

1879.
NEW ZEALAND.

VOLUNTEER FORCE OF NEW ZEALAND

(REPORT ON).

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

No. 1.

The Hon. Colonel WHITMORE to His Excellency the GOVERNOR.

SIR,—

Defence Office, Wellington, 10th July, 1879.

I have the honor to transmit to your Excellency the reports of the officers appointed to inspect the Volunteer forces of the colony during the past year, together with a statement showing the numbers at present enrolled.

From these reports your Excellency will be able to form an opinion of the condition of the several corps.

It is my duty to bring to your notice that volunteering has very greatly increased during the past year, and that the Volunteer spirit has spread widely throughout the colony.

Three very creditable demonstrations by Volunteers, at considerable expense to themselves, have taken place at Dunedin, Auckland, and Invercargill; and at each place it has been proved that a considerable body of trained men can be, at a very short notice, brought together from distant districts.

The Volunteer Rifle Association meeting at Nelson was a marked success, and will be, I trust, the first of a series of such meetings in the future.

It has been with great pleasure that I have received from the Thames, Wellington, Christchurch, Timaru, Oamaru, Temuka, Picton, Cromwell, and Queenstown corps offers of assistance in the event of any outbreak on the West Coast, proving that the military spirit created by the formation of Volunteer corps is a reality, and not, as is too often believed, only an illusion.

In order to foster the Volunteer spirit the Government intend to ask Parliament to follow the recent English precedent, and to increase the capitation grant on certain conditions.

Moreover, in accordance with the arrangements now being made at Home, it is proposed to invite the co-operation of the Force in rendering the clothing of the several corps more uniform; and, if possible, to arrange that at Volunteer demonstrations detachments of several corps may act in companies and battalions, with a similar dress and appearance.

As a step in this direction the Volunteer Artillery is now formed into a regiment, with the same uniform and system throughout, and officers have been appointed to it by election.

It is proposed to carry out further improvements in regard to this branch of the service, including a regular inspection by a competent scientific officer.

The Volunteer Cavalry has during the past year kept up its former efficiency. Your Excellency, while in the Waikato, having personally inspected the strongest corps, it is unnecessary for me to call your attention to its soldierlike appearance.

There are many other corps, not so numerous, but equal in point of discipline and efficiency, which will at a future time hope to be similarly honored by your Excellency's inspection and approval.

I cannot conclude without informing your Excellency that on the West Coast, as soon as our relations with the Natives appeared to be critical, and when the regular-paid force of the colony in the locality was hardly sufficient to inspire a feeling of security in the district, the settlers came forward so readily to enrol themselves for the defence of the country and to maintain law and order that in ten days the large number of 1,500 Volunteers were under arms and training.

I have, &c.,
G. S. WHITMORE.

His Excellency Sir Hercules George Robert Robinson, G.C.M.G.

Small Arms and Ammunition.

Rifles, &c.—In Store and on Issue on 30th June, 1879—

Snider (all sizes)—On issue	...	...	...	...	6,053
In store	...	...	...	...	866
Expected from England	...	...	...	...	3,400
Enfield—In store	...	...	...	...	9,642
On issue	...	...	...	...	1,788

1—H. 15A.

<i>Ammunition—</i>								
Snider—In store	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1,485,822
Enfield—In store	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	969,165
Snider (expected from England)	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	500,000
<i>Cadet Arms—</i>								
Carbines	{ Muzzle-loaders	{ On issue	...	...	...	...	...	845
			{ In store	...	...	...	...	53
	{ Terry's	{ On issue	...	...	...	...	...	783
			{ In store	...	...	...	...	90
Ammunition	{ Muzzle-loaders—(Enfield ammunition used).	{ Terry—In store	...	...	...	...	...	131,317
		

RETURN of VOLUNTEERS on 30th June, 1879.

District.	Cavalry.	Artillery.	Engineer.	Rifle.	Naval.	Total.	Cadets.	Remarks.
Auckland	...	91	89	389	106	675	153	
Waikato	65	...	...	211	...	276	76	
Waikato	197	...	...	79	...	276	...	
Taranaki	67	...	...	918	...	985	...	
Wanganui, Patea, and Rangitikei	260	...	...	789	...	1,049	54	
Wellington and Wairarapa	...	76	...	370	176	622	247	
Napier	...	61	68	...	...	129	24	
Poverty Bay	...	60	...	60	...	120	...	Increase since 1st Aug., 1878:—
Bay of Plenty	33	...	...	107	...	140	...	North Island.
Thames	...	...	158	450	161	769	115	Adults ... 2,207
TOTAL NORTH ISLAND	622	288	315	3,373	443	5,041	669	Cadets ... 64
Nelson	...	79	...	197	52	328	168	South Island.
Marlborough	...	...	...	272	...	272	202	Adults ... 317
Canterbury	100	128	65	182	...	475	138	Cadets ... 64
Oamaru	...	65	...	174	...	239	98	
Dunedin	...	197	...	698	180	1,075	816	
Invercargill	...	153	...	137	...	290	91	
Lake	...	...	...	204	...	204	71	
Westland	...	...	...	108	...	108	55	
TOTAL SOUTH ISLAND	100	622	65	1,972	232	2,991	1,639	
TOTAL ALL NEW ZEALAND	722	910	380	5,345	675	8,032	2,308	

RETURN showing the DISTRIBUTION of ORDNANCE, on 30th June, 1879.

Distribution.	Armstrong.			24-pr. Howitzers.	7-ton Guns.	64-pr. Guns.	4½ Mortars.	Iron Guns, various.	Remarks.
	40-pr.	12-pr.	6-pr.						
A. C. Force, Taranaki	2	...	
Auckland	1	...	2	...	...	...	...	1	
Thames	2	...	...	...	...
Napier	2	...	...	...	2	...	
Wellington	4	...	...	...	...	...
Christchurch	...	1	...	1	...	...	...	...
Timaru	1	...	...	...	...
Nelson	...	2	1	...	...	...	...	2	
Dunedin	...	2	1	2	...	...	...	2	
Invercargill	...	1	...	1	...	...	...	...
Oamaru	1	...	...	...	...
Port Chalmers	1	...	...	...	2	
On issue to Volunteers	1	6	10	9	...	...	4	7	
In store	1	11	11	7	7	
Total	1	6	10	10	11	11	11	14	

RETURN of the STRENGTH of the VOLUNTEER FORCE, and How Armed.

