

(No. 42.)



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PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA.

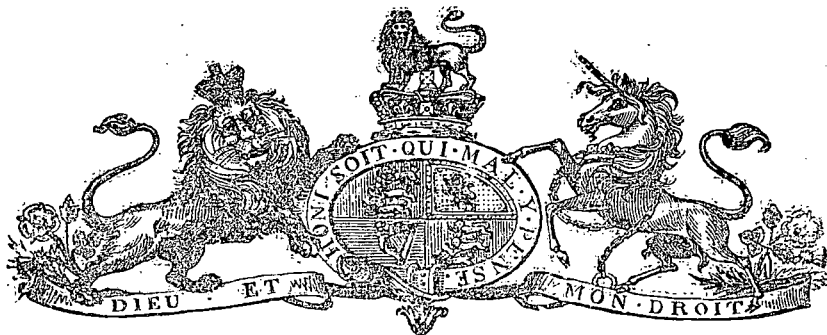
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CAMP OF EXERCISE, 1890:

REPORT.

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



*Head Quarters Office, Hobart, 17th April, 1890.*

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to forward you the following Report on the Encampment recently held at Perth.

*Site.*

The site chosen was an open space in a large paddock on Mr. Wm. Gibson's property, Scone. The paddock is situated at the confines of the township, and, owing to its size and partially wooded nature, was admirably adapted for "attack" and field movements. The distance which water had to be carted was about one mile, and straw for the tents was procurable at a farm adjoining the camp paddock.

The adjacent property, belonging to Mr. A. Mackinnon, was well suited for manœuvres; a low range of wooded hills which commences at the bend of the main road near the camp and runs in a northerly direction with a tract of open country at its base, furnished a good defensive position, which was taken advantage of for the field-day on Saturday. The owner very kindly allowed me to make use of this land, as also his paddocks between the railway and the Esk.

Last month I made a military survey of the whole country between Perth and Longford, which was lithographed from my drawing at the Lands and Works Office, and copies were furnished to officers for instruction in their outpost duties and general field work. All orders issued during camp in reference to manœuvres, artillery practice, and outpost duty were based upon the details of this survey.

*Preparations.*

Early in March the camp-ground was marked out by myself and Captain Mathieson; and on the 25th the Staff Officer and an advanced party of 13 non-commissioned officers and men of the Permanent Artillery proceeded to Perth to commence the work of forming the camp. On the 29th a second party of 10 non-commissioned officers and men left for Perth to assist. Mr. Dowling, of the Railway Department, kindly assisted our operations by constructing a bridge over the drain between the main road and the camp field; and on the first date above mentioned it was ready for the cartage of stores from the railway to the camp.

An artillery range was chosen with the firing point in a paddock to the west of the camp, near the Esk, and the objective point in the bush beneath the hills above mentioned, where a gun-pit and parapet were erected on Good Friday by a party of men of the Launceston and Southern Tasmanian Artillery.

*Transport.*

Great trouble was experienced this year in obtaining transport on the main line for the troops proceeding from Hobart and the Channel Districts. The General Manager declined to furnish anything better than covered trucks for the men, on the ground that the Government wanted the best part of his rolling stock for traffic on the Derwent Valley Line on Easter Monday. I fail to see why the carriages which should have been furnished could not have been brought back on the following day (Good Friday) to Hobart. I inspected the covered trucks on Tuesday, the 1st instant, and found them totally unfit for the conveyance of troops by night to Perth. I therefore had, most unwillingly, to postpone the departure of the troop train until 7 A.M. on Friday morning. As many

men as could leave their employment were sent by the "express" and the "ordinary" on Thursday morning; but the majority of the Southern Division, and about 100 Rifles from the Channel District, did not arrive in camp until 4 p.m. on Friday, and *thereby upset the whole of my programme of work for the four days' training.*

I beg to call the serious attention of the Government to this question of transport for the annual camp, as the four days allotted for work are insufficient for the necessary training; unless the whole Force is ready to begin drill on Friday morning, it is quite impossible to carry out a systematic programme of exercise. This is the more evident in the case of the Tasmanian Force, as the battalions are weak, and the absence of one of them from the first parades of the camp is all the more seriously felt.

