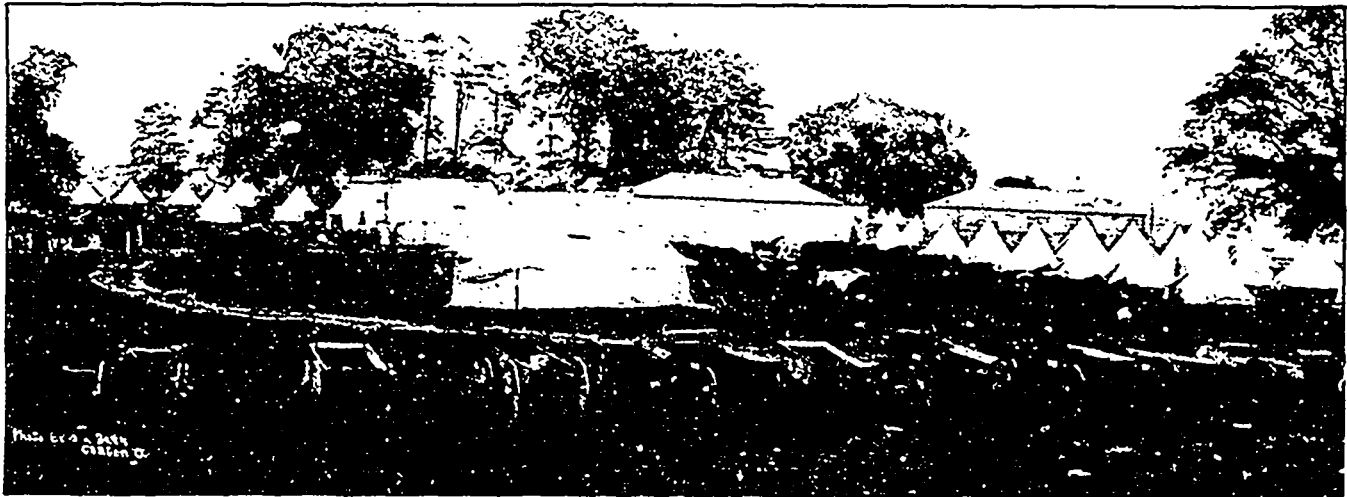
77TH REGIMENT WITH BUTLER'S BARRACKS IN THE BACKGROUND- SEE HISTORICAL SKETCH.



ARTILLERY CAMP.



