

NOTE

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Directorate of History
National Defence Headquarters
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CANADIAN FORCES HEADQUARTERS

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New Brunswick and Prince
Edward Island

1. This Report stresses the organizational features of the militia of the separate provinces of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island prior to Confederation and should be read in conjunction with Report No. 6, which dealt with the Canadian Militia. Both reports are based primarily on the material available in the Manuscript Division of the Public Archives of Canada. External danger was not a major consideration for most of the period under review, because of the considerable strength of the Royal Navy in North American waters, and the provincial appointments of Adjutants General of Militia tended to be sinecures for the British half-pay officers lucky enough to acquire them.

Nova Scotia

2. As early as 1720 Colonel Richard Philipps appointed captains of militia at the fishing settlement of Canso. Although his commission as Governor of Nova Scotia empowered him to "levy, Arm, Muster, Command and Employ all Persons whatsoever" for the defence of that province or any other in North America, there was little need for action.¹ Great Britain experienced almost two decades of peaceful expansion under the parliamentary leadership of Robert Walpole and the small garrison of regulars at Annapolis Royal, belonging to Philipps' own regiment,* proved sufficient to overawe the resentful Acadians and local Indians.

3. The discharged sailors and soldiers who were the first settlers of Halifax in 1749 were mustered as militia in December of that year and an alert was maintained during the ensuing winter because of (ill-founded) rumours of French and Indian preparations to attack the new settlement.² A militia system modelled on New England practice was introduced by Governor Hopson's proclamation of 22 March 1753. This proclamation required "all Planters, Inhabitants and their servants between the ages of Sixteen and Sixty," residing in the Halifax area, to appear with muskets and ammunition whenever ordered to muster.³ During October 1758 the first elected Assembly of the province approved "an Act for establishing and regulating a Militia."⁴ This Act applied to the inhabitants of the out-settlements

* Philipps' Regiment was raised in 1717 from the eight independent companies garrisoning Annapolis Royal and Newfoundland. It was the first British infantry regiment to be stationed in any part of the present Canada. It became the 40th Regiment of Foot in 1751. It is continued in British Army by The Lancashire Regiment (Prince of Wales's Volunteers).

as well as those of Halifax and its immediate vicinity, and its clauses closely adhered to existing American practice.

4. In New England the able-bodied men had initially elected their own officers, but the granting of commissions had gradually been taken over by the General Court of each colony. This, it should be emphasized, established the militia as an avenue to political prominence for any ambitious colonist. It was only natural for officers to be chosen from amongst the more affluent citizens, often merchants as well as landowners, whether or not these had had any experience of warfare. The elaborate drill movements then performed to perfection by European armies were beyond the capabilities of farmers, fishermen and artisans, whose only fighting was likely to be in wooded country or from behind fortified positions. Socially, however, each training day provided a change for the average citizen from the dreary toil of earning a living and a chance to enjoy some rum with neighbours after parade had been dismissed. Local militia companies were intended primarily to register and train men. Whenever there was an emergency, the legislature usually assigned quotas to every district. Although these were usually met by volunteers, local authorities could embody enough men who had been selected by ballot (i.e. by lot) to complete their draft. Service was normally restricted to defence of the colony, but it was clearly recognized that expeditions might have to proceed farther afield.⁵

5. The large New England element in the population of Nova Scotia by 1775 did not emulate the example of turbulent Massachusetts. The inhabitants of Halifax were largely dependent on British military and naval expenditures for their livelihood; like large numbers of people in the American Colonies, they wanted to remain aloof from armed conflict. The majority of the people in the small and scattered out-settlements was definitely determined upon pursuing a neutral course that would permit them to live in peace and continue to trade with their kinfolk in New England.⁶

6. Following receipt of the news that Americans had invaded Canada during the early days of September 1775, Governor Francis Legge convened a special session of the Legislature. It passed a new Militia Act.⁷ On 5 December martial law was proclaimed and a Revenue Act was passed to provide funds for the militia. Plans were made to call out one-fifth of the militia, selected by ballot wherever there should be insufficient volunteers.⁸ Militia men were needed to guard the naval yard and stores at Halifax, because the British regular garrison had been denuded to reinforce Lieutenant-General Thomas Gage at Boston. The widespread opposition that quickly arose, however, startled Governor Legge. Petitions poured in from the out-settlements suggesting that many inhabitants were recent settlers who could not afford to pay any tax in specie and that the sole family breadwinner could not be spared for militia service.

The petition from the township of Truro included what was to become a favourite argument:

... should a number of our Industrious Inhabitants, who have large families Depending upon them for support, be called away into any other part of the provinces, their Lands would lie uncultivated and neglected, and perhaps their property may be carried away or Destroyed in their absence to the ruin of private families, the distress of the Society, and hurtful to the province in general.⁹

Malcontents spread rumours that, once embodied, the militia were to be collected at Halifax and transported to New England to serve as soldiers against their kinfolk. Many militia companies refused to assemble and there were several local disturbances.¹⁰ In consequence, Governor Legge and his Executive Council agreed on 8 January 1776 that militiamen might remain at home unless there should be an actual American invasion of Nova Scotia and that no attempt would be made to collect taxes levied by the recent Revenue Act.¹¹ Legge's circular letter of 12 January directed militia officers to reassure their men that they would be required only for local defence in the event of actual invasion: a provincial regiment of volunteers would be recruited "purely for the defence of the Province."¹² Actually the military situation had been greatly improved by the arrival at Halifax of the 27th Regiment of Foot and other detachments of regulars to reinforce its garrison, so it did not greatly matter that the Loyal Nova Scotia Volunteers never seems to have had an effective strength of more than 242 rank and file.¹³ This provincial corps obtained most of its recruits from English and Scottish settlers who had recently arrived in Nova Scotia, as did the 2nd Battalion of the Royal Highland Emigrants.

7. Unknown to Governor Legge, General George Washington wrote to Congress on 30 January 1776 repeating his earlier condemnation of a proposal to despatch an American expedition to liberate Nova Scotia. Washington did not have the troops to spare for any operation that was not defensive in nature; moreover, any such scheme was impracticable since an invading force was certain to be cut off from its base by warships of the Royal Navy.¹⁴ Despite a later and personal rebuff by Washington,¹⁵ an expatriate Nova Scotian named Jonathan Eddy did lay siege to Fort Cumberland on the Isthmus of Chignecto during the following November, but this farcical attempt at invasion was ended by the arrival of vessels of the Royal Navy with reinforcements for the garrison.¹⁶

8. Small detachments of provincial troops or militia were intermittently stationed in the various out-settlements, but these proved too small to be of much practical use and merely provided an excuse for New England privateersmen to plunder and burn, whenever and wherever they landed. The situation existing at Liverpool has been preserved in the diary of Simeon Perkins. On 31 May 1778 he described how alarmed the leading citizens were by a rumour that American privateers were in the vicinity. This led them to agree that "ye fort ought to be dismantled, and that we keep up a guard of two or three men, to give notice of the approach of any Privateers, in which case

we might treat with them, and let them know that we would not molest them if they did not attempt landing, etc."¹⁷ When the local militia assembled on the following day the majority voted to take offensive action only if American privateersmen refused to treat, and attempted to land by force. On 13 December 1778 a detachment of 55 all ranks of the King's Orange Rangers arrived from Halifax to serve as garrison.¹⁸ Early in the following May four 12-pr. guns and a few reinforcements arrived. Most of the labour required to construct a battery was performed by the local militia.¹⁹ Even when British warships were reinforced in Nova Scotia waters by armed sloops and schooners, however, it was impossible to eliminate the possibility of American depredations. On 13 September 1780 the crews of two American privateers surprised and captured the garrison of Liverpool at dawn. Simeon Perkins and some friends subsequently managed to capture the American commander as he was wandering about the town. This led to an exchange of prisoners and American withdrawal.²⁰

9. Following the Treaty of Paris in 1763 Nova Scotia was left with a British regular garrison of about 100 officers and 2300 other ranks; three of the six weak regiments of foot were allocated to Halifax and district, one to Fort Cumberland, one to Shelburne, and the remaining one was split between Annapolis Royal and Fort Howe on the opposite shore of the Bay of Fundy.²¹ The bulk of the loyalists who sailed from New York made Nova Scotia their immediate destination, but the net increase to the settlements, including disbanded regulars, totalled only 14,000 men, women and children. Another 3150 persons received grants of land in Cape Breton, which was opened for settlement and given a separate government in 1784. There being no conceivable external danger to Nova Scotia as long as units of the Royal Navy controlled North American waters, the Legislature was content to continue its existing militia legislation and merely enrol its new citizens - many of whom were veterans of the recent war - into what was little more than a paper organization.

10. Following the French declaration of war against Great Britain on 1 February 1793, the British Government quickly decided that its principal military effort should be directed against French colonial possessions. Three of the regiments of foot garrisoning Nova Scotia and its Dependencies were ordered to the British West Indies.²² The garrison of Nova Scotia was reduced to one artillery company and the 4th Regiment of Foot.²³ Nova Scotia enjoyed the protection offered by the Royal Navy but, in order to combat possible sporadic raids and re-assure the civilian population, the Home Secretary wrote the Lieutenant-Governor on 8 February that he could raise a provincial corps of 600 rank and file, organized in six companies with the usual proportion of officers and sergeants. Pay and clothing were to be on the same scale as for regular regiments, but the area of service was restricted to Nova Scotia. Bounty money was limited to two guineas; and as large a part of it as possible was to be given to the men in the form of Necessaries. Although appointed colonel of the corps, the Lieutenant-Governor was to receive neither pay nor emoluments. Officers were to be selected from among residents of the province, but they would not thus acquire rank in the British Army or become eligible for half-pay when the unit should be reduced. Existing half-pay officers were to receive the better appointments, but only on a temporary basis.²⁴

As was customary, all officers had to recruit definite quotas of men, even though this opened the possibility of old men and weakly boys being enlisted.