The transport on the Government lines was well carried out. A special train conveyed the Country Rifles from the North Coast and the westward to camp, arriving shortly after 8 p.m. The Launceston contingent, with the Dorset and Tamar Rifle Companies, were conveyed by special train, leaving Launceston at 8.30 p.m., and taking on at Evandale Junction the Midland, Cornwall, and Portland Rifle Companies, which had been conveyed thither by the Main Line "ordinary" train.

#### *Composition of Force.*

The maximum strength of the Force during Camp was as follows:—

Permanent Artillery.....	23
Launceston Artillery.....	70
Southern Tasmanian Artillery .....	67
Torpedo Corps .....	53
Tasmanian Rifle Regiment .....	111
Launceston Rifle Regiment .....	190
Transport Corps.....	12
Staff and members Garrison Band .....	9
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	535
Auxiliary Force.....	501
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TOTAL.....	1036
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The attendance of some corps, particularly the Southern Tasmanian Artillery and the Launceston Artillery, was considerably reduced by sickness.

The Auxiliary Force mustered in strength, and the utmost zeal was shown by this newly-created branch of the Service, some companies attending from great distances—such as those from the Channel, St. Helen's, and Stanley. The returns furnished prior to the camp showed a total of 700 men for camp, but a great many men were prevented from attending by unforeseen contingencies.

Major Room and Captain Walch, on the unattached list, were appointed Senior and Junior Majors of the Country Rifle battalion, in order to render Lieut.-Colonel Warner assistance on parade, nearly all the officers being, as yet, uninstructed in their work.

#### *Routine.*

The hours for *reveillé*, issue of rations, guard mounting, and general parades were much the same as at preceding camps.

The Commissariat department was under Major Just, who had at his disposal the men of the newly-formed Commissariat and Transport Corps. Mr. Jones, clerk in the office of Country Rifles, was appointed Quartermaster for the Auxiliary Force, and performed his duty in such an efficient manner that the rationing of the large body of men who were in camp was conducted without any hitch.

Complaints were made by men of the Auxiliary Force as to the meat ration (1 lb.) not being sufficient. It was accordingly increased to 1½ lbs.; and I should recommend that the meat ration be fixed at that amount for the future, and that the allowance of tea be slightly increased, while the bread ration should be decreased, as I find that there has been considerable waste in this article at every camp.

#### *Training.*

The principal object I had in view at the recent camp was to practise the Force in the new form of attack, which should have been done last year when it first came out in the new drill; but this was not possible, as *no camp was held.*

The absence of the Southern contingent on Friday, and the rawness of most of the rifle companies, militated against a proper commencement of the work on the first day. The Officer Commanding the Country Rifles formed a battalion of his men and gave them a steady drill, while I instructed the Launceston Rifles and one company of the Tasmanian Rifle Regiment in the attack. The Launceston Artillery were engaged in laying "clerk's" platforms, constructing gun-pit, and other duties. In the afternoon the parade was put off for an hour, hoping that the Southern contingent would arrive at 2 p.m. It did not reach the camp till between 3 and 4, and therefore the parade was held without it. The Country Rifles were again drilled by their Commanding Officer, and one or two companies instructed in the attack under Major Wallack. The Launceston Rifles were also instructed in attack drill by Major Martin, the work being supervised by myself. Preparations were made by Lieut. Henry and Lieut. Buckland, with the few men of the Torpedo Corps who were in camp, for the mining experiments in connection with the manœuvres on the following day. The Tasmanian Rifle Regiment, Torpedo Corps, and Country Rifles from the Channel District, who arrived in the afternoon, were excused parade. It was my intention to have had the whole Force out during the afternoon for an attack movement with artillery and infantry combined, in order to illustrate the principle and, likewise exercise the men in the service of ammunition in the field from the carts and wallets of the ammunition carriers.

