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PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA.

CAMP OF EXERCISE, NEWNHAM, 1887 :

REPORT BY COMMANDANT.

Presented to both Houses of Parliament by His Excellency's Command.



EASTER ENCAMPMENT AT NEWNHAM.

Head Quarters Office, Hobart, 20th May, 1887.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to forward you the following Report on the recent Easter Encampment at Newnham, near Launceston.

Preparations.

The desire of the Government being to hold the Encampment this year in the vicinity of Launceston, my instructions were conveyed, during the month of March, to the Officer Commanding the Northern Division to select a site suitable for the operations to be carried on, and as near the Tamar as possible. The position recommended was some ground on either side of the East Tamar Road, on the Newnham Estate, and about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Launceston. On the 7th March the site was visited by myself and Lt.-Colonel Warner, and the next day a reconnaissance of the surrounding country was made, and I chose the position for a small field-work to be erected during the training for Artillery practice. On the 10th of March the Staff Officer, Lieut. Mathieson, was instructed to proceed to Launceston and arrange all matters connected with transport from the town to the Camp, and the supply of wood, water, &c. The plan of the Camp was likewise marked out, and other matters arranged.

The preparation of the Camp ground, pitching of tents, and all other details were carried out this year by the Permanent Artillery under the direction of the Staff Officer, and a party of one sergeant and five gunners proceeded to Launceston on the 30th, and commenced work under Lieut. Mathieson. The Sergeant-Major and six men followed on Friday, the 1st April, and by Saturday night preparations were in a forward state, when a storm of unprecedented severity occurred, deluging the town and suburbs, and laying the ground immediately in front of the Camp under water. On the following Monday, therefore, the site of the Camp was shifted 50 yards to the rear, where the ground had a slight rise. The kitchens and ovens were filled in, and the work of setting out the Camp commenced entirely anew. The men worked very well, however, and by Wednesday night almost all preparations were complete. I proceeded to Launceston on Monday, the 4th, and spent that day and the following at the Camp completing all arrangements and laying out the small field-work for Artillery practice.

The exact site of the Camp was on the left side of the road, in a large paddock situated about 300 yards from the *Racecourse Inn*. The ground was not as dry in its nature as I could have wished, having been under cultivation two years ago, but the soil was porous, and the effect of the very heavy rain had disappeared by the time the troops went into Camp. Water was supplied by carts from the pipes below Mowbray and stored in tanks, four of which were set apart for cooking and two for washing purposes.

Going into Camp.

The Southern Division was conveyed to Launceston in two trains, which left Hobart at 6 and 7 P.M. respectively on the evening of the 7th April. Arrangements were made by the Manager of the Government Railways, Mr. Back, to convey the Main Line trains on the Scottsdale Railway to a convenient point for detraining the Force, about 1200 yards from the Camp, and the first half of the division arrived on the ground at 1.30 A.M., while the second came in at 3 A.M. The men were provided with coffee on arrival, and at once proceeded to the lines to which they had been previously told off.

The Northern Division paraded at 8 P.M. at the Drill-yard, and marched out to Camp headed by the Rifle Band. They were quartered in their lines by 9.30 P.M., and guards were told off at the same time from the Launceston Rifle Regiment for the first tour of duty.

Composition of the Force.

The Launceston Artillery, the Southern Tasmanian Artillery, the Tasmanian Rifle Regiment, the Launceston Rifle Regiment with Cadets and Band, and the Garrison Band at Hobart, were called out by Proclamation. The attendance of the Torpedo Corps and the Reserves was voluntary, but the latter corps were paid this year, and attended in greater strength than on the last occasion. A number of the members of the newly formed Country Rifle Clubs volunteered their attendance in a very praiseworthy manner, and thereby increased the strength of the Force in Camp. Detachments of these Clubs from Oyster Cove, Ouse, Bothwell, and Campbell Town proceeded to the north in the Hobart trains, and the remainder, consisting of detachments from Emu Bay and Latrobe, came in the next day, at 1 P.M., from the N.W. Coast.