11. Once these instructions reached Halifax in early April the lieutenant-Governor, John Wentworth, wasted no time. The Legislature was convened. In an address sent to King George III the Assembly declared that "the augmentation of the military establishment" was "a measure of great utility" and promised that "no exertions within the limited sphere of our ability shall be wanting to give efficacy to any measures His Majesty in his wisdom thinks fit to pursue for the annoyance of his enemies or defence of his people."²⁵ Suitable young gentlemen were available for appointment as ensigns; the remainder of the officers and the sergeants were found from veterans living in the province. A total of 330 rank and file were enlisted before the end of May, although the levy money had to be increased.²⁶ Offers of service poured in, even from loyalist sympathisers who had gone back to live in the United States, and Wentworth wrote the Home Secretary on 21 June that his corps would soon be complete.²⁷ Encouraged by such reports, the British Government authorized an increase in establishment to 800 rank and file (eight companies) and tacitly agreed that the unit might be known as the Royal Nova Scotia Regiment.²⁸

12. Brigadier-General James Ogilvie, commanding the few regular troops still in Nova Scotia and its Dependencies, did not share Lieutenant-Governor Wentworth's enthusiasm. Although the latter's complaints to London about the manner in which his regiment was being snubbed by the regulars make interesting reading, there can be little doubt that the attitude of the professional soldier was the more realistic. Once all the unemployed labourers and other landless men had been enlisted, it proved virtually impossible to recruit further for the Royal Nova Scotia Regiment, even with the bounty money raised to five guineas. Once suspected deserters from the British Army, accepted without question to provide a trained nucleus, were forcibly claimed by parties from the 4th Regiment of Foot, no others of this ilk trying to make a living in the province were willing to come forward. Wentworth admitted this last in a despatch dated 7 May 1794, as well as the fact that a number of recruits had deserted to the United States with their bounty money.²⁹ A recruiting party did fairly well in Newfoundland, where it remained for nearly 12 months, but that source dried up once Colonel Thomas Skinner began recruiting a Newfoundland Regiment of Fencible Infantry in 1795.³⁰ Major-General H.R.H. Edward, Duke of Kent, who had succeeded Brigadier - General Ogilvie late in 1794, considered the Royal Nova Scotia Regiment to be a useful corps, even though it was fated to remain about 230 rank and file below its authorized strength. Since large numbers of the reinforcements sent from Britain for his own 7th (or Royal Fusilier) Regiment of Foot were totally unfit for service, he tried several times to arrange exchanges for the best of the provincials. Wentworth was flattered by the presence of a member of the Royal Family at Halifax, but the Prince's final suggestion that 400-500 provincials might be transferred to the 7th Foot to form a second battalion was too much for him. "He is a most excellent

Prince," the exasperated Lieutenant-Governor reported to London on 1 April 1795, "but has such a military ardor about him that he cannot forbear taking every fine soldier he sees, into own Regt. The discipline of which is too perfect to be eno' popular."³¹ On 23 April the Home Secretary instructed the Duke of Kent to leave the Royal Nova Scotia Regiment alone; it had been raised for local service only, despite Wentworth's success in having his men enlist for service anywhere, because it was cheaper to recruit provincial corps for stationary duties than to employ regulars thereon.³²

13. Initially the Duke of Kent seems to have been able to make better use of the militia, which had been assembled during the late autumn of 1793 and again during the summer of 1794, because of rumours originating at New York that a French fleet was preparing for an attack on Halifax. Two regiments of Halifax militia and a detachment from the Volunteer artillery company were embodied during the summer of 1794 to hasten renovation of the harbour defences to the standards deemed necessary by the Duke of Kent.³³ The more prosperous members of the volunteer artillery company toiled without pay, but the remainder of the militia received British Army rates of pay from provincial funds. The Duke of Kent wanted this work resumed in April 1795. Since his garrison of regulars was small and would have to be stretched to provide additional outpost detachments during the summer months, he requested Lieutenant-Governor Wentworth to embody 600 militia as labourers. These men, however, could not be provided until after the planting of crops was completed in May. The more prosperous of the citizens selected by ballot for militia service bought substitutes from among the towns's casual labourers, making these men unavailable for employment by the Commanding Royal Engineer as civilians.³⁴

14. The provision that substitutes might be provided was common to militia legislation everywhere in the English-speaking world. All the militia legislation pertaining to Nova Scotia was reduced into one measure and, somewhat amended, became the Militia Act of 1795.³⁵ It decreed that the militia was to assemble four times a year by companies and twice as regiments. When called upon to resist invasion, the militia could be ordered into boats to attack the enemy or to go to the assistance of any portion of the province. Except in cases of great emergency, however, quotas for militia duty were to be filled from the rosters maintained by officers commanding companies; except for volunteers, the quotas would actually be filled by a ballot of the eligible men. These men, of course, were entitled to find and pay for a substitute. The men actually embodied were to receive the same pay as regular soldiers. Quakers, although exempt from military service, could be required to work for an equivalent period of time on the roads. The Militia Act of 1796 limited normal militia activity to four muster days a year.³⁶

15. On 20 May 1797 the Duke of Kent asked that 32 sergeants and 600 rank and file of the militia might be embodied for the summer season to continue the work of fortification, but fewer than 500 men could be provided by early August. At Wentworth's request they were released on 24 October. A disillusioned Duke of Kent wrote the Home Secretary on 7 November that the average regular soldier did as much work as three militiamen and that the answer to his problem lay in the despatch of an adequate number of reinforcements from Great Britain and Ireland. Never again did the Duke of Kent want to experience the need of embodying militiamen as labourers:

...for on the one hand, the Country is by far too new, and too thinly settled to admit of even so small a number as that called upon this season to be absent from their homes, without their families being materially injured by the measure; while on the other, the laws by which they are governed when embodied, are so totally inefficient, that it is next to an impossibility to enforce any kind of control or subordination, which they are not ready to submit to. In fact, had I not indulged them in almost every point and overlooked almost every irregularity, it would have been impracticable to have got them to do, even the little we were able to effect. The expense attending the measure of embodying them, is certainly far from being attended with that proportionate good which it ought to produce.³⁷

Fortunately the situation was soon eased by the arrival at Halifax of the 6th Regiment of Foot.

16. When no danger to British North America materialized, doubts began to arise about the need to continue the several under-strength provincial corps. The officers of the Royal Nova Scotia Regiment petitioned for rank in the British Army, with a view to their being placed on half-pay in the event that the unit should be reduced. Although strongly recommended by both the Duke of Kent and Sir John Wentworth, their petition was denied.³⁸ Early in 1799 the Duke of Kent advanced another suggestion: conversion of the several provincial corps into fencible corps liable for service anywhere in North America, as the Newfoundland Regiment of Fencible Infantry already was, would remove the existing limitation on his troop dispositions.³⁹ The Home Secretary agreed; but he pointed out that, since the provincial corps had been raised purely for local service, such an extension would have to be "purely voluntary on their part in the strictest and most unequivocal sense of the word."⁴⁰ There was no problem in the case of the Royal Nova Scotia Regiment, since Wentworth had insisted that all enlistments after 1793 and all re-engagements should be for general service. With the war in Europe drawing to a close, however, no action was taken to convert any of the provincial corps into fencibles. On 27 March 1802 a definitive Peace Treaty was signed at Amiens. During the following summer the Royal Nova Scotia Regiment was disbanded.

17. Peace turned out to be only a breathing spell, since Napoleon soon began to make piecemeal annexations in Europe. On 16 May 1803 Britain went to war with him. There were only 43 officers and 1177 other ranks in the whole of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick.⁴¹ Prince Edward Island and Cape Breton were defenceless, except for a "small and dispers'd Body of unarm'd and undisciplin'd Militia," so Lieutenant-General Henry Bowyer sent a tiny detachment of the 5th Battalion of the 60th (or Royal American) Regiment of Foot from Halifax to both, to prevent their seats of government being "insulted" by privateers or other raiders.⁴² Only in August was Lieut.-Colonel Frederick Augustus Wetherall authorized to raise a Nova Scotia Regiment of Fencible Infantry. Danger did not materialize, however, and the militia seems to have done little more than hold periodic musters, except for a few volunteer enthusiasts. At nine o'clock on the morning of 3 November 1804, for example, Lieutenant-General Bowyer held a practice alert at Halifax. Within the hour 961 all ranks of the local militia units assembled. About 200 trained artillerymen, 80 riflemen, a company of grenadiers and one of light infantry, and one battalion company were armed and uniformed. The remainder were without uniforms and arms but, having received some training, could be allocated to the harbour batteries for duty.⁴³ Outside of Halifax none of the militia had been issued with arms.⁴⁴

18. The war scare occasioned by the Chesapeake Affair of 22 June 1807 was another matter altogether. In view of American impotence at sea the British Government reasoned that military invasion was the more probable form of attack. Should the New Brunswick Fencibles and untrained militia be unable to halt an American invasion launched from Maine, they were to make a fighting withdrawal on Halifax, whose garrison had been reduced to 600 regulars by the transfer of two regiments to the more vulnerable Quebec.⁴⁵ As a start, a regiment of 600 militia was embodied to work on the fortifications of Halifax. Eventually there were three militia regiments, totalling close to 2000 all ranks, on duty in Nova Scotia, as well as a troop of light horse and the militia artillery of Halifax.⁴⁶ On 27 March 1808 Major-General Martin Hunter reported that the embodied militia were now well trained, considering that "they never had weapons in their hands before."⁴⁷ Should an emergency actually occur, however, Hunter did not believe that it would be feasible to muster than 5000 of the men on the militia rolls in Nova Scotia.