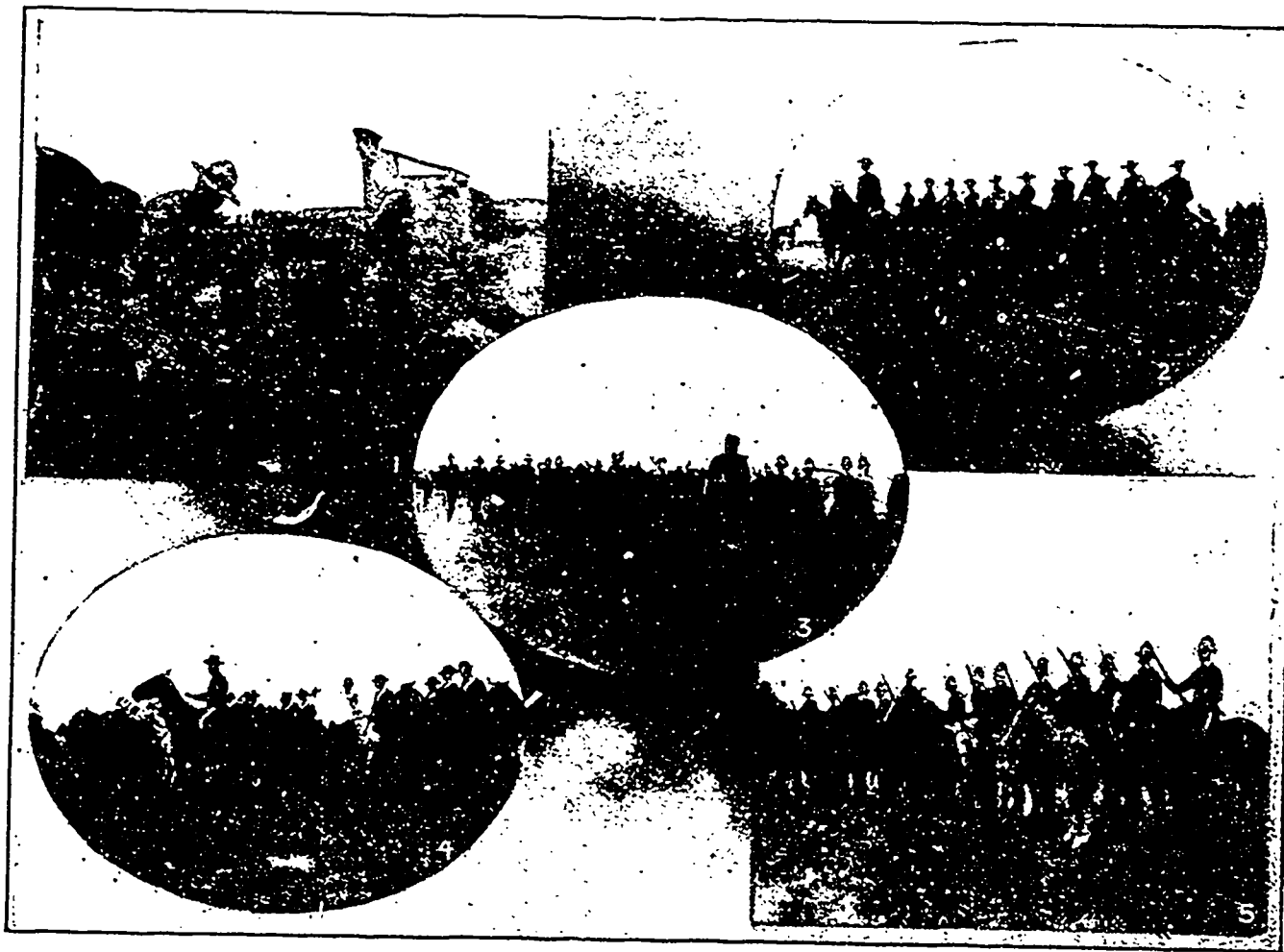
OFFICERS OF THIRD INFANTRY BRIGADE



ARMY SERVICE CORPS CAMP.