The strength of the Force in Camp on the night of Good Friday was as follows:—

Launceston Artillery, officers and men	63
Southern Tasmanian Artillery, ditto	71
Tasmanian Rifle Regiment, ditto	154
Launceston Rifle Regiment, ditto	134
Launceston Regimental Cadets	44
Launceston Reserve Company, officers and men.....	19
Tasmanian Reserves (Hobart), ditto	76
Torpedo Corps, ditto.....	46
Garrison Band (Hobart)	26
Staff and Permanent Artillery, officers and men	21
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Total Defence Force.....	654
Country Rifle Clubs	92
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Grand Total	746
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The strength of the Defence Force in Camp last year was 510, or 144 less than this year.

The hours of parade were as follows:—

7 A.M. to 8 A.M.
10.30 A.M. to 12.30 P.M.
2.30 P.M. to 4.30 P.M.

The programme of work was arranged as on last year, so as to give each corps as much practical work as possible, after deducting the general inspection and the rehearsal for the review to be held on Easter Monday before His Excellency the Governor.

First Day.

The early morning parade was devoted to squaring up the Camp, and putting the lines thoroughly in order. At the mid-day parade, after the whole Force had been drawn up to hear the "Army Act" read out, a detachment of 20 men with an officer from the Torpedo Corps, and 20 men with an officer from the S. T. Artillery, were sent up with intrenching tools to the site of the earth-work, and there commenced operations, under the superintendence of Lieutenant Mathieson. The work consisted of a parapet and ditch 30 feet in length; on the left flank an embrasure, revetted with sand-bags, was constructed, and in rear of this a gun-pit was excavated. In the gun-pit a detachment of "dummies" was placed, and several more stood on the banquette to represent infantry, the superior crest being loopholed with sand-bags. The Launceston Artillery went to gun-drill, with a detachment told off to lay a Clerk's platform in the paddock on the east side of the road for the 40-pounders; the remainder of the S. T. Artillery were likewise exercised in gun-drill. The Tasmanian Rifle Regiment and the Launceston Rifles, with the Reserves, were brigaded and drilled, while the Country Rifle Corps were exercised in battalion drill by Colonel Bernard. After the drill I went to the earth-work, and found it in a forward state.

At the afternoon parade the field-work was completed by a detachment of the Launceston Artillery under one of their officers, while the remainder of the battery finished the Clerk's platform, and drilled at their guns. The Southern Artillery, with the exception of the detachment which had been employed at the earth-work, were exercised in gun-drill. The Infantry Corps were exercised in company and battalion drill under their own officers. In the evening the Launceston Rifle Regiment was sent out on out-post duty to the north of the Camp. Their position was visited by Lieutenant-Colonel Warner at 10 P.M., and the regiment then returned to Camp.

Second Day.

At the early morning parade the Artillery Corps were drilled by their Commanding Officers, and the Rifle Regiments marched out for intrenching drill, which was carried out under the general supervision of the Acting Brigade-Major. The Reserves and Country Rifle Corps were exercised in battalion drill. At 10.30 the whole Force paraded in marching order for my inspection, and turned out very creditably. The Launceston Artillery, both Rifle Regiments and Torpedo Corps, wore the valise equipment, while the Southern Artillery and Reserves paraded in rolled great-coats. After the inspection, the Force marched passed in brigade, as a preparation for the Review on Easter Monday.

At the afternoon parade, practice was carried on by the Launceston and Southern Tasmanian Artillery at the earth-work, the range being 1700 yards. The guns used were—1 40-pounder, 2 7-pounders, and 2 13-pounders; and the projectiles—common, segment, and shrapnel shell. The practice from the 40-pounders by the Launceston Artillery was not so good as it was at Ross last year, owing to the Nos. 1 failing to work up to the proper elevation. The “shortest” common shell struck 30 yards from the ditch, and the remainder varied between that and a hit at the counterscarp of the ditch. The line was, however, excellent, the parallelogram of hits being only two yards in width. The practice with segment and shrapnel was better. The 13-pounders and 7-pounders made very fair shooting, but not quite so good as I could have desired. The small amount of ammunition available for practice, militates against the efficiency of the Artillery Corps in this most important respect; and the absence of good land ranges for field guns at Hobart and Launceston is another serious drawback.