19. Within a few days the arrival of a substantial regular reinforcement at Halifax made it possible for Lieutenant-General Sir George Prevost (who had just arrived himself to assume the appointments of Lieutenant-Governor of Nova Scotia and Commander of the Forces) to disembody all the militia on duty.⁴⁸ Shortly thereafter the Legislature approved a new Militia Act. This Act of 1808 continued what was desired of the legislation previously in force and followed fairly closely the suggestions advanced by the new Lieutenant-Governor.⁴⁹ The militia was divided into two classes: men between the ages of 18 and 50 were to be balloted and rosters compiled so that drafts could be embodied without delay; youths aged 16 to 18 and men aged 50 to 60 were considered to be a "paper reserve." Members of the first class could, if selected for duty, still obtain a substitute; otherwise they would receive

the same pay as regulars while on service.⁵⁰ The Nova Scotia militia was reorganized into two companies of artillery and 26 battalions of infantry. Inspecting Field Officers sent out from Great Britain supervised training. On 15 March 1810 Prevost reported that arms and equipment had been provided for about half the 12,218 men who had actually undergone rudimentary training.⁵¹ He subsequently reported that the militia of the separate government of Cape Breton did not "amount to any considerable number deserving to be noticed."⁵²

20. Nova Scotia's role in the War of 1812 was determined at the outset. News of President Madison's declaration of war reached Halifax on 29 June, along with the heartening information that the nearby inhabitants of New England were generally opposed to it and desired to continue normal trading relations. After consulting his Executive Council, therefore, the Lieutenant-Governor, now Lieutenant-General Sir John Coape Sherbrooke, issued the following proclamation on 3 July:

Whereas every species of predatory warfare carried on against Defenceless Inhabitants, living on the shores of the United States contiguous to this Province and New Brunswick, can answer no good purpose, and will greatly distress Individuals: I have therefore thought proper by and with the advice of His Majesty's Subjects under my Government, to abstain from molesting the Inhabitants living on the shores of the United States contiguous to this Province and New Brunswick: and on no account to molest the Goods, or unarmed Coasting Vessels, belonging to the Defenceless Inhabitants on the Frontiers, so long as they shall abstain on their parts, from any acts of Hostility and Molestation towards the Inhabitants of this Province and New Brunswick, who are in a similar situation. It is therefore my wish and desire, that the Subjects of the United States, living on the frontiers, may pursue in peace their usual and accustomed Trade and occupations, without Molestation, so long as they shall act in a similar way towards the frontier Inhabitants of this Province and New Brunswick.

And I do hereby order and command all His Majesty's Subjects, within my jurisdiction, to govern themselves accordingly, until further orders.⁵³

21. Sherbrooke sent half his supply of arms to Canada, where American attack was expected and embodied one-fifth of the first class of militia for garrison duty at the outposts. The arrival of an additional British regiment of foot made it possible for him to release the militia after little more than a month of service. Otherwise, Sherbrooke wrote the Secretary of State for War and the Colonies on 7 August, it would not have been possible to gather the harvest. The additional food needed by the inhabitants and garrison of Nova Scotia could be provided by continuing trade with the New Englanders who were anxious to get British manufactured goods.⁵⁴ Sherbrooke soon learned

that additional muskets and ammunition were on the way⁵⁵ and that his initial action had been approved in London: the Secretary of State for War and the Colonies recommended that he keep on "cultivating an amicable and liberal Communication with the neighbouring States, and of promoting any friendly disposition which may appear to you best calculated to rensure [sic] its Continuance."⁵⁶

22. Farming, fishing and lumbering were essential services, which could not be safely interfered with, so militiamen were embodied only for the time needed to escort to Halifax the prisoners landed from naval vessels and privateers.⁵⁷ During the slack autumn season of 1812, however, a number of the unembodied militia did volunteer to help repair Fort Cumberland.⁵⁸ Privateering was more profitable than military service for Nova Scotians who were interested in excitement. Halifax was booming: because of British expenditures, civilian wages were forced upwards until masons demanded 10 shillings a day and even ordinary labourers could get seven shillings and sixpence; sailors, soldiers and prisoners of war had to be fed and they were ready to spend their own money in taverns, dance halls and brothels. The militia situation was well stated by Sherbrooke's despatch dated 30 June 1813.

The situation of the Province in respect to its Agriculture and Fisheries, rendered it inexpedient to call out greater numbers of the Militia, than was absolutely necessary beyond the number of days for Training prescribed by the Law of the Province, for which they receive no Pay.

I shall continue during the present Summer, to be guided by the same View to Public Economy, as far as circumstances will permit, consistent with the safety of His Majesty's Province.⁵⁹

The militia cavalry troop formed from volunteers during the late spring of 1814 to provide a courier service throughout the province was hardly a martial effort. The volunteers furnished their own horses and all requisite appointments except swords, belts, pistols and holsters. Sherbrooke's explanatory letter of 20 April 1814 requested 60 of each of the last-named items for issue to them.⁶⁰ Just how good the war was for Nova Scotia is stated in the address which the Legislative Assembly presented to Sir John Sherbrooke on 3 April 1815:

During the whole of the late war with America we have felt a security and confidence arising from the evident propriety and efficacy of your Excellency's measures, and we have had the satisfaction to find those measures carried into effect with the smallest possible inconvenience to the Militia, and a trifling expenditure of the public money [£85,000 pounds]. That such benefits may not pass without some memorial of our estimation of them we have voted £1,000 to be expended in the purchase of a piece of plate, which we beg your Excellency to accept as a lasting proof of the grateful sense this province entertains of the wisdom of those measures by which your Excellency at the same time provided for the security of the country and consulted the ease of the inhabitants, 61

23. On 24 June 1816 the Royal Newfoundland Regiment of Fencible Infantry was disbanded at Halifax: two captains, five lieutenants, one ensign, the quartermaster, seven sergeants and 87 rank and file accepted land grants in Nova Scotia.⁶² Personnel of the Nova Scotia Fencibles reduced at Montreal were returned to Nova Scotia at government expense if they so desired. A year later, 30 other ranks of the 104th Regiment of Foot disbanded at Montreal decided to settle in Nova Scotia.⁶³ Until early in 1819 British regulars demobilized elsewhere were granted a free passage to North America, in addition to free land. These men stiffened the provincial militia which had never experienced more than a modicum of active service, but the three military settlements set aside in Nova Scotia were characterized as "a wilderness of wood and rock and swamp."⁶⁴

24. In 1821 the Legislature passed a new Militia Act which consolidated existing legislation. Men aged 18 to 40 were to attend four drills or musters annually. Although cavalry and artillery units might be organized, the basic militia framework was one infantry regiment for each county and two for the City of Halifax. The considerable number of negroes who had escaped to freedom from the United States were made subject to this Militia Act, but they were to be organized separately into district companies or into smaller bands of pioneers. Henceforth volunteers from the militia might, in the event of emergency, be sent to help defend New Brunswick.⁶⁵ In 1826 the number of muster days was reduced from four to two per year. Although the sedentary militia numbered roughly 26,000 all ranks in 1830, very few members of the 33 battalions of infantry had a weapon. The two volunteer artillery companies and a volunteer rifle company were uniformed, but not armed, at their own expense. Proper military training was not possible, but there were social functions to attend and possession of a uniform could be a decided asset.⁶⁶ According to one cynic who was writing home to England from Halifax:

Since the settlement of the town on the present site, in the year 1749, its population has increased to nearly 14,000 souls. The British garrison forms about one-eighth of this population, and of course materially influences the tone of society. A young officer, in whose head conceit has not previously affected a lodgment, from the specimen of military life he may have just tasted in England, stands every chance of undergoing a regular investment, siege, and assault from this insidious enemy on joining his corps in Halifax. He finds himself raised at once to a level above that accorded to the scarlet cloth at home - society generally sought, frequently courted, and himself esteemed, as a personage whose opinions are regarded with no little degree of attention.⁶⁷

25. Because Nova Scotia enjoyed the protection afforded by the Royal Navy and a sizable force of British regulars, the Legislative Assembly felt free to use the militia as a goad in its struggle with the Lieutenant-Governor, Lord Falkland, to secure responsible government in local matters. In 1843 the Assembly refused to vote any money for the militia which, according to the Militia Act of 1841, could be called out for training three times a year by the Lieutenant-Governor. The Militia Act which the Assembly passed in 1844 completely omitted the sections dealing with training and the payment of regimental adjutants. The Lieutenant-Governor therefore could not assemble any or all of the 48 battalions supposed to total 1455 officers, 2056 N.C.Os. and 37,486 rank and file before danger actually became imminent.⁶⁸ Lord Falkland partially excused this attitude in his despatch of 2 January 1846, which explained why the provincial militia was inefficient:

It was perhaps natural that a disinclination should exist on the part of the Rural population to abandon, in a time of profound peace, their ordinary avocations, for the number of days necessary to keep the different Corps in a high state of discipline, and this feeling having been participated in, or yielded to, by the members of the Local Legislature, the periods for exercise were by degrees diminished or curtailed, until they became so infrequent as to be ineffectual for the purpose for which they were established, and were in 1844 altogether abolished.⁶⁹

26. By this time there was another crisis in Anglo-American relations, this time stemming from the belligerent attitude adopted by President Polk towards the Oregon boundary dispute. Although there was no danger of an all-out invasion should war break out, the inhabitants were alarmed by American boasts that raiding forces might land at various points, march inland, and destroy the valuable coal mines of the province. Lord Falkland discounted such fears, except in the case of the Sydney mines which were close to the sea—an opinion which was confirmed by the Admiralty.⁷⁰ He therefore only requested 10,000 stand of arms in his letter of 2 March 1846 to the Secretary of State for War and the Colonies. This letter also contained the information that the Legislature had hurriedly passed yet another Militia Act, restoring the deleted sections respecting the mustering of the militia in peace time and the payment of unit adjutants. The minute made on it by the Secretary of State for War and the Colonies on 16 March directed that about 8000 flintlock muskets held by the Ordnance Department at Halifax might be given to the militia.⁷¹ Fortunately the crisis was resolved on 15 June 1846, without dependence of any sort on these obsolete muskets. Yet on 18 October 1848 Lord Falkland's successor, Sir John Harvey, would report as follows, despite the extensive knowledge gained in Canada during the War of 1812 and subsequently as Lieutenant-Governor of each of Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick and Newfoundland:

The defence of Nova Scotia is provided for, ordinarily, by the presence of two or three Regiments of British Troops in its Garrisons, and the visits of the squadron in summer. An organized militia consisting of 26 Regiments including a force of 44,248 men, inclusive of officers is provided for by Statute. These Regiments are officered by commissions from the crown and when embodied for actual service, are subject to martial law. In peace they are rarely called out, except for inspection, but as every man in the province has the right to carry a gun and few grow up within it unpractised in the use of fire arms, they could soon be molded for self defence, into valuable auxiliaries to any troop which in case of danger, the Imperial Government could spare.⁷²

By this time, of course, responsible government had been achieved and there was no serious cause for friction between a Lieutenant-Governor and his Legislative Assembly.