Saturday was devoted to manœuvres. Under existing circumstances I hardly approved of carrying out the original programme. The broken work of the previous day, and the undrilled state of the majority of the Country Rifle companies, precluded the likelihood of successful exercising. The latter, however, had much improved after their first day's drill, and, as all preparations had been made, it was resolved to have the "field day."

The manœuvres were adopted to the following "idea":—"The enemy has landed at Devonport, seized the station and railway plant, and entrained his infantry and four guns at night. He proceeds at once by rail to Longford, and on arrival there finds that the railway bridge has been blown up, and learns that there is a force, with supplies of ammunition, &c., encamped at Perth. The enemy accordingly advances by way of the Esk bridge, with the view of attacking the camp and capturing supplies."

The attack was given to Major Martin, Launceston Rifle Regiment, who had under him the Launceston Rifle Regiment, 3 companies of Country Rifles, and 2 guns of the Southern Tasmanian Artillery, which came to camp as a division of Field Artillery horsed, from Hobart. This division, the first instalment of the Tasmanian Field Artillery, was organised last winter, and both drivers and men have made commendable progress in their work. It is commanded by Captain Lewis.

The defence was entrusted to Major Evans, who had under him the Tasmanian Rifle Regiment, 4 companies Country Rifles, 2 12-pounder howitzers, temporarily horsed, from Launceston, and an escort of gunners from both Artillery Corps.

The umpires were the Commandant, Lt.-Colonel Warner, Major Wallack, and Major Collins.

The early morning parade was devoted to battalion drill. After breakfast a haversack ration was issued to the troops, and at 9:30 the attacking force left the Camp for Longford to carry out the attack in accordance with the "idea." Certain instructions were issued both to attacking and defending commanding officers, and after that they were left to make their own dispositions.

The duties apportioned to the Torpedo Corps were the blowing up with dynamite of a rail laid with sleepers near the line at Longford bridge, the tracing of two redoubts, and mining with gunpowder charges the approach to the main position of the defence on the hill, marked 170 on the map. The party to blow up the rail left camp after the attacking force, and the remainder paraded with the defenders, who left camp at 10:45 a.m.

The best drilled companies of Riflemen were sent with the attacking force. The advance was commenced at 1 o'clock, when a signal gun was fired from the hill, immediately after which the rail was blown up at Longford. Major Martin conducted his attack very fairly and with a considerable amount of tactical principle. The volley firing by his men was very fair.

In the defence mistakes were at first made in taking up positions by the Tasmanian Rifle Regiment. These were partly rectified, but the commanding officer was at a great disadvantage in not being mounted. On the whole, the dispositions made by Major Evans were fairly good. Had his force been provided with a few mounted infantry to watch the movements of the attacking force and harrass their skirmishers, he could have made a much better defence. He was also without a field telegraph to connect his main body with the advanced positions.

A small corps of Engineers with a field equipment is absolutely necessary; and I would again point out that without mounted infantry the Field Force of this colony is practically useless.

At the termination of the engagement two groups of mines were successfully exploded by Lieut. Henry in advance of the redoubt traced on the hill.

The Force returned to Camp at 4.30 p.m., and, owing to the lateness of the hour and the weak state of the Launceston Rifle Regiment, I did not send out any picquets on outpost duty. The same difficulty occurs every year on Easter Saturday, when a large number of men are obliged to return to work in Launceston. This is not the case as regards the Hobart Regiment; and if employers in Launceston will not give their men leave, it would be well for the commanding officer not to enrol any man who cannot remain in camp during Saturday.

On Easter Sunday the same routine was followed as in former years. The Catholics attended Divine service in Longford, and the Episcopalians paraded for my inspection at 10.30, after which service was conducted by the Chaplain to the Forces, Rev. J. B. Woolnough.

