

virtues and possibilities. The Governor, the press, local businessmen and Wellington *prominenti* were marshalled most effectively to support the cause.

I have dwelt on the Wellington Boys' Institute since it seems to reflect in microcosm what was going on in different forms elsewhere in Australasian cities. The Boys' Brigade was the Institute's first uniformed training arm, boasting two companies and ninety boys in the early 1890s under Captain Alfred Armstrong, a warehouseman and traveller. But he was also a petty officer in the Wellington Naval Artillery²⁴ and it came as no surprise therefore when in 1896, 'The Boys' Brigade, which has done such useful work at the Institute was gazetted as a naval cadet Company'. The Institute Committee was guided in this move by 'several local volunteer Officers' anxious, it seems, to 'improve the drill and *esprit de corps* of the brigade'.²⁵ The naval brigade, which also took some root at Port Chalmers, was a peculiarly Australasian and American deviation from W. A. Smith's norms, and was particularly successful in Melbourne between 1902–1910.²⁶



First church parade of Boys Brigade, Port Chalmers, 1 December 1901.
Photo Neg. 94355½

After about 1908–1910 when the 'scouting mania' gripped the boy (and girl) world of Britain and the Empire, the Institute moved quickly to organize its own troops and, still very much in keeping with the times, the Boys' Institute Cadets were formed circa 1907 and flourished sixty-three strong in 1910. 'The Cadet Corps, the