

ANNUAL REPORT

ON

THE STATE OF THE OTAGO VOLUNTEERS.

PRESENTED TO BOTH HOUSES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, BY COMMAND OF
HIS EXCELLENCY.

WELLINGTON.

—
1870.

ANNUAL REPORT ON THE STATE OF THE OTAGO VOLUNTEERS.

No. 1.

Major BATHGATE to the Hon. the DEFENCE MINISTER.

SIR,—

Dunedin, 25th July, 1870.

I beg to forward the within report, and to state that the spirit which has animated the force during the last season has been excellent, and that, generally, both officers and men have shown much zeal and attention to their duties. Great credit is due to Captain and Adjutant Atkinson for his care and attention to his multifarious duties, and to his efforts the state of efficiency in which the force at present is must in a great degree be attributed.

I beg to draw special attention to the necessity for assistance to the Dunedin Battalion in getting a head-quarters drill shed, armoury, and office erected, and also to the expediency of providing arms for the Cadet Corps.

I have, &c.,

JOHN BATHGATE, Major,
Commanding Otago District.

The Hon. the Defence Minister, Wellington.

Enclosure in No. 1.

Captain and Adjutant ATKINSON to Major BATHGATE.

Militia and Volunteer Office,

Dunedin, 23rd July, 1870.

SIR,—

I have the honor to make this my fifth annual report of the Volunteer Force under your command, and respectfully to bring to your notice, for the information of the Government, the following:—

1st, *Class Firing*.—I enclose returns of practice of each corps, together with an analysis of the same, showing the strength of the force, the number of men practised in each class, with the figure of merit. The position and aiming drills were conducted differently this year from that of last. The practice was, to have special drills for musketry instruction, this year. At the end of each Company or Inspection Parade, about a quarter of an hour was devoted to that purpose, so that every man in the force had a certain amount of this drill.

It will be seen that the strength of the force remains about the same as last year—with this difference, that nearly all at present on the roll are efficient and good attendants at drill. The numbers of men practised are 472 in the 3rd Class, 336 in the 2nd Class, and 181 in the 1st Class, 156 of which are marksmen. The highest scorer in the Province for the Battalion Badge is Lieutenant Robert Smith, Dunedin Naval Company, with 106 points in the 2nd and 1st Classes (*vide* page 92, par. 3, of the Musketry Regulations, 1867); with Corporal McGregor, No. 1 City Guards, Sergeant Cowie, No. 2 Scottish, and Petty Officer J. Begg, Dunedin Naval, ties for second place, with a score of 105. I beg also to call your attention to the following scores, which will show the progress made in individual firing:—Corporal McGregor, of the No. 1 City Guards, made a total of 175 points in the three classes; Lieutenant Smith, Dunedin Naval, 170 points; Petty Officer J. Begg, Dunedin Naval, 170 points; Sergeant Cowie, No. 2 Scottish Company, 164 points; Lieutenant Goldie, Port Chalmers Naval, 163 points.

The weather has been unexceptionally bad for rifle shooting, there having been more wet days than in any other season during the last five years. I therefore considered it advisable not to carry on the file and volley firing.

2nd, *Arms and Accoutrements*.—Two hundred of the four hundred medium rifles on charge issued in 1864, are worn out for accurate shooting, the grooving being much worn, so that the bullet readily slips down the barrel without the use of the ramrod. Most of them have had at least one thousand rounds per year fired out of them during the last six years. The long Enfield rifles are only fit for recruits and non-shooting men. I would recommend your applying for at least two hundred new medium rifles.

3rd, *Drill Sheds*.—All the country corps except the Waikouaiti are provided with substantial drill sheds, sufficiently large for the requirements of the companies. The City of Dunedin is greatly in want of a head-quarters building. The one at present used has long been unequal to the requirements of the companies. It has lately been required for the use of the High School, to which it belongs, so that in a short time the City companies will be without a drill shed, and the Government without an armoury or offices. The shed used by the Artillery is very unsafe for the guns and stores; the rain pours in at every seam of the boarding. The weight of the guns has caused the flooring and piles to give away. The Provincial Government have liberally granted £300, the officers of the Artillery Dunedin Naval and the Nos. 1 and 2 Companies have guaranteed £50 each, towards the erection of a large and convenient shed. I would urge on the Government through you, the desirability of granting a sum for a store-room, armoury, and office.

4th, *Rifle Ranges*.—The Artillery, Dunedin Naval, and 1st Battalion have the use of the two rifle ranges provided by the Provincial Government, both to the extent of eight hundred yards. All the country corps are well provided with ranges, except the Port Chalmers Naval. I am informed by Captain Robertson that he has made arrangements for a range which will be ready for the next season's practice.

5th, *Targets*.—Those at the Government rifle range are worn out. I would recommend application to be made at an early date for a supply, so as to be ready for the next season.

6th, *Ammunition*.—The supply has been all that could be desired, both in quantity and quality. The amount expended is as follows: Government allowance to companies, 80,160; purchased, 27,140; making a total of 107,300 rounds during the year.

7th, *Cadets*.—I have much pleasure in reporting that this branch of the service has made rapid progress during the past year. All the Government schools in and about Dunedin are under instruction. They have not, as a company, gone through their class-firing, owing to the want of suitable rifles. I hope to be able to put the whole of the boys over twelve years of age through their class-firing next season. I give a list of the schools with the number attending drill:—

High School	...	...	...	...	...	85
Middle District	...	...	...	...	...	122
South District	...	...	...	...	...	67
North Dunedin	...	...	...	...	...	30
Caversham	...	...	...	...	...	44
Preparatory School	...	...	...	...	...	23
						<hr/> 371

Making a total of 371 boys under training.

