

**“Scarlet parade,” May 1960.** Six months after Lieutenant-Colonel Frost announced his intention of putting the Royal Regiment of Canada into scarlet, the entire battalion paraded in full dress at Fort York Armoury. For the next few years the first parade in every month was a full dress parade in which the warrant and non-commissioned officers trained the unit in ceremonial drill. Note the criss-cross arches of the lamella roof. This type of construction is rare in Canada and makes the Fort York Armoury a heritage building. It has served its purpose well for eight decades.

(Photograph by Ken Bell, LAC e011157183)

## “With a bit of a swagger perhaps”

THE GOOD YEARS, 1945–1964

*Some talk of Alexander, and some of Hercules  
Of Hector and Lysander, and such great names as these.  
But of all the world's great heroes, there's none that can compare,  
With a tow, row, row, row, row, row, to the Royal Grenadiers.  
But of all the world's great heroes, there's none that can compare,  
With a tow, row, row, row, row, row, to the Royal Grenadiers.<sup>1</sup>*

### The regiment stands up again, 1945–1953

During the Second World War, 730,159 Canadians – approximately 40 per cent of all males of military age – served in the nation's army. As soon as the war ended, however, all three armed forces were drastically reduced, although the end of the conflict did not lead to a lessening of international tension. There had been problems between the Allies during the last years of the war, and in the immediate postwar period the Soviet Union embarked on an aggressive policy of undermining the democratic governments of eastern Europe to the point where, as former Prime Minister Winston Churchill remarked, an “Iron Curtain” descended across the continent. Senior Canadian army officers proposed that the postwar regular force consist of about 55,000 all ranks backed up by a reserve force of no fewer than 177,396, which would be supplied by a limited form of conscription for 18- and 19-year-old males and which would form six infantry divisions and two independent armoured brigades.<sup>2</sup> This was a pipe dream not grounded in political reality. “Conscription” was not a welcome word in Canada, it having caused severe riots in the First World War and considerable tension in the Second World War, and Prime Minister Mackenzie King termed the idea “perfectly outrageous.”<sup>22</sup> The army was informed that it would be permitted a strength of 50,000 in both the regular and reserve forces but these totals were never reached – by 1947 the regular force consisted of 13,985 and the reserve force 19,625 all ranks.

The Royal Regiment of Canada was stood up again as a unit of the reserve force. The major problem facing the first postwar commanding officer, Lieutenant-Colonel Jack Anderson, who

\* In 1945 the militia were retitled the “Reserve Force” but they regained their traditional title in 1954.