27. Although provision had existed in the several militia acts for the existence of volunteers corps, and an occasional unit had had a precarious existence, the necessary impetus for widespread action was lacking until 1859 - the year that a large force of volunteers sprang into being in Great Britain as a direct answer to widespread alarm about the possibility of a French invasion. Nova Scotians were, of course, already familiar with the gaily uniformed volunteer units of Massachusetts, New York and Pennsylvania, after which the Canadian volunteers had been patterned in 1855. As early as 30 January 1859, in a letter to the Colonial Secretary, another Lieutenant-Governor of Nova Scotia, Lord Mulgrave, proposed the formation of a volunteer force. During the summer Lord Mulgrave circularized the officers commanding sedentary militia regiments with a view to them forming companies of volunteers for each. The first volunteer corps was organized in September at Sydney Lines.⁷³ During December citizens of the provincial capital organized the Scottish Volunteer Rifle Company of Halifax, Chebucto Greys, Mayflower Rifles, Irish Rifles and the Halifax Rifles. On 14 May 1860 these companies were organized into a Halifax Volunteer Battalion.⁷⁴ Other rifle companies were organized elsewhere. An engineer company was established at each of Halifax and Dartmouth.⁷⁵ On 12 May the Legislature voted \$8000 to pay for securing the services of staff officers and drill sergeants from the British garrison.⁷⁶ On 15 April 1861 the Militia Act was amended to make provision for three categories of volunteers - effectives, non-effectives, and honorary members. This statute also exempted other ranks of volunteer units from the normal statutory labour required annually on the roads.⁷⁷ For its part, the British Government provided 3000 Enfield rifled muskets. On 12 November 1861 Lord Mulgrave reported that about 1500 volunteers, organized as 30 companies had undergone drill and musketry training. They had, however, had to spend considerable sums of their own money. "The Militia had been neglected for so many years," Lord Mulgrave's despatch added, "and the Province has so long existed without cause for alarm, that it is very

difficult to persuade the people of the necessity of making an extra exertion in time of peace, for the purchase of arms which they believe will probably never be required."⁷⁸

28. Volunteer strength increased to 2357 effectives during 1862, organized as 54 companies. Three companies disappeared during 1863, but five new companies were organized and there was a total strength of 2364 effectives. Training for 26 of the companies was conducted by unit officers; instructors were provided from the British garrison to assist the remaining companies. Except for the Halifax Volunteer Battalion, the volunteer corps continued to be attached to county battalions of sedentary militia.⁷⁹ The British half-pay officer serving as Adjutant General of Militia having recommended that the volunteer and sedentary militia should cordially co-operate in training, the consolidated Militia Act of 1862 initiated a trend opposite to that in the other provinces of British North America. The sedentary militia of Nova Scotia was rejuvenated and encouraged to train annually for five days - a day being considered to consist of a four-hour training parade held under local arrangements. About 35,000 militia were trained during 1863. Militia officers, in many cases former members of attached volunteer corps, were required to perform 28 additional drills of approximately three hours each.⁸⁰ This last type of training was conducted by officers and sergeants of the British garrison along the same lines as the military schools in the Province of Canada, but, of course, the courses were not of nearly so intensive a nature. The following table shows the paper strength of the militia and the numbers trained in subsequent years:

	<u>Enrolled</u>	<u>Trained</u>
1864	48,675	34,883
1865	59,379	45,600
1866	58,031	45,767
1867	59,147	41,997 (81)

However, there were only enough rifles for somewhat better than a third of the men who underwent training. A considerable portion of the strength was organized as artillery and was trained under the supervision of Royal Artillerymen stationed in the Halifax garrison. There were 19 militia batteries in and around Halifax; companies or batteries were also organized at Pictou, Chester, Lunenburg, Liverpool, Yarmouth, Digby, Grandville and Annapolis.⁸² By 1867 the number of volunteers declined to 639 effectives and, except for Halifax, there were efficient companies only at Windsor, Tatamagouche, Shubenacadie, Shelburne and Somerset.⁸³

29. Nova Scotia had been in no danger from the Fenians in 1866, but the militia had responded to the call for preparedness made by the Lieutenant-Governor on 17 March. A volunteer battalion was placed on duty at Halifax until 14 April; when the 62nd Regiment of Foot was subsequently ordered to New Brunswick, where real danger threatened, about 150 volunteers were placed on full time duty and remained embodied until late July. Elsewhere the militia drilled more earnestly and more often than usual, but Nova Scotia enjoyed the protection

of the Royal Navy.⁸⁴

New Brunswick

30. During the summer of 1784 a separate province of New Brunswick was created across the Bay of Fundy from Nova Scotia to administer the 10,000 men, women and children recently settled there. Most of the loyalists arriving during the spring and early summer of the preceding year had been civilian refugees. During the autumn of 1783, however, they were joined by 13 provincial corps, which were disbanded immediately farms were allotted. With a view to future defence requirements, these last arrivals were granted lands higher up the St. John River Valley. The surviving Acadians moved further up the river into the Madawaska country.

31. Only in 1787 did the Legislature of New Brunswick take steps to create a militia. With the usual exceptions, all physically fit males aged 16 to 50 were required to enrol in one of the independent militia companies located in towns and parishes. Each militiaman was supposed to appear at the annual muster with a good musket, bayonet, cartridge box, nine cartridges and nine bullets. Every officer was authorized in the event of an alarm, invasion, insurrection or rebellion to mobilize the men under his command and be prepared to march to any part of the province - but not beyond it. Should there actually be an enemy invasion, all males 50 to 60 years of age would also be liable for service, as would Quakers who were excepted from all other militia duties.¹

32. Following the outbreak of war between Britain and France on 1 February 1793, all the British regulars were withdrawn from the province, except for a few artillerymen, and Lieutenant-Governor Thomas Carleton was authorized to recruit a provincial corps of 600 rank and file for garrison duty on the same terms as the previously mentioned Royal Nova Scotia Regiment (see para 10). Ability to enlist upwards of 200 men within the first few weeks engendered a false optimism, which was not dispelled for upwards of a year. The strength of 22 sergeants, 14 drummers and 364 rank and file reported on 20 June 1794 proved to be a total which could not be bettered.² Despite an increase in bounty money to five guineas during the summer of 1795, what had become known as the King's New Brunswick Regiment was fated to continue with a shortage of roughly 240 rank and file.³ On 10 September 1795 Carleton admitted in a despatch that there was little hope of completing the regiment without sending a recruiting party to Newfoundland, where recruiting would be expensive and in competition with both the Royal Nova Scotia Regiment and the Newfoundland Regiment of Fencible Infantry. Carleton's original view that success would be unlikely because New Brunswick was sparsely populated and good men would not abandon their farms after the long and arduous struggle to carve them out of the wilderness had been borne out.⁴ However,

predatory French raids against Saint John or St. Andrews were the only possible danger to the province and the erection of small batteries made possible an adequate defence of these towns against any enemy privateer or naval vessel.

33. The militia organization set forth in the Acts of 1787 and 1792 had little reality. Almost all the 3000 potential militiamen were without firearms and were too poor to buy them, as was required by law. Most of the veterans of the American Revolution had had to sell the army muskets, which they had been permitted to retain on discharge, in order to buy additional implements and goods - a contingency that the authorities had not envisaged.⁵ During the years since 1784 the population had not been increased by immigration; indeed, a substantial number of loyalists had become sufficiently discouraged to leave the province. The remainder were widely dispersed in scattered settlements. Agriculture progressed slowly and, until the early years of the 19th Century, provisions had to be imported annually from the United States.

34. The Militia Act passed in 1794, to be in effect for the duration of the war, was very similar to the legislation enacted in Nova Scotia (see para 14). It included a provision that the militia could be ordered into boats to go to the defence of another part of the province. Musters of the militia regiments and independent companies were to be held four times a year and a fine of 20 shillings could be levied against anyone not attending. In the event of invasion only, "free-male-blacks" aged 16 to 50 were to be formed into companies.⁶

35. During the summer of 1802, following the general peace established by the Treaty of Amiens, the King's New Brunswick Regiment was disbanded. When war was resumed in Europe on 16 May 1803, New Brunswick had literally only a handful of British regulars as garrison. On 1 August 1803 the Duke of York, Commander-in-Chief of the British Army, authorized Brigadier-General Martin Hunter to raise a New Brunswick Regiment of Fencible Infantry for service anywhere in British North America.⁷

36. Danger did not materialize and the militia merely held periodic musters, except for the odd volunteer company of enthusiasts who continued to give of their own time and money. The scare occasioned by the Chesapeake incident of 22 June 1807 persuaded the British Government that the Americans might attempt a military invasion across New Brunswick. Action was taken to embody a portion of the militia, after balloting, since there were too many enthusiastic, if untrained volunteers.⁸ Should the New Brunswick Fencibles and the untrained militia be unable to stop the enemy, they were to make a fighting withdrawal on Halifax. (see para 18) On 29 March 1808 Major-General Hunter reported that the militia embodied in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia were now well trained, considering that they "had never had weapons in their hands before."⁹ Within a few days the arrival of a substantial British reinforcement at Halifax

made it possible for Lieutenant-General Sir George Prevost, who had just arrived himself, to dismiss the Nova Scotia militia to their homes (see para 18). On 11 April Prevost reported that the militia embodied in New Brunswick would be dismissed as soon as the 101st Regiment of Foot got there from Halifax.¹⁰ Companies of the New Brunswick Fencibles could then be sent to each of Cape Breton and Prince Edward Island: "a measure which may be attended with benefit to the Service, as it is probable many belonging to them domiciliate too much."¹¹

37. Sir George Prevost's appreciation of 18 May 1812, respecting the military situation in North America, stated that the security of New Brunswick "very materially depends upon the Navy, and the vigilance of our Cruizers in the Bay of Fundy."¹² The defence of Fredericton was "out of the question, and the course of the River St. John must be defended at the discretion of the Officer Commanding that Garrison, according to the description and number of the assailing Army." The town of Saint John was "totally indefensible on the land side." The only regular troops in the province were a few artillerymen and the 104th Regiment of Foot (raised in 1803 as the New Brunswick Fencibles). The militia amounted to "about 4,000 men, much scattered, and but few of them have been trained in the use of Arms."

