

change
000 439
\$10.00

9/3



NEW ZEALAND PERMANENT FORCE
OLD COMRADES' ASSOCIATION (INC)

P.O. BOX 79-371, ROYAL HEIGHTS, AUCKLAND 1230

NEWSLETTER No. 101

MARCH 1999

ROUTINE ORDERS

SUBSCRIPTIONS:

for 1999 are now due. Honorary, Life and Members over 80 pay no subs. Lady Associates pay \$5.00, all others \$10.00. By Rule 4 (f) any member over three years in arrears shall ipso facto cease to be a member, unless there are extenuating circumstances, in which case the Secretary should be informed. To be financial to 31 Dec 99 you owe us \$... If no amount is shown you are financial.

LAST POST:

1599 Maj J.D. Gibb ED
1785 T.J. Arnott
36645 J.G. (Aussie) Moore
1743 D. Jones
1712 R.B. McIver

15 Sep 98 at Kenepuru Hospital.
20 Dec 98 at Waiheke Island.
28 July 98 at Bulli Hospital, NSW.
8 Jan 99 at Wanganui.
9 Jan 99 at Auckland.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS:

Lt Col M.J.R. Pearce to
Lt Col W.L. Dillon to

74 Ngapuni Rd, Remuera, Auckland.
Malvina Major Retirement Village, 134 Burma Rd,
Khandallah, Wellington.
PO Box 39-306, Howick, Auckland.
163 Bty, 16 Fd Regt RNZA, Pte Bag 1702, Waiouru.

Lt Col B.D. Dreyer to
Capt S.L. Bassett to

LIFE MEMBER:

Lt I.E. Rollo w.e.f. - 18 Apr 98.
H.G. Fantham w.e.f. - 13 Dec 98.

NEW MEMBERS:

Mrs Ruth Arnott, 24 Surfdale Rd, Waiheke Island (Lady Associate).
828767 N.A. (Neville) Davey, PO Box 36, Seddon, Marlborough 7353.

Lt A. Fortune
Lt R. Croker
2 Lt D. Gerling
2Lt D. Sheridan
2 Lt W. Koia
Sgt R. Falwasser

} 163 Bty
16 Fd Regt RNZA
Pte Bag 1702
Waiouru

NEXT COMMITTEE MEETINGS:

These will be held at 1000hrs on Saturday 10 Apr and 12 Jun 99 at Birkenhead RSA.

EDITORIAL

The New Year's first message from a member defined our attitude to the PFOCA... "It's a wonderful organisation I'm so proud to belong to it." It is an attitude sadly weakened by the "Interim Report into Defence Beyond 2000" published in Nov 98, after more than a year's consideration, by the Parliamentary Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee.

The report managed to repeat most of the negative attitudes which have characterised defence reviews since 1987. These are based on the assumed "absence of military threat," stating that the need to defend NZ "has been no more than a remote possibility for over 50 years," then making the unwritten assumption that there will never be any such threat in the future (Logic and 4th Form history would suggest that the longer since the last threat, the

closer the next will become). The committee, probably conscious of its ignorance of these subjects, says "consensus amongst defence analysts is that direct attacks... are not likely in the foreseeable future." It then converts this unlikelihood into a certainty as a basis for its cogitations, sublimely unconscious that NZ has had approx 15 years to evolve a class of boot-licking analysts anxious to tell them what they would like to hear, i.e. keep the money for catching votes.

There is a saving grace in the report: Recommendation No 9 — "that options for recombining the NZ Defence Force and the Ministry of Defence into one organisation be investigated..." If this were done, and combined with a mission statement now sneered at as old-fashioned, that the Defence Force be developed "as an insurance against aggression", instead of the present one restricting it to "dealing with small contingencies", there would still be hope for the future of this country. Then would emerge the need for firepower, which, as we know, troops, means artillery.

GEMS FROM THE WEBSITE

Meet us on the Internet: in case you have lost Newsletter 100, here is the address:

<http://OurWorld.compuserve.com/HomePages/RiversPartners/OldComrades/index.htm>

Here are examples of jewels we would have missed without this input, all from the odd & bits page Webmaster Catherine calls "Shrapnel".