A heavy shower prevented the usual tent-striking at 2.30, which exercise was accordingly abandoned. At 3 p.m. a meeting of umpires took place to discuss the manoeuvres of the previous day; and at 5.30 p.m. a company of the Tasmanian Rifle Regiment under Captain Watchorn, and a company of the Launceston Rifle Regiment under Captain Sadler, left camp with tents, &c. for outpost duty, their positions having been detailed on the map. At 10.30 p.m. I visited the outposts and sentries, accompanied by Lt.-Colonel Warner and Major Wallack.

On Monday morning, at 4.30, there was an alarm caused by the outposts firing on the Camp. The officer in command of the picquets had received sealed instructions on the night previous that they were to withdraw their sentries at 4 a.m., and then act as an enemy for the purpose of alarming the Camp. Owing to my continued indisposition I was unable to sleep in Camp, and I issued instructions to Lt.-Colonel Warner as to the disposition of the Force in Camp on the alarm.

The Corps turned out smartly, the Field Artillery (S.F.A.) doing especially good work. The horses were at a farm about a third of a mile from their lines, yet the guns were horsed and in action in 20 minutes from the alarm being given.

The early morning parade was devoted to battalion drill. The Artillery Corps were to have commenced practice; but a thick fog prevailed, and firing did not begin till 10 a.m.

After breakfast I visited the practice ground, and then returned to Camp. The Country Rifles were first exercised in "marching past," and the Rifle Regiments in battalion drill. I then took the whole Force to "attack" drill with blank cartridge, which lasted till nearly 1 p.m.

The Artillery concluded their practice about the same time, and returned to Camp. I append a diagram of the firing at the gun-pit, which was situated under the hill, marked 170. The shooting was very fair, showing good laying as to direction, but not sufficient care as to elevation. This fault, however, was induced by want of proper signalling as to effect of the rounds, this not being possible owing to the gun-pit being in the bush and not visible to a range party properly posted. Most of the common shell fell within a parallelogram 11 yards wide by 53 long, and no shell struck beyond the flanks of the parapet of the work. The shrapnel fire could not be judged, as the dummies, through some oversight, were not taken out to the work. There was one premature burst of a 12-pr. shrapnel with a "short" time and concussion fuse, and one 12-pr. common shell broke up at the muzzle.

In the afternoon, at 2.30, the whole Force paraded under Lt.-Colonel Warner for my inspection. Corps were, on the whole, very steady, and the marching was, taking it throughout, very fair. The four days' training had made a great improvement in all the Rifle Companies, as, with the exception of the Channel, Tamar, and Midland companies, the men came into Camp in a raw state. The presence, however, in many of the companies of officers and non-commissioned officers who had attended the Class of Instruction conducted to favourable results; and if this method of training be kept up for two years, the Auxiliary Force will then be officered by a body of men who know their work.

The division of Field Artillery turned out very smartly.

#### *Conduct.*

I can speak highly of the conduct of the whole Force during Camp, and have much pleasure in testifying to the zeal and true military spirit which existed in all Corps.

I received every assistance from Lt.-Colonel Warner and the Acting Brigade Major in carrying out the training, and I have to speak highly of the manner in which the Permanent Artillery carried out their work of preparing the camp.

Commanding Officers of corps worked hard to give their men as good a training as the short time would admit of, and they were well supported by their battery and company officers.

The Acting Commissary-General, Major Just, zealously conducted his branch of the service, and has again rationed the Force at a rate per man which could not be reduced, considering the varied rations supplied.

The Torpedo Corps did their work well,—all the experiments carried out by them being a success. The attendance of this corps is voluntary; and this year the muster was larger than it had been on previous occasions.

The Auxiliary Force is now the largest Volunteer Service in the Australian Colonies,—the number of enrolled members being between 1300 and 1400. The physique of the men, judging from the 500 who were in camp, is very good; and an admirable spirit now prevails among officers and men.

