

1946
NEW ZEALAND

MILITARY FORCES OF NEW ZEALAND

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CHIEF OF THE GENERAL STAFF

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

REPORT

The Hon. the MINISTER OF DEFENCE.

Wellington, 20th June, 1946.

SIR,—

I have the honour to submit the following report on the New Zealand Military Forces for the period 1st June, 1945, to 31st May, 1946.

GENERAL REMARKS

The period covered by this report has been marked by the final allied victory over the Axis Powers. The major problem confronting the New Zealand Army has therefore been the return to New Zealand of 2nd New Zealand Expeditionary Force, and the progressive demobilization of both this Force and units on home service.

Thanks to the very generous provision of shipping by the British Ministry of War Transport, all New Zealand Army personnel in the Central Mediterranean theatre of war were returned to New Zealand by the end of March, 1946, with the exception of a small Rear Headquarters and Graves Concentration and Registration Units and the force of one brigade and ancillary units sent to Japan.

The total number of demobilizations (including women's Services) in the year under review is 40,441.

Further demobilization is governed by the return of overseas personnel, training requirements for overseas replacements, storage and maintenance of equipment and ammunition, and the response to the Interim Army proposals.

A relief for the Force serving in Japan has been recruited and trained in New Zealand, the first draft, in replacement of men with the longest service, now being on its way.

COMMANDS AND STAFF

On the 31st December, 1945, Major-General (temp. Lieutenant-General) Sir Edward Puttick, K.C.B., D.S.O., relinquished the appointments of General Officer Commanding the New Zealand Military Forces, Chief of the General Staff, and First Military Member of the Army Board.

Colonel (temp. Brigadier) N. W. McD. Weir, C.B., C.B.E., A.D.C. to the King, relinquished the appointments of Quartermaster-General, Army Headquarters, and Third Military Member of the Army Board, and was appointed Chief of the General Staff and First Military Member of the Army Board with the rank of Major-General as from the 1st January, 1946.

Lieutenant-Colonel (temp. Brigadier) G. B. Parkinson, C.B.E., D.S.O., was appointed Quartermaster-General, Army Headquarters, and Third Military Member of the Army Board as from 1st January, 1946.

ROYAL MILITARY COLLEGE OF AUSTRALIA

Five New Zealand Cadets were selected for entry to the Royal Military College of Australia in 1946. There are at present twenty New Zealand Cadets at the College.

REGULAR ARMY

The strength of the Regular Force is now 144 officers and 400 other ranks. Of the 400 other ranks, 131 hold temporary or N.Z.E.F. commissions.

The strength by Corps against the approved establishment in 1939 is :—

(a) Officers—				Present Strength.	Establishment.
N.Z. Staff Corps	..	..	..	104	130 officers. 20 officers.
Royal N.Z. Artillery	..	..	..	14	
N.Z. Ordnance Corps	..	..	..	9	
				<hr/> 127	<hr/> 150
(b) Other Ranks—				Present Strength.	
				Temporary Commissions.	
N.Z. Permanent Staff	..	..	..	70 officers	67 other ranks.
Royal N.Z. Artillery	..	..	..	39 „	168 „
N.Z. Ordnance Corps	..	..	..	12 „	31 „
N.Z. Permanent Army Service Corps	..	..	..	9 „	6 „
N.Z. Medical Corps	..	..	..	1 „	3 „
				<hr/> 131 officers.	<hr/> 269 other ranks.
				Establishment.	
				Quartermaster Commissions.	
N.Z. Permanent Staff	..	..	..	12 officers	162 other ranks.
Royal N.Z. Artillery	..	..	..	3 „	321 „
N.Z. Ordnance Corps	..	..	..	2 „	83 „
N.Z. Permanent Army Service Corps	..	..	..	..	45 „
N.Z. Medical Corps	..	..	..	..	7 „
				<hr/> 17 officers.	<hr/> 618 other ranks.