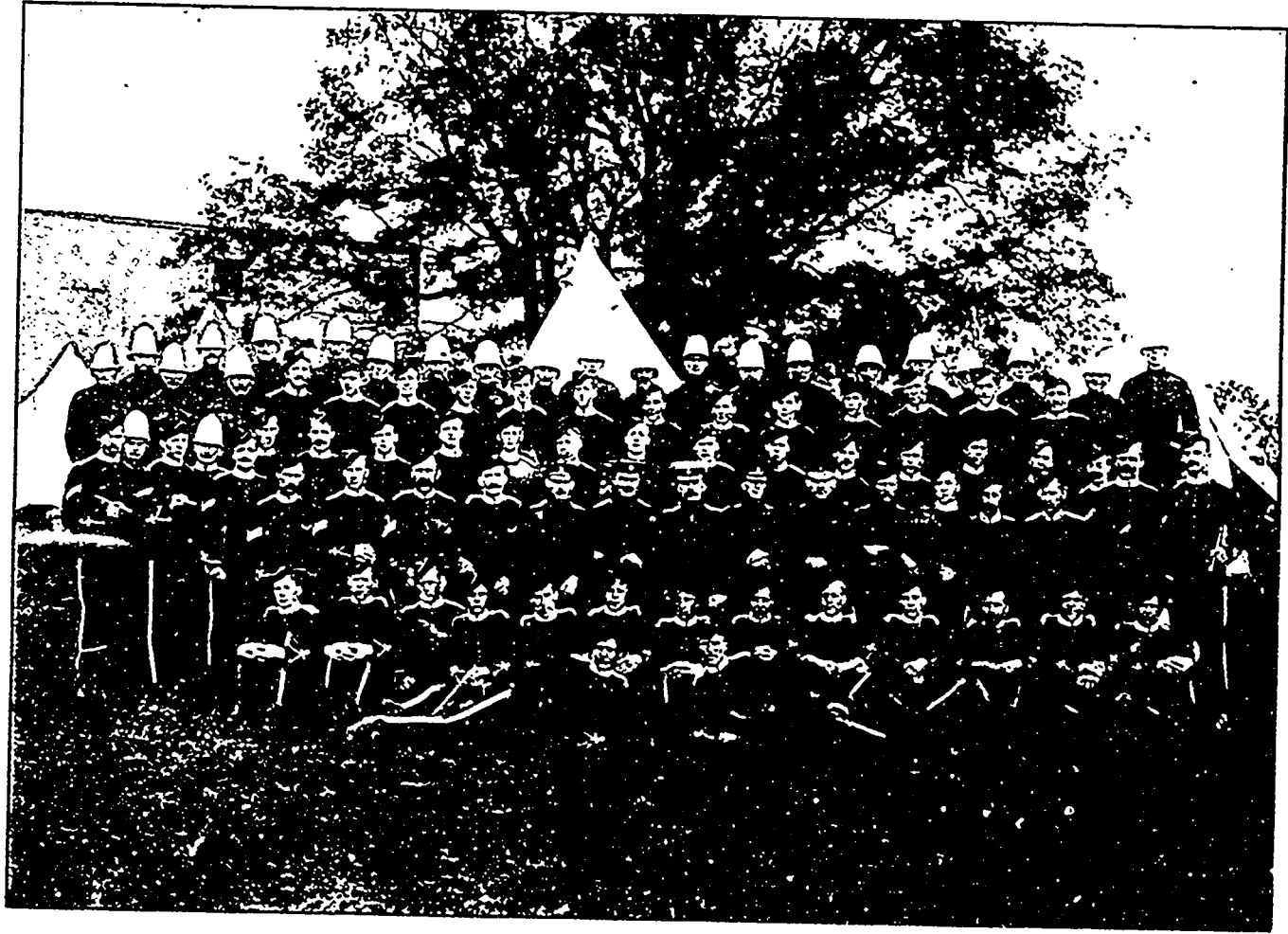


WITH THE ARTILLERY MEN AND WOMEN TOO.