The following is a summary of the effect of the practice on the work:—

Earthwork.

1 13-pr. common shell—

Struck on sole of embrasure, right side. Small crater disturbing lower part of revetment.

1 13-pr. common shell—

Struck in rear of gun-pit, forming large crater. This shell passed between the legs of the No. 1, exploding three feet behind, without removing the “dummy” from its place.

“Dummies” in Gun-pit.

Shrapnel fire—

4 bullets through No. 2 dummy; 2 through No. 3; 5 through No. 4; 4 through No. 1; 2 through No. 7; 1 through No. 5.

Common shell or segment—

Right shoulder of No. 5 carried away.

“Dummies” on Banquette behind Loop-holes.

Shrapnel fire—

1 bullet through one of the “dummies.”

Directly in rear of the gun-pit there were seven grazes of 13-pounder and 7-pounder common shells, or portions of the bodies of segment and shrapnel shells; the farthest being 13 yards beyond the pit.

In addition to the practice at the battery, firing was carried on at several canvas targets placed on the right and left of the work, with the following result:—

In right target—

3 splinters and 1 bullet.

In left targets, placed one in rear of the other at 6 yards—

6 splinters or segments in front target; 5 ditto in rear target.

After the conclusion of the artillery practice the two Nordenfelt 5-barrel guns were advanced to 1000 yards from the earthwork, and a few rounds fired from them; but owing to the lateness of the hour the grazes could not be seen, and it was therefore difficult to obtain the correct elevation. The practice was therefore not satisfactory; but on the following Monday it was excellent, the dummies placed on the river being riddled with bullets.

During the afternoon ball-firing was carried on at rows of canvas targets placed under the hill on the right of the battery. The Country Rifle Corps, under Colonel Bernard, fired first prior to the commencement of the artillery practice; and later on the Infantry Regiments carried out their firing under the superintendence of Lt.-Colonel Warner. I received satisfactory verbal reports on

the shooting, which, however, would be better had the Force the advantage of daylight parades during which to carry on such necessary exercise.

In the evening the Tasmanian Rifle Regiment marched out for outpost duty, taking up the same position as the Launceston Rifles on the previous day. After being visited by Lt.-Colonel Warner (in my absence, owing to indisposition) they returned to camp.

Third Day.

Fatigue duties were carried on throughout the lines at the morning parade, and the camp got ready for my inspection at the dinner hour.

At 10 A.M. the Catholics paraded and marched into Launceston, under the command of Major O'Boyle, to attend service. At 10.30 A.M. the remainder of the Force paraded for my inspection in line of quarter columns, after which hollow square was formed, and service conducted by the Chaplain to the Forces, the Rev. J. B. W. Woollnough. His Excellency the Governor and suite attended this service, driving out from Launceston.

At the dinner hour, 1.30 P.M., I inspected the whole of the Camp, commencing on the right with the lines of the Country Rifle Corps and Reserves, which were found in neat order. The lines of the two Artillery Corps were then taken, and so on to the Infantry lines on the left of the Head-Quarters, which were, as last year, in the centre of the Camp. The tents of the Torpedo Corps were very neat, as also most of the Artillery tents; and in the Infantry lines, some companies had their tents equally tidy, whilst those of others fell behind in this respect. At an inspection of this kind, however, the impossibility of visiting all tents at the commencement of the meal accounts for a certain amount of untidiness in the arrangement of the tents which came last in the tour.