ARMY SCHOOL OF INSTRUCTION

The Army School of Instruction has continued to maintain a high standard of efficiency.

A total of 1,875 students has attended courses in signals, various trades, small-arms, engineering, and tactics. An O.C.T.U. has been established to provide officers for the Occupational Force in Japan.

ARTILLERY

The installation of heavy coast artillery guns at Auckland and Wellington is nearing completion. The technical proof-firing has been carried out at one Auckland site and will shortly be proceeded with at the Wellington Battery.

At all minor ports coast artillery equipments have been removed to main-centre storage, and at major ports equipments have been centralized where possible.

NEW ZEALAND JAYFORCE

Consequent upon the decision of the Government to send a Brigade Group as New Zealand's contribution to the British Commonwealth Occupation Force for Japan, 4,000 all ranks were retained in Italy after the departure of the main body of personnel returning to New Zealand and were despatched, together with equipment, to arrive in Japan about 20th March, 1946. With the exception of officers and certain specialists, this Force was constituted from the single men of 13th, 14th, and 15th Reinforcements.

In accordance with the Government's decision to return by July or August, 1946, personnel who went to Japan from Italy, a relief Force of volunteers was enlisted and trained in New Zealand, the first draft sailing in May, 1946. The response to the call for volunteers was good. Difficulties, however, have been experienced in obtaining sufficient qualified personnel to replace officers of the Engineer, Medical, and Dental Services at present in Japan.

ARMY ESTABLISHMENTS

The rate of demobilization of home-service personnel has been to a large extent dependent on the rate and number of personnel returning from overseas, as hospital, records, and movements staffs are required to deal with overseas personnel until their leave expires and they have been discharged. In addition, a large number of buildings and a great quantity of valuable equipment is still to be maintained or held pending disposal. The establishments of Army units are constantly under review, and much care has been taken to ensure that personnel are not being retained unnecessarily. The number of men and women on home service by 30th April, 1946, was 5,959.

At the time of the Japanese surrender in August, 1945, the numerical strength of the Army was :—

Overseas	..	..	..	..	..	..	37,312
In New Zealand	..	..	..	..	..	..	15,619
							<hr/> 52,931 <hr/>

The total strength of the New Zealand Army as at 30th April, 1946, was 14,933 all ranks, which includes 2 N.Z.E.F. Japan, the Victory Parade Contingent, and 4,181 Jayforce personnel in training within New Zealand.

RECOVERY OF ALLIED PRISONERS OF WAR AND INTERNEES

During the course of the year three recovery teams comprising 9 all ranks were despatched to the Far East for this duty.

Approximately 580 British personnel were interviewed before they returned to the United Kingdom, 170 statements by civilians (British and New Zealand) were received from the Commissioner of Police, and over 120 New Zealand service personnel have been interviewed.

ARMY EDUCATION AND WELFARE SERVICES

Army Educational Services were maintained throughout the year among New Zealand personnel in the Mediterranean, in the United Kingdom (prisoners of war), in the Pacific, and in New Zealand.

Vocational education has been carried out by tutorial classes in camps, technical and agricultural colleges, and by correspondence. The number of Army Education and Welfare Service correspondence students in New Zealand exceeded 3,500 in August, 1945, and is now approximately 1,800.

Following the cessation of hostilities with Japan, arrangements were put in hand for the transfer of Study Courses, Library Service, Current Affairs Section, and the Library of 400 films to civilian organizations.

To provide educational facilities for the New Zealand Occupation Force in Japan, a well-equipped Education Unit has been established within the Force.

WOMEN'S SERVICES

During the year under review there has been a reduction in the strength of the New Zealand Women's Auxiliary Army Corps on home service of 950 all ranks. Three hundred and forty-two W.A.A.C. personnel have returned from service in the Middle East, United Kingdom, and hospital ships, and have been discharged. Thirty-three W.A.A.C.s (Medical Division) went to Japan with 9 New Zealand Infantry Brigade, and the present strength of the Corps, both in New Zealand and abroad, is 797 all ranks.

