

MOUNTED POLICE GONE TO THE WAR

Considerable Decrease in Force Attributable to This Cause

(Canadian Press Despatch.)

Ottawa, April 2.—A considerable decrease in the strength of the Royal Northwest Mounted Police, owing to enlistments for overseas service, is shown in the annual report tabled in the Commons to-day by Hon. N. W. Rowell, President of the Privy Council.

Commissioner Perry of Regina states that at the end of September last the force consisted of 53 officers, 693 non-commissioned officers and constables and 675 horses. As compared with the same date a year earlier this represents a decrease of four officers, 137 non-commissioned officers and constables and 129 horses. The decrease in the force, Commissioner Perry states, is due to war conditions. No fewer than 284 members of the force took their discharge on the expiration of their term of service or by purchase, and the majority of these enlisted for overseas service. He observes that, owing to the shortage of labor and the high wages paid, it will be difficult to replace these men.

Cavalry Unit Offered.

Reference is made in the report to an offer made by Commissioner Perry to Sir Robert Borden to provide a mounted police regiment for overseas service. Sir Robert, in his reply, stated that he had submitted the proposal to the Imperial authorities, who replied that no additional cavalry units were required at that time. He added that if cavalry was required at a later date it was his intention to send a regiment of mounted police.

Activities of Patrol.

Commenting on the release of the Mounted Police from civil duties because of the expiry of the agreements between the Dominion Government and the Provinces of Saskatchewan and Alberta, the report draws attention to the fact that the military duties assumed included the maintenance of a patrol along 900 miles of international boundary and the supervision of enemy nationalities. In regard to the latter

work, the report states that "many investigations are being made every day of the alleged activities of enemy aliens, and although the results are usually negative, they are beneficial in that they show that they are subject to a close watch."

Testimony in support of the claim that beneficial results follow the introduction of prohibition is given in the report, which states that the conditions in Alberta and Saskatchewan were satisfactory as far as law and order were concerned when the force discontinued police duties. In comparison with previous years there was a material decrease in crimes, especially crimes of violence and in horse and cattle stealing. "Many reasons may be given for these satisfactory conditions," says Commissioner Perry, "but in my opinion the prohibitory liquor law in force in both Provinces is the principal one."