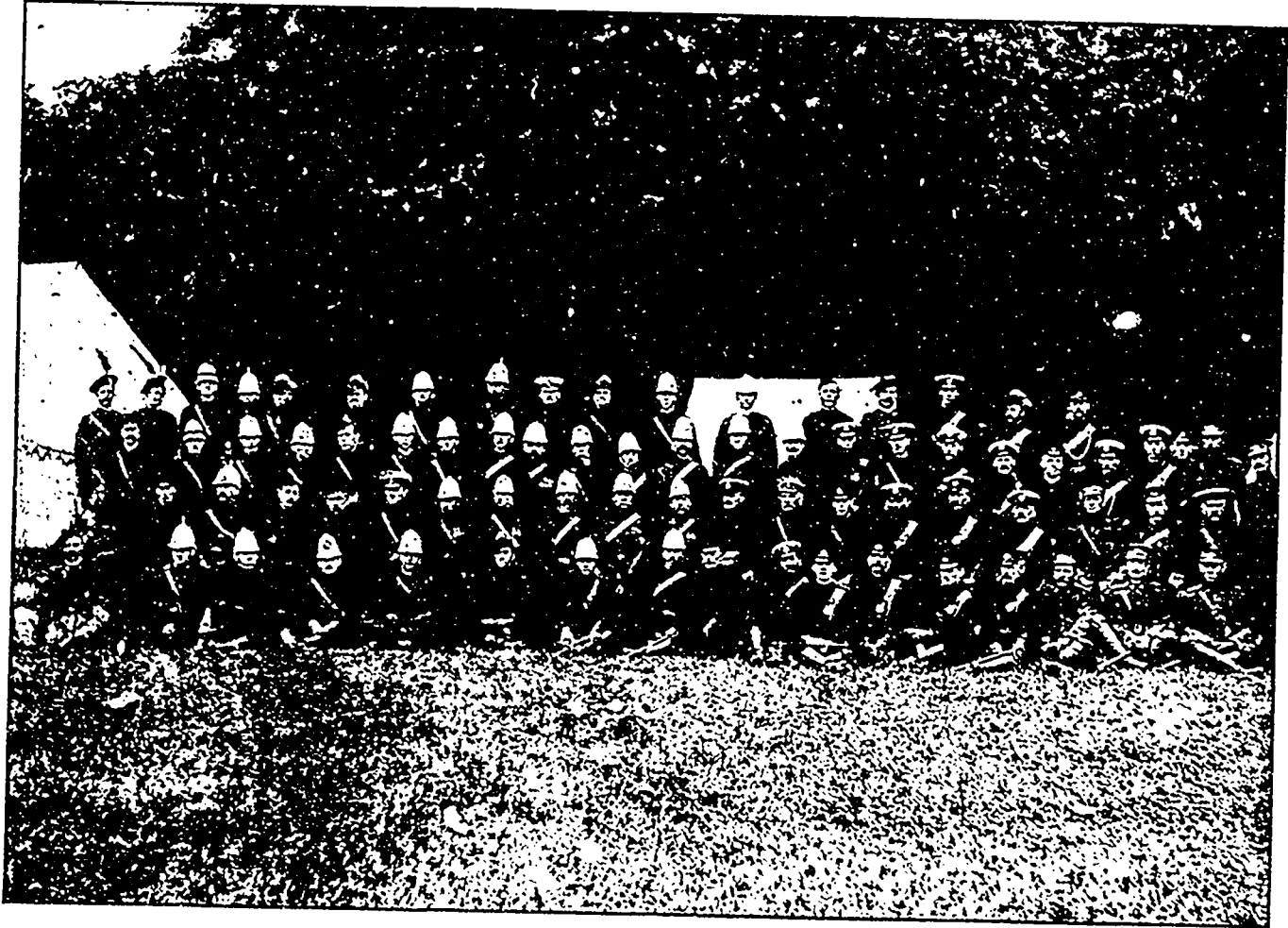


1. Horseshoeing -G. G. B. G.      2. Toronto Light Horse -ready for inspection.      3. Second Dragoons returning from rifle butts.  
4. G. G. B. G. ready for inspection.      5. Second Dragoons ready for inspection.