Janet Castell, Lt Col, Associate Member gained the NZ Order of Merit in the New Years Honours list for her part in the Bougainville peace process.

CWO Andy Wilkins, RSM (at least we know that one!) of 1st Royal Canadian Horse Artillery, sends St Barbara's greetings to all NZ gunners, and a particular hello to WO Paul Galloway "who ensured I remained sane on the Master Gunner course".

Angus Rivers, (we suspect) describes the ceremonial reception of a 105mm L5 Howitzer at the Titahi Bay RSA on 5 Dec last. (Before this, we thought Titahi Bay was up near Eketahuna — Ed).

FROM & ABOUT MEMBERS

Wally Ruffell is a member of the Ordnance Society (UK), the object of which is to promote, encourage and coordinate the study of all aspects of the history of ordnance and artillery. He will be glad to supply details to anyone interested.

Kerry Lee was in Morocco last Anzac Day with another Kiwi and two Aussies. At lunch on the road from Fes to Marakesh their tour guide, a Berber reminded them that many of his people, who were in the French contingent to the Dardanelles, are buried at Cape Helles. "So we shouted each other another couple of rounds." Thanks for that Kerry: there was also a Ross-shire field battery at Gallipoli (Ed).

Frank Wood sends a tale of woe. After his wife falling ill, "then followed my cutting down upper branches of a ribbonwood protruding over the roof of our cottage. I tied the subject branch to branches either side, crosscut R to L — the branch came down on the chainsaw which came freely down to the outside of my thumb so I severed two ligaments — Middlemore job plus... I was lucky."

In future, Frank, use a handsaw — leave that high-tech to the youngsters who have been brought up with it (Ed).

WO Paul ("Sink me the ship, Master Gunner") Galloway, writes:

"Since coming under command of 16 Field Regiment, the School has continued to function much the same as it always has. We, like the rest of the Army continue to suffer from a shortage of experienced personnel in some key appointments. This situation is unlikely to improve in the foreseeable future.

1999 has bought the introduction of a new training cycle. This requires the School to run 17 courses ranging from RNZA Captains to driving courses between January and April 99. The majority of you will appreciate the considerable challenge this presents. Our prime objective as always is to ensure the maintenance of standards.

Of particular interest is the first indirect fire controller course. This is a combined Artillery and Infantry Observer course for both Officers and Soldiers. It is the first step in the integration of all indirect fire capabilities in the New Zealand Army.

Other significant events coming up in the near future are:

- a. Introduction of the Gun Laying and Positioning System (GLPS) which provides gyroscopic orientation to 2mils.
- b. Introduction of a new laser and angulation head for Forward Observers as well as thermal viewing devices.
- c. Commencement of the Light Gun refurbishment (mid 99). This will take approximately 2 years and should see the guns through until 2008.

In closing may I again thank the Members of the Association for the privilege of replying to the toast to the Regiment and invite any of you who are passing through Waiouru to call in at the School."

Capt Shay Bassett has signalled his new appointment as Bty Comd, 163 Fd Bty, Waiouru, by bringing in 6 new members (see Routine Orders), which is much appreciated. He also has a message:

"Due to the New Zealand Army adopting a single winter mess kit army-wide, there is no longer any significant distinction between corps in mess attire. This is something the serving members of the Royal Regiment are less than impressed with, and therefore are trying to beg, borrow or steal any "old" winter mess kit jackets they can. In line with this could you please run an advertisement in the Old Comrades Newsletter explaining our situation and requesting any old winter mess kit that people no longer need or require be made available for purchase or donation to, I'm sure you'll agree, a worthy cause. The Officers of the Regiment will gladly provide a good home for it and wear it with the pride it deserves. If anyone wishes to help us in our effort we can be reached on the above address (see Changes, P1) or phone (06) 387 6111 xtn. 7320."