38. On 27 June 1812 news of the American declaration of war reached Saint John from Eastport, Maine. Its inhabitants had held a meeting on the previous day and unanimously agreed to "preserve a good understanding with the Inhabitants of New Brunswick and to discountenance all depredations upon the Property of each other."¹³ Since New Brunswick depended for its existence on imports of food, the Executive Council requested the Administrator, Major-General G.S. Smyth, to permit trade with New England in unarmed vessels. On 10 July Smyth issued a proclamation similar in nature to that of Sherbrooke (see para 19). Smyth also negotiated agreements which would keep the Indians of the region neutral. Yet he took steps to have the crumbling defences repaired against invasion and asked for 1000 stand of arms. The inhabitants seemed loyal and numbers of them laboured voluntarily on the defences. "I have not yet actually enroled any part of the Militia", he reported on 4 July, "as depriving the Country of its labour at this Season would occasion the most alarming scarcity, if not the total want of food, during the remainder of the year."¹⁴ The Secretary of State for War and the Colonies approved of Smyth's action, as he had that of Sherbrooke. (see para 20).

39. On 8 December 1812, Smyth reported that, since there no longer was any possibility of a speedy end to the war, something should be done about local defence. Although the people of Maine were friendly, the Bay of Fundy was swarming with privateers.¹⁵ Smyth had divided all the eligible militia men aged 16 to 60, about 4500 in all, into 14 battalions: but he could never assemble more than 3000 and embody them for any length of time, because of the paucity of provisions and the poverty of most of the inhabitants.¹⁶ Shortly thereafter he embodied about 250 militia - two companies at Saint John, six companies at Fredericton and one company at St. Andrews. A militia bounty was paid out of

provincial funds, but the men's pay and other expenses were charged against the military chest. The two companies at Saint John were stood down during February 1813.¹⁷ The six companies at Fredericton were dismissed in April and the single company at St. Andrews in early July, 1813.¹⁸ The Americans had made no hostile moves, except for the activity of privateers in the Bay of Fundy, and a new corps of New Brunswick Fencibles was being recruited for garrison duty.¹⁹ The Legislature had passed a new Militia Act on 3 March 1813, but for one year only and chiefly because a committee had reported back to the Assembly that "if the times of drilling the different Battalions of Militia can be effected between the 20th June and the 25th July, it will answer all the purposes intended, and will generally give an opportunity for the agricultural and other interests of the country to be attended to."²⁰ It remains only to note the assistance provided to the 2/5th or King's Regiment of Foot and Commander Edward Collier's naval party which marched overland to Canada during the winter of 1814. According to the Quebec Gazette of 10 March 1814:

The liberality of the people of New Brunswick, in the assistance they have afforded to the 2nd battalion of the King's Regiment, and to the detachment of Seamen, recently arrived at Quebec overland from that Province, deserves public thanks. The inhabitants of the City of St. John, alone, gave three hundred pounds for the hire of sleighs to carry the Seamen and Soldiers from that place to Fredericton; and the House of Assembly of the Province voted an equal sum (£300) to convey them on their route from Fredericton as far as it was possible for sleighs to proceed.

40. The consolidated Militia Act of 1825 specified that physically fit men under the age of 45 years might be required to undergo two days of annual training by companies, but "interfering as little as possible with seed time and harvest."²¹ The Lieutenant-Governor might order a further day of battalion training "for the purpose of inspecting and improving it in martial exercises." No man, however, was, required to travel more than 20 miles from his home to the place of muster. Two half-pay officers held appointments as inspecting field officers of militia. In the event of an emergency, however, militia could be marched beyond the limits of the province. According to Joseph Bouchette's compilation, The British Dominions in North America, published in London in 1832, the New Brunswick militia numbered roughly 12,000 effectives, organized in 23 battalions whose composition varied with the density of the population. Normally there were two companies of 60 rank and file each in a militia district, but remote and sparsely settled areas might have only one company with a strength of anything up to 80 men. Bouchette qualified his remarks with the statement: "The regulations for this force, however, are frequently varied by the provincial legislature."²² The reason was the succession of minor storms and lulls in Anglo-American relations stemming from the failure to settle the Maine-New Brunswick boundary dispute. In 1832, according to a British subaltern who was touring North America at his own expense:

The militia were called out for three days' training, and the battalion which assembled at Fredericton 1000 strong was composed of fine athletic men. Only 200 of them were armed, and about the same number had clothing and accoutrements. There was also an African company, who had decked themselves very gaily, and carried the only drum and fife in the field. They appeared quite proud of their occupation, not being exempted, as in the United States, from the performance of military duty. The province could, in case of emergency, furnish 20,000 men (but, unfortunately, there are neither arms nor clothing for one tenth of that number), and six troops of yeomanry cavalry. The Fredericton troops made an exceedingly neat and clean appearance, being well clothed and partly armed; and in active service, in such a country as New Brunswick, would prove a very essential utility. In case of immediate aggression from their neighbours, the province must for some time be entrusted to their care alone, there being only six weak companies of regular infantry in three distant detachments, with a frontier of 200 miles in extent, and a province of 22,000 square miles in charge, while the Americans have two garrisons close upon the boundary line (at Eastport and Houlton) and an excellent military road nearly completed to Boston.²³

41. New Brunswick remained peaceful during 1837-1838, when there were abortive rebellions in the Canadas and filibustering raids along the Canadian-American border. However, a crisis was building up along the still unsettled Maine-New Brunswick boundary. Possession of 12,000 square miles of Acrostook country was desired by lumbering interests of both Maine and New Brunswick, but retention of the military road and portage route to Canada was considered essential by the British Army. Mounting pressure during 1838 caused the New Brunswick legislature to authorize the mobilization of a corps of 1200 volunteer militia in the event of an emergency,²⁴ while that of Maine appropriated \$800,000 for defence.²⁵ During the first week of February 1839 a civil posse sent into the disputed area by the Governor of Maine was apprehended and jailed in Fredericton. The State of Maine mobilized 10,000 militia and a New Brunswick land agent was taken into custody. Major-General Sir John Harvey, the Lieutenant-Governor of New Brunswick, ordered the detachment of British regulars at Fredericton to move forward to Woodstock. A draft from the York County militia took over garrison duty at Fredericton. The militia of Saint John similarly provided 150 volunteers when this British garrison also moved forward.²⁶ A militia detachment from the New Brunswick Regiment of Artillery was ordered to Woodstock during mid-March.²⁷ By this time four companies of the 11th Foot, which had travelled by sleigh to Canada only a short time before were back in the Madawaska country.²⁸ Newspapers on both sides adopted a very bellicose attitude. It was very disconcerting therefore for the Maine militia to discover that the inhabitants of the disputed region

were interested only in lumbering as usual. The only "incident" was a brawl in a Houlton tavern, where the protagonists had been drinking amicably together until someone proposed a toast of "Success to Maine."²⁹

42. No one in Washington wanted war with Britain, so Major-General Winfield Scott was sent to arrange a modus vivendi with Sir John Harvey. This was quickly negotiated. It called for withdrawal of all troops from the disputed area. On 27 March orders were issued for the New Brunswick militia to return home.³⁰ Two days later the four companies of the 11th Foot left Lake Temiscouata for Quebec. A satisfactory boundary settlement was reached in the Webster-Ashburton Treaty signed in Washington on 9 August 1842.

43. Interest in the militia quickly waned and when a crisis developed in 1845 over the unsettled Oregon boundary in the far west, Lieutenant-Governor Sir William Colebrooke reported that the militia was in a very inefficient state.³¹ Only the scattered sub-units of artillery, two battalions of infantry at Saint John, one battalion at Fredericton, a few companies of riflemen and a few troops of yeomanry were armed. Except in the case of the Saint John militia and the rifle companies of York and Charlotte counties, when firearms were issued only on actual training days, the weapons had mostly become unserviceable. Colebrooke encouraged the formation of yeomanry and riflemen to act as bushrangers and protect the overland transportation route to Canada. The large number of absentees from militia musters (5273 out of 27,532 enrolled in 1844) were mainly officers and men employed in logging camps. Only the New Brunswick Regiment of Artillery, commanded by a half-pay officer of the Royal Artillery, was reasonably proficient. Colebrooke's despatch of 27 February 1846 suggested that he could call out 25,000 militia under the age of 45 and make them efficient enough to do garrison duty, if arms were made available.³² The Secretary of State for War and the Colonies replied on 18 March that the 14,000 obsolescent flintlock muskets held by the Ordnance Department at Saint John might be issued, if there was an immediate emergency; subsequently he agreed to the shipment of arms, accoutrements, saddles and bridles for nine troops of cavalry whose members had purchased their own uniforms.³³ No action was taken in New Brunswick, however, because of the widespread belief that there would be no war. The Members of the Executive Council and of the Legislature assured Colebrooke that special legislation would be approved if necessary, but they wanted to wait and see.³⁴ Peaceful settlement of the Oregon question soon demonstrated that they had been wise not to be stampeded into hasty action and expenditures (see para 25).

44. It soon became the practice for the Lieutenant-Governor to approve requests by the Legislative Assembly that the annual two days' company drill be dispensed with. When the Assembly further requested in 1850 that the day of general inspection might also be omitted, a new Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Edmund Head, raised vehement objections against what would be the practical abolition

of the militia:

The drill now enforced by the General Inspection is, it may be said, useless. It is vexatious, in some respects, without being effective either for discipline or instruction.

... any system which leaves it a matter of choice to the Assembly whether they will, or will not pay for the maintenance and discipline of a tolerably effective Militia, will necessarily end in their being no such force in existence. In time of Peace the immediate object of saving overbalances all other considerations and when the necessity for such a force arose, it could not be created in a moment.