HONOURS AND AWARDS

Up to 31st May, 1946, His Majesty the King approved the undermentioned honours and awards to members of the New Zealand Expeditionary Force for gallant and distinguished service in the field :—

Victoria Cross	5	A.R.R.C.	18
Bar to Victoria Cross	1	M.C.	252
K.C.B.	1	Bar to M.C.	13
K.B.E.	1	D.C.M.	107
C.B.	6	Bar to D.C.M.	1
C.B.E.	28	M.M.	589
D.S.O.	111	Bar to M.M.	4
Bar to D.S.O.	19	George Medal	1
O.B.E.	83	B.E.M.	72
M.B.E.	144	Mentioned in Despatches	2,283
R.R.C.	9		

During the war awards were made to members of the N.Z. Military Forces in New Zealand as follows :—

K.C.B.	1	M.B.E.	56
K.B.E.	2	R.R.C.	1
C.B.	4	A.R.R.C.	4
C.B.E.	6	B.E.M.	38
O.B.E.	28		

FOREIGN AWARDS

Foreign decorations have been awarded to members of the New Zealand Military Forces by Allied Nations as follows :—

U.S.A.	37
Greece	51
U.S.S.R.	1

MEDICAL SERVICES

The general health of troops during the past year has been good, and, apart from an extensive but transient outbreak of upper respiratory tract infection in the mobilization camps in August, 1945, there have been no reports of epidemic disease. The average hospital admission rate for the year was 0.87 per 1,000 troops per day—an even lower incidence than that recorded in 1944-45.

The total deaths from all causes during the year was 38, of which 19 were due to sickness, 11 the result of accident, and 8 from other causes.

As at 31st May, 1946, 64 medical officers were serving in the Army, of whom 31 were overseas and 8 on part-time service. There were 46 Nursing Sisters and 36 W.A.A.C. Voluntary Aids overseas at the same time.

Surplus medical stores have been disposed of to discharged medical officers, to public hospitals, to educational institutions, and various Government Departments. One hundred tons of medical supplies was disposed of to the Netherlands East Indies Government.

Optician Units have been disbanded as demobilization progressed, the only unit now operating being with 2 N.Z.E.F. (Japan). Visual treatment for New Zealand Service personnel has now been taken over by civilian practitioners. Since the inception of the Optician Service in 1942, 34,000 full visual examinations have been carried out and 22,000 pairs of service-pattern spectacles prescribed.

DENTAL SERVICES

Despite the cessation of hostilities, the New Zealand Dental Corps has been kept fully occupied in accordance with the policy in relation to dental treatment for personnel mobilized for full-time service with the New Zealand Armed Forces. Every endeavour is made to return these personnel to civil life in a state of dental fitness, a factor which will undoubtedly have a great bearing on the post-war dental health of the Dominion.

The following summary shows the dental treatments rendered to Navy, Army, and Air Force personnel in New Zealand and overseas for the year (corresponding figures for the previous twelve months being given in parentheses) :—

<i>Surgical Operations</i>					
Fillings	..	..	..	..	112,376 (251,951)
Teeth extracted	..	..	..	..	19,683 (44,555)
Prophylactic treatments	..	..	..	..	22,492 (38,839)
<i>Artificial Dentures—</i>					
Full dentures	..	..	..	..	3,893 (7,782)
Partial dentures	..	..	..	..	2,839 (4,049)
Dentures remodelled	..	..	..	..	4,674 (12,460)
Dentures repaired	..	..	..	..	8,687 (18,877)

ORDNANCE

Ordnance Establishments during the past year have been fully occupied with the consolidation, classification, and maintenance of the large stocks held, and with the receipts into permanent ordnance depots of stores previously held in rented accommodation now completely vacated. Further large disposals of surplus stores have been effected, and still further considerable surpluses have been declared to War Assets Realization Board and are at present held pending disposal instructions.

