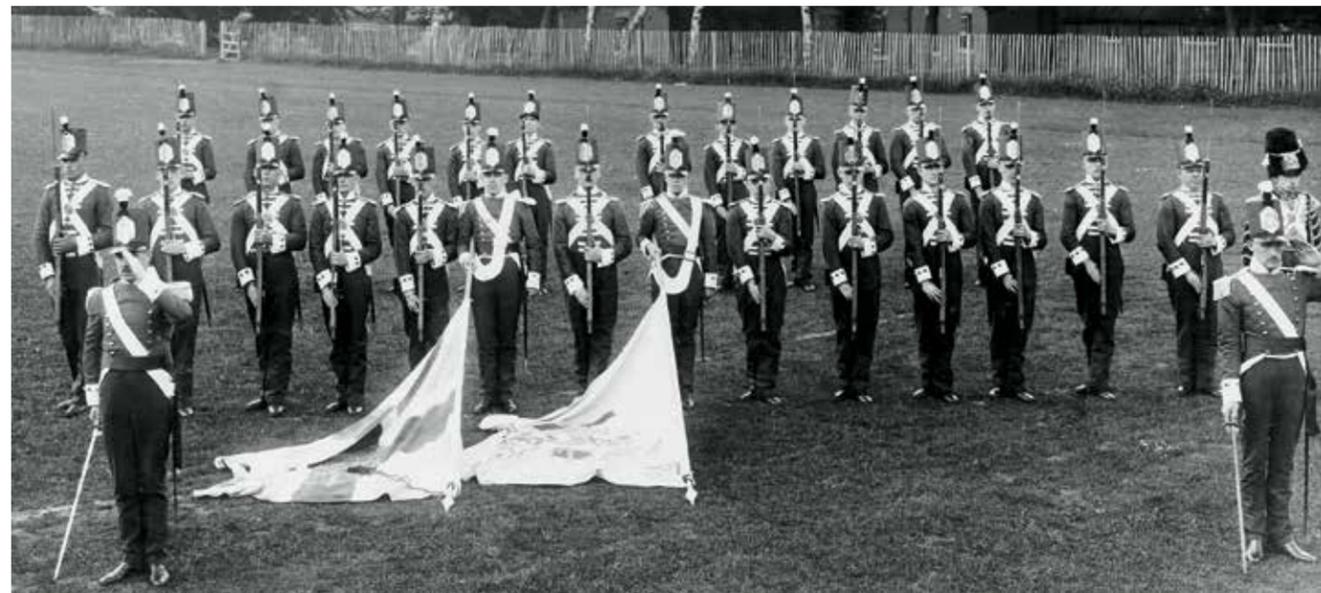


in the early 19th century. On 13 June the detachment marched down Whitehall in London to lay a wreath at the cenotaph before attending a service of thanksgiving at Westminster Abbey. Two years later the Royals and Toronto Regiment participated in the Toronto Garrison Tournament held at the CNE.

Both units also kept up their respective anniversary dinners – Batoche for the Royals and Mount Sorrel for the Toronto Regiment – and held popular Christmas parties for the regimental children. On the occasion of the 50th wedding anniversary of Colonel and Mrs. Albert Gooderham on 25 October 1933, the Royal Grenadiers, at almost full strength, marched from the University Armouries to Rosedale, where they formed under



**A step back in time.** In 1932 the Toronto Regiment sent a detachment of four officers and 25 other ranks, dressed as the 3rd Regiment of York militia of the War of 1812, to Britain to take part in the Aldershot Military Tattoo. Below, the detachment renders a Royal Salute. Note the officers saluting with their left hands. Before 1914 soldiers saluted with their free hand, left or right. Above left are the Toronto Regiment officers disguised as members of an older army. While visiting London the detachment donned modern uniforms to escort Lieutenant-Colonel Georges Vanier, secretary to the Canadian High Commission, when he laid a wreath at a cenotaph. Vanier would become governor general in 1959. (All, RRC Museum)



torch light on the lawn of “Deancroft,” the Gooderhams’ residence, to salute the couple. The Toronto Regiment played a major part in centennial celebrations held in the city in 1934, and in March of that year hosted Prime Minister R. B. Bennett, Mayor Stewart and W.L. Mackenzie King, Leader of the Opposition, at a regimental dinner.

There were other celebrations that, although smaller and somewhat less fancy, were nevertheless enjoyed just as much. At a time when money was short and entertainment at a premium, the social side of the militia – sports, outings and parties – was important. It did take some ingenuity to make such things happen in the 1930s, as Lieutenant McMahon recalled:



#### THE PLATOON PARTY

Thursday night, after parade, advised by spokesman that personnel consider formal party necessary in interests of wives, lady friends and general well being and esprit-de-corps of Platoon.

Immediate conference of all ranks. Agreement on necessary facilities, amenities and supplies. Comparison with total available funds. Reduction in requirements.

Further estimates and comparisons. Agreement on absolute minimum of arrangements involving financial outlay. Officer advised that he will be expected to provide or arrange for balance of requirements.

Friday – Consultations by telephone and personal visit with establishments believed favourably inclined towards Militia and its problems.

Saturday – In company with Platoon Sergeant, inspected all known premises within required space and price range. Only one found suitable – immediately above Public House.

Friday – Called on cooperative establishments and collected – one large baked ham, one box baloney, one box bread, coffee, ice cream, butter, cream, one large cake.

Saturday – Advised by Platoon that band refused to play for payment previously arranged. That three juveniles, in possession of accordion, guitar and drum, would play for nothing if Platoon Officer would pick up and return.

Picked up juveniles and instruments in far reaches of Scarborough and delivered to hall in west end of City. Party large success owing to strategic location of hall and availability of funds marked for band.

Delivered juveniles and instruments to Scarborough.

Ran out of gas on way home.

Repeat process next year.<sup>20</sup>

And so a rather dreary decade passed – as McMahon truthfully commented, it was a time which stressed “the necessity of improvisation and making the most of the least.”<sup>21</sup>

There were occasional high points. The Toronto Regiment had long sought better quarters and in the early 1930s they moved towards accomplishing that goal. Since the government seemed unwilling to provide them with a new armoury, they decided to build one themselves. They brought in the other regiments of their brigade, formed an “Armoury Company” and

designed a building satisfactory to the Department of National Defence, arranged for the Government to rent it at an agreed sum for twenty years (at which time it would become the property of the Department), obtained a contractor who agreed under bond to build it for a fixed price, borrowed the necessary capital from an insurance company which took the



**Posing with their trophies.** Officers and men of the Toronto Regiment pose with trophies won at various competitions. Note that there are no First War ribbons on the rear ranks, which are composed of younger personnel. (RRC Museum)



**Toronto on parade, 1930s.** Corporal George Graves, a smart looking soldier, wears the dress uniform of the Toronto Regiment. The scarlet tunic has a blue collar and cuffs and white lace. The white Wolsley pattern helmet was the full dress headgear of many Canadian regiments at this time and some still wear it to this day. (RRC Museum)