As it is now, it is reduced to the merest elements....³⁵

On 24 February 1851 Head reported that the Assembly and general public were not interested in having an efficient militia: "no Militia organized against the wishes of people themselves can be of value - and that in practice no law of the kind could be enforced against public opinion."³⁶ In consequence he did not raise serious objections to the militia bill passed by the legislature in 1854, and sent it for approval to London. By suspending most of the clauses of earlier acts, it made the militia dormant. Only in the event of an emergency could the Lieutenant-Governor revive it.³⁷

45. The scheduled visit of the Prince of Wales to North America in 1860 was the impetus needed to create volunteer militia units in New Brunswick. Formation began during the late summer of 1859, with each volunteer unit being attached to a sedentary militia regiment. The new legislation authorizing volunteers did not, however, relate to the sedentary militia which continued dormant.³⁸ In the space of a few months the volunteer movement grew to one troop of cavalry, 11 companies of artillery and 44 companies of infantry. Yet enthusiasm quickly waned following the Prince's visit in August 1860. Before the end of the year two companies of artillery and four companies of infantry ceased their existence; the strength of the remainder noticeably declined. Sufficient Enfield rifled muskets were made available to the continuing 1850 volunteers, but only about 1400 men were trained to use them. These men belonged to seven artillery and 30 rifle companies. For his part, the commanding officer of the 63rd Regiment of Foot stationed in the province had made as many instructors available as possible.³⁹

46. The outbreak of the American Civil War on 12 April 1861 led to another tense situation in Anglo-American relations, with recriminations on both sides: Northern recruiting agents were active in New Brunswick, while Southern sympathisers in Britain were urging that

the Confederacy be given de jure recognition. Major-General C. Hastings Doyle was depressed by his inspection trip to New Brunswick shortly after assuming command of the British troops in the maritime provinces. There were 25 artillerymen and 128 infantrymen at Fredericton, but no other British regulars in New Brunswick. According to the very forthright letter he addressed to the Secretary of State for War on 28 October 1861:

With so few troops at my disposal, I must naturally in case of sudden invasion, look to the Militia of these Provinces for assistance, but we should do so in vain, for altho' it would be numerous, & altho' nominally officered, they are generally speaking too old for service (in some instances from 60 to 90 years of age), entirely unacquainted with their duty, totally ignorant of Drill, and without Adjutants or Staff, so that a considerable period must elapse, with the small means of instruction available, before this mass of men could be formed into working order or properly disciplined, nor can this state of affairs be remedied, as the local legislatures of the provinces have repeatedly refused to provide money for the purpose of Defence generally40

Lieutenant-Governor A.H. Gordon of New Brunswick subsequently accused his Executive Council of using the militia as a political football. The Executive Council's argument, that it should control the militia because it voted all moneys, would result in all militia appointments being filled by politicians of the right persuasion and funds being diverted to patronage. The government had paid the rent for drill halls in 1861, only for those commanding officers who supported the government.⁴¹

47. During the cold, winter days of January, February and March 1862 the people of New Brunswick assisted in the overland movement of 6823 British regulars to Canada. Public buildings and schools at Saint John were used as temporary barracks; local volunteers did sentry duty and helped the regulars with their baggage; local labour constructed and staffed overnight halting places; sleighs were hired from local contractors; volunteer police patrolled the route to discourage any dissatisfied British regulars from attempting to desert to the United States.⁴² Since the Trent Affair had been resolved before the troops began to move across New Brunswick, there was no need to organize a force of provincial cavalry to patrol the frontier with Maine. Annoyed by the arrival of both a British cavalry officer, Major F. Elliott, to organize such a force, and the cavalry equipment for 500 men from Halifax, the Lieutenant-Governor reported to London on 15 February that none of the inhabitants would ride horseback in the middle of winter and that horses were useless in deep snow.⁴³ On the other hand, the eight drill sergeants sent from Great Britain to train volunteer infantry units were busily employed.

48. The Militia Act of 1862 provided that men between the ages of 18 to 45 should be enrolled as an Active Militia and be mustered annually; they were grouped separately as bachelors, widowers, and married men. All men aged 45-60 were considered to belong to a sedentary militia. About half of the 1553 volunteers lived in Saint John. The rural population was too widely dispersed to permit volunteer corps to be effective or even feasible, and the Adjutant General of Militia was convinced that the small provincial grant might best be devoted to increasing the number of urban corps. Uniforms, as well as arms and ammunition, were now provided at public expense.⁴⁴ The Adjutant General reported continued improvement during 1863, particularly in the case of the six batteries of the New Brunswick Regiment of Artillery.⁴⁵ The efficiency of the seven companies of infantry at Saint John had been greatly increased by combining them into a battalion. Drills could be held only in the evenings because most of the volunteers were mechanics, hence the following comment in the annual militia report:

...the Volunteers in Saint John would be more efficient, if more young men of a different class would foster the movement by their personal exertions in becoming active members of the Companies. The large body of clerks and those engaged in stores who have more leisure and and larger means than mechanics, are far from following the good example set them by the same class of the English population. In English towns it is this class that forms the bulk of the Volunteers, and there is no reason why it should not be so in the towns of New Brunswick, with the same result of improved health, strength and loyalty.⁴⁶

In 1864 the Adjutant General of Militia complained that "Volunteers are too apt to neglect drill and commence their musketry practice at once; the latter being much more interesting but not more useful than the former."⁴⁷

49. A new Militia Act in 1865 decreed that the annual grant to individual corps should be based on the number of volunteers who had attended not less than 15 drills during the preceding six months. The 1791 volunteers were now organized as four troops of cavalry, seven batteries of foot artillery, one company of engineers drilled as infantry, and 21 companies of infantry (including the six combined as the St. John Volunteer Battalion). However, only five of the eight British drill sergeants remained, so some units fared better than others. The officers of 15 of the battalions of the Active Militia, but not the men, drilled regularly. Some 634 of the 947 men who attended the Camp of Instruction held at Fredericton from 5 to 28 July 1865 were untrained men of the active militia; the camp staff and instructors, however, belonged to either the British Army or volunteer militia.⁴⁸ During 1866 the number of volunteers increased to 2099 officers and men, even though only 1473 could be considered to be effectives. There were now a regiment of cavalry, consisting of seven troops, and 10 batteries of artillery, but still only one company of engineers and 21 companies of infantry.⁴⁹

50. This was the year of Fenian alarms, when about 1000 volunteers of the New Brunswick Regiment of Artillery, the Saint John Volunteer Battalion and the York and Charlotte county militias were embodied for better than three months' frontier service.⁵⁰ A Fenian concentration at Calais and Freeport was broken up by the American federal authorities during the third week in April 1866, but only after small parties of Fenians had made two hit-and-run raids against Indian Island, which was close to their immediate objective of Campobello, and had sunk a coastal schooner. Small vessels of the Royal Navy continued to patrol Passamaquoddy Bay and both British regulars and New Brunswick volunteers remained deployed along the border, as far north as Woodstock, for several weeks.⁵¹ The only untoward incident was an alarm at St. Andrews when H.M.S. Cordelia held a midnight gun drill and firing practice. As the British drill sergeant attached to the Saint John Volunteer Battalion later recalled:

I had kept my bed in the guard room, so as to be on hand in case of a turn-out during the night. On the night in question, about 12 midnight, on the first gun being fired, I took the bugle, which I always kept close to me, and immediately sounded the "assemble." Before five minutes every man in the barracks was ready and fit for action. We marched off to our headquarters' post, where Colonel Anderson with the staff of the battalion was already assembled. Many reports were now raised, while the man-of-war was firing off her guns, and it was difficult to keep the men from loading their rifles after Colonel Anderson gave the order to loose the packages of ammunition. While the battalion was forming ready for attack, the artillery under Captain Osborn was not idle, for they had already attacked and fired at an imaginary enemy; but luckily no harm was done. After about one hour's waiting, Colonel Anderson ordered the force to return to their quarters, when everything was again quiet; except such women and children as kept up their fears until well into the following day.⁵²

51. Although New Brunswick became an integral part of the Dominion of Canada on 1 July 1867, the existing militia organization continued until the legislation finally passed by the Canadian Parliament on 22 May 1868 took effect. There was little of interest in the provincial Adjutant General's militia report for 1867; the volunteers numbered 2079 all ranks.⁵³

Prince Edward Island

52. French surrender of the fortress of Louisbourg on 26 July 1758 to the British forces commanded by Admiral the Hon. Edward Boscawen and Major-General Jeffrey Amherst, also provided for the capitulation of Isle Saint-Jean. Most of its Acadian inhabitants were subsequently deported; a few New Englanders arrived.¹ After St. John's Island became a separate province from Nova Scotia in 1769, its 270 inhabitants were joined by about 1,000 English and Scottish

settlers. Since the island had been divided into lots and granted to proprietors for development, these settlers were lease-hold tenants to absentee landlords, a fact which was to dominate the history of the island for the period covered in this report.²

53. During the summer and autumn of 1775 a number of disillusioned settlers enlisted in the Royal Highland Emigrants and left for service against the revolting American Colonies.³ The remaining inhabitants of the island had never even been assembled as a militia, so Charlottetown was defenceless when two American privateers appeared on 17 November. After plundering the principal houses they carried off the acting Governor, Philips Callbeck, and another member of the Executive Council.⁴ General George Washington, however, deplored this unauthorized action, which could only damage the American cause morally, and ordered the release of the captives as soon as they were brought to his headquarters in Cambridge, Massachusetts.⁵

54. The defenceless state of St. John's Island, and reported treasonable utterances by some of its Acadian inhabitants, subsequently resulted in the returned acting Governor Callbeck bombarding Major-General Sir William Howe at Halifax with appeals for arms and military stores for the 100 men he hoped to recruit for local defence.⁶ Howe replied on 4 June, 1776, however, that Vice-Admiral Lord Shuldham was sending a sloop to protect Charlottetown and instructing a frigate from Quebec to keep the area under surveillance. "As this is judged the most advisable Expedient at present," this letter continued, "and the Cannon at Charlotte Town, without an Established post or some force, only affording a Temptation to the Rebels to disturb the peace of the Island, the Admiral at my request, has given directions for bringing them away, and in consequence of this Determination, the Company you intended to raise becomes an unnecessary measure."⁷

55. Continued activities by American privateers and the French declaration of war in 1778 resulted in second thoughts. Another Commander-in-Chief of the British Army in North America, Lieutenant-General Sir Henry Clinton, transferred Major Timothy Hierlihy's five companies of provincials from Cape Breton to Charlottetown, where they arrived on 16 July 1778.⁸ By this time Callbeck had gone ahead and raised a local company consisting of himself as captain, three other officers and 44 men; but an attempt to increase its strength by recruiting in Newfoundland met with indifferent success, since most of the 70 contracted men changed their minds and disappeared before a ship was available to transport them to Charlottetown.⁹ A small battery was again erected at Charlottetown. In mid-August of 1778 the crews of another two American privateers landed at St. Peter's and were able to make off with two schooners before either the brigantine H.M.S. Cabot or a detachment of provincial troops could get there.¹⁰ During June, 1779 a second small battery of guns was added to the defences of Charlottetown.¹¹