The Rector of the High School, and the head-masters of the district schools, take a great interest in the instruction of the boys, and invariably attend the drill. I bring this matter prominently to your notice, as I consider it one of great importance in the future of this Colony, the training of the youths to the use of arms.

8th, *Efficiency*.—The companies were never in a higher state of efficiency than at present. The various companies were inspected by Lieut.-Colonel Harington early in this year, who made a most minute inspection of the arms, accoutrements, and clothing; he also made the company officers drill their men; at the end of each parade selecting men to fire at the target. The Artillery and Naval Companies fired shot and shell, thus testing the efficiency in every branch. The Inspecting Officer expressed himself pleased with all he witnessed. I do not wish to say more on this subject, as Lieut.-Colonel Harington will no doubt make his report to the Government, which I have every confidence will be favourable. I cannot leave this subject without adding my testimony to the great benefit derived by periodical inspections by the various companies by an officer of standing.

The fact that the Province has, for the fourth time, taken the proud position of champion riflemen of New Zealand, shows clearly that the spirit of rifle shooting has not diminished, and the fact of two new companies in the course of formation upholds the spirit for volunteering.

In conclusion, I have every confidence that, in submitting this report to the Hon. the Defence Minister, you will express your satisfaction with the present efficient state of the force in general, and of the progress made during the past year; and I beg leave, through you, to express my grateful thanks to the officers, musketry instructors, non-commissioned officers, and members of the force, for the kind and gentlemanly manner in which they have assisted me in my various duties.

I have, &c.,

Major Bathgate,
Commanding Militia and Volunteers,
Otago District.

JNO. JAS. ATKINSON,
Captain and Adjutant.

OTAGO DISTRICT.
ANALYSIS of CLASS FIRING of the OTAGO VOLUNTEERS for the Year ended 30th May, 1870.

No.	Corps.	STRENGTH OF						Strength on 30th May.	PRACTISED IN						FINAL CLASSIFICATIONS.			Figure of Merit.	REMARKS.						
		Efficients.			Non-efficients.				3rd Class.		2nd Class.		1st Class.		3rd Class.	2nd Class.	1st Class.								
		Officers.	Sergeants.	Corporals.	Buglers.	Volunteers.	Sergeants.		Corporals.	Buglers.	Volunteers.	Number.	Points.	Average.						Number.	Points.	Average.			
1	Staff and Band	3	3	1	...	19	...	...	26	1	47	47-00	1	49	49-00	1	30	30-00	...	1	1	50-80	{The percentage of 3rd class shots is 18-61 in excess of 1st class shots. Have only fired in 3rd class. {No 1st class range. The percentage of 3rd class shots is 3-50 in excess of 1st class shots.	
2	Dunedin Artillery	3	5	3	1	52	...	...	63	27	1,345	49-81	17	699	41-11	13	397	30-53	...	15	12	72-24		
3	City Guards (Rifles)	3	5	5	1	54	...	...	68	53	2,594	48-94	41	1,742	42-48	29	740	25-51	3	34	21	94-53		
4	Scottish	3	5	4	1	38	...	...	51	33	1,784	54-06	27	1,122	41-55	20	541	27-05	...	8	26	15		105-06
5	Bruce	4	2	2	1	40	...	...	1	37	1,380	37-29	18	567	31-50	9	254	28-22	4	21	12	53-29		
6	Wakari	2	3	3	1	38	...	...	3	36	1,823	50-63	30	1,167	37-64	17	448	26-35	...	27	14	104-63		
7	South District	2	2	2	...	30	...	...	4	40	1,688	47-72	10	407	40-70	8	232	29-00	...	4	10	6		67-72
8	North Dunedin	1	3	3	...	43	...	...	6	56	1,637	39-95	36	1,227	33-16	10	263	26-30	5	5	30	7		84-52
9	East Taieri	4	2	3	...	40	...	...	4	53	1,319	38-79	27	979	36-25	25	749	29-69	3	5	26	25		82-49
10	Oamaru	2	4	4	...	30	2	42	869	41-38	14	494	35-28	6	162	27-00	6	10	6	10		6	50-91
11	West Taieri	2	3	2	1	37	...	...	45	33	1,531	46-39	27	867	32-11	12	327	27-25	4	11	18	11		77-51
12	Waikouaiti	1	3	2	1	36	43	24	643	28-79	12	204	17-00	9	14	1	{The percentage of 3rd class shots is 18-61 in excess of 1st class shots. Have only fired in 3rd class.
13	Cadet	1	144	145	15	441	29-40	8	7
14	Dunedin (Naval)	3	4	4	1	62	...	...	7	81	2,618	47-60	50	1,930	38-06	22	793	36-04	3	7	45	22		99-35
15	Port Chalmers	3	4	4	...	46	57	48	1,578	32-87	26	986	39-44	9	250	27-77	18	14	16	8		...	{No 1st class range. The percentage of 3rd class shots is 3-50 in excess of 1st class shots.
TOTAL		36	48	42	8	709	...	...	870	472	20,277	42-95	336	12,437	37-01	181	5,186	28-65	64	138	274	156	...	

JOHN BATHGATE, Major,
Commanding Otago District.

JNO. JAS. ATKINSON, Capt. and Adjutant,
Musketry Instructor.

