

1895.
NEW ZEALAND.

DEFENCES AND DEFENCE FORCES OF NEW ZEALAND,

ANNUAL REPORT ON THE (BY COLONEL F. J. FOX, NEW ZEALAND MILITIA,
INSPECTING OFFICER).

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

To the Honourable the PREMIER and DEFENCE MINISTER.

SIR,—

I have the honour to forward herewith my report on the defences and defence forces of the colony for the year 1894-95, which I trust may be found satisfactory.

I have, &c.,

FRANCIS J. FOX,
Colonel, N.Z.M.

Defence Office, 29th July, 1895.

GENERAL REPORT.

SINCE I had the honour of making my last report, the defence of the colony has been much improved, and active steps are being taken at the present time to complete the defence in so far as is considered necessary as regards armament, works, and submarine mines.

The efficiency of the forces is being dealt with and improved. Two thousand Martini rifles have been received in the colony, and the remaining rifles and carbines to complete the proposed equipment, now under order, should be in the hands of the forces within a year.

Arrangements have been made for the supply of small-arm ammunition of proper quality made within the colony.

The remaining necessities—the supply of appointments, accoutrements, renewal of camp-equipment, and completion of stores—are receiving due consideration.

A conference of officers was called together in September by the Hon. the Defence Minister for the purpose of recommending to the Government any changes in Volunteer and defence matters which the conference might consider necessary, and for altering the Volunteer Regulations as might be deemed advisable.

As a result new regulations have been promulgated, and amendments required in the Defence Act will be submitted.

New clothing regulations have been compiled.

Sound recommendations have been submitted to, and approved of by, the Hon. the Minister.

The capitation grant has been increased to £2 10s. per efficient man, very much to the benefit of the Volunteers.

The new regulations provide for the better organization of the Volunteer Force by banding the various companies of the districts into battalions of infantry and brigades of naval artillery.

A much-needed want—the provision of handy manuals of musketry instruction, and of drill for mounted rifles and naval artillery—has been met.

Lieut.-Colonel Newall, New Zealand Militia, commanding the Wellington District, Captain Coleman, New Zealand Militia, and Staff Sergeant-Major Richardson, Royal Artillery, have been respectively associated with the production of these manuals, and have done excellent work.

Staff Sergeant-Major Richardson is now preparing a handy field-artillery manual.

It remains for a proper organization to be completed for each district, under competent headquarters control, when a scheme of defence can be prepared by which the defence of the colony may be brought into effect on emergency arising.

Such a scheme is absolutely necessary. Without it the defence cannot be efficiently conducted. It is also necessary that better infantry instruction should be provided. The officers require instruction in tactics, elementary field fortification, and military topography. I hope that these two very urgent necessities, and the supply to the infantry and mounted rifles of means for carrying a proper amount of ammunition in the field, will be soon remedied.

Under the heading of the "Permanent Forces" I have made certain recommendations, which I hope may receive favourable consideration.

It is to be regretted that a generally very satisfactory report is marred by the fact that in the Auckland District only 59 infantry capitated during the last Volunteer year, which was extended by two months. The fact has to be faced that there is no efficient force for the defence of Auckland. The guns and submarine mines cannot be relied upon unless they are protected by an efficient infantry force.

DEFENCES.

(1.) WORKS AND ARMAMENTS.

Auckland.—(1.) The Bastion Fort is nearly completed. (2.) Work has gone on at the electric-light installation. (3.) A 64-pr. gun has been mounted. (4.) Repairs and other slight work have been effected. (5.) Two 6in. B.L. guns have been sent Home for strengthening.

Wellington.—(1.) One 8in. B.L. gun has been mounted. (2.) Repairs and small work have been effected. (3.) Arrangements are being made for altering Fort Ballance, and for mounting one 7in. R.M.L. gun.

Lyttelton.—(1.) Fort Jervois has been completed to original design. (2.) Repairs have been made. (3.) Two 6in. B.L. guns have been sent Home for strengthening.

Dunedin.—(1.) Repairs have been effected. (2.) One 6in. B.L. gun has been sent to England for strengthening.

The ammunition for the heavy guns is deteriorating very seriously from age; the fuses are generally unreliable, and the powder is fast losing its strength.

(2.) SUBMARINE DEFENCE.

The "Ellen Ballance" has been fitted for laying E.C. mines. Stores have been received from England which improve the value of this defence. Some further stores are required for Wellington. Considerable work has to be done at Auckland; the necessary arrangements are being made.

(3.) TORPEDO-BOATS.

Beyond the fact that the boats and equipment are two years older than when I last reported, there has been no change.

PERMANENT FORCES.

PERMANENT ARTILLERY.

This force is divided into four so-called batteries.

Each battery has one officer attached to it, two of which are majors, one a captain, and one a lieutenant. A third major is borne on the strength, Major Goring. He is in command of the Auckland District, but also is practically the Battery Commanding Officer. The strength* of the batteries varies from 55 at Wellington to 21 at Lyttelton. The officers in command of these batteries appear to correspond direct with the Defence Office, the District Commanding Officer being ignored; the result being that, except in the case of Lieut.-Colonel Goring, the District Commanding Officers are not aware of what is going on as regards their Permanent Artillery, nor of the condition of their defences. For instance, they are not officially aware of the fact that the 6in. B.L. guns in an un-chase-hooped state are dangerous to fire, and consequently are not to be depended on for defence; nor do they know that the powder is rapidly deteriorating with age; nor that the fuses are generally unreliable, and not to be depended upon. This results from want of organization. They understand that the Permanent Forces and the defences are under the direct control of the Defence Office, and that they have no responsibility as regards those forces and defences. They are not aware of the number of men required to man the works, and therefore are ignorant of the numbers which are deficient in their districts. Under these circumstances, on an emergency arising they would be absolutely unable to organize their defence.

The Wellington Battery is the dépôt of the force. Recruits are there trained and clothed, and on the completion of their training they are drafted to the various other batteries to fill vacancies caused, in the main, by transfer of gunners to the police. The number of men so transferred during the past year† has been 36. This is an abnormally large number. The fact results that it has been necessary to send untrained men from the dépôt to the outlying batteries, in which it is very difficult for them to be trained, owing to the almost impossibility of getting gun detachments together for drill. In some cases it has been necessary to send men not fully trained to the police. As a set-off to this draining of the Permanent Artillery, 100 policemen have been put through a course of gunnery during the year, and the experience shows that the men who were trained previously to their being drafted to the police are to be relied upon as gunners on emergency. This is very satisfactory.