At 2.30 P.M. the whole of the tents, except those of the Head-Quarters, were struck, and this work was, again this year, very smartly done. After a quarter of an hour's duration the tents were again pitched, and leave was then granted to officers and men for the afternoon. Before evening the Commanding Officers were taken out to the ground selected for manœuvring on, and the intended operations explained to them. The alarm parade was carried out on this night. At 11 P.M. a gun was fired, and in the space of eight minutes the whole force was assembled at the alarm posts next the quarter-guard and rear-guard respectively. Five rounds of ammunition were served out for the field guns, and five rounds per man for all corps acting as infantry. A Company of the Tasmanian Rifle Regiment was detached to the north to attack the Camp, and the remainder of the infantry disposed on the left of the position to resist the attack. The guns, supported by the requisite infantry escorts, advanced to the right front of the line of defence, and opened fire on the road. The engagement lasted half an hour, after which the corps returned to their lines, and were dismissed. Mention must not here be omitted of the smart manner in which the Country Rifle Corps turned out, they being first at the alarm-post next the quarter-guard. This was highly creditable, considering that the whole of the men were entirely new to camp life.

Fourth Day.

At the early morning parade ammunition was served out for the sham fight—20 rounds per gun, 25 rounds per man. The Reserves likewise proceeded to the Railway, and carried out their ball-firing. The Torpedo Corps were engaged in making final preparations with their mines and boats, hired for the purpose, in order to explode two groups of extempore observation mines in the Tamar, as part of the operations to be carried out at the mid-day parade. At 9.30 A.M. the whole Force left the Camp to carry out an attack on, and defence of, the Camp position: the enemy advancing from the north, where they were supposed to have landed at a point known as Dilston, and from which their main body had marched by a by-road leading directly from that place to the Camp, whilst a small detached force had kept to the main road farther to the east, for the purpose of conducting a false attack.

The attacking force consisted of the Launceston Rifle Regiment with the Cadets, the Launceston Artillery with two 7-pounder guns, and a company of the Country Rifle Corps under the command of Temporary Lieutenant Miller. Lieutenant-Colonel Warner was in command of this Force, which took up a position on the road above mentioned about 1000 yards from the line of country occupied by the defenders. Its right wing advanced between the road and the river, with the object of covering the approach of their boats from Dilston. The left wing, consisting of the Country Rifle Corps, rested on the main road; and at this point the engagement was commenced by the attack under Lieutenant Miller.

The defending force consisted of the S. T. Artillery with two 13-pounder guns, each one of which represented a battery, the Tasmanian Rifle Regiment, the Reserves, and the remainder of the Country Rifle Corps. A detachment of the Artillery were also stationed between the Camp and the river to defend the line of submarine mines from a boat attack.

The right wing of the defending force rested on the main road, and consisted of one gun with its escort, and the Reserve Force under Major J. G. Davies; the centre occupied the wattle copse on the by-road, with its support at the cottages in rear; the left wing, under Colonel Bernard, and consisting of the Country Rifle Corps, stretched from the copse to the river. I directed the defence with my staff, which consisted of Captain Wallack (the Acting Brigade Major), and Lieutenant N. E. Lewis, Adjutant of the Reserves. The work was fairly well carried out, with the exception of one or two mistakes, in which the right of the Tasmanian Rifle Regiment was not properly supported by the Reserves after the false attack had been repulsed by the latter; and, again, where a company of the Tasmanian Rifle Regiment allowed their right flank to be turned by the Launceston Rifle Regiment. The men of the Country Rifle Corps, who were, like the Reserves, clothed in Khakee uniform, did very well, considering that the work was quite new to them, and fell into their duties as skirmishers with considerable aptitude.

The attacking force carried out their operations creditably under Lt.-Colonel Warner, but, as in the case before mentioned, some mistakes were made which were the result of want of experience in field work. With nothing but night parades throughout the year, the men have no practice in skirmishing and in attack and defence work, and when the Easter Monday manoeuvres are carried out, the evils consequent on the absence of daylight drills are at once apparent.

His Excellency the Governor and suite and Lord Aberdeen were present at my head-quarters and witnessed the operations, but owing to a hitch in the submarine work, which necessitated a delay of half an hour, His Excellency did not witness the explosions, which were very effective. He, however, saw some excellent practice with the Nordenfolt 5-barrel guns, under Major Evans, at some "dummies" placed on the opposite bank of the river, at 700 yards range. At 12:30 the "cease fire" was sounded, and the Force marched back to camp. At the dinner hour some of the "Broad-arrow" kitchens were inspected by His Excellency, who expressed himself pleased with the cooking arrangements.

