

MILITARY CAMP WILL COME HERE

Vernon Finally Selected as the
Training Ground for B. C.
Soldiers.

SELECTION AN IDEAL ONE

Upwards of Four Thousand
Troops Expected Here in the
Course of a Few Weeks—Col-
onel Ogilvie Here Last Week
to Make Preliminary Arrange-
ments — Military Carpenters
and Plumbers Will Prepare the
Camp.

On Friday last official information was received from Ottawa that Vernon has been selected as the site for the British Columbia military concentration camp. This news was contained in a telegram from the Hon. Martin Burrell, who stated that the Minister of Militia had definitely informed him of this decision. This means that the population of Vernon will virtually be doubled this summer, as upwards of 4,000 men for overseas service will receive their training here. Instead of one central camp for Canada, such as was established at Valcartier when the first contingent was being prepared, the military authorities decided some time ago to form camps in each province, and after full consideration Vernon has been made the point at which this work will be conducted for British Columbia. It is understood that the selection was made on the recommendation of Lieut.-Colonel Taylor of New Westminster, after a thorough inspection of the facilities offered at Kamloops, Merritt and Vernon, and those acquainted with the respective merits of these places have no doubt that the decision reached was an eminently wise one.

An Ideal Camp.

Vernon possesses many advantages of an outstanding nature for a camp of this kind. On either side of Mission Road within the city limits lies the fine site used last summer for the militia camp, which gained such unstinted commendation from all the officers and men who then used it. It lies on a gently sloping plateau, almost flat, and contains over 1200 acres. It is furnished with city water, of the best possible quality, and is served by the civic electric light service.

For manoeuvring purposes the whole country between Vernon and the head of the lake lies open. The physical features of this ground lend themselves admirably to the requirements of such work. There is abundance of open country, gently rolling hills, extensive flats, sections where broken ground with bluffs and ravines are found, lakes and streams at frequent intervals, in fact everything that can be required for the most varied and extended training operations. A fine rifle range, which can easily be extended to any required size, is available close at hand. The Land and Agricultural Company of Canada—locally known as the Belgian Syndicate—has placed at the disposal of the authorities, free of charge, its extensive holdings for manoeuvring purposes. Upwards of 1,500 acres on the old O'Keefe and Greenhow properties are thus made available, and the Indian Reserve lands may also be utilized. The camp will be free of mosquitoes and black flies, those pests which, in some sections of the province, would be a continual source of annoyance and discomfort to the troops. Taking it altogether, it is doubtful if a more favorably located camp for such purposes could be found in the whole of Canada.

Col. Ogilvie Here.

On Thursday Colonel Ogilvie, D. C. O., and Captain Wilson, an engineer officer, came up from Victoria to look over the ground and make an estimate as to the cost of getting it into shape for the troops. They were most favorably impressed with the facilities offered here, and were delighted to find that such splendid opportunities were offered for the establishment of a camp under conditions that made their task a comparatively easy one. They met the City Council on Friday, and discussed the arrangements which the city will make regarding water and light service to the camp. The water will be furnished without stint, additional pumping apparatus being installed at the creek pool for this purpose. This water is absolutely pure, as is shown by several reports from the Government Analyst. The military authorities will bear the expense of trenching and laying such additional pipe as is required. The camp will be lighted free of charge by arc lamps, light for the tents being charged for at a flat rate. All the work connected with getting the camp ready will be done by the military corps of carpenters, plumbers, etc., an advance party of which, consisting of about 100 men, will be here for this purpose. It is expected, before the end of the week.

Troops Coming.

It was not definitely known by Col. Ogilvie exactly how many troops will be here, but he expects that these numbers will be in the neighborhood of four thousand officers and men. Among those who may train here will be the 47th Battalion, under Col. Winsty, now quartered at New Westminster; the 54th Kootenay Battalion, under Col. Davis, and the 11th C. M. R., under Col. Kirkpatrick. These latter are mounted troops, about 500 strong.

It is expected that the work of getting all preparations completed will take about a fortnight. The Col. Ogilvie expressed the opinion that within three weeks all the troops will be here. Col. Ogilvie and Capt. Wilson left on Friday evening for the coast, motoring over to Salmon Arm to catch the train, and are expected to return here today or tomorrow.