As regards drill and theoretical knowledge the non-commissioned officers and trained gunners are excellent, but as regards practical work they are ignorant. They have not sufficient practice, and most of them have rarely, if ever, fired at a moving target. I find that at the different stations there are small differences in detail of drill, consequent generally on a want of uniformity as regards certain fittings and alterations, which have not been made in the same way at each station; and at some stations alterations have been carried out and not at other stations.

The uniform of the Force is not the same throughout, nor are the rules as to discipline.

There is no officer in the position of Officer commanding the Permanent Artillery, responsible to the department for the uniform carrying-out of work and of regulations.

* Taken on 1st May, 1895.

† From 1st January, 1894, to 1st May, 1895.

The distribution of the Force on the 1st May, 1895, was—

	Majors.	Captains.	Lieutenants.	Sergt.-Major Instructors.	Sergt.-Majors.	Sergeants.	Corporals.	Bombardiers.	Gunners.						Total.
									Acting Bombardiers.	Artificers.	1st Class.	2nd Class.	3rd Class.	Probation.	
Auckland ...	*1	...	1	1	1	2	..	1	2	2	5	4	19	...	38
Wellington ...	1	...	...	1	...	2	...	1	7	3	3	4	24	8	54
Lyttelton ...	1	...	...	...	1	1	...	1	1	3	3	2	8	...	21
Dunedin ...	...	1	...	...	1	1	1	...	1	4	4	5	12	...	30
Total strength ...	*3	1	1	1	3	6	1	3	11	12	15	15	63	8	143
Establishment ...	3	1	1	1	4	4	4	4	...	12	27	30	52	...	144

* One major in command, Auckland District.

PERMANENT TORPEDO CORPS.

The corps has its dépôt at Wellington, where more than half the men are quartered, detachments being at Auckland, Lyttelton, and Dunedin.

The detachment at Auckland is under an officer, Captain Powell. The other detachments are under petty officers. The work of these detachments is running the Government steam-launches—one at each station—and the care and preservation of the torpedo-boats and submarine mining stores. The Volunteer submarine miners are instructed by them.

The strength of the detachments precludes any practical work from being carried out in laying down mines, nor could such work be carried out, owing to want of appliances.

The torpedo-boat is run at Auckland and Wellington with torpedoes; but this is not done at either Lyttelton or Dunedin.

At Wellington the dépôt is under command of Captain Falconer. Instruction-work is carried out chiefly in theory. No service mines have been laid out during the past year, and only on five days during the year has any practice in laying out dummy mines taken place. The submarine steam-launch has been employed 196 days for work in other departments.

The torpedo-boats are well kept, and the submarine mining equipment in the various stores is well cared-for.

The officers and men are as capable as they can be under the circumstances.

As is the case with the Permanent Artillery, the District Commanding Officers are not responsible for the Torpedo Corps detachments under their command, and they are generally unaware of the state of their defence under this head.

A capable officer is required to be in charge of this corps, to be responsible for its efficient control and for the maintenance of proper equipment.

Distribution :—

	Captains.	Whitehead Instruc- tor.	Submarine Mining Instructor.	Petty Officers.	Engineers.	Corporals.	2nd Corporals.	Lance Corporals.	Torpedo-men.				Total.
									Artificers and 1st Class.	2nd Class.	3rd Class.	On Probation.	
Auckland ...	1	...	...	1	...	...	1	1	4	3	5	...	16
Wellington ...	1	1	...	1	1	...	2	1	2	6	17	1	33
Lyttelton ...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	1	1	...	2	...	5
Dunedin ...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	1	2	2	1	...	8
Total strength	2	1	...	3	1	1	4	4	9	11	25	1	62
Establishment	2	1	1	4	1	2	6	14	18	15	...	...	64

As it appears probable that for some time no further great strain will be put upon the Permanent Artillery as regards furnishing drafts for the police, it would be advisable for the training of the men to be lengthened to include a course in submarine mining.

The value of the Permanent Force would be greatly enhanced were the two branches combined into one corps, all officers and men, except actual specialists, being trained to the working of the guns and of the submarine mines.

It is very unlikely that the guns will be required for use at the actual commencement of hostilities, and therefore, during the time from the declaration of war to the actual arrival of a hostile ship in our waters the Permanent Artillery would be available for laying out the mine defences were they previously trained for such work.

Similarly, after the mine-field has once been laid out a certain number of the Permanent Torpedo Corps would be available for the service of the guns.

I have to draw attention to the fact that no provision is being made for filling up vacancies in the ranks of the officers in the Permanent Force. These vacancies must occur, and it is most necessary that trained officers should fill them.

These officers should belong to the colony, should receive their first instruction in the colony, and, if found capable, be sent to England for courses in gunnery and submarine mining. If found incapable they should be replaced.

Eighteen months' training in the colony and eighteen months' training in England should produce officers technically capable. A further training as district staff officers in the colony, in addition to their technical work, should make them capable of filling such vacancies as may occur. Such appointments should be open to public competition, a certain qualifying standard being requisite, especially in mathematics. Candidates should not be more than twenty years of age.

VOLUNTEERS.*

(1.) CAVALRY AND MOUNTED RIFLES.

There are three cavalry corps and ten mounted rifle corps in the colony. All the corps do the same drill, and are instructed as mounted rifles. They are generally well horsed; but, while in some there is uniformity in appointments, cleanliness, and smartness, in other corps there is nothing of the kind—consequently there is a wide difference in the value of the corps. The Otago Hussars is deserving of the highest praise. The Canterbury Yeomanry, Alexandra Cavalry, Hawera Mounted Rifles, and North Otago Mounted Rifles are very good corps. The Heretaunga Mounted Rifles has improved very considerably.

A manual of mounted infantry drill is now in the press. Its issue will be of very great benefit. Great credit is due to Captain Coleman for its compilation.

Distribution.

District and Corps.	Officers.	Men.	Qualified for Capitation.	Unqualified.	Remarks.
Auckland—					
Waiuku Mounted Rifles ...	3	57	41	19	Bad.
South Franklin Mounted Rifles ...	3	57	35	25	Indifferent.
Te Awamutu Mounted Rifles ...	3	43	...	46	Bad.
Total ...	9	157	76	90	
Wellington—					
Alexandra Cavalry ...	3	55	48	10	Very good.
Wairoa Mounted Rifles ...	2	49	43	8	Fair.
Heretaunga Mounted Rifles ...	2	40	31	11	Good.
Hawera Mounted Rifles ...	3	68	38	33	Very good.
Manawatu Mounted Rifles ...	2	49	35	16	Good.
Total ...	12	261	195	78	
Canterbury—					
Canterbury Yeomanry ...	4	69	61	12	Very good.
Canterbury Mounted Rifles ...	2	51	32	21	Good.
Total ...	6	120	93	33	
Otago—					
Otago Hussars ...	3	58	55	6	Excellent.
North Otago Mounted Rifles ...	3	60	52	11	Very good.
Total ...	6	118	107	17	
Nelson, &c.—					
Marlborough Mounted Rifles ...	3	48	...	51	Indifferent.
Grand total, 13 corps ...	36	704	471	269	

(2.) NAVAL ARTILLERY VOLUNTEERS.