District.	Corps.	Lieutenant-Colonel.	Majors.	Captains.	Lieutenants.	Sub-Lieutenants.	Surgeons.	Assistant-Surgeons.	Staff Sergeants.	Sergeants.	Trumpeters or Buglers.	Rank and File.	Total all Ranks.	Sniders.			Cadet Arms.		Enfield Rifles.	
														Cavalry Carbines.	Artillery Carbines.	Rifles.	Muzzle-loading Carbines.	Terry's Carbines.		
Auckland	Staff	1							2				3							
	A Battery Artillery			1	1	1				5	1	82	91		76					
	Engineers...			1	1	1		1		3	1	81	89				64			
	Victoria Rifles			1	1	1				6		69	78				89			
	No. 3 Rifles			1	1	1				5	1	57	66				61			
	Hobson Rifles			1	1	1				4	1	74	82				80			
	Otahuhu Rifles			1	1	1				3		46	52				63			
	Scottish Rifles			1	1	1				4	1	51	59				55			
	Whangarei Rifles*												52							
	Naval Brigade			1	2	1				6	1	95	106		90					
	Engineer Cadets			1	1	1				5		66	74			3	59			
Grammar School Cadets	Artillery		1	1	1				2		74	79								
Waiuku	Staff	1							1				2							
	Waiuku Cavalry			1	1	1				4	1	57	65	56						
	Forest Rifles			1	1	1				3	1	49	56				68			
	Pukekohe Rifles			1	1	1				3	1	39	46				65			1
	Tuakau Rifles			1	1	1				3		54	59				55			
	Wairoa Rifles			1	1	1				3		44	50				43			
	Forest Cadets												11				17			
	Tuakau Cadets												23				14			
Pukekohe Cadets												42				11				
Wanganui and Rangitikei	Staff	1							1				2							
	Alexandra Cavalry			1	1	1		1		4	1	48	57	40						
	Wairoa Cavalry			1	1	1				5	1	48	57	58						
	Hawera Light Horse Cavalry			1	1	2				6	1	84	95	89						
	Patea Light Horse Cavalry			1	1	1		1		4	1	39	48	53						
	Wanganui Rifles			1	1	1		1		6	1	87	98				90			
	Royal Rifles			1	1	1				5	1	62	71				72			
	Palmerston North Rifles			1	1	1		1		4		71	79				70			
	Waverley Rifles			1	1	1				3		54	60							55
	Normanby Rifles			1	1	1				2		61	66				58			5
	No. 1 Hawera Rifles			1	1	1		1		2		49	55							130
No. 2 Hawera Rifles			1	1	1				5		45	53								
Patea	No. 1 Carlyle Rifles			1	1	1				5	1	48	57							62
	No. 2 Carlyle Rifles			1	1	1				5	1	59	68							66
	Manutahi Rifles			1	1	1				2		24	29							45
	Feilding Rifles*												75							
	Kaikaramea Rifles			1	1	1				4		52	59							56
	Wanganui Cadets			1		1				4		48	54				22	27		1
Waikato	Staff	1							1											
	Te Awamutu Cavalry			1		2	2			8	1	106	120	125						
	Cambridge Cavalry			1	1	1				5	1	68	77	58						
	Hamilton Rifles												79							
Taranaki	Staff	1							1											
	Taranaki Mounted Rifles			1	1	1				5	1	58	67	66						
	No. 1 Taranaki Rifles				1	1		1		5	1	52	61				75			
	Waitara Rifles			1	1	1				4	1	53	61				60			
	No. 1 Inglewood Rangers			1	1	1				4		57	64				70			
	Bell Block Rifles			1	1	1				5	1	50	59							62
	Urenui Rifles			1	1	1				2		30	35				36			
	Okato Rifles			1	1	1				3		48	54				60			
	Omata Rifles			1	1	1				2		39	43							43
	No. 2 Inglewood Rangers			1	1	1				2		53	58							59
	No. 2 Taranaki Rifles			1	1	1				3	1	29	36				50			
	No. 3 Taranaki Rifles			1	1	1				4	1	67	75							80
	Manutahi Rifles			1	1	1				4		73	80							90
	Tikorangi Rifles			1	1	1				2	1	25	30							28
	Oakura Rifles			1	1	1				2		37	41							36
	Kent Road Rifles				1	1				2		24	28							32
	Mangorei Rifles				1	1				2		22	25							25
Waitara West Rifles			1	1	1				2		34	38							40	
No. 3 Inglewood Rangers			1	1	1				1		91	95							101	
No. 4 Inglewood Rangers			1	1	1						29	31							35	
Wellington	Staff	1							1				2							
	D Battery Artillery			1	2	1		1		5		67	76		71					
	City Rifles			1	1	1				6		61	70				60			
	Makara Rifles			1	1	1				3	1	53	60				60			

* New corps.

RETURN of the STRENGTH of the VOLUNTEER FORCE, and How Armed—continued.

District.	Corps.	Lieutenant-Colonel.	Majors.	Captains.	Lieutenants.	Sub-Lieutenants.	Surgeons.	Assistant-Surgeons.	Staff Sergeants.	Sergeants.	Trumpeters or Buglers.	Rank and File.	Total all Ranks.	Sniders.			Cadet Arms.	
														Cavalry Carbines.	Artillery Carbines.	Rifles.	Muzzle-loading Carbines.	Terry's Carbines.	Enfield Rifles.
Wellington—continued.	Kaiwarawara Rifles	...	...	1	1	1	...	...	...	4	1	45	53	...	...	49	...	...
	Naval Brigade	...	...	1	2	1	...	...	...	...	...	172	176	...	120	...	...	...
	Artillery Cadets	...	...	1	1	1	...	...	...	4	...	54	61	...	3	...	63	...
	City Cadets	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	51	56	...	...	...	55	...
	College Cadets	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	33	34	...	...	...	6	...
	Te Aro Cadets	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	4	...	90	96	...	...	24	...	...
	Staff	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...
	Greytown Rifles	...	...	1	1	1	...	...	...	4	...	46	53	...	...	75	...	...
	Masteron Rifles*	...	...	1	1	1	...	...	...	4	...	66	73	...	...	...	...	...
	Carterton Rifles*	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	60	61	...	...	...	...	...
Napier	Staff	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...
	F Battery Artillery	...	...	1	1	1	...	...	...	4	...	54	61	...	78	...	...	...
	Engineers...	...	...	1	1	1	...	...	...	4	1	60	68	...	78	...	...	...
	Artillery Cadets	...	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	2	...	20	24	...	...	...	30	...
Poverty Bay	J Battery Artillery...	...	...	1	1	1	...	1	...	3	1	52	60	...	...	100	...	...
	Gisborne Rifles	...	...	1	1	1	...	...	...	7	1	49	60	...	...	92	...	...
Opotiki	Bay of Plenty Cavalry	...	...	1	1	1	...	...	...	3	...	27	33	44	...	...	...	...
	Queen's Native Rifles†	...	...	1	1	3	...	...	...	4	...	98	107	...	...	...	...	...
Thames	Staff	...	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...
	Engineers...	...	...	1	1	1	...	...	...	8	1	148	160	...	100	...	...	...
	No. 1 Scottish Rifles	...	...	1	2	1	...	...	...	5	1	120	130	...	...	110	...	...
	No. 2 Scottish Rifles	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	4	1	95	102	...	...	85	...	...
	No. 3 Scottish Rifles	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	58	60	...	...	60	...	...
	Rifle Rangers	...	...	1	2	1	...	...	...	5	1	109	119	...	...	90	...	...
	Native Volunteers	...	...	1	1	1	...	...	...	2	...	41	46	...	...	40	...	...
	Naval Brigade	...	...	1	2	2	...	...	...	6	1	146	158	...	130	...	...	...
	Scottish Cadets	...	...	1	1	1	...	...	...	3	...	38	44	...	...	51	...	...
	St. George's Naval Cadets	...	...	1	1	1	...	...	...	4	...	60	67	...	...	...	45	...
Nelson	Staff	...	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...
	H Battery Artillery	...	...	1	1	1	...	...	...	5	...	71	79	...	58	...	...	...
	City Rifles	...	...	1	1	1	...	...	...	3	...	57	63	...	...	77	...	...
	Stoke Rifles	...	...	1	1	1	...	...	...	4	...	56	63	...	...	74	...	...
	Waimea Rifles‡	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	71	...	...	...	...	...	...
	Naval Brigade	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	3	...	47	52	...	60	...	...	...
	Artillery Cadets	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	4	...	36	41	...	...	46	...	...
	College Cadets	...	...	1	1	1	...	...	...	2	...	66	71	...	...	56	...	...
Marlborough	Staff	...	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...
	Picton Rifles	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	4	1	69	75	...	...	56	...	...
	Spring Creek Rifles	...	...	1	1	1	...	...	...	4	...	69	76	...	...	75	...	...
	Renwick Rifles	...	...	1	1	1	...	...	...	4	...	52	59	...	...	45	...	...
	Blenheim Rifles	...	...	1	1	1	...	...	...	4	1	54	62	...	...	65	...	...
	Picton Cadets	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	5	...	84	91	...	...	23	...	10
	Blenheim Cadets	...	...	1	1	1	...	...	...	6	...	102	111	...	...	71	...	...
Canterbury	Staff	...	...	1	2	...	...	1	2	...	...	...	6	...	...	...	...	...
	Canterbury Yeomanry Cavalry	...	...	1	1	1	...	1	...	4	1	104	113	59	...	...	...	...
	C Battery Artillery	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	4	1	53	61	...	40	...	...	...
	E Battery Artillery	...	...	1	1	1	...	...	...	5	1	54	64	...	52	...	...	...
	Engineers...	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	3	1	66	73	...	...	40	...	...
	No. 1 Canterbury Rifles	...	...	1	1	1	...	1	...	3	1	53	61	...	...	20	...	...
	No. 5 Canterbury Rifles	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	2	1	48	52	...	...	37	...	1
	City Guards	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	6	1	77	86	...	...	46	...	...
	High School Cadets	...	...	1	1	1	...	...	...	2	1	45	51	...	...	37	...	...
Oamaru	Staff	...	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...
	I Battery Artillery	...	...	1	1	1	...	...	...	3	...	58	65	...	50	...	...	...
	Oamaru Rifles	...	...	1	1	1	...	...	...	5	1	60	69	...	...	74	...	...
	Hampden Rifles	...	...	1	1	1	...	...	...	4	...	40	47	...	...	50	...	...
	Otepopo Rifles	...	...	1	1	1	...	...	...	4	...	51	58	...	...	40	...	...
	High School Cadets	...	...	1	1	1	...	...	...	4	...	47	54	...	...	30	...	15
Dunedin	Staff	...	...	1	...	...	...	5	...	...	...	...	6	...	...	...	...	...
	B Battery Artillery	...	...	1	1	1	...	...	...	6	...	113	122	...	100	...	...	...
	L Battery Artillery‡	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	75	...	...	...	...	...