During the year all ammunition and explosives previously held by Ammunition and Equipment Section, Army Headquarters, have been taken over as an Ordnance responsibility, together with Coast Artillery, and equipment and stores previously held by that Section. Small-arms, machine guns, and bicycles held are being inspected, serviced, and preserved for storage. Ammunition of all calibres is being classified, inspected by the Inspecting Ordnance Officer's Branch, and progressively serviced and prepared for long-term storage.

STORAGE SPACE

The total storage space (including magazine accommodation) now occupied by Ordnance Services is 1,319,488 square feet, which meets all requirements except for that of the equipments at present held in the open at Waiouru Camp and in mess-rooms, barrack-rooms, and institutes at Waiouru and Linton. These equipments will, however, be stored under cover at Sylvia Park when the storage accommodation there becomes available to the Army.

All rented storage space occupied at the commencement of the year has been vacated. Stores released include Federal Street (Clothing Store), Auckland; Mills Lane Boot Store, Auckland; Glide Rink, Auckland; Showgrounds, Pukekohe; Farmers'

Co-operative Building, Wanganui; Thanes Building, Wanganui; Horsley's Garage, Wanganui; Taranaki Street (Bulk Store), Wellington; Todd Motors (Clothing Bulk Store), Victoria Street, Christchurch; New Zealand Railways Building (Clothing Bulk Store), Moorhouse Avenue, Christchurch; Briscoe's Building (Clothing Bulk Store), Dunedin; Otago Steam Laundry (Overseas Bulk Store), Dunedin.

RENTED PREMISES

Eighty-one tenancies, for which the annual rental totalled £17,845 7s. 6d., were released by the Army during the year. In the latter part of the year the rate of vacation of such premises was accelerated, and the figures for the coming year will show a further increase in the number of premises surrendered and a corresponding decrease in the annual rental paid.

LOAN AND GIFT BINOCULARS

The return of loan and gift binoculars to their original owners has progressed steadily. Of the 9,154 binoculars received by the Army Department under these headings, 8,264 have been returned.

IMPRESSED RIFLES

A total of 23,604 rifles was received by the Army under the regulations governing the impressment of rifles. Of this number, 22,793 have been returned to their original owners, or, where it has not been possible to return the rifle through loss or conversion, the owner has been paid compensation.

ARMS, AMMUNITION, AND EQUIPMENT

On the cessation of hostilities immediate action was taken to cancel outstanding orders placed overseas, with the exception of those for items required to complete equipments already in the country and maintenance and modification stores. The following table of yearly requisition values illustrates how these demands were equated to the war situation:—

Year ended						£
31st March, 1943	..	..	..	..	..	44,830,000
31st March, 1944	..	..	..	..	..	7,300,000
31st March, 1945	..	..	..	..	..	173,000
31st March, 1946	..	..	..	..	..	94,000

ORDNANCE WORKSHOPS

Work of a general nature in all shops has been fairly heavy, in spite of the closing down of units. It has been mainly the overhaul and repair of stores returned by units and the inspection and dismantling of stores for disposal by War Assets Realization Board. Machinery in all workshops has been maintained and is in excellent condition.

MOTOR TRANSPORT BRANCH

A total of 25,664 jobs has passed through Army motor transport workshops, including work for Navy and Air Force.

A vehicle-reception depot has been opened in each military district for the valuation and disposal by War Assets Realization Board of vehicle surpluses of Navy, Army, and Air Force. During the year disposals totalled over 6,000 vehicles, including 4,440 through War Assets Realization Board to Government Departments and the public, 616 to British Pacific Fleet, and 770 (principally motor-cycles) to United States authorities.

To assist rehabilitation, Motor Transport Equipment Section has operated a store selling £20,000 of used tools to 1,170 ex-servicemen.