This Force is divided into two distinct branches—

A. Affiliated to the works of defence.

B. Purely infantry companies.

The work done by the A branch in artillery and submarine-mining work is very considerable, being much more than that of any other branch of the Volunteer Force. The companies are, in general, worthy of much commendation, the Wellington Navals being most praiseworthy. I cannot speak too highly of the value of this company, possessing three excellent officers and 65 highly-trained men. The Dunedin, Petone, and Ponsonby Navals also do excellent work. Each man of

* The strength as shown in these tables is as at the end of the Volunteer year.

this branch receives a yearly grant of £1 provided he attains a certain degree of proficiency. The money so expended yields a valuable return.

A manual of garrison artillery drill has been published. It will be of great benefit to the officers and men. Staff Sergeant-Major Richardson, R.A., has devoted much time and labour to this manual, which is an excellent one.

Distribution of Branch A.

District and Corps.	Officers.	Men.	Proficient.	Qualified for Capitulation.	Unqualified.	Remarks.
Auckland—						
Auckland Navals	3	87	30	82	8	Good.
Ponsonby Navals	3	87	56	87	3	Very good.
Devonport Navals	4	83	9	...	87	Good.
Total	10	257	95	169	98	
Wellington—						
Wellington Navals	3	95	65	84	14	Excellent.
Petone Navals	3	71	48	65	9	Very good.
Total	6	166	113	149	23	
Canterbury—						
Lyttelton Navals	1	65	14	59	7	Good.
Otago—						
Dunedin Navals	3	72	47	69	6	Very good.
Port Chalmers Navals	3	77	32	76	4	Good.
Total	6	149	79	145	10	
Grand total, 8 corps ...	23	637	301	522	138	

The work done by the B Branch of the Naval Artillery is that of rifle companies. A wise decision has been arrived at in allowing these corps a certain time within which they must become infantry companies, and become absorbed in the battalions about to be formed.

The Bluff and the Nelson Naval Artillery Companies are very excellent infantry companies; the Thames, Westport, and Timaru Companies are very good.

Distribution of B Branch.

District and Corps.	Officers.	Men.	Capitated.	Unqualified.	Remarks.
Auckland—					
Thames Navals	2	70	68	4	Very good.
Wellington—					
Wanganui Navals	2	63	63	2	Very good.
Napier Navals	3	49	50	2	Good.
Total	5	112	113	4	
Canterbury—					
Timaru Navals	2	79	66	15	Very good.
Otago—					
Bluff Navals... ..	4	97	98	3	Very good.
Oamaru Navals	3	58	59	2	Improved.
Total	7	155	157	5	
Nelson, &c.—					
Nelson Navals	3	60	61	2	Very good.
Greymouth Navals	3	52	55	...	Moderate.
Westport Navals	2	64	58	8	Very good.
Total	8	176	174	10	
Grand total, 9 corps ...	24	592	578	38	

(3.) FIELD ARTILLERY VOLUNTEERS.

The batteries of this branch of the service are armed with different field guns, some being good, some serviceable, and others quite unserviceable. The 6-pr. R.B.L. guns and the 12-pr. R.B.L. guns are useless, and the batteries armed with them are therefore not to be relied on. The officers, non-commissioned officers, and men of such batteries are trained theoretically, but can have no practical training.

No battery has its complement of service ammunition in charge, nor the means of carrying it.

Hitherto the instruction has been in pure drill and in theoretical work. Taking them all round each battery has shown very great interest in that work, and a very great improvement has been made. The batteries armed with guns with which it is safe to practise are in a perfectly fit state to have regular practice, provided that it is carried out under supervision. A start has been made in this direction.

No attempt has been made in training the batteries in field movements. This is wise. The rôle of the field batteries will be that of guns of position, only requiring horse-power to move the guns from one selected position to another.

The batteries have suffered very much from the want of a handy manual of drill and equipment. Staff Sergeant-Major Richardson, who is an excellent instructor, is now preparing such a book.

Distribution.

District and Corps.	Officers.	Men.	Capitated.	Unqualified.	Guns.	Limbers.	Wagons.	Remarks.
Auckland— A Battery	3	80	81	2	4 9-pr. R.B.L. ...	4	Nil	Very good.
Wellington— D Battery	2	58	59	1	4 6-pr. Nord. ...	4	"	Personnel good; matériel useless.
F Battery	3	45	42	6	4 6-pr. R.B.L. ...	4	"	
Total	5	103	101	7				
Canterbury— C Battery	2	56	50	8	3 9-pr. R.B.L. ...	3	"	Good.
E Battery	2	57	46	13	4 9-pr. R.B.L. ...	4	"	"
Total	4	113	96	21				
Otago— B Battery	3	57	49	11	4 9-pr. R.B.L. ...	4	"	Very good.
G Battery	3	52	52	3	4 12-pr. R.B.L. ...	...	"	Personnel good; matériel useless.
I Battery	3	48	40	11	3 9-pr. R.B.L. ...	3	"	Good.
Total	9	157	141	25				
Nelson— H Battery	3	52	52	3	3 6-pr. R.B.L. ...	3	"	Personnel good; matériel useless.
Grand total, 9 bat- teries	24	505	471	58				

(4.) GARRISON ARTILLERY.

There is only one battery of garrison artillery in the colony—the N Battery, at Lyttelton. The work required from this battery is of the same nature as that required from the A Branch Naval Artillery Volunteers, and it should be absorbed into that branch of the Volunteer Service. The Naval Artillery uniform is popular, inexpensive, and well adapted for coast-defence work.

District and Corps.	Officers.	Men.	Proficient.	Capitated.	Unqualified.	Remarks.
Canterbury— N Battery	2	52	13	32	22	Improving.

(5.) ENGINEERS.

There are two corps which are trained as field companies. The Dunedin company is a very good one; the Christchurch company good.

District and Corps.	Officers.	Men.	Capitated.	Unqualified.	Remarks.
Canterbury— Christchurch Engineers ...	3	64	62	5	Good.
Otago— Dunedin Engineers ...	2	78	65	15	Very good.
Total, 2 companies	5	142	127	20	

(6.) INFANTRY.