SOCIAL EVENTS AND REUNIONS

ST BARBARA'S DAY 1998

was celebrated at Birkenhead RSA on 3 Dec at an 1100hrs gathering attended by: Estelle and Bill Morland, Wally Ruffell, Iris Boytor, Alan and Elsie Boyd, Yogi Young, Des and Bunty O'Connor, Barney Harrop, Eric and Joyce Bickerton, Bert Dyson, and Jim and Ruby Ross. Greater support for this function, particularly from the torpid members in Shore City, is requested.

GUNNER'S DAY 1999

The 283rd anniversary of the formation of the Royal Regiment will be marked at two functions. The usual 1100hrs meeting for lunch at Birkenhead RSA will be held on Thursday 27 May. If you intend coming, tell Jim Ross on 416 8662. There will also be a:

LADIES FORMAL DINING-IN DINNER

organised by a committee chaired by our South Auckland Rep., Jeff Waters. Its purpose is to renew old acquaintances and foster camaraderie amongst gunners and those who served the guns.

Venue: Papakura RSA
Date: Wednesday 26 May
Time: 1800 for 1900hrs
Cost: \$37 per head (same as last year)
Dress: Formal with medals (Minimum Jacket and Tie)
Comprises: Pre-dinner sherry, dinner, table wine & port, RNZA Band, after dinner dancing. Attendance is limited to the first 200 applicants. The previous functions of this kind have been resoundingly successful and fully subscribed. Enquiries to Jeff Waters, 14A Dittmer Place, Papakura. Phone 296 2457.

ANNUAL AGM AND REUNION

This rendezvous will be held on the weekend 12-13-14 November 99 at Taupo. Details later, but mark calendars NOW.

REUNION DINNER, TAUPO, 1998.

Omitted in error from the list of those attending in NL100:
 add Estelle and Bill Morland.

HISTORY OF THE NEW ZEALAND ARTILLERY

Our Patron, Brig R.J. Andrews, CBE, provides this account of progress so far.

In 1997 the Royal Regiment of New Zealand Artillery Regimental Fund Committee approached the Historical Branch, Department of Internal affairs and commissioned a project scoping report for the history of the artillery.

The rationale for having an artillery history was:

- the artillery has the longest uninterrupted history of any Corps/Regiment in New Zealand.
- the artillery makes a significant contribution to the NZ historical record.
- to provide retired gunners with a history of their Regiment.
- as a source of information for serving gunners.
- to raise the profile of the Regiment.
- to provide, by example, a high quality history for other major Corps.

Subject to adequate funding and contractual arrangements being finalised, the Regimental Funds Committee has decided to proceed with the project. We are grateful for financial and other support being provided by Defence and Army General Staff.

The aim is to produce a narrative-style, comprehensive account of the artillery throughout the history of New Zealand. It is intended to make the book readable and accessible with an appeal to a wide target audience. It will take 3 years to write and a further year for editorial and publishing processes before this volume appears on your bookshelves.

Throughout the research period, I know many of you will be approached by researchers, particularly if you possess specialised knowledge or material. The Committee will be very grateful for any support you are able to give, share or loan. We are making careful arrangements to ensure any borrowed material is safeguarded.

In the meantime we hope to conclude preparatory arrangements in the next 6 weeks. Historical Branch, Internal Affairs, have undertaken to appoint an experienced, first-class author/historian who is available to start by 1 April '99.

To facilitate a smooth and successful launch and assist in monitoring the project, an advisory group (Wellington based) has been formed. We will provide their contact details in a later edition.

For my part, I plan to be AWOL in Italy from April for 5 months. It's a long awaited holiday for which I make no apologies - however I regret being unable to share the commencement and management of this unique and stimulating project.

STOP PRESS

It has come to our ears that 16 Fd Regt, having seen our Website, is to establish one of its own. Welcome, Little Brother!

Continued from Newsletter 100.

By Wally Ruffell.