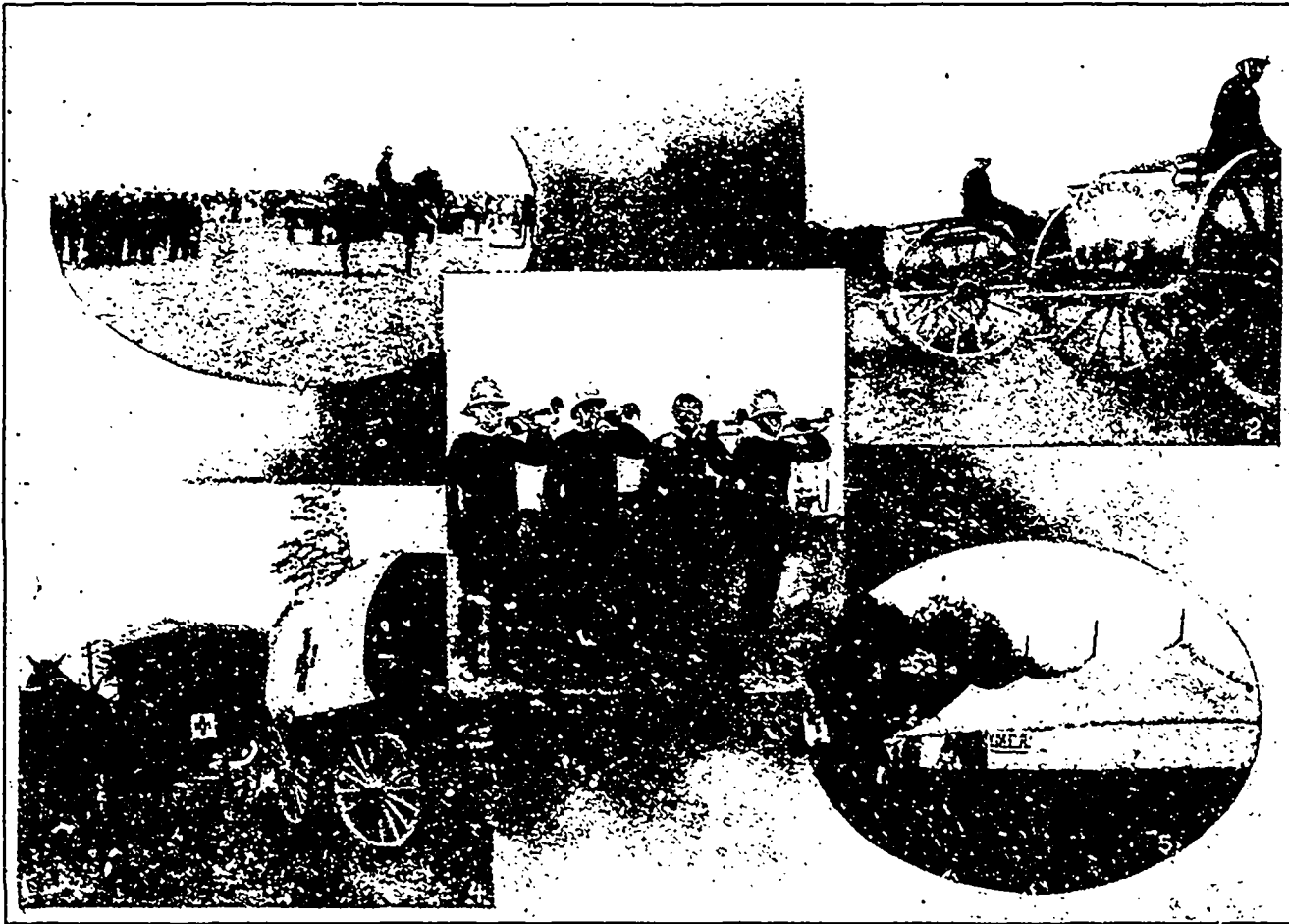




ARMY SERVICE CORPS



OFFICERS OF FOURTH INFANTRY BRIGADE



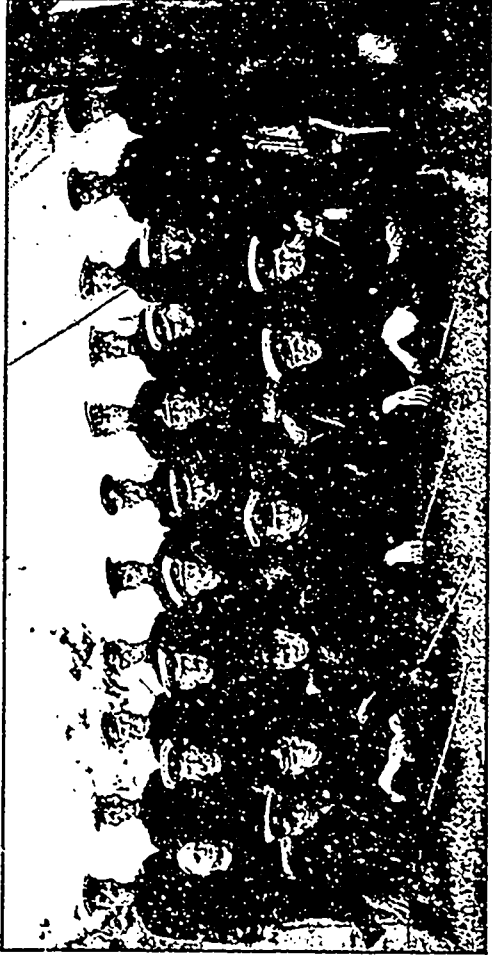
1. Field Ambulance Nos. 10, 11 and 12.

2. Water Carts - Army Medical Corps.

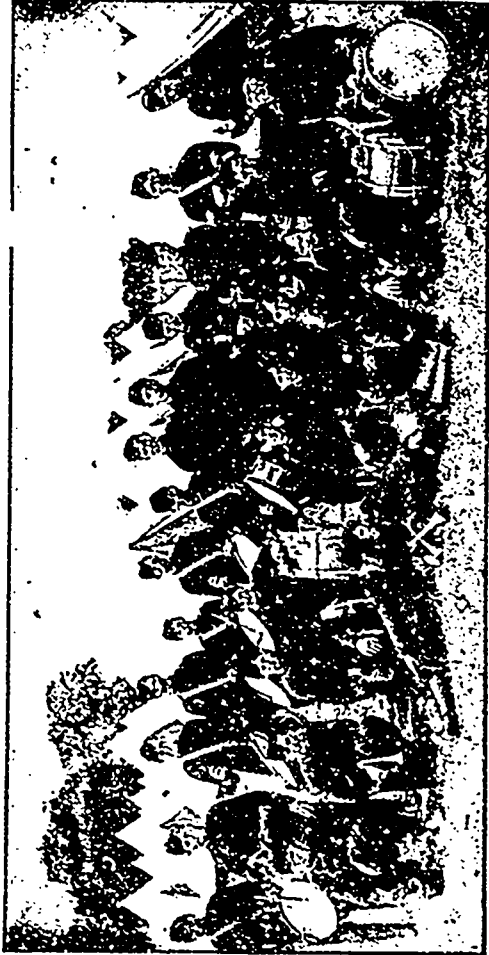
3. Litters, 2nd Dragoons.