56. On 28 June 1780 Governor Walter Patterson finally returned to his post, after five years' absence in England. The short-lived enthusiasm engendered by his return resulted in a militia bill being finally approved by the Legislative Assembly. According to this Militia Act, "all male Persons, Planters and Inhabitants, and their Servants, between the ages of Sixteen and Sixty, residing in, and belonging to this Island" were to be

enrolled in companies.¹² Each man was obligated to provide himself with a firearm and attend a regimental muster twice a year. Governor Patterson wrote to London on 30 July, however, that he would do nothing to organize a militia until a supply of muskets should be received.¹³ In a subsequent letter to the military commander at Halifax, Patterson argued that, if the British Government would pay for the construction of a network of roads, and supply sufficient arms and ammunition, it should be possible to rely completely on the militia for defence of the island. Furthermore, since the best way to ensure being left alone was to appear unimportant, he recommended that the existing garrison at Charlottetown should be reduced.¹⁴

57. The request for arms and ammunition was granted. These were forwarded from Halifax during the early summer of 1781, along with orders to withdraw Major Hierlihy's five companies as soon as it should prove possible to increase Captain Callbeck's company to 100 men.¹⁵ Not only was such an augmentation impossible, but many of its continuing 32 rank and file were too old or infirm for any active service.¹⁶ Still the possibility of danger was steadily becoming less. A strength return of 23 January 1783 showed the Charlottetown garrison as being only eight officers and 110 other ranks of the provincial corps of King's Rangers.¹⁷

58. The post-war garrison of Charlottetown was two companies of British regulars, detached from one of the infantry regiments of the line stationed at Halifax.¹⁸ Since there was no conceivable danger so long as units of the Royal Navy were based on Halifax, and the youthful United States possessed no naval force whatsoever, the Legislature of St. John's Island merely renewed its existing Militia Act whenever it expired. Loyalist newcomers and other settlers who decided to remain on the island, as tenant farmers when freehold land was available to them elsewhere, were enrolled as militiamen but given no training.

59. Following the outbreak of war with Revolutionary France in 1793 the two companies garrisoning Charlottetown were withdrawn (see para 9). Naturally Lieutenant-Governor Edmund Fanning was perturbed.¹⁹ Henry Dundas, the Secretary of State responsible for both the war and most North American affairs, ignored Fanning's suggestion of 20 April that the British regulars might be replaced by a garrison of locally raised provincial troops or fencibles, which should function as a mobile reserve rather than attempt to man expensive fortifications.²⁰ On 10 August Dundas wrote that arms and ammunition were being dispatched for the militia, who should be capable of repelling any predatory raid.²¹ There really was little to worry about, because Brigadier-General James Ogilvie's Halifax garrison had effected a peaceful occupation of the French colony of Saint-Pierre-et-Miquelon in June, to prevent its becoming a French base for privateering, and the French navy was temporarily disorganized because most of its best officers had been purged by the Revolution.

60. In a letter dated 1 December 1793, however, Fanning expressed the hope that companies of the provincial regiments newly raised in New Brunswick or Nova Scotia might be ordered to St. John's Island in the spring, since the militia could not be expected to perform military service during the planting season.²² Instead Dundas authorized Fanning, in a letter dated 5 February 1794, to raise a two-company provincial corps not exceeding 200 men from among the inhabitants, with the usual proportion of officers and sergeants. Although appointed commandant, Fanning was to receive neither pay nor emoluments. Company officers were to be selected from among those on the British Army's half-pay list. Each officer was expected to recruit a specified quota of men, even though this increased the possibility of old men and mere boys being enlisted. All the other ranks were to receive the same pay and scale of clothing as regulars, but their area of service was restricted to St. John's Island.²³ In addition to the authorized levy money of two guineas, Fanning's recruiting notice of 12 May offered 100 acres of land to all who enlisted before 1 November 1794.²⁴ Sufficient land had been re-possessed from proprietors to make such freehold grants possible and this was a real inducement for tenant farmers. Yet Fanning's corps never seems to have achieved more than half of its authorized strength at any one time. Moreover, many of the men continued working on their own land, or that of their officers, leaving the actual garrison duties to the 30 or more men recruited in Newfoundland.²⁵ The pay of these last seems to have been kept permanently in arrears, possibly as a deterrent against desertion.

61. Fanning's letter of 20 April 1793 had advised Mr. Dundas that the militia was organized on paper into three battalions, but that there were practically no arms or accoutrements available. Although there had always been a "general opposition" to a militia, Fanning considered that the inhabitants were loyal and would rally to defend the island against any invader.²⁶ During the autumn of 1793, 200 stand of arms and a quantity of small arms ammunition arrived from Halifax, with the promise that some artillery would follow. When no danger materialized, the inhabitants soon lost any interest they might have momentarily taken in the militia.²⁷ One militia muster, which the Lieutenant-Governor attended in Prince County in September 1797, was reported to the British Government by an antagonistic proprietor as follows:

The people being warned attended the Muster and their appearance was a Burlesque upon anything that was ever called a Militia; out of about 300 men not more than 5 or Six had Muskets, and they were so rusty that they were unfit for Service and some of the rest had sticks.

When the Muster Roll was called and some names were inserted that was not in it before the Men were dismissed and told that they might go to their own houses.²⁸

62. The general peace resulting from the Treaty signed at Amiens on 27 March 1802 was sufficient to effect a reduction in British garrisons in North America and the disbandment of the several provincial corps.²⁹ Thus Prince Edward Island was defenceless when war between Britain and France broke out anew on 16 May 1803, except for a "small and dispers'd Body of unarm'd and undisciplin'd Militia".³⁰ Lieutenant-General Henry Bowyer could spare from Halifax only a subaltern, sergeant, two corporals, one bugler and 18 privates of the 60th (or Royal American) Regiment of Foot for duty on Prince Edward Island. Such a detachment, Bowyer admitted, was sufficient only to prevent its seat of government being "insulted" by privateers or other raiders.³¹ The Duke of York, Commander-in-Chief of the British Army, authorized the formation of fencible regiments for each of Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Canada, but he wisely refrained from making any attempt to raise another unit in the thinly populated Prince Edward Island. During the summer of 1804, however, a company of the Nova Scotia Fencibles took over garrison duties at Charlottetown. A year later, it was replaced by a company of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment of Fencible Infantry, when that unit traded stations with the Nova Scotia Fencibles.³² In June 1808, No. 4 Company of the New Brunswick Fencibles became the garrison of Prince Edward Island. There was a change in title in 1810, when the New Brunswick Fencibles was taken on the regular British establishment as the 104th Regiment of Foot. According to the appreciation of the military situation in North America made by Lieutenant-General Sir George Prevost for the Secretary of State for War and the Colonies on 18 May 1812:

The Islands of Cape Breton & Prince Edward Island, dependencies of the British North American Provinces, are garrisoned by small Detachments of Troops stationed at the principal Town in each but their Works of defence are so insignificant as to be unworthy of observation; nor does their militia amount to any considerable number deserving to be noticed.³³

63. Following the outbreak of war with the United States on 18 June 1812 Lieutenant-Governor J.F.A. DesBarres suggested raising a fencible corps of 500 men. In view of what had happened earlier, however, the Duke of York rejected this proposal. He thought that the militia should be able to contribute sufficiently to the defence of the island and that any inhabitants interested in military service elsewhere might enlist in existing corps.³⁴ During the previous winter the island had been visited by recruiting parties for the Glengarry Light Infantry Fencibles being organized in the Canadas; similar parties returned during the following winter to seek reinforcements.

64. Since Prince Edward Island enjoyed no sizable trade with the United States and was remote, the province continued a quiet backwater, with its tenant farmers mainly interested in their perennial dispute with the landlords and their agents.³⁵ When a new Lieutenant-Governor, Charles D. Smith, reached Charlottetown on 24 July 1813, he found most of the militia still in a "most undisciplined State" and without an Inspecting Field

Officer from the British Army to supervise training.³⁶ Smith had managed to obtain some arms when he had stopped off at Halifax en route, but no further troops. The stock answer to all such requests was that "Sir John Sherbrooke will always afford such assistance as may be necessary for defence of P.E. Island but the exigencies of the service in N. America require that the Troops should not be placed in situations where there is but little prospect of attack."³⁷

65 Drastic reductions to the strength of the British Army following the return of peace, resulted in the Charlottetown garrison being reduced to merely a subaltern's command in 1818. When it was proposed to remove even this token force early in 1819, Lieutenant-Governor Smith protested vehemently. His letter of 22 February argued that the island's regular garrison never had been adequate for what it was expected to do: that is, guard government stores, enforce the Navigation Acts and other British legislation, and provide aid to the civil power if called on.³⁸ The real reason for Smith's protest, which would be re-echoed by successive lieutenant-governors whenever a British Government suggested the garrison's withdrawal, was a real fear that the widespread agitation for freehold tenure of land might cause serious disorders. Thus the tiny garrison of British regulars continued as potential aid to the civil power, generally as an under-strength company of one of the infantry regiments stationed in Halifax.