* New corps. † Not armed. ‡ New corps; not armed.

RETURN of the STRENGTH of the VOLUNTEER FORCE, and How Armed—*continued.*

District.	Corps.	Lieutenant-Colonel.	Majors.	Captains.	Lieutenants.	Sub-Lieutenants.	Surgeons.	Assistant-Surgeons.	Staff Sergeants.	Sergeants.	Trumpeters or Buglers.	Rank and File.	Total all Ranks.	Sniders.			Cadet Arms.		Enfield Rifles.
														Cavalry Carbines.	Artillery Carbines.	Rifles.	Muzzle-loading Car-bines.	Terry's Carbines.	
Dunedin— <i>contd.</i>	City Guard Rifles ...	...	1	1	1	1	...	...	...	6	1	108	119	...	...	100	...	...	...
	North Dunedin Rifles ...	...	1	1	1	1	...	1	...	5	1	59	68	...	...	67	...	...	...
	South District Rifles ...	...	1	1	1	1	...	...	...	4	...	45	52	...	...	55	...	...	...
	No. 1 Waikari Rifles ...	...	1	1	1	1	...	...	...	5	1	47	57	...	...	80	...	...	...
	No. 2 Waikari Rifles ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4	1	41	48	...	...	...	...	...	...
	Bruce Rifles ...	...	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	3	...	48	54	...	...	57	...	...	...
	East Taieri Rifles ...	...	...	...	1	1	1	...	1	...	4	...	56	64	...	60	...	...	...
	West Taieri Rifles ...	...	...	...	...	1	1	...	1	...	5	1	36	45	...	46	...	...	...
	Clutha Rifles ...	...	...	...	1	1	1	...	1	...	4	...	63	71	...	73	...	...	...
	Waikouaiti Rifles ...	...	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	3	1	49	55	...	...	39	...	...	...
	Portobello Rifles ...	...	...	...	1	1	1	...	...	4	...	56	63	...	...	50	...	...	...
	Dunedin Naval ...	...	...	...	1	1	1	1	...	...	5	...	94	103	...	81	...	...	...
	Port Chalmers Naval ...	...	...	...	1	1	1	...	...	8	1	65	77	...	77	...	...	...	...
	No. 1 City Guard Cadets ...	...	...	...	1	1	1	...	...	3	...	38	44	...	...	...	...	49	...
	High School Artillery Cadets ...	...	...	...	1	1	1	...	...	5	...	70	78	...	...	...	...	50	...
	High School Rifle Cadets ...	...	...	...	1	1	1	...	...	4	...	50	57	...	...	...	...	2	...
	North District School Cadets ...	...	...	...	1	1	1	...	...	4	...	93	100	...	...	...	...	100	...
	South District School Cadets ...	...	...	...	1	1	1	...	...	5	...	47	55	...	...	...	...	44	...
	Middle District School Cadets ...	...	...	...	1	1	1	...	...	5	1	91	100	...	...	...	...	49	...
	Tokomairiro Cadets ...	...	...	...	1	1	1	...	...	2	...	54	59	...	...	...	...	39	...
	Normal School Cadets ...	...	...	...	1	1	1	...	...	7	...	90	100	...	...	...	...	85	...
	Waikouaiti Cadets ...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	4	...	36	41	...	...	...	...	40	...
	Sandymount Cadets* ...	...	...	...	1	1	1	...	...	3	...	47	53	...	...	...	...	...	...
	Dunedin Naval Cadets ...	...	...	...	1	...	1	...	...	5	...	81	88	...	...	...	80	...	...
	Port Chalmers Naval Cadets... ..	...	...	...	1	1	1	...	...	4	1	34	42	...	...	...	30	...	...
	Invercargill ...	Staff ... ..	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	3	...	...	...	...	...	...
G Battery Artillery ... ..		...	1	2	...	...	...	...	4	1	47	55	...	80	...	...	...	...
K Battery Artillery ... ..		...	1	1	1	...	1	...	6	1	58	69	...	75	...	...	...	...
Garrison Band ... ..		...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3	...	26	29	...	...	...	...	...	...
Invercargill Rifles ... ..		...	...	1	1	1	...	...	5	2	51	61	...	...	57	...	...	...
Riverton Rifles ... ..		...	...	1	1	1	...	...	5	...	68	76	...	...	40	...	...	...
Artillery Cadets ... ..	...	...	1	1	1	...	...	5	1	82	91	...	...	...	...	60	...		
Lake	Staff ... ..	...	1	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	Arrow Rifles ... ..	...	1	1	1	...	...	5	1	62	71	...	...	66	...	...	...
	Queenstown Rifles ... ..	...	1	1	...	1	...	6	1	50	60	...	...	47	...	...	...
	Cromwell Rifles ... ..	...	1	1	1	...	...	8	2	60	73	...	...	60	...	...	...
	Queenstown Cadets ... ..	...	1	1	...	...	...	2	...	34	38	...	...	...	...	...	20	...	
	Arrow Cadets* ... ..	...	1	1	1	...	...	4	...	26	33	...	...	...	...	...	...
Westland	Staff ... ..	...	1	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...
	1st Westland Rifles ... ..	...	1	1	1	...	...	5	1	48	57	...	...	121	...	...	...
	Greymouth Rifles ... ..	...	1	...	1	...	...	3	...	46	51	...	...	50	...	...	...
	Hokitika Cadets ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	14	...	...	...	26	...	5		
Greymouth Cadets ... ..	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	40	41	...	...	60	...	...	