At 2:30 P.M. the whole Force left the Camp and marched to the Racecourse, where they were drawn up in line for the inspection of His Excellency the Governor. At the termination of the inspection the Brigade was marched past in the usual manner, and then formed up on the parade base in line of quarter columns. The Brigade then advanced in review order, and hollow square was formed for the purpose of presenting the miniature gold medals struck off by the late Minister of Defence for the winners of the Champion Medal subsequent to the year 1870. The recipients of the medals were—Lieut. Watchorn, T.R.R. (1885-1886); Gunner Peart, L.A. (1884); Sergeant A. Kirk, T.R.R. (1883); Captain Hunt, unattached, (1882). After the presentation, His Excellency addressed the Force, and subsequently the Hon. the Premier complimented the several corps on their smart appearance and proficiency in drill.

After the return to the Camp, the Southern contingent made preparations for entraining for Hobart, at the Scottsdale line. The first train left at 5:20 and the second at 6:20 P.M. They were shunted on to the Main Line at Launceston, and proceeded to their destination forthwith. I am pleased to say that no hitch occurred this year, the trains arriving at Hobart at 1 A.M. and 3 A.M. respectively.

Staff.

The Staff consisted this year of Lt.-Colonel Warner (Commanding Northern Division), Captain Wallack (Acting Brigade-Major), Lieut. Mathieson (Acting Quartermaster-General), and Major Just, who again acted as Deputy Commissary-General. I received cheerful and efficient assistance from my Staff, an arduous share of work falling to the lot of Lt.-Colonel Warner, who commanded for me on the Brigade Parades of the first three days owing to my unfortunately losing my voice on the night the Force went into Camp. The incessant tour of duty falling to Captain Wallack as Brigade-Major was performed by him in a highly satisfactory manner, and all the arrangements and preparatory work devolving on Lieut. Mathieson were efficiently carried out.

Captain Wylie, of the Madras Staff Corps, was attached by his request to the Staff, and acted as Aide-de-camp to His Excellency the Governor on Monday.

General.

The general conduct of the Force was very satisfactory, there being but two or three crimes (one of them being drunkenness) which were brought before me for disposal. The discipline enforced during Camp is calculated to exercise an excellent influence on the Force; and this fact alone, independent of the effect produced by the four days' continuous training, is sufficient to make the Annual Encampment a most valuable aid to the general efficiency of the Force. It is right to mention, as I did last year, that the result of the training was very apparent in the steadiness under arms, and soldier-like bearing of the men, on the last day of the Encampment. The most important feature of this year's Camp was the attendance, purely voluntary and unpaid, of the Country Rifle Corps, who adapted themselves with surprising willingness to the discipline enforced on them, and, under their painstaking and able Commanding Officer, Colonel Bernard, acquitted themselves far better than I expected.

The commissariat arrangements were very satisfactorily carried out by Major Just, whose Report (marked A) I attach herewith. The water required for the cooking was stored in tanks, one of which was placed near each kitchen, and the supply was well kept up by the contractor for this service.

An officers' mess was established, and was presided over by a Committee of Officers, of which Lt.-Colonel Warner was President. The catering was satisfactorily carried out by a local tradesman.

In conclusion, I have the honor to append (marked B) a statement of the cost of the Camp, including *pay, transport* of men, baggage, guns and war material, and *maintenance*; but I think it is only right to disconnect the first item altogether from the *two* latter, as the amount expended in pay represents the annual sum total (Torpedo Corps training excluded) which the whole Force costs the Government in this respect, and were it not expended in Camp it would have to go for occasional daylight parades throughout the year. The actual cost of the Camp as per statement would therefore be only £458 19s.

I am also able to furnish, from a return kindly sent me by Major-General Downes, Secretary for Defence, Victoria, the cost of the recent Encampment at Langwarrin, at which 1926 of all ranks were present. It is as follows:—

Transport, £2367; maintenance, £452; pay of Commissariat Staff, £150; pay, officers and men, £4680.