DEFENCE SERVICES PROVISION OFFICE

During the year a total of 383,475 packages of a value of £4,892,537 was shipped overseas, comprising articles manufactured locally against orders placed by Eastern Group Supply Council and articles accepted by War Office from surplus holdings of the Services in New Zealand. Storage space for Provision Office has been reduced from 124,800 square feet to 84,000 square feet.

RATIONS AND SUPPLIES

The rations issued to troops in New Zealand for the year totalled 2,871,796, the average cost being 1s. 9-545d. per daily ration, an increase of 1½d. per ration on the last report.

The rations issued to Japanese prisoners of war totalled 219,451, at a cost of £14,676 3s. 8d. averaging 1s. 4d-05d. per daily ration, an increase of 1d. per ration.

The rations issued to Polish refugees at Pahiataua totalled 28,311 at a cost of £24,827 4s. 4d., an average of 1s. 8-66d. per daily ration.

Supplies shipped overseas totalled £61,504 16s. 5d., of which £58,009 has been paid for by Fiji Government. In addition, shipments of goods for sale in New Zealand Forces clubs have been made on behalf of the National Patriotic Fund Board, totalling for the year £157,123 11s. 3d.

Foodstuffs imported consisted entirely of dried and tinned fruit and rice to a value of £7,209 12s. 2d.

Surplus supplies of canned meat, vegetables, and candles were disposed of to United States Joint Purchasing Board, Government Departments, merchants, and for provisioning troopships, to a value of £16,247 12s. 9d.

The consumption of petrol in New Zealand for the year was 1,005,061 gallons, a reduction of nearly 500,000 gallons on the previous year.

Other fuel consumed in camps was—

Coal	..	..	..	..	..	10,426 tons.
Coke	..	..	..	..	..	2,266 tons.
Wood	..	..	..	..	..	3,036 tons.

MOVEMENTS

Movements conducted 39 embarkations, totalling 4,262 personnel, and 88 disembarkations, totalling 41,706 personnel, for the year.

Sick and wounded disembarked from hospital ships totalled 2,149 for the year.

Army personnel moved by air to and from destinations outside New Zealand were 435 outward and 1,128 inward passengers.

Japanese prisoners of war, totalling 803, were embarked for Japan on 30th December, 1945.

New Zealand Railways provided 907 special troop trains and transported 452,650 military personnel booked through Railway Transport Officers on ordinary trains. One hundred and ninety-five ambulance cars were provided for sick and wounded personnel.

The inter-Island steamer express carried—

To Lyttelton	..	..	..	..	..	41,009
To Wellington	..	..	..	..	..	22,386

Passages allotted to civilian personnel totalled 7,064 for various overseas destinations, and included 600 wives and 130 children of United States servicemen. The figure is an increase of 3,706 over the previous year's figures.

Cargo shipped on behalf of Defence Services Provision Office, Marketing Department, National Patriotic Fund Board, Canteen Board, UNRRA, &c., totalled 119,280.5 tons measurement.

Air freight totalling 3,237 lb. was despatched to various destinations.

Disembarked in New Zealand for the year have been 533 wives, 38 fiancées, and 84 children of New Zealand servicemen. Complete arrangements were made to bring husbands, fiancés, and/or next-of-kin to the port of arrival to meet their dependants, accommodation being provided where necessary and transport arranged to home destination. In addition, Army arranged transportation for Navy, Air Force, and Merchant Navy dependants.

BUILDINGS AND WORKS

With the reduction in large construction works, the Works Branch has been engaged mainly in the disposal and salvage of surplus camps and assets, the completion of heavy coast defence installations, the adjustment of financial authorities for works previously carried out, and the major task of the detailed planning and organization involved in the proposed evacuation of Trentham Camp.