* Not armed.

Enclosure 1 in No. 1.

Colonel LYON to the UNDER SECRETARY for DEFENCE.

SIR,—

Cambridge, 16th July, 1879.

I have the honor to forward my report of inspection of the Thames Volunteers for the information of the Hon. the Defence Minister.

The Thames District comprises one company of Engineers, one Scottish Battalion of three companies, one of Rifle Rangers, one Native Company and Naval Brigade, two companies of Cadets—one attached to the Scottish and the other to the Naval.

Annexed is a state showing the number of each company at inspection parade.

I inspected each company separately on the evenings of the 7th, 8th, 9th, and 10th of April.

In consequence of want of space (my inspections being held in the Public Hall), there was no possibility of drilling the several companies, further than proving them and putting them through the manual and platoon exercise, which were in general satisfactorily performed.

I carefully examined the arms and accoutrements, which were in good order.

I was unable to see the Naval Brigade at gun practice, being obliged to leave earlier than I intended, in order to be back in Waikato in time to make arrangements for the review to be held at Hamilton on Easter Monday.

The Thames Volunteers are particularly zealous, and take a great amount of interest and pride in all volunteer matters. I had heard much about them, especially the Scottish and Naval Brigade, and

my expectations were not disappointed. In efficiency I would place the several corps in the following order: Scottish, Naval, Engineers, Rifle Rangers, and Native Company. The red coat and helmet of the Scottish adds much to the appearance of the men, and I would like to see all infantry corps adopt that colour and head-dress.

I may mention that there is no parade ground or large central hall available for the Volunteers, each company having to pay rent for the use of a hall.

With regard to the Cadet Companies I consider there is room for improvement. Much difficulty is experienced in enforcing regular attendance.

I have further to report, on Easter Sunday, the Volunteers to the number of 480 all ranks, under command of Major Murray, and accompanied by Colonel Fraser, honorary colonel of the Scottish Volunteers, arrived at Hamilton by special train, to take part in a review on Easter Monday, and were billeted in the township.

On that day, at 9 a.m., the several companies fell in on their private parades, and at 9.30 marched to the place selected for the review. The Waikato Cavalry, numbering 133 all ranks, under command of Major Jackson, preceded them. I arrived on the ground at 10 a.m., and was received by a general salute, the brigade being formed in line at open order. The march past, both by cavalry and infantry, was performed in a very soldierlike manner; the subsequent manœuvres were, upon the whole, conducted to my satisfaction; an advance in line was particularly steady. The skirmishing was the weak point, which is to be regretted; but it can scarcely be a matter of surprise, when it is taken into consideration what little opportunity there is of practising Volunteers in that most essential part of their drill. The theory may be taught in a drill-shed, but constant practice in the open is required to make efficient skirmishers.

The absence of continuous drill is an impediment to Volunteers attaining real efficiency in the field. If, however, the several corps in a district could be brigaded for a week at a time twice in the year under canvas, I believe it would have a most satisfactory result. There is no want of intelligence among the men; they showed great aptitude for instruction, and quickly conformed to the orders received; and I was much pleased with their steadiness and discipline generally. Silence and good order were maintained in the ranks, and there was little or no hurry and confusion, except when skirmishing.

The Waikato Cavalry turned out with their usual promptness. There were but few absentees, and those unavoidable.

The order and regularity with which the Volunteers conducted themselves from the time of leaving the Thames until their return have been reported upon in a most satisfactory manner by Major Murray and officers commanding corps. No casualty occurred; nor was a single complaint brought to my notice during their stay in Hamilton. Their conduct throughout was orderly and soldierlike.

I have, &c.,

The Under Secretary for Defence,
Wellington.

WILLIAM C. LYON, Lieut.-Colonel,
Commanding Waikato District.

ANNUAL RETURN OF VOLUNTEERS Inspected by Lieut.-Colonel LYON.

Corps.	Hon. Colonels.	Majors.	Captains.	Lieutenants.	Sub-Lieutenants.	Adjutants.	Surgeons.	Assistant-Surgeons.	Veterinary Surgeons.	Staff Sergeants.	Sergeants.	Trumpeters or Buglers.	Band.	Rank and File.	Total all Ranks.	Total Strength last Return.	Increase during the Month.	Decrease during the Month.
Hauraki Engineers ...	...	...	1	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	6	1	20	77	107	...	...	...
Scottish Battalion—																		
No. 1 Company ...	1	1	...	2	1	1	1	...	...	...	5	1	30	78	121	...	...	...
No. 2 Company ...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	5	1	...	81	88	...	...	...
No. 3 Company ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	34	36	...	...	...
Thames Rifle Rangers ...	...	...	1	2	1	...	...	...	...	...	5	1	15	64	89	...	...	...
„ Native Volunteers ...	...	...	1	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	5	...	...	36	41	...	...	...
„ Naval Volunteers ...	...	...	1	1	2	...	...	...	...	...	7	1	15	124	151	...	...	...
Cadets—																		
Thames Scottish ...	...	...	...	1	1	1	...	...	...	...	3	...	...	42	48	...	...	...
St. George's Navals ...	...	...	...	1	1	1	...	...	...	...	3	...	...	37	42	...	...	...

REMARKS.—The above shows the men inspected by Colonel Lyon as per the company parade states.—T. L. MURRAY, Major.

Enclosure 2 in No. 1.

Lieut.-Colonel PACKE to the UNDER SECRETARY for DEFENCE.

SIR,—

Militia and Volunteer Office, Christchurch, 21st April, 1879.

According to instructions contained in your letter No. 49, of the 6th March last, I have the honor to state, for the information of the Hon. Colonel Whitmore, that, immediately after the conclusion of the meeting of the New Zealand Rifle Association, I commenced inspecting the Nelson Volunteers.

I beg to report on each corps in detail, and have placed a number with each corps, corresponding with a like number on the parade states, the whole of which I attach hereto.

(1.) *Stoke Rifles*.—This company paraded at Richmond, six miles from Nelson, the head-quarters of the corps, on Saturday, the 15th March. I found the arms and accoutrements in excellent order. They were practised in company drill and skirmishing, and both officers and men acquitted themselves to my satisfaction. I may mention that Lieut. Paynter, the ex-rifle champion, is an officer in this corps.

(2.) *H Battery of New Zealand Artillery*; (3.) *Artillery Cadets*.—I inspected this battery on Monday, the 17th March, together with the cadets. There was a very good muster of each corps. The guns, arms, and accoutrements were in excellent order. The gun-drill was very steady and good. I was much pleased with the way the cadets worked the 6-lb. Armstrong. I had to find fault with both corps for unsteadiness in the ranks when at marching drill. This battery are dressed in the regulation artillery uniform, with helmets instead of busbies. It is a smart-looking serviceable dress.

(4.) *Nelson City Rifles*; (5.) *City Cadets*.—These two companies were inspected by me on Wednesday, the 18th March. Their arms and accoutrements were in good order, but I discovered that one or two rifles had been cleaned with emery powder, and I would suggest that a circular should be sent to each district warning Volunteers against using this, for I feel sure that it is only ignorance of the bad effect upon the weapon that induced the men I speak of to use it. Their drill was very creditable.