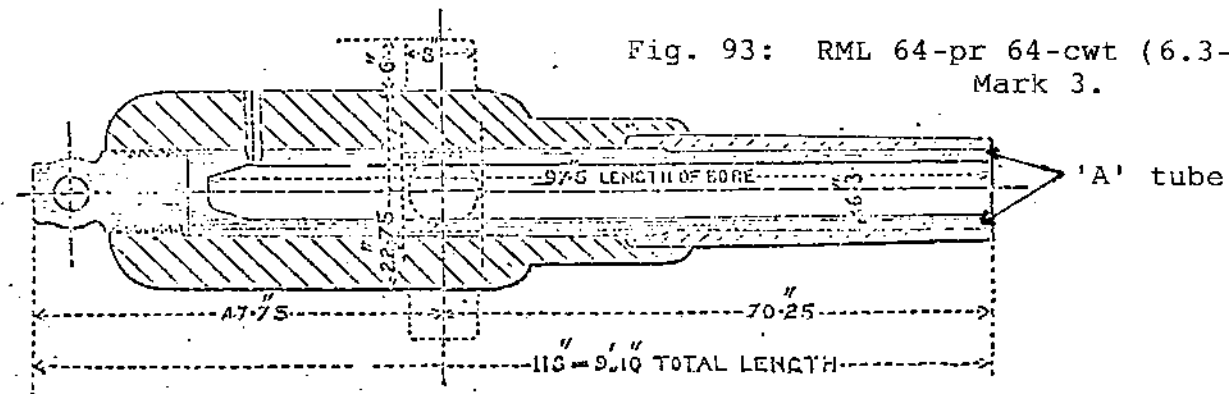
NEW HEAVY RML EQUIPMENTS:

ORDNANCE: Heavy guns, where used for both land and sea services, were identical.

During the 1860s the British were concerned at the increasing strength of iron-clad ships, especially those of the French fleet across the channel. The heaviest Armstrong rifled breech-loader, the RBL 110-pr (7-inch) had not come up to expectations. As Armstrong himself had foretold, his system was not entirely suitable for heavy guns; the muzzle velocity of the 110-pr was not high enough to defeat the warships' armour - and the breech mechanism would not stand any increase in propellant charge to make it higher. Priority was therefore given to the construction of the heavy natures of RML guns which began with the recommendation of the Ordnance Select Committee which sat in 1866.

Four systems of construction ensued; the 'original' followed Armstrong's 'built-up' system, the superiority of which had been duly recognised by the Committee. Subsequently three other systems evolved, the 'modified,' 'Fraser,' and 'Royal Gun Factory' (RGF), incorporating improvements in strength and simplicity, but all retained the same basic principles shown in Fig. 84, i.e. a steel 'A' tube over which other tubes and/or fittings of wrought iron were shrunk. Fig. 93 shows a typical example.

Guns included the 64-pr 64-cwt, 7-inch $4\frac{1}{2}$, $6\frac{1}{2}$, and 7-ton, 8-in 9-ton, 9-in 12-ton, 10-in 18-ton, 10.4-in 28-ton, 11-in 25-ton, 12-in 35-ton, 12.5-in 38-ton etc etc up to 17.72 of 100 tons. The New Zealand Government bought eleven each of the 64-pr 64-cwt and 7-in 7-ton guns in 1878 at the time of the 'first Russian scare.' However, by the time they arrived here in 1879 the 'scare' had passed so they were put into store and apparently forgotten until the next 'scare' in 1885 when they were mounted '.. in all haste' to quote the Fort Record Book. The Kiwi 'she's right' attitude is older than you think!



Manufacture of the Mark 3 gun began in 1867 although the guns received in New Zealand in 1879 were made in 1878.

It differed from earlier marks mainly in having fewer parts. It is built up of four portions, i.e. the 'A' tube of steel, the breech coil to which the trunnion piece is welded before being shrunk on the gun, the 'B' tube, and the cascable screw, all of wrought iron. On the right of the cascable is a gas escape leading to the end of the 'A' tube.

The bore is rifled with three plain grooves on the Woolwich system with a uniform twist of one turn in 40 calibres.

Full charge was 8 pounds of powder, MV was 1390 fs, range 4000 yards.

The 64-pr was not designed for the defeat of armour but rather to attack the upper works of ships.