Excluding pay, therefore, we have the following data:—

Camp, Newnham...	746 men	£459
Camp, Langwarrin.....	1926 men	£2969

For purposes of comparison, however, the sum of about £115 should be deducted from maintenance at the Victorian Camp, as this was spent on the men who remained two extra days in Camp.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

W. V. LEGGE, *Lt.-Col. (R.) R.A.*
Colonel Commandant.

The Hon. the Minister of Defence.

(A.)

EASTER ENCAMPMENT, 1887.

REPORT of the Acting Commissary-General.

SIR,

1. I HAVE the honor to report on the Commissariat arrangements of the late Easter Encampment, held at Newnham, near Launceston, the duties of which I took up on 21st March last. Having arranged with contractors for supply of stores, &c., I proceeded to Launceston on 31st March, concluding agreements and settling as to deliveries. Returned to Hobart on 2nd April, and proceeded again to Camp to take up my duties on 6th April.

2. The large marquee provided as a store tent answered very well, and the whole of the Commissariat appliances were in excellent order.

3. The rations were, as usual, issued to Corps, being received by the several Quartermasters or their deputies. The camp kitchens and stoves were handed over to the regimental cooks, who performed their duties well; but I think a considerable saving in fuel might be effected if these men received a few lessons in the use of the Broad Arrow kitchens before going into camp. I recommend that, in future, perforated iron plates be provided to cover the trenches and so retain the heat.

4. The Aldershot ovens and Soyer's stoves worked exceedingly well. The ovens would be greatly improved were the sole-plates of thicker metal, and I again recommend that at least two additional Soyer's stoves be procured for use on future occasions.

5. *Meat* of first-class quality (beef and mutton) was supplied under contract by Messrs. Smith and Hutchinson, of Launceston, at 32s. per 100lbs. The meat was delivered with regularity, and gave satisfaction.

6. *Bread*, of fine quality, in 1½lb. ration loaves, was supplied by Mr. Alexander Rankin, of Launceston, at 10s. per 100lbs., with a small allowance for delivery. The bread was the best I have yet seen at any camp.

7. *General Rations*.—The groceries and general rations were supplied by the Northern Government contractors, Messrs. M'Phail and Weymouth, Launceston. The same firm also supplied a portion of the vegetables, the balance being obtained from Longford. The whole of the articles were of first-class quality. Tea and sugar were obtained from the Colonial Storekeeper's Department, and Mr. F. Stearn supplied potatoes of excellent quality.

8. The total number of full rations issued from 31st March, the day the Permanent Force men proceeded to Camp, up to 15th April, the day they finally left, and including 140 extra rations issued by your order to the Reserves and Country Rifle Clubs, was 3360. In addition, 669 half rations, consisting of bread, butter, coffee, and sugar, were issued on the evening the troops marched into Camp,—making the total full rations issued, 3694. The cost of supplies, including carriage, was £145 13s. 8d., making the cost of the daily full ration equal to 9½d.

9. Gunner Bowland, of the Permanent Force, acted most efficiently as storeman and weigher, and Corporal Eady, of the Southern Tasmanian Rifle Regiment, very satisfactorily performed the duties of store clerk. In the handling of meat, &c., Gunner Bowland's Khakee suit was completely destroyed. I recommend that another be issued to him.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,
Your obedient Servant,

THOS. C. JUST, *Major T.D.F., A.C.G.*

*The Colonel Commandant,
The Barracks, Hobart.*

B.

STATEMENT of Expenditure for Camp of Exercise (including Pay) at Newnham.—Strength of Force, 747.

	Transport and Incidental.	Rations.	Pay.	GRAND TOTAL.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	
Expenditure .	294 14 4	164 4 8	678 13 0	
...	TOTALS...	£458 19 0	£678 13 0	£1137 12 0

W. V. LEGGE, *Lt.-Col. (R.) R.A.,
Colonel Commandant.*

Hobart, 10th June, 1887.