(6.) *Nelson Naval Volunteers*.—Of this corps there was a remarkably good attendance, considering it was a very wet night. Their arms were in very good order, and on parade their appearance is most smart-looking and effective. The drill they went through was well done, but owing to the noise of the rain on the roof of the shed it was impossible to hear anything. I went out one afternoon in the boat belonging to this corps, when the crew appeared to be well up in their work.

(7.) *Nelson College Cadets*.—At noon on Thursday, the 20th March, I inspected the College Cadets. They have no uniform at present. Their carbines were in very fair order, but a great deficiency of snap-caps and stoppers. Captain Mackay, the commanding officer of this corps and second master, suggested to me that when the new carbines arrived, if he were allowed twelve, he would be personally responsible for their being kept in good order, and that they should be kept only for a squad of boys for the purpose of rifle practice, as no more than that number would be allowed to go out at once. The boys were drilled for some time by Staff Sergeant-Major Alborough, and acquitted themselves very well.

Normanby Hussars.—This corps I did not inspect, as I was informed by Major Pitt that he had already recommended that they should be disbanded. This ended my inspection in Nelson. And, in conclusion, I beg to report to the Hon. Colonel Whitmore most favourably upon the general efficiency of Major Pitt, commanding the district, and the officers under his command; also upon the good feeling existing between the officers and volunteers of the different corps, and upon the general interest in the Volunteer movement taken by the public of Nelson. Whilst in Nelson I inspected in numbers as follows:—

	Officers.	Volunteers.
Stoke Rifles	2	44
H Battery	3	58
City Rifles	3	41
Naval Brigade	3	39
Total	11	182
Artillery Cadets	1	29
City "	2	33
College "	3	48
	6	110

I arrived in Auckland from Nelson on Monday, the 24th March, and commenced on Tuesday, the 25th, by inspecting the corps marked in the margin.

(8.) *Victoria Rifles*; (9.) *Auckland Scottish*; (10.) *Hobson Rifles*.—I regret to say that a heavy thunderstorm with torrents of rain prevented a very full muster. The arms and accoutrements were in very good order. The companies were put through company drill by their respective officers, after which Major Derrom, the officer in charge of the district during the absence of Major Withers, took over the battalion, and put it through the usual evolutions. With the exception of the Victorian Rifles, I had some fault to find with the want of steadiness, but I must commend the steadiness in the ranks and the wheeling of the Victorian Rifles, showing the attention paid to their drill and discipline by their commanding officer, Major Derrom.

(11.) *Auckland Engineers*.—On the following evening I inspected the Engineers, of whom there was a very good muster. The arms and accoutrements were in very good order, and they were put through company drill and bayonet exercise, and acquitted themselves to my entire satisfaction. I was informed that money had been granted to this corps for the purpose of procuring proper engineering tools, &c. I cannot conclude the report on this corps without paying a compliment to their most excellent band, under Bandmaster Impey. It is the best I have as yet heard in this country. On the 27th March the Auckland Artillery paraded for inspection.

(12.) *Auckland Artillery, A Battery*.—The guns, carbines, and accoutrements were in excellent order, and after each officer had exercised the battery in marching drill, detachments were taken without picking out of the ranks, and I was much pleased with the smart manner in which the gun drill, as well as dismantling, was performed. I had to find fault with the marching drill, which was not so steady as it might have been, and also for considerable talking in the ranks.

(13.) *No. 3 Rifles*; (14.) *Naval Brigade*.—On the 28th March I inspected these corps. There was a very good muster of each, and, with the exception of a few carbines, with the cleanliness of which I had to find fault, the arms and accoutrements were in good order. The two companies, formed into three as a battalion, were put through the manual and platoon by the subaltern officers, after which they were drilled as a battalion by Major Morrow, the officer commanding No. 3 Rifles, with whose company I was much pleased.

I was much struck with the appearance of the Naval Brigade, who numbered 82 of all ranks present on parade. They reflect the greatest credit upon their commanding officer, Captain Le Roy, whose only grievance was that he had twenty more men than carbines. This company was exercised in the cutlass exercise, which was done most creditably.

Before dismissing the parade this evening, Major Morrow brought to my notice, on behalf of the Rifle Volunteers of Auckland, the inferior weapons with which they are armed. I expected before this to have an official report sent to me, which I requested previous to leaving Auckland; but I promised that I would bring this matter before you in my report.

I regret extremely that I was unable, owing to illness, to complete the whole of the inspections according to instructions. I inspected seven corps in the City of Auckland, leaving undone the Otahuhu Rifles, Artillery Cadets, and Engineer Cadets, the parade states of which have been since forwarded to me by Major Derrom.

Whilst in Auckland I inspected in numbers as follows:—

	Officers.	Volunteers.
Victoria Rifles	3	46
Auckland Scottish	2	30
Hobson Rifles	3	52
Auckland Engineers	2	63
A Battery, Auckland Artillery	3	63
No. 3 Rifles	3	43
Auckland Naval Brigade	2	80
Total	18	377

I attach a return forwarded to me by Major Derrom.

The Under Secretary for Defence.
Wellington.

I have, &c.,
GEO. PACKE,
Lieut.-Colonel.

ANNUAL INSPECTION RETURN OF VOLUNTEERS, 31st March, 1879.

Corps.	Lieut.-Colonel.	Majors.	Captains.	Lieutenants.	Sub-Lieutenants.	Adjutants.	Surgeons.	Assistant-Surgeons.	Veterinary Surgeons.	Staff and Colour-Sergeants.	Sergeants.	Trumpeters or Buglers.	Farriers and Shoeing Smiths.	Rank and File.	Total all Ranks.	Total Strength.	Increase during the Month.	Decrease during the Month.
Artillery Company	1	1	1	...	...	...	...	1	4	1	...	57	66	91	...	...
Engineer Company	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	2	1	...	60	65	84	...	...
Victoria Company	1	1	1	...	...	...	...	1	3	...	...	42	49	82	...	...
Auckland Volunteers, No. 3 Company	1	1	1	...	...	...	...	1	4	...	...	38	46	65	...	...
Hobson Company	1	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	51	55	99	...	...
Otahuhu Company
Scottish Company	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	29	32	62	...	...
Naval Brigade	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	3	...	1	...	76	82	113	...	...
Artillery Cadets	7	4	7	...	...	...	...	6	15	3	...	353	395	596	...	...
Engineer Cadets	1	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	49	54	62	...	...
Total	9	6	9	...	...	...	...	7	19	3	...	434	487	733	...	...

JAMES DERROM, Major,
Commanding Auckland Volunteer District.

Enclosure 3 in No. 1.

Major WITHERS to the UNDER SECRETARY for DEFENCE.

SIR,—

Auckland, 23rd June, 1879.

Having received instructions to inspect the Volunteers at Gisborne, Napier, Wellington, the West Coast of the Middle Island, and the Lake District for the past volunteer year, I beg to report that I left Auckland on the 10th of February for Gisborne, where I arrived on the afternoon of the 13th; but, as there was no communication between the town and the steamer until 5 p.m., and no boat coming off again that night, I considered it better to proceed to Napier at once, rather than be detained in Poverty Bay several days, and to inspect the Volunteers at Gisborne on my return.

NAPIER DISTRICT.

The first corps paraded was the Artillery (F Battery). I found it much changed since I had left the district (only six months), several of the old members having resigned, whose places had been filled by recruits who do not by any means add to the efficiency of the corps; nevertheless, I found them well clothed, arms, accoutrements, &c., clean and in good order. They acquitted themselves very fairly at squad, company, and gun drill.