4. Ambulance Wagons - Army Medical Corps.

5. Y. M. C. A. tent on Camp Grounds.



OFFICERS OF FORTY-FOURTH REGIMENT.



BUGLE BAND OF FORTY-FOURTH REG'T—LARGEST IN CAMP. Photo. by Lusk, 23 Queen E., Toronto.



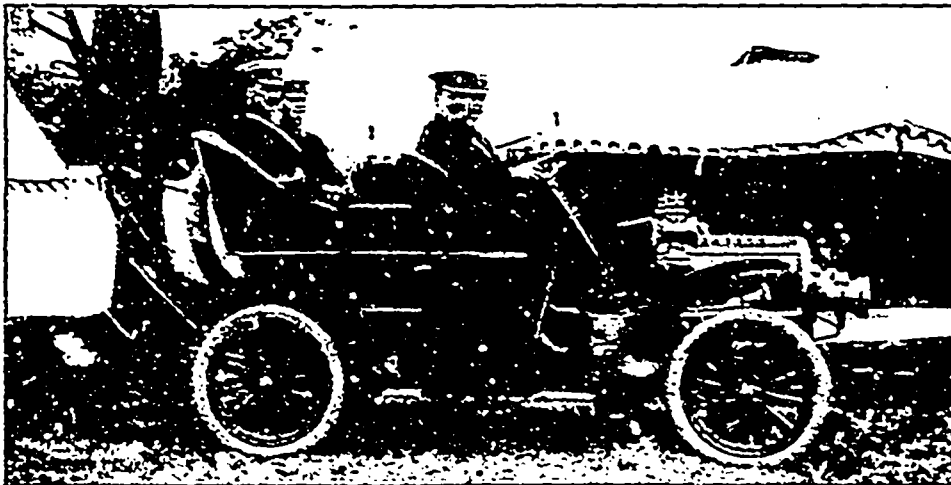
OFFICERS ARMY MEDICAL CORPS—"FIFTH WHEEL MESS." Photo. by Lusk, 23 Queen E., Toronto.



1. Serving meat rations to cooks of 12th Regt. 2. Regulars from Stanley Barracks, who acted as police during camp. 3. Rifle pits—  
taken from rear. 4. Field entrenchment taken from rear. 5. 31st Regiment preparing to entrain after camp.



INDIAN BAND—37TH REGIMENT. Photo. by Lusk, 2<sup>d</sup> Queen E., Toronto,



The Auto in Warfare. Property of Major W. E. S. Knowles. The other gentlemen are Lieut.-Col. Proby, Major Orr and Capt. Hagar, all officers of the 77th Reg't. The headlights of the machine helped at the distribution of rations at the bivouac on Queenston Heights sharp fight.



SCALING DRILL.



1. At the rifle butts.    2. Unloading bread.    3. The blanket throw.    4. Cleaning harness.    5. Poor "Snowball!" - G. G. R. G.  
6. The toilet 2nd Dragoons.



HARBOR SCENE AT OLD NIAGARA.



SIGNAL DRILL - SPELLING THE WORD N-I-A-G-A-R-A.





**THE ALDERSHOT OVENS AT NIAGARA CAMP.**

Great wood fires are built in these semi-circular steel ovens. When the wood has burned out the coals and ashes are withdrawn and the bread and roasting pans put in their place. The retained heat sufficiently bakes and roasts.