It is with pleasure that I am able to report that I have generally found amongst the infantry companies in the Wellington, Canterbury, Otago, and portion of the Nelson Districts a very distinct improvement as regards their knowledge of drill and field-work. I am sorry that I cannot report any improvement in the infantry of the Auckland District or in the corps of the Westland Sub-district. In the latter I found the officers and men belonging to the various companies most anxious to learn, but unable to do so owing to inefficient supervision. The bringing of this sub-district under the command of Lieut.-Colonel Pitt, V.D., will, I feel certain, have an excellent effect.

The condition in which I found the Auckland infantry companies I have already reported confidentially upon, and I need do no more in this report than state that they were quite inefficient at my inspection, and that there is practically no infantry force to be relied on for the defence of Auckland. The instruction and example as to smartness set by some of the instructors leaves much to be desired. If all the corps were well instructed, and had a smart example set to them, they would be capable generally of doing anything that was required of them. The *esprit* of officers, non-commissioned officers, and men is, as a rule, most excellent. They have generally worked hard to improve, and have done so.

In the Canterbury and Otago Districts, and in Nelson and Marlborough, there are several officers of field rank who take the greatest interest in the Volunteer movement; but in the remaining districts officers in that position do very little. This is much to be regretted. I do not here refer to Volunteer officers who are permanently employed.

The rifle companies are being gradually armed with Martini-Henry rifles, and arrangements have been made within the colony for the supply of small-arm ammunition. This is very satisfactory.

There is at present no organization beyond that of the so-called corps, which is in reality a company, and should be made part of a battalion. A battalion organization is provided for in the new regulations, and should be enforced in each district.

The infantry always has been and must remain the base of any force. No artillery and submarine defence can be relied on unless that defence is supported and protected by infantry. It is therefore necessary that the infantry force of the colony shall be made effective as regards its organization, its equipment, and its capability. The force is being efficiently armed; it remains for it to be efficiently organized, commanded, and instructed.

The uniforms of the various corps vary both in pattern and in quality: it will be of great advantage when the whole of the corps are clothed alike.

I wish specially to commend the following companies—Wellington City Rifles, Wanganui Rifles, Kaiapoi Rifles, Christchurch City Guards, Timaru Rifles, Dunedin City Guards, and Invercargill City Guards; while many other companies have improved very greatly since I last inspected them.

Distribution.

	Companies.	Officers.	Men.	Qualified for Capitation.	Unqualified.
Auckland District ...	4	9	183	59	133
Wellington District ...	9	25	506	484	47
Canterbury District ...	9	19	544	497	66
Otago District ...	11	31	572	491	112
Nelson, Marlborough, and Westland Districts ...	10	26	545	528	43
Grand total ...	43	110	2,350	2,059	401

VOLUNTEERS.

DISTRICT REPORT.

(1.) AUCKLAND DISTRICT.

I regret that I am obliged to report that the Volunteer Force in this district is, as regards the mounted rifles and rifle companies, very inefficient, and far below the necessary strength.

There are only four infantry companies in the district. None of these are efficient, the Hamilton company being the worst.

Of these companies only 59 received capitulation, and 15 of these were recruits.

Of the three mounted rifle companies only 76 received capitulation. These companies are much behindhand as regards their knowledge of drill and field work.

The instruction in infantry work has been very indifferent. It has been improved by sending Sergeant-Major Instructor Carpenter to Auckland.

Great improvement has been made in the Auckland and Ponsonby Naval Artillery, and the Ponsonby company is now quite a good one, having 56 well-trained men in its ranks. The Devonport Navals have been raised during the year. The A Battery has very much improved, and ranks with the best field batteries in the colony as regards the capabilities of its officers, non-commissioned officers, and men.

The instruction in artillery work is good.

Lieut.-Colonel Goring, commanding the district, is a very energetic and capable officer.

Major Banks, late 12th Lancers, has been most good in giving his services voluntarily in aid of the Volunteers.

Inspection of Volunteer Corps in Auckland District.

Auckland District.	Officers.	Non-commissioned Officers, Rank and File.	Total.	At Inspection.	Qualified for Capitulation.	Unqualified.	Remarks.
Mounted Rifle Corps— Waiuku Mounted Rifles	3	57	60	51	41	19	This corps is inefficient. Little or nothing was known of drill or field work.
Te Awamutu Mounted Rifles	3	43	46	33	...	46	This corps is inefficient. Nothing was known of drill or field work.
South Franklin Mounted Rifles	3	57	60	39	35	25	This corps is inefficient. No proper camp was held.
Total ...	9	157	166	123	76	90	
Naval Artillery— A. Auckland Navals ...	3	87	90	45	82	8	This is a good corps.
Ponsonby Navals ...	3	87	90	75	87	3	A very good corps.
Devonport Navals ...	4	83	87	70	...	87	Lately formed. Promises well; at present inefficient.
B. Thames Navals ...	2	70	72	72	68	4	A good infantry company. I was unable to inspect it this year.
Total ...	12	327	339	262	237	102	
Field Artillery— A Battery ...	3	80	83	66	81	2	This is a very good corps as regards officers, non-commissioned officers, and men.
Rifle Companies— Victoria Rifles ...	3	50	53	38	...	53	This corps is inefficient.
Auckland City Rifles ...	3	39	42	29	...	42	This corps is inefficient.
Hamilton Rifles ...	1	47	48	34	29	19	Most inefficient.
Te Aroha Rifles ...	2	47	49	35	30	19	This corps is not efficient, but promises fairly well.
Total ...	9	183	192	136	59	133	
Grand Total	33	747	780	587	453	327	

(2.) WELLINGTON DISTRICT.

The cavalry and mounted rifle companies are generally in a satisfactory state, and have considerably improved since I last reported. The Alexandra Cavalry and Hawera Mounted Rifles are very good.

There are four naval artillery companies.

The Wellington Navals is a most excellent Volunteer company. It is affiliated to the heavy guns, and possesses 65 very well-trained and 30 partially-trained men.

The Petone Navals is a very good company, having 48 well-trained and 23 partially-trained men.

The Wanganui and Napier Naval Companies are purely infantry companies.

The D Battery is armed with 4 6-pr. Nordenfeldt field-guns. It is the most efficient of the field batteries in the colony.

The F Battery has 6-pr. R.B.L. guns, which are useless. The officers, non-commissioned officers, and men take great interest in theoretical work, but cannot be given any practice.