To digress from technicalities for a moment, two of the 17.7-ton guns mentioned above were installed at Gibraltar - and thereby hangs a tale. During a practice shoot one of the guns misfired, and was ordered to be unloaded. What had happened to the 'instrument extracting projectile' supplied for the purpose is not recorded, but a small Drummer Boy - having been assured 'it was perfectly safe' - was persuaded to crawl down the barrel and attach a rope to the shot. When he crawled out legend has it he was immediately promoted to Corporal!

CARRIAGES AND PLATFORMS: Platforms were sometimes referred to as 'slides.' The new RML 64-pr 64-cwt (6.3-inch) equipment received in New Zealand in 1879 was called 'Carriage garrison sliding' on 'Platform traversing dwarf.' The 'dwarf' part of the nomenclature simply indicated the platform was lower than other equipments, i.e. the wheels were smaller. Fig. 94 shows a side view

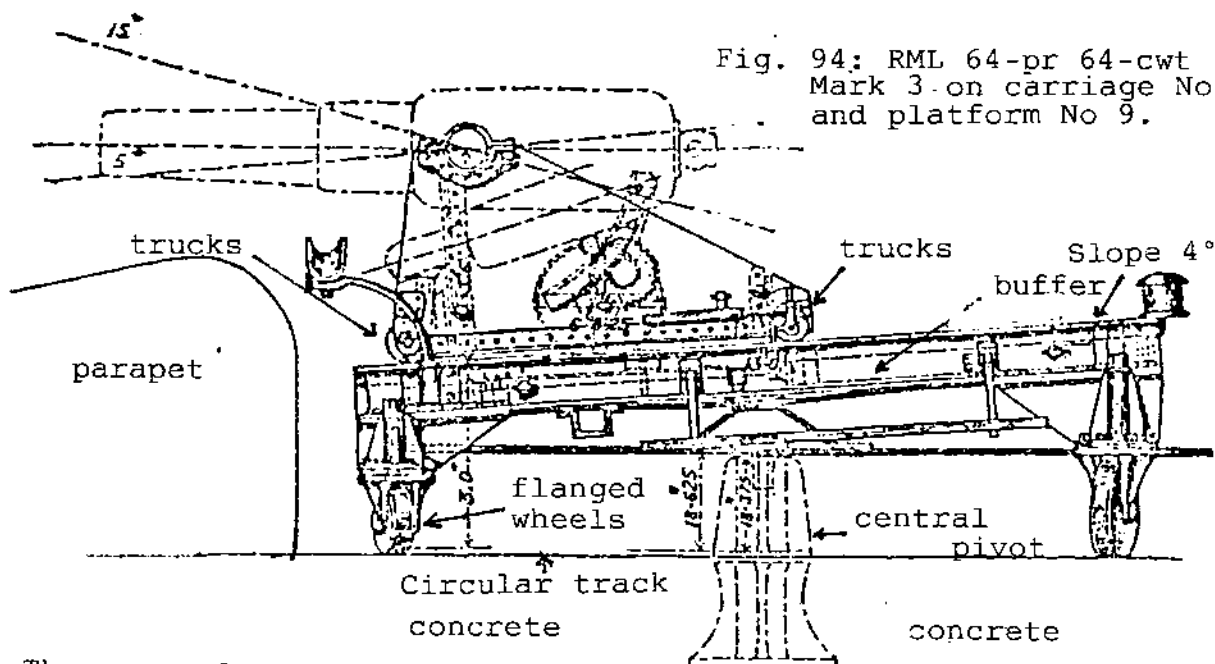


Fig. 94: RML 64-pr 64-cwt Mark 3 on carriage No 9 and platform No 9.

The gun and carriage were said to be mounted 'en barbette, that is to say on a sloping iron platform behind a parapet over which the muzzle protruded in the firing position. While the centre of the platform was secured to a pivot set in the concrete gun floor, each end of it stood on a pair of 'trucks' or small flanged wheels, which ran on a circular rail set in the floor. Thus the complete equipment could be traversed through any angle up to 360° according to the sector the gun was expected to cover.