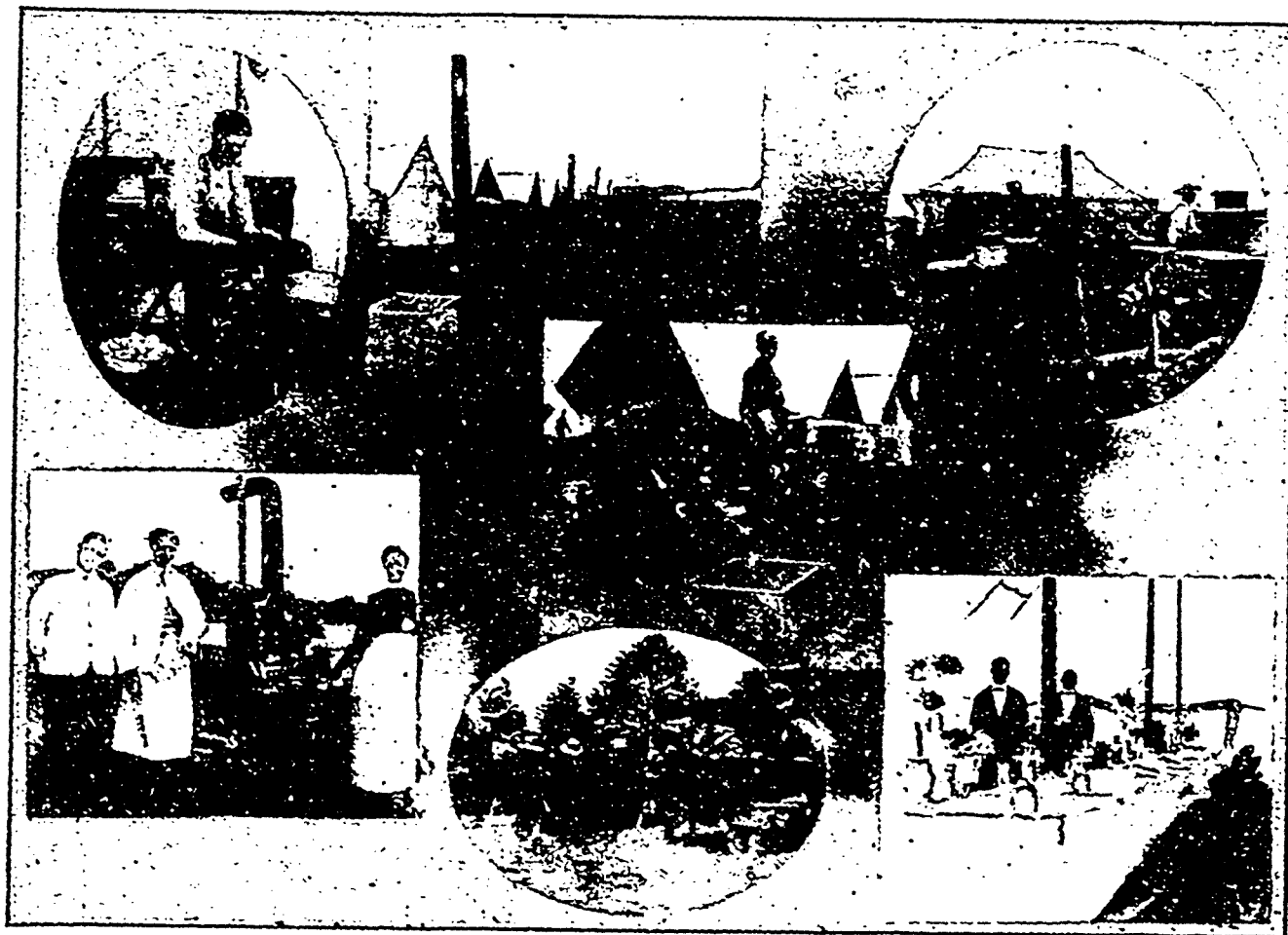
1. Youngest soldier in camp—Stanley Fleming, aged 7 years, of Stanley Barracks, Toronto. 2. Shine! 3. Stirring the Scotch blood of 2nd Dragoon officers—James Allen, piper, aged 12 years, Brantford. 4. Canteen, 2nd Dragoons. 5. Gen. Otter and staff on field day. The General is second from the front.