There are nine rifle companies in the district. A very general and considerable improvement has taken place since I last inspected. More infantry instruction is much needed. Sergeant-Major Finn is very capable, and a very hardworking instructor.

The Taranaki, Wanganui, and Napier Districts have been absorbed into the Wellington District, under Lieut.-Colonel Newall, who is a very hardworking and good officer.

Major Wood, who is in charge of the Napier Sub-district, is a very good officer, taking much interest in his work.

Major Ellis does what he can to further Volunteer interests.

Inspection of Volunteer Corps in Wellington District.

Wellington District.	Officers.	Non-commissioned Officers, Rank and File.	Total.	At Inspection.	Qualified for Capitulation.	Unqualified.	Remarks.
Cavalry and Mounted Rifles—							
Alexandra Cavalry ...	3	55	58	50	48	10	A very good corps.
Wairoa Mounted Rifles	2	49	51	30	43	8	Fair.
Heretaunga Mounted Rifles	2	40	42	24	31	11	Good.
Hawera Mounted Rifles	3	68	71	41	38	33	Very good.
Manawatu Mounted Rifles	2	49	51	36	35	16	Good.
Total ...	12	261	273	181	195	78	
Naval Artillery—							
A. Wellington Navals ...	3	95	98	82	84	14	Excellent.
Petone Navals ...	3	71	74	62	65	9	Very good.
B. Wanganui Navals ...	2	63	65	54	63	2	Very good infantry company.
Napier Navals ...	3	49	52	41	50	2	Good infantry company.
Total ...	11	278	289	239	262	27	
Field Artillery—							
D Battery ...	2	58	60	53	59	1	Very good.
F Battery ...	3	45	48	40	42	6	Good theoretically and at gun drill. The battery is, however, useless, the guns being unserviceable.
Total ...	5	103	108	93	101	7	
Infantry Companies—							
Royal Rangitikei Rifles...	3	56	59	44	57	2	Very good.
Wellington City Rifles ...	2	64	66	63	61	5	Very good indeed.
Wanganui Rifles ...	3	60	63	63	63	...	Very good indeed.
Taranaki Rifles ...	3	57	60	50	59	1	Good; much improved.
Napier Rifles ...	3	48	51	48	48	3	Much improved.
Palmerston North Rifles	3	60	63	56	60	3	Good.
Manchester Rifles ...	3	52	55	51	47	8	Good.
Wellington Guards ...	3	63	66	42	54	12	Good.
Hastings Rifles ...	2	46	48	44	35	13	Improving.
Total ...	25	506	531	461	484	47	
Grand Total	53	1148	1201	974	1042	159	

This is a very excellent record. About 84 per cent. capitated. About 81 per cent. were present at inspection.

(3.) CANTERBURY DISTRICT.

The Canterbury Yeomanry is a very good corps ; much improved since I last reported.

The mounted rifle company is improving.

The Lyttelton Navals and the N Battery Garrison Artillery are much improved. They are affiliated to the heavy guns, but still have very few men who have qualified as gunners.

The Timaru Navals is simply a very good infantry company.

The C and E Batteries possess good knowledge theoretically and at gun drill, but practical work is much needed. They are armed with 9-pr. R.B.L. guns. Neither battery has any service ammunition on charge, nor is there any means of carrying any except in the limbers.

The Canterbury Engineers is a good company, but has rather gone backwards.

The nine infantry companies have generally improved, the Christchurch City Guards and the Timaru rifle companies being very good.

The district is fortunate in having Majors Slater, Moore, and Francis amongst its Volunteer officers. No difficulty should be experienced in forming a battalion.

Lieut.-Colonel Gordon, commanding the district, works well.

The infantry instructors are good.

Inspection of Volunteer Corps in Canterbury District.

Canterbury District.	Officers.	Non - commissioned Officers, Rank and File.	Total.	At Inspection.	Qualified for Capitulation.	Unqualified.	Remarks.
Cavalry and Mounted Rifles— Canterbury Yeomanry ...	4	69	73	61	61	12	Very good. I was unable to inspect this corps during its training this year. Good.
Christchurch Mounted Rifles	2	51	53	33	32	21	
Total ...	6	120	126	94	93	33	
Naval Artillery— A. Lyttelton Navals ...	1	65	66	48	59	7	Good ; much improved. Very good as an infantry company.
B. Timaru Navals ...	2	79	81	67	66	15	
Total ...	3	144	147	115	125	22	
Field Artillery— C Battery ...	2	56	58	50	50	8	Good ; wanting practical knowledge. Good ; wanting practical knowledge.
E Battery ...	2	57	59	45	46	13	
Total ...	4	113	117	95	96	21	
Garrison Artillery— N Battery ...	2	52	54	44	32	22	Improving.
Engineers— Canterbury Engineers ...	3	64	67	39	62	5	A good company.
Rifle Companies— Christchurch City Guards	3	65	68	52	62	6	Very good.
Temuka Rifles ...	2	48	50	45	46	4	Fairly good.
Ashburton Rifles ...	2	60	62	65	61	1	Good.
Christ's College Rifles ...	3	62	65	40	53	12	Good.
Christchurch City Rifles	1	63	64	38	50	14	Good.
Timaru Rifles ...	2	77	79	63	64	15	Very good.
Kaiapoi Rifles ...	2	74	76	54	73	3	Very good.
Waimate Rifles ...	2	47	49	38	43	6	Fairly good.
Rangiora Rifles ...	2	48	50	29	46	4	Fairly good.
Total ...	19	544	563	424	498	65	
Grand Total	37	1037	1074	811	906	168	

This is a very good record. The total strength of corps at my inspection was 856, of whom 811 were present. Eighty-four per cent. earned capitulation.

(4.) OTAGO DISTRICT.

The Otago Hussars is one of the best bodies of Volunteers that I have ever met.

The North Otago Mounted Rifles is a very good company.

The Dunedin Naval Artillery is very good indeed, having 47 well-trained and 25 partially-trained gunners. The Port Chalmers Naval Artillery is very much improved, and has 32 well-trained and 45 partially-trained men in its ranks.

The Bluff Naval Artillery is an excellent infantry company; and the Oamaru Navals has very considerably improved as an infantry company.

There are three field batteries in the district. Of these, B Battery is as good as can be expected. The G and I Batteries have improved very much in their knowledge of gunnery. All are deficient in practical knowledge. G Battery is armed with 12-pr. R.B.L. guns, which are unserviceable. B and I Batteries have 9-pr. R.B.L. guns.

There is no service ammunition on issue, nor is there the means of carrying it.

The Dunedin Engineer Company is in a very good state of efficiency.