On firing both gun and carriage recoiled up the sloping platform, being held there while the gun was reloaded. Loading completed, gun and carriage were released to run out down the platform to the firing position once again.

(To be continued.)

Old Comrades Association Trial Website

The AGM approved a trial website for the Association. Catherine Rivers created the site and it can be viewed at the following Internet address:

<http://OurWorld.compuserve.com/HomePages/RiversPartners/OldComrades/index.htm>

It is important to include all letters and punctuation exactly as they appear above. After you have reached the site, you should save it as a "favourite place", or a "bookmark", so that you can return to it in future without having to type in the address again.

If you do not have access to the Internet yourself, you should be able to find a friend or relative who can take you to the site on their system. Show them this Newsletter item.

The Old Comrades' website starts with a cover page, from which you can navigate using the menu buttons or by clicking on an underlined word or phrase. Any place where your cursor changes into a pointing hand can be clicked on to navigate to a different page. The site includes a Welcome page, a list of members, recent newsletters, links to other organisations, activities, obituaries, historical notes, and a photo or two of recent events of interest to members. You can influence the arrangement of the website by sending email from the site to the Webmaster (Catherine). Also, you can send comments and material for inclusion to the Association Secretary, who will vet everything that appears on the site. Members' personal affairs, their addresses and other contact details will not appear on the site without the express permission of the member(s) concerned. If you would like to publish your photo and/or a paragraph or two of personal details, please contact the Association Secretary, and a page will be opened for you for access from the Members' List on the site. The site will be updated at least monthly.

This trial will last until after the next AGM, at which the Association should decide whether to continue with an Internet presence.

THE GUN

Continued from Newsletter 99.

By Wally Ruffell.

Although wooden carriages and platforms as shown in Figs 90 and 91 could easily have been constructed in New Zealand where suitable timber was readily available it seems our Government was not prepared to meet the cost. The 1893 report on the state of the country's defences classified half of the 64-pr 71-cwt carriages unserviceable. They had simply been permitted to rot where they stood.

In situations where carriages and platforms depicted in Figs. 90 and 91 were not available and guns were exposed to the weather, garrison standing carriages of wrought iron as shown in Fig. 92 were used. In addition to being better able to stand the weather than the wooden Naval types they were an improvement on the latter as they carried an elevating screw operated by a ratchet. These carriages could be adapted for certain other guns, e.g. RBL 40-pr, SBML 32-pr.

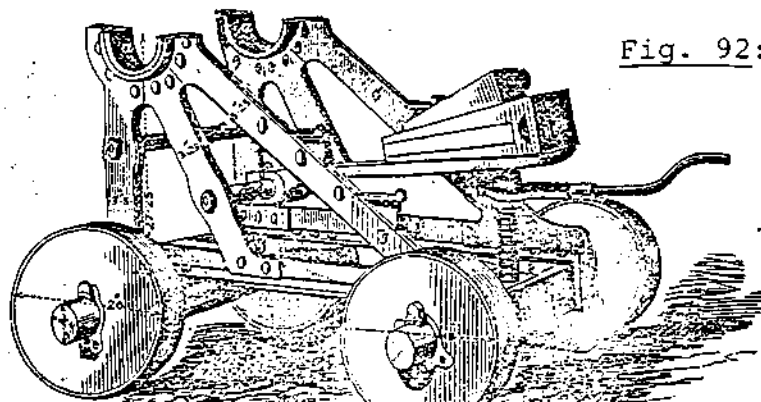


Fig. 92: Wrought iron garrison standing carriage with wooden wheels. Carriage dates from about 1867.

It seems the New Zealand Government could not afford any of these either.

NEW HEAVY RML EQUIPMENTS:

ORDNANCE: Heavy guns, where used for both land and sea services, were identical.