66. The one day of annual training prescribed for the militia was considered to be all that was necessary. Actually the authorities must have been relieved that there were no muskets available for issue to the Militia. "That force in this Island," Lieutenant-Governor Sir Henry Vere Huntley would later report, "although efficient in numbers, I regret to say has never been so in any other respect, the resources of the Colony being unequal to meet the expenses of clothing, arming, or even of properly training the men; the Militia has in consequence received little more attention than that comprized in an annual Muster, and as careful a selection of persons to fill the situations of Officers as the state of the Community has permitted."³⁹

67. Agitation over the land question in 1843 caused Lieutenant-Governor Huntley to request a second company of infantry and artillerymen from Major-General Sir Jeremiah Dickson, who was commanding at Halifax. According to this letter of 27 March, large bodies of men were meeting in King's County to administer illegal oaths, and to threaten the lives of neighbours who refused either to collaborate or to leave. One man's home had already been burned.⁴⁰ A further and more anxious appeal for help by Lieutenant-Governor Huntley, dated 17 April, caused Major-General Dickson to order a lieutenant, one sergeant and 20 rank and file to Charlottetown.⁴¹ On 29 May Huntley replied that this reinforcement should "demonstrate the determination and disposition" of the British Government to "suppress disaffection and disorder here."⁴²

68. Although militarily useless, and left at 80 rank and file following the desertion of 20 men in the single year 1849, a regular garrison continued at Charlottetown.⁴³ The British Government did, however, threaten to withdraw the garrison unless the number of deserters was greatly curtailed.⁴⁴ In Prince Edward Island most farmers were too poor to want to hide away a deserter as a hired man and he was likely to be turned in to the authorities for the five pounds reward **money** unless lucky enough to be married to a local girl whose friend would help to smuggle them both away in a visiting American fishing boat. After advising the Secretary of State for War and the Colonies in this vein, Lieutenant-Governor Sir Ambrose Bannerman wrote on 9 April 1852 that it would be most inexpedient to withdraw the regular troops at this time. The Militia Act passed by his Legislature in 1851 had eliminated even the one day of annual muster, except in time of war, civil commotion or other emergency. Furthermore "on any emergency, in all probability of an Agrarian nature, they are the last force I should dream of employing on such occasions. The number which are liable to be enrolled amounts to above 8000 and two hundred old serviceable flint muskets, are all the arms at my disposal in this Colony!"⁴⁵

69. Yet Bannerman had been unwise enough to turn down a request from about 50 citizens who wanted to form a company of volunteers, an action which caused consternation at the War Office.⁴⁶ So seldom were inhabitants of any colony interested in their own defence that it was felt any offer of service should be accepted. Therefore the Secretary of State for War and the Colonies ordered Bannerman to change his mind, while the Board of Ordnance supplied 100 rifles "on loan" to Prince Edward Island for use by such volunteers as should agree to serve for two years and drill up to 20 days annually. The British Government was very anxious to get the few British regulars withdrawn, but it would first be glad to give a volunteer movement a chance to develop.⁴⁷

70. The arguments of the Lieutenant-Governor and the Legislature against the withdrawal of the British garrison could now be reduced to the single one of reluctance to hire an adequate police force. Early in 1854 the Assembly passed a bill to employ 14 policemen, but this measure was rejected by the Legislative Council.⁴⁸ Since the British Army needed all the troops it could muster for the Crimean War, the company of the 76th Regiment of Foot left Charlotte-town without replacement late in 1854.

71. By degrees the enthusiasm of the volunteers, who had initially provided their own uniforms, declined because there was no visible need for their existence. On 25 July 1859 Lieutenant-Governor George Dundas wrote to the Duke of Newcastle, now Colonial Secretary, that the "Militia of the Colony exists only in name. Two Brass Field Guns have been permitted to remain at Charlotte-Town, and in connection with them there is a handful of irregular volunteers, which has, however, dwindled down into a number, only just sufficient to serve these two guns, on the occasion of firing a Salute."⁴⁹

72. By this time the British Government was becoming increasingly perturbed by the belligerent attitude of the Emperor Napoleon III of France and Sir William Fenwick Williams, the British Army's Lieutenant-General Commanding

in North America, visited Prince Edward Island to make a plan for its defence. Williams recommended the installation of large guns for the defence of Charlottetown against enemy warships, the provision of a few gunners to man them and of a company of older soldiers to instruct local volunteers. Lieutenant-Governor Dundas was particularly interested in the last suggestion and requested permission from the Colonial Secretary to form volunteer rifle companies or clubs in emulation of the popular movement that was then sweeping Great Britain.⁵⁰ Approval was quickly given and on 25 October 1859 the first shipment of rifles arrived at Charlottetown from British Army stocks held at Quebec City.⁵¹ A total of 1,000 rifles would be provided as a gift to the Provincial Government.⁵²

73. By early April, 1860 there were ten "efficient companies of Volunteer Rifles" in Prince Edward Island.⁵³ On 14 May the Lieutenant-Governor wrote the Colonial Secretary that upwards of 1,000 young men had expressed a desire to serve in volunteer companies. In order to capitalize on this enthusiasm, which was directly related to the pending visit of the Prince of Wales to each of the separate provinces of British North America, the Lieutenant-Governor requested the services of proper drill instructors and an officer to serve as commandant. Military veterans among the island's inhabitants were mostly too old to be capable instructors and more help was needed than the recently received ten copies of "Model Rules for the Organization of Volunteer Corps" in Great Britain. His letter added that three companies might be trained as artillery, if guns could be provided for the defence of Charlottetown, Georgetown and Summerside.⁵⁴ The War Office in London refused to provide guns for a province where there were no regular troops, but the Commander-in-Chief of the British Army directed that an officer and three or four drill sergeants right be sent from Halifax if the Provincial Government would provide their pay and allowances.⁵⁵ Captain W.S. Marson of the 63rd Regiment and four non-commissioned officers who had been on similar duty in New Brunswick were selected.⁵⁶ The British Government also provided 50 sets light cavalry accoutrements for the corps of militia cavalry scheduled to escort the Prince of Wales during his visit to Prince Edward Island.⁵⁷

74. Following the outbreak of the American Civil War in April, 1861, the Legislative Assembly passed a resolution expressing "deep sorrow, and regret that actual hostilities have commenced between the Northern and Southern Sections of the United States of America."⁵⁸ The Trent Affair did not occasion nearly as much excitement as it did in nearby New Brunswick, which had the State of Maine on its western border, but the Lieutenant-Governor was able to report to the Colonial Secretary on 24 April 1862 that 1643 officers and men were enrolled as volunteers, and that more could be recruited if weapons were immediately made available.⁵⁹ His Legislature had voted £ 266:13:4 for maintenance of the local volunteer force during 1862, but this was not enough and members of most rural corps were too poor to pay for their own uniforms and equipment. Since Prince Edward Island was the only self-governing colony without a British garrison, Dundas thought that the British Government should help out financially by paying for

accoutrements and ammunition. Otherwise he was afraid that the volunteer force would "degenerate into a few isolated Corps, for want of the little assistance, which is indispensable to its welfare."⁶⁰ The Secretary of State for War accepted this argument and advised the Colonial Secretary as follows:

The insignificance of P.E. Isl. (wh. is hardly fit to be treated as a separate community) & the fact that she costs the Imp. Govt. nothing for Troops, are sufficient reasons to my mind, for recommending the War Office to comply with this application.⁶¹

75. The Lieutenant-Governor was able to go ahead with his plans for expansion and the volunteers were organized into a brigade of three regiments. Command of this Volunteer Brigade was given to Colonel John Hamilton Gray, a native son who had served as a cavalry officer in the British Army from 1831 to 1852 and was now a member of the Legislative Assembly. In the following year Colonel Gray also became Prime Minister of Prince Edward Island. During the summer of 1864 he was busy with preparations for the Charlottetown Conference, of which he was to serve as chairman. Farmers were finding it a short summer for harvesting and fishermen were equally busy so only 677 volunteers bothered to devote a whole day to the annual inspection required of each unit. The Lieutenant-Governor's report to the Colonial Secretary was phrased in an apologetic tone, and he emphasized that the whole question of defence would have to be reviewed by the Provincial Legislature when the proposals for a Confederation of British North America came up for discussion.⁶² Defence was not an important local issue, as it was in Canada however, and Confederation was rejected.

76. During three weeks of January-February 1865 a military school was conducted at Charlottetown by a newly appointed Adjutant General of Militia for 33 all ranks of the volunteers. Instruction was given by a sergeant of the 17th Foot despatched from Halifax for the purpose. Volunteer strength for the year was 756 officers and men; 118 of these were "unavoidably absent" from the annual inspection.⁶³ New legislation of 11 May 1866 revived the militia: henceforth volunteers and other men under the age of 45 years would comprise an active militia; older men would be enrolled on paper as a sedentary militia. Military schools were held at Charlottetown, Georgetown and Summerside to train officers of the active militia, copying the example of Nova Scotia (see para 27). British drill sergeants supervised the rudimentary drill given 2461 ranks of active militia; these were organized as two companies of mounted rifles, two artillery companies and 33 infantry companies, but only 1627 men were issued with arms and accoutrements. The Adjutant General, however, was not impressed by the result:

Shortly after assuming the duties of my office, I took the opportunity of inspecting the Companies then formed, and found them totally ignorant of the first rudiments of a soldier's instruction. The old members had mostly dropped off, and though there were in each Company a few men who had been drilled, this number was so small (about 60 amongst the three town Companies numbering upwards of 310 men) that whatever knowledge they possessed was lost in the great majority who had received no instruction whatever.⁶⁴

Training continued, but the Adjutant General considered that only the volunteers could be classed as effectives.⁶⁵ In 1870 there was only a annual muster of the 12,543 active militia. The nine continuing companies of volunteers had a strength of only 442 all ranks and their officers were finding it difficult to enforce discipline.⁶⁶ Interest in the militia continued to decline, helped by the fact that negotiations had been resumed towards having Prince Edward Island enter the Canadian Confederation.

77. Prince Edward Island became Canada's seventh province on 1 July 1873, but Military District No. 12 was not authorized until 19 June 1874. Colonel John Hamilton Gray, who received the appointment of Deputy Adjutant General, was not instructed to form active militia units until he received a letter from Ottawa dated 23 April 1875. "I was met with much hesitation on the part of the population coming forward to volunteer," Gray subsequently reported, "the employers in the towns intimating to the young men in their service that they would be discharged if absent from their engagements for twelve days in camp, while in the rural districts the inhabitants being chiefly small landholders, much distaste was expressed at the prospect of having to leave their farms and live stock for so many days without their oversight."⁶⁷ Only special authorization to perform all of the training at company headquarters enabled him to enroll 51 officers and 640 other ranks.⁶⁸

Conclusion

78. By this time the continuing volunteer militia in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick were absorbed into the Canadian militia organization created by 31 Vict., cap. XI of 22 May 1868 and this story is concluded.

79. This Report was written by Dr. J. Mackay Hitsman.



(C.P. Stacey)
Director of History

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