

NELSON VOLUNTEER DISTRICT.

This District is commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Pitt, a Volunteer officer of considerable service. He is assisted by an Adjutant, Captain Littlejohn (who also commands the Nelson College Cadets), and by a drill-sergeant instructor.

The corps in the command, with the exception of the Naval corps at Westport, lie either in or close to Nelson, and are brought to that place once a month for battalion drill. It is quite impossible for either the Adjutant, who is a Volunteer officer and could not give the time, or the drill-sergeant (on account of expense and time involved), to visit the corps at Westport as frequently as is necessary. The corps is therefore thrown altogether on its own resources as regards the instruction of the recruits and men, and the result is not at all satisfactory.

On the other hand, the corps in Nelson and the immediate district are well cared for and have much time spent on them, and it is their own fault if they are not up to the mark. The uniform, except in the Nelson Naval corps, the H Battery, and the Cadet corps, is old and worn out, the Stoke Rifles having only serge frocks.

The rifles are in very many cases cleaned with emery-powder or sand-paper, the accoutrements are in bad condition, and the pouches are worn in different ways.

The standing drill (manual exercise, &c.) is very well taught, but there has been no opportunity for the men to learn outpost or reconnoitring work.

Colonel Pitt is a very good officer, taking a very great deal of interest in his command, and keeping it in better order than any other commanded by a Volunteer officer. He is very ably assisted by Captain Littlejohn, who is an exceptionally good officer and works very hard.

I regret to report that the drill-sergeant was too ill to appear, and that he has since died.

The band is composed of Volunteers belonging to the various corps, and is not a separate body as in other districts. The instruments are the property of the district. The corps give their bandmen their own capitation-money, and also find the uniform. In this, the district, which has a fund of its own, assists.

I recommend that H Battery be disbanded, and that in this district the Nelson Naval Artillery, two rifle corps, and the Nelson College Cadet corps be only kept up.

NELSON DISTRICT.—AFTERNOON PARADE, 18TH MARCH, 1893.

	Present.				Absent.
	Officers.	Non-commissioned Officers.	Privates.	Hon. Officers.	
H Battery	3	5	48	2	3
Naval Artillery Volunteers	1	4	55	2	5
City Rifles	2	4	42	2	9
Stoke Rifles	2	4	36	...	5
Waimea Rifles	2	4	40	1	3
College Cadets	2	4	50	...	7
Staff	5
Total	12	25	271	7	32

There was an excellent muster of all corps, and the work done was, on the whole, satisfactory.

The variety of uniforms and accoutrements and mode of wearing them was marked.

The manual exercise, firing exercise, and sword-bayonet exercise (as for Martini-Henry rifles with bayonets, an exercise not done elsewhere in the colony) were very well done, as was also some physical drill by the various corps.

The battalion movements were on the whole well done.

The attack formations were attempted, the Naval Artillery Volunteers and the City Rifles being in the firing-line. The Navals did well, but the City Rifles completely failed, the officers and non-commissioned officers being unable to lead their half-companies or sections. Captain Littlejohn, the Adjutant of the district, was in command during this manœuvre, and showed himself quite capable.

Lieutenant-Colonel Pitt, Major Franklin, and the various captains of corps put the battalion through some drill and movements.

The march past was creditably done.

All the honorary officers were present.

The band is in good order.

H BATTERY NEW ZEALAND ARTILLERY VOLUNTEERS.—18th March, 1893.

Uniform.—Artillery Volunteer; in good order.

Arms and Accoutrements.—Snider artillery carbine; white enamel belts; 3 6-pr. R.B.L. guns.

Officers.—Captain Hyde: Takes much interest in his work. Lieutenant Topliss: Painstaking officer. Lieutenant Wimsett: Painstaking officer.

Non-commissioned Officers.—Good class.

Men.—Fine body of men.