During the 1860s the British were concerned at the increasing strength of iron-clad ships, especially those of the French fleet across the channel. The heaviest Armstrong rifled breech-loader, the RBL 110-pr (7-inch) had not come up to expectations. As Armstrong himself had foretold, his system was not entirely suitable for heavy guns; the muzzle velocity of the 110-pr was not high enough to defeat the warships' armour - and the breech mechanism would not stand any increase in propellant charge to make it higher. Priority was therefore given to the construction of the heavy natures of RML guns which began with the recommendation of the Ordnance Select Committee which sat in 1866.

Four systems of construction ensued; the 'original' followed Armstrong's 'built-up' system, the superiority of which had been duly recognised by the Committee. Subsequently three other systems evolved, the 'modified,' 'Fraser,' and 'Royal Gun Factory' (RGF), incorporating improvements in strength and simplicity, but all retained the same basic principles - shown in Fig. 84, i.e. a steel 'A' tube over which other tubes and/or fittings of wrought iron were shrunk. Fig. 93 shows a typical example.

Guns included the 64-pr 64-cwt, 7-inch $4\frac{1}{2}$, $6\frac{1}{2}$, and 7-ton, 8-in 9-ton, 9-in 12-ton, 10-in 18-ton, 10.4-in 28-ton, 11-in 25-ton, 12-in 35-ton, 12.5-in 38-ton etc etc up to 17.72 of 100 tons. The New Zealand Government bought eleven each of the 64-pr 64-cwt and 7-in 7-ton guns in 1878 at the time of the 'first Russian scare.' However, by the time they arrived here in 1879 the 'scare' had passed so they were put into store and apparently forgotten until the next 'scare' in 1885 when they were mounted '... in all haste' to quote the Fort Record Book. The Kiwi 'she's right' attitude is older than you think!

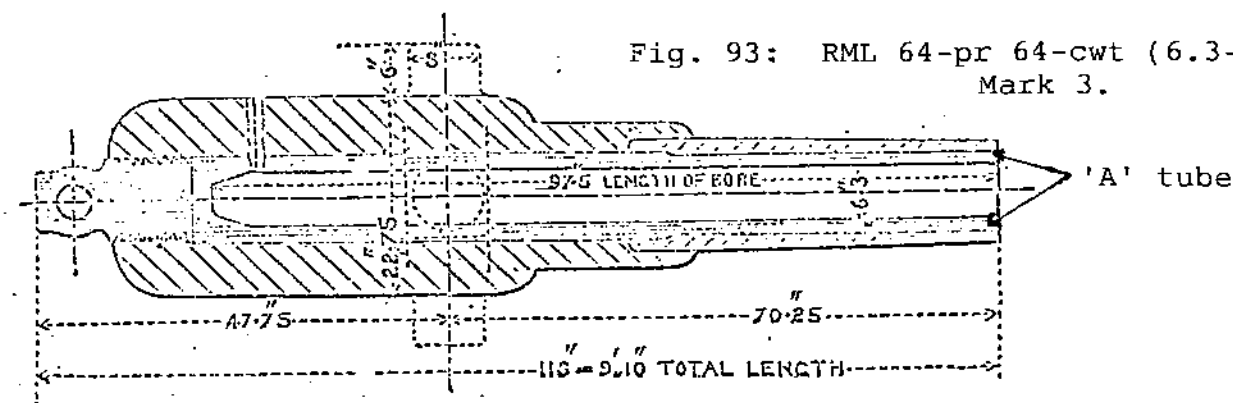


Fig. 93: RML 64-pr 64-cwt (6.3-inch)
Mark 3.

Manufacture of the Mark 3 gun began in 1867 although the guns received in New Zealand in 1879 were made in 1878.

It differed from earlier marks mainly in having fewer parts. It is built up of four portions, i.e. the 'A' tube of steel, the breech coil to which the trunnion piece is welded before being shrunk on the gun, the 'B' tube, and the cascable screw, all of wrought iron. On the right of the cascable is a gas escape leading to the end of the 'A' tube.

The bore is rifled with three plain grooves on the Woolwich system with a uniform twist of one turn in 40 calibres.

Full charge was 8 pounds of powder, MV was 1390 fs, range 4000 yards.

The 64-pr was not designed for the defeat of armour but rather to attack the upper works of ships.

(To be continued.)