Considerable improvement has been shown in the majority of the infantry companies, of which there are eleven in the district. Several are, however, inefficient in their strength and knowledge. The Bruce Rifle Company did not capitulate last year, being below its minimum strength. The East Taieri, Naseby, and Riversdale Rifle Companies did not attend the Easter Camp, and the Kaitangata Company was represented by seven men.

The infantry instruction in this district is very much behindhand. Sergeant-Major Towler is good, but the other instructors are useless. With good instruction the Volunteers would much improve. They have shown that they are desirous of learning.

The Oamaru and Southland Districts have been absorbed into the Otago District, under Lieut.-Colonel Webb. I feel certain that the corps in those districts will benefit thereby. Lieut.-Colonel Webb is a very excellent officer.

Majors Callan, Headland, and Smail, and Captain Milne and Quartermaster McIndoe, are very good officers. A battalion can easily be formed in this district, and Lieut.-Colonel Webb has already taken steps in that direction.

Inspection of Volunteer Corps in Otago District.

Otago District.	Officers.	Non-commissioned Officers, Rank and File.	Total.	At Inspection.	Qualified for Capitulation.	Unqualified.	Remarks.
Cavalry and Mounted Rifles—							
Otago Hussars ...	3	58	61	57	55	6	Excellent.
North Otago Mounted Rifles	3	60	63	53	52	11	Very good.
Total ...	6	118	124	110	107	17	
Naval Artillery—							
A. Dunedin Navals ...	3	72	75	40	69	6	Very good indeed. Seen at camp at gunnery.
Port Chalmers Navals	3	77	80	64	76	4	Good; very much improved.
B. Bluff Navals ...	4	97	101	53	98	3	Very good indeed as an infantry company. Seen at Easter Camp; did capital work.
Oamaru Navals ...	3	58	61	60	59	2	Much improved as an infantry company.
Total ...	13	304	317	217	302	15	
Field Artillery—							
B Battery ...	3	57	60	31	49	11	Very good as regards its officers, non-commissioned officers, and men. Practical work necessary.
G Battery ...	3	52	55	18	52	3	Personnel good; matériel useless. Detachment seen at Easter Camp.
I Battery ...	3	48	51	49	40	11	Improved very much. Practical work very necessary.
Total ...	9	157	166	98	141	25	
Engineers—							
Dunedin Engineers ...	2	78	80	64	65	15	Very good indeed.

Inspection of Volunteer Corps in Otago District—continued.

Otago District.	Officers.	Non-commissioned Officers, Rank and File	Total.	At Inspection.	Qualified for Capitulation.	Unqualified.	Remarks.
Rifle Companies—							
Riverton Rifles ...	2	46	48	19	42	6	Seen at Easter Camp. A poor muster; work done good.
Dunedin City Guards ...	3	67	70	27	61	9	Very good indeed. Seen at Easter Camp.
Bruce Rifles ...	3	30	33	31	...	33	I think this company will improve.
East Taieri Rifles ...	3	48	51	34	36	15	Indifferent. The company was not at Easter Camp.
North Dunedin Rifles ...	2	64	66	42	63	3	Very good. Seen at Easter Camp; smart and well turned out.
Invercargill City Guards	3	70	73	40	73	...	Very good indeed. Seen at Easter Camp; did capital work.
Dunedin Highland Rifles	3	63	66	54	61	5	Very good.
Naseby Rifles... ..	3	45	48	...	28	20	Not seen. This corps did not attend Camp.
Kaitangata Rifles ...	3	45	48	31	46	2	Fair. This company had only 7 men at Easter Camp.
Gore Rifles	3	49	52	19	45	7	Seen at Easter Camp. Good work done. The company has considerably improved.
Riversdale Rifles ...	3	45	48	...	31	17	Not seen. This company did not attend Easter Camp.
Total	31	572	603	297	486	117	
Grand total	61	1229	1290	786	1101	189	

A very creditable return, marred by a few companies. About 85 per cent. capitated.

NOTE.—Owing to the lateness of the season I inspected several corps of this district at the Easter Camp. It is impossible for corps to muster so strongly at camp as at their homes.

(5.) NELSON, MARLBOROUGH, AND WESTLAND DISTRICT.

The Marlborough Mounted Rifle Company is not up to the standard.

There are in this district three Naval Artillery companies. They are purely rifle companies, of which the Nelson and Westport are very good.

There is one field battery, armed with 3-6-pr. R.B.L. guns. The guns are useless; there is no ammunition for them. Theoretical knowledge is fair; practical knowledge nil.

Of the ten rifle companies, those at Nelson and the Blenheim Rifles are good; but the Westland companies are very much behindhand. This is generally not the fault of the officers and men, who as a rule appear to be keen to become efficient. A bad system has hitherto prevailed, which will be put an end to now that Lieut.-Colonel Pitt is in charge of the whole district. Competent supervision has been much needed.

Lieut.-Colonel Bonar has done much for volunteering in the past. He is not, however, able to exercise that supervision which is necessary in the command of a sub-district, and the various companies under him have suffered in comparison with those companies which are more looked after. The practical examination of the officers has been allowed to become simply a form, and the subaltern officers of several of the companies are never given an opportunity of commanding their men on parade.

The want of a drill-hall at Greymouth has severely handicapped the two companies belonging to that place.

The drill-hall at Blenheim is too small for any company to drill in.

At my inspection the Blenheim City Rifles had no officer and only one sergeant present.

Majors Franklyn and Rogers take much interest in volunteering. Captain and Adjutant Littlejohn is a most excellent officer. Quartermaster Coleman is a good officer, taking great interest. Sergeant-Major Instructors Healy and Benning are capable instructors. The honorary officers of Nelson take quite an exceptional interest in the volunteering work.

Lieut.-Colonel A. Pitt, V.D., who commands the district, is a most excellent officer.

Inspection of Nelson, Marlborough, and Westland District.