The next corps paraded was the Engineers, a very fine body, and for the time they have been in training they drill very well. The captain complains he has not a sufficiency of rifles, only 60 stand for 77 men; but I presume this can easily be remedied by his making application for more. The cadets, the last corps inspected, have fallen off very much in point of numbers; but those I saw drilled passably well.

WELLINGTON DISTRICT.

In this district the first corps paraded was the Kaiwarawara Rifles. I minutely inspected their clothing, arms, and accoutrements; they were clean and in good order. I directed one of the sergeants to prove them as a company, and the lieutenant to put them through the manual and firing exercises. The captain then put them through marching drill, including the different formations—from a company in line to a company in column—front forming company from fours, from both flanks, counter-marching, &c., in some of which they were a little unsteady. This I consider is wholly attributable to the non-attendance of a few of the members at the weekly drills of the company.

The next corps seen were the City Rifles and Cadets, whose clothing, arms, and accoutrements were clean and in good order. They performed the manual and firing exercise, forming fours, &c., pretty well; but in the limited space in which they paraded (the engine-house of the Fire Brigade) it was impossible thoroughly to judge of their efficiency.

The next companies I inspected were the Artillery (D battery), with the Artillery Cadets. These, like the last-mentioned, were seen to very great disadvantage from want of space, having paraded in the same building. I found them uniform in dress; arms and accoutrements clean and in good order. They were subjected to the same drill as the last-named companies, which they performed to my satisfaction.

I would here bring to notice the great disadvantage the Wellington companies labour under from the want of a proper drill-shed, as it is impossible to manœuvre them in the building in which they now assemble.

I did not inspect the Makara Company through want of time, intending to see them on my return from the Southern districts; but was then instructed to proceed to Wanganui at once, to inspect the Volunteers there.

CHRISTCHURCH DISTRICT.

In this district there are nine corps—the Yeomanry Cavalry, the Christchurch and Timaru Batteries of Artillery, four companies of Rifles, and the High School and Timaru Artillery Cadets—the majority of whom have a fair knowledge of drill in its various branches. Their clothing, arms, and accoutrements were clean and in good order. I must make exception, in all these respects, in the case of No. 5, or the Kaiapoi Corps, in which neither the officer, Lieutenant Perrin, nor his men seemed to have any knowledge of drill; many of them were not in uniform, attendance at parades very irregular, and the company is twelve below the minimum strength, as shown by their state. Taking all things into consideration, I think it desirable they should be disbanded.

With regard to the Cavalry, I was informed that it would be impossible to get a good muster, as they were so scattered. I was therefore requested to postpone my inspection till after I had visited places further South, as they would then be assembled for six days' consecutive training, on which occasion I should be likely to see the whole corps. For some reason the training did not come off at the time appointed, consequently I had no opportunity of seeing them; but from what I could ascertain they are a fine body of men, and well-mounted.

OAMARU DISTRICT.

The number of corps in this district is six: one of artillery, three of rifles, and two of cadets. Their clothing, arms, and accoutrements were clean and in good order, and they drill very fairly, with the exception of the Hampden Company, the officers of which did not understand their work, causing the men to drill badly; but when taken in hand by Major Stewart, the officer commanding the district, they did much better in this respect.

DUNEDIN DISTRICT.

In this district there are 27 corps, including the Head-quarters and City Guard Bands and the Cadets, the whole of which I inspected, except the West Taieri, which I was prevented seeing as there was no communication with the place, the bridge having been carried away by the floods. In many cases the attendance was very small compared with the numbers on the roll, excepting the B battery of Artillery and most of the cadet corps. The majority of the latter belong to the different schools in the city, and were marched direct from the school to the parade ground. This would account for their large attendance.

The appearance of the different adult corps was very good, and they, with one exception, drilled well; but those of which I must make special mention are: the B Battery of Artillery, who paraded 78 of all ranks; the City Guards; the North Dunedin Rifles; Waikari Rifles, Nos. 1 and 2 Companies; Bruce Rifles; East Taieri Rifles; and the Dunedin and Port Chalmers Naval Brigades.

The corps I have alluded to above is the Portobello Rifles, which did not drill well, neither did their officers understand their work.

The cadet corps which merited the greatest commendation are the High School Artillery (an exceptionally fine corps), the City Guards, the Normal School, Middle District School, High School Rifles, and the Dunedin and Port Chalmers Naval Cadets.

The corps I have omitted in the foregoing list were greatly deficient in steadiness, except the Sandymount, who are not armed: they performed preliminary and marching drill very well.

INVERCARGILL DISTRICT.

I inspected the Garrison Band on the night of my arrival, 29 members on parade. Their uniform is neat and effective. They played exceedingly well, and I consider them about the best Volunteer band in New Zealand, and a credit to their conductor.

There are five corps in this district, not including the Riverton Cadets.

The adult corps comprise the G and K Batteries of Artillery, and the Invercargill and Riverton Rifle Corps.

The G Battery, considering the short time they have been embodied, drill well, and at the time of my inspection had only been in possession of carbines about a fortnight.

The K Battery gave me great satisfaction as regards their uniform, the condition of their arms, and the manner in which they drilled.

The Invercargill Rifles presented a very military appearance; they drilled well. Their clothing, arms, and accoutrements were all in excellent order.

The Riverton Rifles were very deficient in their knowledge of drill. It appears that they have been very much neglected by their captain, who, I am informed, is about to resign; in which case they have a prospect of securing the services of an efficient officer.

The cadet corps are two in number—the Artillery and the Riverton.

The Artillery paraded without carbines, the reason assigned for which was that they had been taken into store to enable the officer commanding the district to see them previous to his signing the capitation roll. Their uniform was clean, and they performed preliminary and marching drill very fairly.

The Riverton Cadets paraded only 10 in number, without officers or non-commissioned officers arms, accoutrements, or uniform, and knew little or nothing of drill. I would therefore recommend, their services be discontinued.

QUEENSTOWN.

In this district there are in all five corps: three adult and two cadet. The adult corps are the Queenstown, Arrow, and Cromwell Rifles, all the members of which, with the exception of 10 recruits (six in the Cromwell, and 4 in the Arrow), were in uniform. Arms and accoutrements clean and in good order, and their knowledge of drill quite as good as the average.

The Arrow Cadets are without arms. Captain Aldred informed me he had applied for them, and had been promised that when a supply arrived from England he should get what he required. They were put through the different movements in marching drill, turnings, &c., which they performed very steadily.

The Queenstown Cadets presented a most wretched appearance. Some few of them paraded in worn-out red coats and forage caps, the remainder in their ordinary dress; and on inquiring how it was I was informed it was owing to some bad management on the part of their late captain. Their present commanding officer assured me he was only waiting the receipt of the capitation allowance for 1878-79 when he would procure new uniforms for them. This corps also paraded without carbines, having lent them to the Arrow corps to enable them to fire for the Government prizes. They were put through preliminary and marching drill, in which they were by no means proficient, and were very unsteady.

WANGANUI DISTRICT.

There are in this district two corps of cavalry, three of infantry, and one of cadets. At the time appointed for my inspection of the Wanganui Cavalry I found only one officer (Lieutenant Somerville) and four troopers on the ground. This was owing to the unavoidably short notice given, the members of the corps almost without exception residing many miles from the parade ground. The same cause prevented me from seeing the other troop, and I was led to understand it would take at least a week's notice to insure a large attendance; but upon inquiry Major Noake, the officer in command of the district, informed me that both corps were in an efficient state.