SECOND DRAGOONS



ARMY MEDICAL CORPS



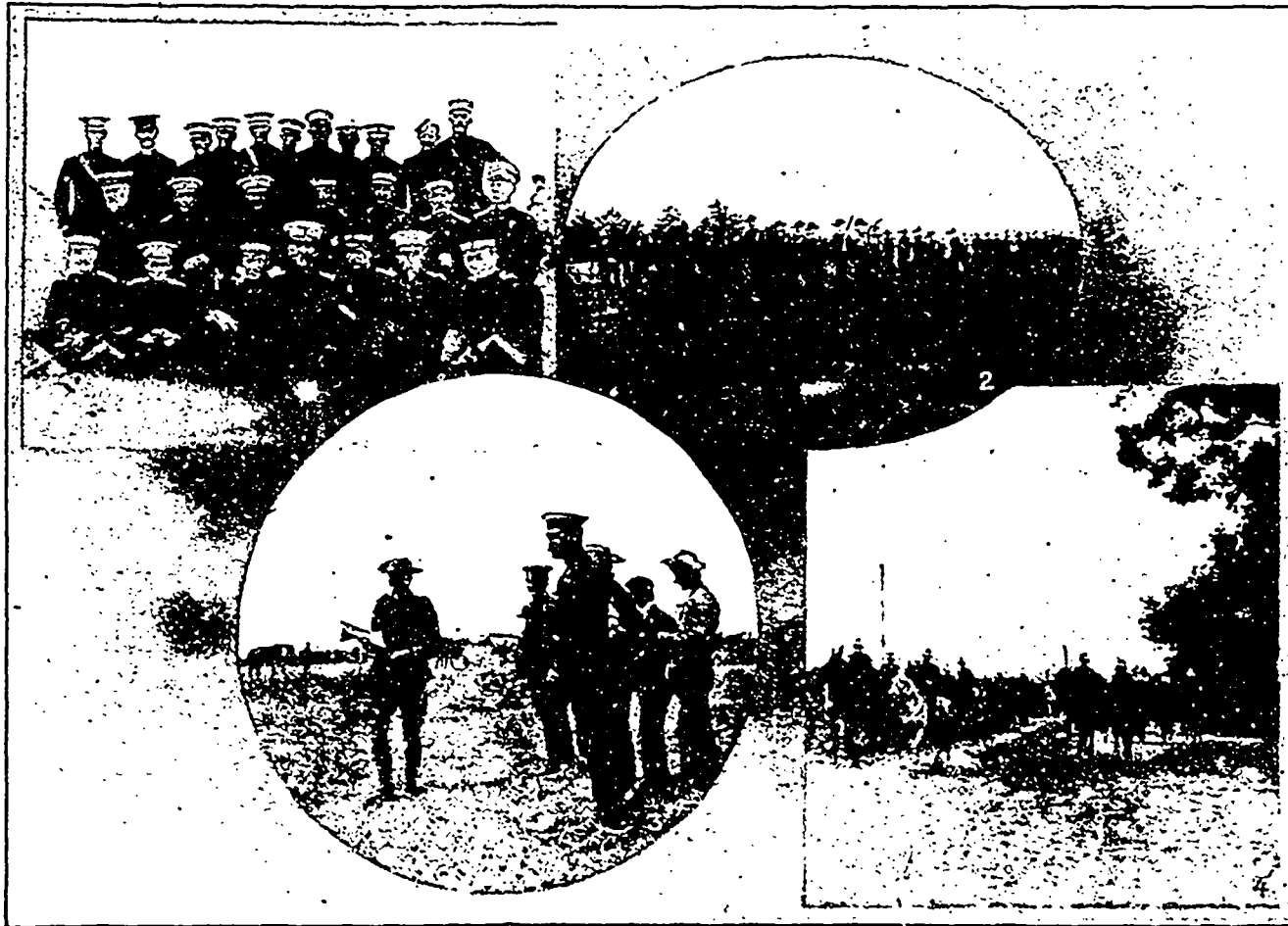
1. Peeling potatoes. 2. A line of cooking outfits in the infantry camp. 3, 4, 5. With the cooks. 6. Dinner in the artillery camp. 7. The officers' mess, 2nd Dragoons



BREASTWORKS AND BRIDGE BUILT BY TORONTO ENGINEERS



INFANTRY CAMP



1. Officers 2nd Dragoons. 2. G. G. B. G. marching to the rifle butts. 3. Muster. 4. Cavalry scouting in the country.



TWELFTH REGIMENT (YORK) ARRIVING.



NIAGARA RIVER, QUEENSTON HEIGHTS AND BROCK'S MONUMENT



MILITARY HEADQUARTERS ON CAMP GROUNDS



STREET SCENE IN OLD NIAGARA





CHURCH PARADE.