

"HE ALWAYS GETS HIS MAN!"

LIFE AS A "MOUNTIE"



Adventurous and romantic as the job of a "Mountie" seems, it is far removed from being "cushy." This article puts you wise to his many duties and the intense training he is put through to fit him for his hard and hazardous life.

WHAT romantic and thrilling stories have been—and are still—written around that splendid body of men—the Royal North-West Mounted Police; or, as they are now termed, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police! Stories of perils and adventures in the Frozen North; seemingly endless treks over a snowbound wilderness after "wanted"; living up to their grim slogan "Get your man!" keeping law and order over a district so vast that England could be placed into it many times!

But thrilling as these stories undoubtedly are, they not only come from the fertile imagination of authors—they are founded on fact.

Therefore, very few fellows are not interested in the R.C.M.P.; the work of a "Mountie," his training, the knowledge he has to acquire, and many other tasks that fit him for his hard and hazardous job.

So let us follow a recruit from the date of acceptance to the day of his signing on for the required engagement of five years.

Signing On.

A recruit has to be between the ages of twenty-two and forty, and must be sound in health and of good character. He must be able to read and write the English or the French language, and must both ride well and understand the care of horses.

In the first place, the recruit will take the oath of allegiance, together with the oath of office, which runs as follows:

"I, John Jones, solemnly swear that I will

faithfully, diligently, and impartially execute and perform the duties required of me as a member of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Force, and will well and truly obey and perform all lawful orders and instructions which I shall receive as such, without fear, favour, or affection of or toward any person. So help me, God."

Next—if not there already—the recruit will be sent to the headquarters at Regina, to be supplied with a kit and started on the road to acquire a police education.

The kit, which is a free issue to every recruit, is a complete cavalryman's outfit, with, in addition, a supply of warm underclothing, fur cap, fur coat, buckskin "mitts," moccasins, etc. For service in the Yukon and far Northern districts an extra kit is provided.

Routine at Regina.

Riding and drill first mostly occupy the recruit's attention. The question of horsemanship is of the greatest importance, as so much of his time will be spent in the saddle, and very often his life may depend upon it. Among the duties that a recruit will have to perform are the grooming of his mount, and, on certain days, having to act as stable guard. The stables are seen to three times a day. He must learn, also, how to clean all harness, how to saddle and unsaddle a horse, how to shoe it, and how to care for it in the various conditions of his work in and out of barracks.

A day's routine at Regina is as follows:

Reveille, 5.30 a.m.; stables, 6 to 7; break-

fast, 7.15; rides and drills, 8.30 to 11.30 (including lectures on various subjects); mid-day stables, 11.30 to 12.30; dinner, 12.45; rides, drills and lectures, 1.30 to 4; tea, 4.15; evening stables, 4.45 to 5.30. "Lights out" is sounded at 10.15 p.m. Extra duties that are entailed are: Escorts on prisoners who are employed in various ways in the barracks; night guard, from 6.30 to reveille; and night guards over the prisons and stables.

"The efficient training of a recruit requires twelve months," stated the Commissioner of Police in an official order. *"He must be drilled, set up, taught to ride (cavalry fashion), to shoot with rifle and revolver, acquire a knowledge of his duties and powers as a police officer, be instructed in veterinary knowledge, understand how a horse should be taken care of, and become an efficient prairie man—by which is implied a knowledge of cooking and the ability to find his way about and to look after the comfort of himself and his horse."*

This is the ideal. More often than not a recruit has to leave barracks with less than six months' service to his credit; time does not allow of the full twelve months being taken in training.

Target Practice.

The recruit will find a little relief from his class work in target practice on the rifle range. Having learnt the mechanism of his weapon, he is next taught to shoot at given distances—200, 500, 600, and 800 yards. Disappearing targets are used for the purpose. In the mounted squads the constables are taken a mile away from the targets—which only appear for a minute at a time—and started towards them at a gallop. They then have to dismount, judging the distances themselves, fire, remount, and gallop on again, to repeat the same process. The targets appear four times in the mile at unknown ranges.

In revolver practice, the recruit is taught its use on foot, how to shoot mounted, at a walk, full gallop, and sudden halt. These four methods are taken in one lesson, the target being from 25 yards to 35 yards distant.

The picturesque uniform of a "Mountie"

consists of scarlet serge tunic, brown belt and high-laced brown boots, blue breeches with a two-inch yellow stripe down each side, a Stetson hat and brown gauntlets. A sword and a lance are part of the equipment of every policeman, but they are only used at drill or on "musical rides."

When in the Yukon the duties of the police are varied, as a summary of their work shows:



A typical trooper of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police

Patrols, rescue work, care of asylums, prisons, and prisoners; bailiffs for the sheriff, court bailiffs, patrolmen in Dawson and other towns; health officers, mining recorders, mining inspectors, timber agents, royalty collectors; customs house agents, gold dust inspectors, baggage inspectors, magistrates; mail carriers, coroners, and postmasters at the smaller posts on river and trail.

Thus, anyone on the look-out for a "cushy" job would be ill-advised to apply to the R.C.M.P. Life for these stalwart fellows means Work, spelt with a capital "W," and only at the end of twenty years' service can the "Mountie" rest easy on a well-earned pension.