Nelson, Marlborough, and Westland District.		Officers.	Non-commissioned Officers, Rank and File.	Total.	At Inspection.	Qualified for Capitulation.	Unqualified.	Remarks.
Mounted Rifles—								
Marlborough Mounted Rifles		3	48	51	32	...	51	Moderate; shows signs of improvement.
Naval Artillery—								
(B.) Nelson Navals ...		3	60	63	56	61	2	A very good infantry company.
Greymouth Navals		3	52	55	42	55	...	This company has gone back; there was no drill-shed.
Westport Navals ...		2	64	66	47	58	8	A very good infantry company.
Total ...		8	176	184	145	174	10	
Field Artillery—								
H Battery ...		3	52	55	42	52	3	Fair knowledge of theoretical work; no practical knowledge. The guns are useless.
Rifle Companies—								
Westland Rifles ...		3	70	73	61	63	10	Fairly good; has improved slightly.
Nelson City Rifles ...		3	49	52	52	44	8	Much improved.
Stoke Rifles ...		2	47	49	38	35	14	Much improved.
Blenheim Rifles ...		3	71	74	63	70	4	This will be a very good company.
Waimea Rifles ...		3	48	51	48	43	8	Much improved.
Kumara Rifles ...		3	57	60	50	57	3	Has improved. The subaltern officers never have a chance of drilling the company.
Greymouth Rifles ...		2	55	57	51	57	...	There was no drill-shed. I was obliged to inspect in the dark. The company did fairly well.
Blenheim City Rifles ...		3	48	51	34	51	...	No officer; only one sergeant present at inspection. This company is in a very unsatisfactory state.
Brunnerton Rifles ...		3	51	54	36	54	...	No improvement.
Totara Rifles ...		1	49	50	20	49	1	No improvement; a bad spirit exists in this company.
Total ...		26	545	571	453	523	48	
Grand total ...		40	821	861	672	749	112	

87 per cent. capitated.

MEDICAL DEPARTMENT.

A NUMBER of gentlemen of the medical profession give their time and frequently spend their money freely for the benefit of the Volunteer Force.

In many of the companies and corps a proportion of the men are instructed in ambulance work, but in others nothing of the kind is attempted.

There is no system of organization, and none is attempted except during Easter Camps. Surgeon-Major De Latour, Principal Medical Officer, Otago District, does more in the way of organization than I have found in other districts.

There was no medical officer at the camp at Kaituna, in the Canterbury District. It is fortunate that no serious consequences resulted. No artillery practice should be carried out unless a medical officer is present.

It has been reported to me that medical officers attending camp and taking medical comforts for the benefit of the men in camp have frequently to bear the expense thereof, being unable to recover the amount. This is not right, and very possibly was the reason why no officer went to the Kaituna Camp. They are justified in arguing that it is useless their going without medicines, and, although perfectly willing to go, they do not feel called upon to expend their own money in supplying medicines.

CADET CORPS.

The following return shows the various cadet companies in the colony, with their strengths, and the amount of allowance paid to each during the past year.

The Wanganui Collegiate School Cadets, the Wellington College Cadets, the Nelson College Cadets, the Kaiapoi Rifle Cadets, the Queen's Cadets, and the Dunedin High School Cadets are very good companies.

The St. John's College Cadets, the New Plymouth School Cadets, the Blenheim School Cadets, the Christ's College Cadets, the Christchurch High School Cadets, the Palmerston South High School Cadets, and the Tokomairiro High School Cadets are good companies.

The remainder of the cadet companies which I have inspected during the past year are not up to the standard of the above companies. In most cases the work done was simply setting up and recruit drill.

There are in all thirty-seven companies of cadets, and the difficulty of instructing such a number of companies is very great.

It would be extremely beneficial if all the companies could be raised to the same state of proficiency as those reported upon as being very good.

Several applications have been received from Auckland for the formation of cadet companies. If there is a reasonable prospect of such companies receiving good instruction it would be wise to form them. Indifferently-instructed cadets are worse than useless, as they from the commencement get into slovenly and careless habits.

Return of Cadet Corps, showing Strength, and Amount of Annual Allowance paid each Corps, on the 28th February, 1895.

District.	Corps.	Strength.	Allowance paid.
Auckland ...	St. John's College Rifle Cadet Volunteers ...	55	£ 20
East Coast ...	Napier High School Naval Artillery Cadet Volunteers ...	40	...
Taranaki ...	New Plymouth School Rifle Cadet Volunteers ...	42	15
Wanganui ...	Wanganui Collegiate School Rifle Cadet Volunteers ...	106	20
" ...	Wanganui Boys' Public School Rifle Cadet Volunteers ...	44	20
Wairarapa ...	Masterton School Rifle Cadet Volunteers ...	51	...
Wellington ...	Wellington College Rifle Cadet Volunteers ...	49	20
" ...	Mount Cook School Rifle Cadet Volunteers ...	62	20
Nelson ...	Nelson College Rifle Cadet Volunteers ...	61	20
" ...	Westport School Rifle Cadet Volunteers ...	43	...
Marlborough ...	Blenheim Borough School Cadet Volunteers ...	60	20
" ...	Tuamarina School Cadet Volunteers ...	24	...
North Canterbury ...	Christ's College Rifle Cadet Volunteers ...	56	20
" ...	Christchurch Boys' High School Cadet Volunteers ...	60	20
" ...	Kaipoi Rifle Cadet Volunteers ...	46	20
" ...	Queen's Rifle Cadet Volunteers ...	40	20
South Canterbury ...	Timaru High School Cadet Volunteers ...	46	15
" ...	Temuka District High School Cadet Volunteers ...	47	10
Oamaru ...	Oamaru High School Cadet Volunteers ...	47	15
" ...	Oamaru North School Cadet Volunteers ...	48	20
" ...	Oamaru South School Cadet Volunteers ...	47	20
" ...	Waitaki High School Naval Cadet Volunteers ...	43	20
" ...	Palmerston South High School Cadet Volunteers ...	47	20
Dunedin ...	Union Street School Cadet Volunteers ...	65	10
" ...	Normal School Cadet Volunteers ...	62	10
" ...	South District School Cadet Volunteers ...	51	10
" ...	Arthur Street School Cadet Volunteers ...	81	10
" ...	Outram School Cadet Volunteers ...	45	Disb.
" ...	Dunedin High School Cadet Volunteers ...	53	20
" ...	Lawrence District High School Cadet Volunteers ...	50	20
" ...	North-east Valley School Cadet Volunteers ...	60	10
" ...	Albany School Cadet Volunteers ...	62	10
" ...	Tokomairiro High School Cadet Volunteers ...	39	20
" ...	George Street School Cadet Volunteers ...	69	10
" ...	Balclutha School Cadet Volunteers ...	50	...
Southland ...	Invercargill Middle School Cadet Volunteers ...	50	15
" ...	Woodlands School Cadet Volunteers ...	41	...
		1,942	500

REPORT ON WORK DONE BY THE DEFENCE FORCES DURING EASTER ENCAMPMENTS, 1895.

I have the honour to report as follows on the work done by the Defence Forces at the camps held during Easter holidays, 1895:—

Camps were organized in the Auckland, Wellington, Canterbury, Otago, and Nelson Districts.