I inspected the Wanganui Rifles. They were all in uniform; arms and accoutrements very clean. They were proved by one of the sergeants, put through the manual and firing exercise by the lieutenant, and the captain then put them through the bayonet exercise and marching drill; the whole of which was performed with precision.

I next inspected the Palmerston Rifles, a corps whose services have only been accepted some four months. As might be expected, they are not yet supplied with uniform. Their arms, accoutrements, &c., were clean. The Drill Instructor put them through the manual and firing exercise, also preliminary drill by numbers, and marching drill, which they performed very fairly. This promises to be a fine company.

The next corps seen was the Marton Rifles, and I regret to say they have very little idea of the simplest rudiments of company drill, which is accounted for by the fact that the majority of them are mere recruits.

I inspected the Wanganui Cadets. This corps has two kinds of carbines—the Terry and the muzzle-loader—which is very detrimental to their efficiency. Their arms, &c., were clean, but not in serviceable order. They were very unsteady at drill.

GISBORNE.

I inspected the Gisborne Rifles, and found everything clean and in good order. They were put through the usual drill, which they performed very unsteadily. This I have no doubt is attributable to the fact that they have never had the advantage of a Sergeant Drill Instructor. Since my return to Auckland the officer commanding the district has informed me by letter that there is a sergeant of the Armed Constabulary, a man in every way competent, who would undertake this duty for a small addition to his present pay—2s. per diem; and I would recommend that his services should be secured.

Having given a faithful report as to the efficiency or otherwise of the various Volunteer corps I inspected, I shall now refer to their equipment.

ORDNANCE.

Some of the artillery corps in the Middle Island have the 24-pounder brass howitzer and 24-pounder battery guns on issue to them. These I would recommend should be taken into store as soon as possible, to be replaced by 6-pounder Armstrong guns, at the rate of two to each battery.

The gun-carriage of the Dunedin or B Battery is in a very rotten and unsafe state from long use. I would suggest that a new one should be supplied, as I do not think it possible the one they have could be repaired.

SMALL ARMS.

I heard great complaints from many of the officers and men with regard to the inaccuracy of their rifles as to the sighting, rendering it almost impossible to make good scores when at target practice.

The Terry carbines, with which most of the cadet corps are armed, are completely useless. I could not have credited their perfectly worn-out state if I had not examined them, scarcely one of them being complete in all its parts. Two of the corps, the Oamaru Grammar School and the Wanganui, are armed with two different descriptions of carbines—the Terry and the muzzle-loader. This is a great drawback to the efficiency of these corps, as the firing drill varies considerably. I would therefore recommend that the whole of the carbines at present on issue to the corps mentioned should be replaced by new ones with as little delay as possible.

ACCOUTREMENTS.

The majority of the Volunteers I inspected had their own accoutrements (corps property); the remainder were supplied with the plain brown-leather belts and pouch issued by the Government.

I think too much importance cannot be attached to the uniforms of Volunteers. At present each corps is allowed to choose the colour and style of its own clothing: the result is an almost endless variety, which is never so forcibly seen as when large bodies are massed together, as was exemplified at the late Invercargill demonstration, where three or four different-coloured uniforms were displayed in each division of a battalion. I scarcely need add that the effect is most unmilitary and objectionable.

I would venture to suggest that each arm of the service should have a special uniform: for instance—cavalry, blue jumper with cord breeches and leggings of leather, with hunting spurs, and forage cap similar to that worn by the Waikato Cavalry; artillery and engineers, blue; infantry rifles green, with scarlet facings; the naval brigade as at present.

With regard to the various corps I inspected I must in justice state that I consider the majority of them very efficient—that both officers, non-commissioned officers, and men understood their duties, and evinced great interest in their work; and, if circumstances should ever occur requiring their services in the defence of their country, I am convinced they would be found both able and willing to respond to the call.

By referring to the states it will be seen that the numbers on parade were in many instances very small. This is wholly attributable to the fact of the inspection taking place during the harvest time, when many of the men were employed at long distances from their homes, and all were unusually busy; and I would strongly urge the advisability of future inspections taking place at least two months earlier, beginning at the South and working northwards: the South would then be seen before the harvest commenced, and the North after shearing was over.

I cannot conclude this report without mentioning the favourable impression made on me by the Sergeants Drill-Instructors in each district. I found them zealous, intelligent, hard-working men, well fitted in every respect for their positions.

Should there be any necessary information omitted I shall, if called upon, be most happy to supply the deficiency.

When I had finished my inspection of the Lake District, I returned to Invercargill, where I arrived on the evening of Good Friday, and as the great Volunteer demonstration was to take place on the Monday following, I deemed it advisable to remain there, that I might be present on the occasion. As it was in no way connected with my duties as Inspecting Officer, I took no part in the proceedings. I propose, however, to give my impression of the review, together with a few particulars. As a whole, I consider it was a great success, and calculated to be of vast advantage to Volunteering in general throughout the colony, as a means of stimulating others to follow so laudable an example, at the same time giving them some idea of how large bodies of troops should be manœuvred.

As will be seen from the following statistics, there were more than 1,000 of all ranks on the ground. These were divided into three battalions of six divisions: No. 1, commanded by Captain Jack, of the Dunedin Artillery; No. 2 by Major Wales, of the Otago Rifle Volunteers; No. 3 by Major Lean, of the Canterbury Volunteers. These officers exhibited considerable skill in the manner in which they handled their men.

The Brigade was formed into line of column at deploying distance. They then deployed into line on the leading divisions of battalions at the double, and took open order to give the general salute. The Brigade was then inspected by Lieut.-Colonel Stanley; the ranks were then closed. They then performed several other movements, among the rest moving off in echelon of battalions and forming square. This was rather well done, particularly by No. 3 battalion, which had the advantage of having its divisions equalized. They then reformed quarter-column and marched past, first in column; counter-marched, returning in mass of quarter-column; counter-marched again, returning at the double, which finished the day's proceedings.

E. WITHERS, Major,
Inspector of Volunteers.

RETURN of the VOLUNTEER FORCE seen by me at the period of Inspection, showing the number of each on parade and those absent, with their different causes assigned.