Careful drill and training will be necessary during the next two years; and, unless an Adjutant be appointed, the Commanding Officer cannot exercise sufficient supervision over such a large Force, scattered throughout the Colony. If the Government desire that the Auxiliary Force shall be as efficient as the Victorian Rangers, who number about 800 strong, and have a Commanding Officer and a paid Adjutant, the course I suggest will have to be adopted.

#### *Breaking up Camp.*

The transport arrangements for the conveyance of the troops to their Head Quarters were somewhat better than those referred to above. The Country Rifles for the Midland and Cornwall Districts left by special train for Evandale Junction between 4 and 5, and were conveyed to Conara by the Midland train. A special train took the Country Rifles from the North Coast to the westward shortly after 8; and the Launceston contingent left camp by another special about 9 o'clock. The Hobart contingent were, I regret to say, put to considerable inconvenience through the breaking down of the mail train to Hobart, preventing the arrival of the troop train until 9.30 A.M. The men did not leave camp until 11.25, the earliest hour that the Government Manager could furnish carriages. At Parattah a change had to be made into a Main Line train, timed to arrive at Hobart at 7 A.M., but which was delayed as mentioned.

On Tuesday morning three squads of Country Rifles competed for the trophy presented for "all Tasmania" by Major-General Tottenham. I append the Report of the shooting received from Lt.-Colonel Warner.

I likewise append the Report of the Assistant Commissary-General on the rationing of the Force in camp.

I have the honor to be,  
Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

W. V. LEGGE, *Lieut.-Col., R., R.A.,*  
*Colonel Commanding.*

*The Hon. the Minister of Defence.*

## APPENDIX I.

*Staff Office, Launceston, 9th April, 1890.*

*From the Officer Commanding Auxiliary Force  
to the Commandant.*

SIR;

I HAVE the honor to report that the Vase presented by Major-General Tottenham, of Bruny Island, to be competed for annually, open to all rifle companies in Tasmania, was fired for yesterday. The Dorset, Channel, and East Devon Companies entered, 10 men, commanded by a N.C. officer from each company, advancing as for attack between 540 and 150 yards. Each section had eight head-and-shoulder targets placed close together to fire at; ten rounds per man. On examining the targets, Dorset Company were found to have 48 points (hits); Channel Company, 24 hits; East Devon Company, 17 hits. Three points had been previously deducted from Dorset for bad volleys and one each from Channel and Latrobe, which leaves the result as follows:—

Dorset, 45 hits.....	1st
Channel, 23 hits .....	2nd
East Devon, 16 hits .....	3rd

Before commencing the competition each corps drew lots for choice of targets, which was won by the Dorset Company. This certainly gave them an advantage, as the targets were in the best position. East Devon fired a man short—nine instead of ten.

In communicating the result to the donor, I would be obliged if you will request him to forward the Vase to Captain Holmes, commanding Dorset Company, Scottsdale.

With reference to the few entries for it, I find the cause is that as it never can be permanently won, the men object to remain an extra day in camp and lose a day's work.

I have the honor to be,  
Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

ASHTON H. WARNER, *Lieut.-Colonel,*  
*Commanding Auxiliary Force.*

## APPENDIX II.

## EASTER ENCAMPMENT, 1890.—REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT COMMISSARY-GENERAL.

*Hobart, 21st April, 1890.*

SIR,

1. I HAVE the honor to report on the Commissariat Department at the late Camp of Exercise held at Scone, near Perth, from 3rd to 7th April.

2. I received my orders from Head Quarters on 1st March, and at once proceeded to make arrangements for the necessary contracts for the supply of an estimated Force of 1200 men.

3. The usual marquee was provided as a store tent, but I found it too small for conveniently dealing with the supplies required for so large a camp, and I recommend that a larger tent be supplied in future. The commissariat appliances were in good order, but additions to the equipment should be made if Regimental Quartermasters are to be supplied therefrom. Additional weighing apparatus is necessary, and should be well tested before being sent to camp.