In the Auckland District there was one camp, at Devonport, in which camp the whole Force of the district was ordered to assemble.

In the Wellington District there were four separate camps:—(A.) At Mahanga Bay, under Major Messenger, Permanent Artillery, in which camp were assembled all the available Permanent Artillery and the men of the Wellington and Petone Naval Artillery affiliated to the working of the heavy guns. (A2.) At Shelly Bay, also under command of Major Messenger, in which the available men of the Torpedo Corps and the men of the Petone Naval Artillery affiliated to submarine-mining work were assembled. (B.) At Feilding, where the whole of the cavalry, mounted infantry, infantry, and naval artillery not affiliated to the heavy guns were assembled. The four Nelson corps, under Lieut.-Colonel Pitt, V.D., commanding the Nelson District, were also ordered to this camp, and, as Lieut.-Colonel Pitt, V.D., is senior to Lieut.-Colonel Newall, the command of the Force devolved on him. (C.) At Island Bay, where the D Battery was ordered to carry out a course of practice.

In the Canterbury District there were two camps:—(A.) At the forts protecting Lyttelton Harbour, where the available Permanent Artillery, Submarine Mining Corps, Lyttelton Naval Artillery, and N Battery Garrison Artillery were assembled, under Major Sir A. P. Douglas, Bart., Permanent Artillery. (B.) At Kaituna, where the whole of the cavalry, mounted rifles, field artillery, infantry, and naval artillery corps not affiliated to the heavy guns, and the engineer company were assembled, under Lieut.-Colonel Gordon, commanding the district.

In the Otago District there were four camps:—(A.) At Taiaeroa Heads, where the Permanent Artillery, Torpedo Corps, and Dunedin and Port Chalmers Naval Artillery were assembled, under Captain Morrison, Permanent Artillery. (B.) At Waitati, where the naval artillery not affiliated to the heavy guns, the engineer company, and the infantry companies were assembled, under command of Major Callan. (B2.) At Waikouaiti, where the Otago Hussars and North Otago Mounted Rifles were assembled, under Captain Chaffy, North Otago Mounted Rifles. (C.) At Warrington, where three batteries of field artillery were assembled for practice, under Captain Rice.

In the Nelson District, at Greymouth, where the Westland corps were assembled, under Lieut.-Colonel Bonar, V.D.

The numbers assembled in these various camps were:—

District.	Camp.	Present in Camp.				Absent.				Total.			
		Permanent Force.		Volunteer Force.		Permanent Force.		Volunteer Force.		Permanent Force.		Volunteer Force.	
		Officers.	Men.	Officers.	Men.	Officers.	Men.	Officers.	Men.	Officers.	Men.	Officers.	Men.
Auckland...	Devonport ...	4	44	28	392	...	...	3	157	4	44	31	549
Wellington	Mahanga Bay	1	30	3	49	...	...	...	51	1	30	3	100
	Shelly Bay ...	1	30	2	18	...	...	1	46	1	30	3	64
	Feilding ...	6	15	55	803	...	...	7	284	6	15	62	1,087
	Island Bay ...	...	1	1	41	...	...	...	12	...	1	1	53
	Total ...	8	76	61	911	...	...	8	393	8	76	69	1,304
Canterbury	Lyttelton Har- bour	1	20	2	63	...	...	1	34	1	20	3	97
	Kaituna ...	2	3	38	495	...	...	3	366	2	3	41	861
	Total ...	3	23	40	558	...	...	4	400	3	23	44	958
Otago ...	Taiaeroa Heads	1	30	6	54	...	...	...	90	1	30	6	144
	Waitati ...	2	6	28	399	...	...	13	421	2	6	41	820
	Waikouaiti ...	...	...	6	76	...	...	...	48	...	...	6	124
	Warrington ...	...	1	6	70	...	...	2	88	...	1	8	158
	Total ...	3	37	46	599	...	...	15	647	3	37	61	1,246
Nelson ...	Greymouth ...	1	1	16	256	...	...	3	117	1	1	19	373
	Grand total	19	181	191	2,716	...	...	33	1,714	19	181	224	4,430

NOTE.—The Thames Naval Artillery, the Te Awamutu, Waiuku, and Marlborough Mounted Rifle Companies, the Blenheim and Blenheim City Rifles, and the F and H Batteries were not ordered to camp. The strength of these corps is not included. Three companies—the Riversdale, East Taieri, and Naseby—did not attend the camp, and one—the Kaitangata—was represented by seven men. All corps ordered to attend camp were warned that unless half the minimum strength attended the corps would be disbanded.

The camps were held with the object of testing the defence of the four chief ports, and of ascertaining the value of the defence forces. Orders were issued for this purpose.

I regret that in the Auckland District the result was very unsatisfactory.

In the Wellington District there was an excellent muster of infantry and mounted rifles at Feilding, and of the D Battery at Island Bay, but all work was prevented by continuous rain and gales.

In the Canterbury District there was a good muster of field artillery, infantry, and mounted men at Kaituna. Very good work was done for the first thirty-six hours, but after that such bad weather prevailed that nothing more could be attempted.

Very excellent work was done by the Otago Volunteers, but three companies did not attend camp.

From the reports of the officers in charge I find that generally it was found impossible for the majority of the men of the naval artillery companies to remain in camp during the encampment. In consequence of the representations of their officers, who stated that unless the men were allowed to leave on Saturday they would lose their means of livelihood, a number of men were allowed to leave. It was therefore impossible to keep the guns in readiness.

It is with very great satisfaction that I am able to report that the conduct of the Volunteers at each camp was excellent. The men in camp in the Wellington, Canterbury, and Otago Districts experienced the most inclement weather and the most trying circumstances. Those who were in camp at Feilding were all late in returning to their homes, the Nelson contingent not reaching that town until the Sunday after Easter.

Under the circumstances, all ranks showed an excellent spirit; and it is most satisfactory that a strong desire to help the Government, in making no demand except for actual food, was evident. It is also most pleasing to note that the employers recognised that the difficulty was one for which their men could in no way be blamed, and that they at once took their men on again.

From my personal observation in the Otago District, I am satisfied that a great step forward has been made. Officers and men were most keen and anxious to learn their work and to go through any hardships.

The outpost line defending Dunedin was held by day and by night during rain and hail without a murmur. The march of the mounted men from Waikouaiti, starting at 10 a.m. on Saturday morning, pitching their camp at Warrington at 5 p.m., reconnoitring the defending outposts at 10.30 p.m., and, after an arduous night-march, attacking and penetrating the defending line at day-break on Sunday, was an excellent piece of work.

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