In addition, normal maintenance of existing establishments was a large commitment involving the sum of £298,516, the restoration of old Territorial Force camps cost £11,717, works authorized and proceeded with, £6,606, and moving further warehouses and installing a fire-alarm sprinkler system for the Main Ordnance Depot, £13,590.

Three Army Troops Salvage Companies have been employed in New Zealand co-operating with War Assets Realization Board in stripping camps, removal of buildings, and preparing for the sale and disposal of equipment, but with heavy reductions in their strength the amount of this work performed by the Army will be considerably reduced.

An Army Works Company has been employed in New Caledonia dismantling warehouses, barrack-rooms, and a general hospital, totalling some 14,000 ship-tons. This is now under guard awaiting a decision regarding disposal.

ARMY INSPECTION DEPARTMENT

The inspection of outstanding orders has been taken over by the Munition and Factory Controllers, and the Army Inspection Department ceased to be a separate organization and Unit from May, 1946.

Ammunition has been cleared from field to magazine storage, unserviceable ammunition and explosive being held for repair or destruction.

CANTEEN FUND BOARD

During the year profits totalling £13,437 received from the Canteen Board in respect of the canteens operated by the Board in New Zealand were distributed to units or placed on board troopships for expenditure for the benefit of troops.

ACCOUNTS

War Service Gratuities. Up to 31st March, 1946, 169,549 applications had been received for war gratuities, including 10,477 on account of deceased personnel. Fifty-three thousand nine hundred and twenty-two assessments have been completed and accounts opened. Owing to the large number of personnel returned from overseas between December, 1945, and March, 1946, it was not possible to finalize the majority of gratuity applications by the date of entitlement—viz., 31st March, 1946.

It is estimated that upwards of 220,000 applications will ultimately be received for action.

Final Pay. The number of soldiers' accounts finalized during the year, including those of deceased soldiers, totalled 37,298.

RECORDS

Towards the end of 1945 Base Records moved from Kaiapoi Woollen Mills Building, Jervois Quay, and Hyam's Building, Wakefield Street, to McPhee's Building, Wakefield Street, where both Base Records and the War Service Gratuities Section are now

accommodated. The volume of work handled may be judged from the fact that daily 2,000 items are received inwards, and 1,900 sent outwards, excluding gratuity applications and the despatch of pay warrants.

CASUALTIES

Total 2 N.Z.E.F. Casualties as at 31st March, 1946

Casualty.	Theatre of War.									Totals.		
	Middle East and Italy.			United Kingdom.			Pacific.					
	Officers.	Other Ranks.	Totals.	Officers.	Other Ranks.	Totals.	Officers.	Other Ranks.	Totals.	Officers.	Other Ranks.	Totals.
Killed in action..	303	3,804	4,107	..	2	2	11	84	95	314	3,890	4,204
Died of wounds, &c.	120	1,785	1,905	..	1	1	8	37	45	128	1,823	1,951
Deaths due to accident	12	303	315	..	10	10	7	36	43	19	349	368
Died of sickness	13	250	263	..	8	8	4	29	33	17	287	304
Prisoners of war	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Missing	1	186	187	..	..	..	2	1	3	3	187	190
Wounded	1,183	16,563	17,746	..	3	3	23	208	231	1,206	16,774	17,980
Total	1,632	22,891	24,523	..	24	24	55	395	450	1,687	23,310	24,997

EXPENDITURE

The expenditure brought to charge under War Expenses Account—Army—during the financial year 1945-46, was £46,269,042, while credits-in-reduction totalled £21,251,518, making the net expenditure £24,017,524 for the year.

CONCLUSION

As may be expected during any period of reconstruction, the past year has been a difficult one for the Army. It has, however, been greatly assisted by the loyal and constant endeavour of all those still serving, and by the generous and whole-hearted co-operation of Government Departments and of civil organizations, to all of whom I should like to express my personal appreciation and gratitude.

N. W. McD. WEIR, Major-General,
Chief of the General Staff.

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