4. The camp kitchens worked well, but are not properly understood by the regimental cooks, who work them too quickly. It would be a great improvement if the baking dishes were fitted with strong wire legs about 1½ inches long, which would allow for draught and prevent the meat being burned. The bars for the broad-arrow trenches are too short; an alteration must be made before another encampment.

5. *Meat.*—On the verbal authority of the Minister of Defence the ration of meat was increased from one pound to one and a half pounds per diem, which gave satisfaction. Meat of excellent quality was supplied by Mr. W. H. Ferrall, of Launceston, at 29s. per 100 lbs.

6. *Bread* in  $1\frac{1}{2}$  lbs. ration loaves was supplied by Mr. F. Symons, of Launceston, and was of first-class quality. Contract price, 10s. per 100 lbs.

7. *General Rations*.—Groceries and general rations, including vegetables and potatoes, were supplied by Mr. George Weymouth, of Launceston, who gave every satisfaction. Tea and sugar were, as usual, drawn from the Colonial Storekeeper. At any future camp I should prefer the sugar of a higher grade.

8. *Special Rations*.—For field days and outpost duties a special haversack ration, consisting of biscuit and saveloys, was issued. These were supplied by Messrs. Swallow and Ariel, of Melbourne, and Mr. Scholtz, of Hobart, respectively, and gave general satisfaction.

9. *Scale of Rations*.—In view of the issue of the extra meat ration, it will be desirable to revise the authorised scale. I am now instituting enquiries on this subject, with a view to making a special report.

10. The total number provisioned during the camp, *i.e.*, on full rations during the four days, was 4224 men. The total cost of these, on the ration scale, was £177 0s. 6d.=10·0246d. per man per diem. In addition to this 1353 men received partial rations on the night of marching in, and special extra rations on field days, &c. In this number is included advance parties engaged in preparing camp. The cost of these extras was £56 2s. 6d.=9·09d. per man. The cost of all supplies was £233 3s., making the daily cost per man on the four days' camp 13·02d.

11. The formation of the Commissariat and Transport Corps is a movement of importance. Twelve men were enrolled immediately before the camp, and rendered excellent service. When the Corps is fully organised the department will be in a position to take over all general duties connected with supply and transport. The men at present enrolled are 2 clerks, 3 issuers, 2 butchers, 1 carpenter, and 4 labourers and drivers. All these men are able to drive horses, and understand that they are not engaged as specialists, but must perform any duties required of them.

12. The usual detailed Return is enclosed herewith.

I have the honor to be,  
Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

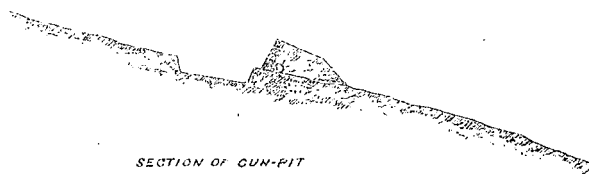
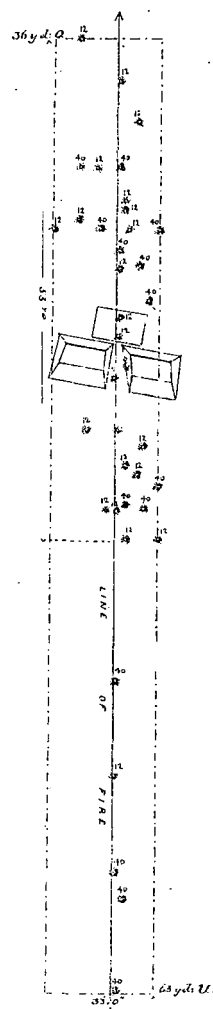
THOS. C. JUST, *Major, A.C.G.*

*The Colonel Commandant,  
The Barracks, Hobart.*





ELEVATION OF PARAPET



SECTION OF GUN-PIT

DIAGRAM OF PRACTICE  
AT  
GUN-PIT, PERTH  
SCALE 20 YARDS TO 1 INCH