Name of Commanding Officer and District.	Corps.	Actual enrolled Strength at period of Inspection.	Numbers present at Inspection Parade.	Members absent with leave.	Numbers absent with-out leave.	Sick.
ADULTS.						
Napier, Major Routledge	Artillery, F Battery	65	45	16	3	1
	Engineers	77	57	15	5	...
Wellington, Major Stack	Artillery, D Battery	73	32	18	23	...
	Kaiwarrawarra Rifles	56	39	10	7	...
	City Rifles	61	41	9	9	2
Canterbury, Lieut. - Col. Packe	Artillery, E Battery	61	37	6	16	2
	Kaiaipoi Rifles	38	23	3	11	...
	City Guards	82	51	...	31	...
	Engineers	63	30	6	27	...
	Temuka Rifles	54	34	20	...	...
	Timaru Artillery, G Batt.	67	29	...	28	...
Oamaru, Major Steward	Artillery, J Battery	61	19	17	25	...
	Oamaru Rifles	81	34	36	8	3
	Hampden "	47	23	13	10	1
	Otepopo "	48	24	34	...	...
Dunedin, Lieut.-Colonel Stavely	City Guard Band	21	14	7	...	...
	Head Quarters Band	22	17	4	1	...
	Artillery, B Battery	98	78	11	9	...
	City Guards	103	63	7	33	...
	North Dunedin Rifles	80	54	17	9	...
	South District "	50	26	3	21	...
	No. 1, Waikari Rifles	54	36	14	4	...
	No. 2, " "	51	35	8	8	...
	Bruce Rifles	51	36	14	1	...
	Portobello Rifles	64	40	24	...	...
	East Taieri "	66	44	13	7	2
	Waikouiti "	55	15	39	...	1
	Clutha "	70	24	46	...	...
Invercargill, Major Macrorie	Artillery, G Battery	63	38	3	22	...
	" K "	67	46	2	18	1
	Invercargill Rifles	56	40	12	4	...
	Rimtown "	53	34	18	1	...
	Garrison Band	34	23	6	4	1
Queenstown, Capt. Finn	Queenstown Rifles	63	43	18	1	1
	Arrow "	72	29	39	3	1
	Cromwell "	76	52	17	5	2
Wanganui, Major Noake	Wanganui "	100	52	2	31	15
	Palmersten "	77	54	9	11	3
	Masterton "	70	52	8	10	...
Gisborne, Sub.-Inspector Gudgeon	Gisborne "	64	40	5	6	13
	Total ...	2,514	1,403	550	412	49
CADETS.						
Napier, Major Routledge	Artillery Cadets	30	21	1	8	...
Wellington, Major Stack	City Rifle Cadets	61	45	1	9	2
	Artillery "	79	47	5	...	...
Canterbury, Lieut. - Col. Packe	Timaru Artillery Cadets	53	37	32	3	1
	High School "	53	35	12	19	...
Oamaru, Major Steward	Citizen "	50	28	...	14	...
	High School "	64	51	8	7	1
Dunedin, Lieut.-Colonel Stavely	Artillery "	73	73	5	...	...
	Waikouaiti "	42	30	...	...	...
	City Guard "	70	45	12	24	1
	Normal School "	100	92	...	...	...
	North Dunedin "	100	83	0	...	...
	South Dunedin "	60	49	11	...	...
	Middle District "	100	82	11	...	...
	High School "	56	54	18	...	...
	Sandy Mount "	54	39	15	...	...
	Dunedin Naval "	90	71	1	26	18
	Port Chalmers Naval "	51	26	3	4	...
Invercargill, Major Macrorie	Artillery Cadets	87	57	6	24	...
Queenstown, Capt. Finn	Queenstown Rifle Cadets	36	29	6	1	...
	Arrow Cadets	64	29	34	1	...
Wanganui, Major Noake	Wanganui Cadets	69	24	43	2	...
	Total ...	1,451	1,047	233	142	29

Enclosure 4 in No. 1.

Lieut.-Colonel PACKE to the UNDER SECRETARY for DEFENCE.

SIR,—

Militia and Volunteer Office, Christchurch, 7th April, 1879.

In accordance with instructions received from the Hon. Colonel Whitmore in your letter No. 33-2c of the 11th February, I have the honor to report for his information that I proceeded to Nelson from Lyttelton, arriving there on the 1st March, to take command at the meeting of the New Zealand Rifle Association, having with me on the staff Majors Noake, Baillie, and Lean.

Upon arrival we were warmly welcomed by the Bishop of Nelson, the Mayor, and a Reception Committee, after which the representatives were driven to town and dispersed to their several allotted quarters.

Whilst speaking of our arrival, I would take this opportunity of suggesting that, for the next meeting, the Union Steamship Company should be requested to place a larger steamer on the line, as the s.s. "Wellington" was unduly crowded, and was a source of the greatest discomfort, not only to the representatives, but also to the travelling public.

On Sunday morning the Nelson Volunteers and the representatives paraded for Divine service, and were marched to church, where the sermon was preached by the Bishop of Nelson, chaplain to the Volunteers. The total strength on parade was 290 of all ranks.

On Monday morning, the 3rd March, the representatives paraded at the drill-shed at 9 o'clock, when I addressed the parade, and informed them that I had appointed Major Noake camp adjutant, and that I expected strict discipline to be maintained during the meeting, and as long as they were Volunteers under arms. This was duly carried out.

They then marched to the railway station, arriving in camp at half-past 10. The site selected for the camp and ranges is situated on the Nelson and Foxhill line of railway, twelve miles from Nelson and about three minutes' walk from the Brightwater Station. I do not consider that a more advantageous position could have been selected, nor for the general convenience of competitors from the North and South Islands could a more suitable spot have been chosen than Nelson. I am informed by the oldest settlers that during February, when the meetings will take place, rain is very rare, with little wind and warm weather.

The camp and the butts were laid out by Armourer Christie, with his usual skill and diligence, and, as far as his work went, gave general satisfaction.

At 3 o'clock the first meeting of the New Zealand Rifle Association was declared open by the Hon. Major Richmond, Vice-President, and the first shot fired by Mrs. Pitt, the wife of the officer commanding the district.

No. 1 match then commenced, but considerable delay occurred by the discovery that the ranges were wrong in measurement. This was caused by the carelessness of one of the Range Committee, to whom the work had been intrusted. Considerable discontent was the consequence, as well as delay in remeasuring the ground.

I much regret to state that two days after arrival in camp I lost the valuable services of Major Noake, who was compelled, after much suffering, to leave the camp, and was confined to his room during the entire meeting.

I appointed Major Lean to the post of camp adjutant, who performed the duties of this office to my entire satisfaction.

I may here mention that a captain and subaltern of the day, as well as non-commissioned officers, were duly detailed for duty. The lights were extinguished at a stated hour, and strict order kept in the camp.

I beg to bring to the notice of the Hon. Colonel Whitmore the close attention to their duties paid by Majors Baillie and Lean, who remained in camp during the entire meeting, and were indefatigable in their attendance all day on the range. Also to Captain Wildman, of the Thames Naval Brigade, who, in the absence of Major Noake, volunteered his services, and performed the duties of staff officer with zeal and energy. Major Pitt's services were at my disposal when required, but his time was fully occupied during our stay with duties connected with his district.

Staff Surgeon Boor visited camp on several occasions, and treated Major Noake with the greatest skill and kindness. Beyond this there were only two slight cases of sickness during the meeting.

Mr. Stevens, the Secretary of the Association, performed his various duties with much satisfaction, but was unable to remain all night in camp owing to a recent severe illness.

The telegraph office opened in camp was of great service, and I wish to draw special attention to the manner in which Mr. Halliday in charge performed his duties. Cheerful and obliging, he gave satisfaction to every one.

I regret to state that the catering was a source of universal complaint. In no encampment have I ever seen the messing so bad.

The firing ended on Thursday morning, the 13th March, when a special train brought the competitors into Nelson, where, at 3 o'clock, the prizes were presented by Mrs. Suter, attended by the Hon. Major Baillie, Vice-President, in the absence, through illness, of the Hon. Major Richmond.

The Volunteers and representatives, to the number of 276, were present on parade under command of Major Lean. I inspected them before the presentation, after which they marched past, and were then dismissed.

Before concluding this report of this first and most successful meeting of the Association, I beg to record our most sincere thanks to the Mayor and citizens for their reception and welcome, also for their kind hospitality during our stay in Nelson.

I attach hereto a memorandum handed to me by Major Baillie, showing an approximate account of money paid by the Association.

I have, &c.,

GEO. PACKE,

Lieut.-Colonel.

The Under Secretary for Defence, Wellington.

By authority: GEORGE DIDSBURY, Government Printer, Wellington.—1879.

