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## NEWSLETTER No. 107

**SEPTEMBER 2000**

**ROUTINE ORDERS**

**LAST POST:**

F.R. Jones  
L.B. Tolson

22 Jun 00 at Devonport  
14 Apr 00 at Whangamata

**E-MAIL ADDRESS:**

Capt J.B. Rout

johnbasr@zfree.co.nz

**CHANGE OF ADDRESS:**

J. Fallon  
M.W. Ruffell  
I.J. Doak  
S.sgt D.F. Burton  
T. Hughes

to: 14 Sydney St, Red Cliffe, 4020 Queensland, Australia  
to: 21 Alison St, Rotorua  
to: C/o Croucott, 102 Cogswell Rd, RD1, Raglan  
to: 12 Kippenberger Dr, Linton Camp, Palmerston North  
to: 8a Queens Rd, Glen Avon, New Plymouth

**RETIREMENTS:**

Mrs J.M. Blackwell

retired due to advanced years.

**NEW MEMBERS:**

H 50630 T.J. (Josh) Collins

48 Mears Rd, Hamilton

**LIFE MEMBERS:**

Mr T.P. Shirley  
Mrs Iris Rowntree

w.e.f. 5 Mar 98  
w.e.f. 27 Jan 97 "Good things take time".

**MANAWATU/ RANGITIKEI REPRESENTATIVE:**

Angus Rivers has been the regional rep for a few years and is sponsor of the Association website. He would like to get an active member to take over the regional rep position, to improve recruiting and visiting services. Angus will continue to sponsor the website, and will support the new rep wherever possible. If you can help, please contact the Secretary.

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:**

- (a) **Post of Secretary** — It was resolved that Capt John Rout be nominated for election at the AGM as Honorary Secretary, to replace J. McL. Ross, who is retiring.
- (b) The next committee meeting will be held at Birkenhead RSA at 1000hrs on 14 Oct 00.

### EDITORIAL

**UBIQUE ET OMNIA**

If you escaped Latin at school, this heading means "Everywhere and Everything". Gunners are now forming part of NZBAT 3, a battalion group to be the third relief (now called a "rotation") of troops for East Timor. Long live the old "infantry" tradition: we're right behind you lot. Remember the hard-won wisdom, and carry your packs on the platoon truck.

**NZ DEFENCE QUARTERLY**

Our glossier, though shorter-lived sister has published its last issue, that of Winter this year. Its first editorial, by the then Secretary of Defence, produced his "We have the world's largest moat" dictum of NZ's invulnerability, and stated "There are no ten commandments to tell us how to protect these interests". He had not heard of the Principles of War. "Contributions by retired majors... will be discouraged" he wrote, and, sure enough journalists, historians and academics maintained a seamlessly-sanitised content reminiscent of a militarised "Ladies Home Journal". By the last number, however, some more pertinent comment was being published, but at that point, it was decided that the magazine would be discontinued "for financial reasons". Probably a coincidence.

## DEFENCE POLICY

Sure enough, the Governments "Defence Policy Framework," in June, canceled previous good intentions of holding a thorough review of defence, and yet delayed or shelved hard decisions on re-equipping the armed forces. "In a long list of things to do" wrote the Minister. "The most pressing are to address the mobility and communication requirements of the Army..." What about some firepower, like rounds on the ground? The Regiment should beware of sentiments expressed in the late-lamented Defence Quarterly: "What justification is there for artillery which has never been used and would never be deployed on a peace-keeping mission?" Once again, one sees the emphasis on peace-keeping, and the placid assumption of the "No Threat" brigade that, despite the "ring of fire" developing in the South Pacific, conflict can be avoided by sweetness and reason. Our comments suffer from being second-hand: the new policy statement is not available in print in Auckland. One is referred instead to a mysterious entity know as: [www.defence.govt.co.nz](http://www.defence.govt.co.nz)

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### REUNION NOV 2000

I encourage all members to attend the 2000 Reunion. I attended my first reunion in 1999 and feel very ashamed that I have not done so before. At the time I felt I had let the Corps and committee down by not attending on previous occasions. The few have to do so much work for all Gunners to enjoy each other's company and reminisce about the good times had together. So don't you let them down like I did in the past, register NOW.

### MURRAY CONNOR'S FUNERAL

I was quite disappointed to see so few Gunners at Murray's funeral where there are a number living locally. Col. Kenning traveled from Palmerston North, Brig. Smith from Tauranga and I from Hamilton. Come on Gunners make an effort in the future. At least do it for the person's family.

Jim I will definitely be attending this year's reunion and will stay in the bottom quarters at the Spa as I did last year. I am more than happy to share with someone else who may be attending on their own.

Barry Cook and I shared a couple of hours in the local RSA on Gunner's Day. Unfortunately no one else turned up. Gunners must be on the endangered list by now.

Graeme Black

*(Best letter this year, Graeme — you get the bottle of whisky: sorry it's a miniature, but it's the thought that matters — Ed)*

### HERE'S ANOTHER FROM MATT CRAWLEY, D. RECRUITING

1. Have you looked in the mirror at your hair (if any) lately? Scary isn't it.
2. Are there more wrinkles on your face?
3. Do your bones and joints ache and groan and as you sit or kneel to put on your socks?
4. Do you have to ask people to repeat what they just said?
5. Do you need glasses to read the telephone numbers — or the Old Comrades Newsletter?  
If you answered Yes to question 5 above I suggest you purchase a magnifying glass to read all about the Annual Re-union at Taupo in November. It could be your last chance to attend.
6. How many of your "Old Comrades" have you seen lately?  
This Re-Union is not a case of "old Digs" getting together and spending all the time telling "Grim Dig" stories. It is a time for friends and Partners getting together and having a ball. If you haven't been before, come along and meet those who have been regular attenders.  
Like General McArthur — They'll be back"

## INTERNET REP

### FROM WEBMASTER, CATHERINE RIVERS

The web address is: [riv.co.nz/rnza/](http://riv.co.nz/rnza/)

Please bring your artillery ties, badges and buttons to the Taupo reunion. We just want to photograph them for upcoming articles.

If you want an obituary published on the website for any deceased member (no matter how long ago), write it and give it to the Secretary or the Webmaster.

Does anyone have information on 45th Field Battery NZA? It may have been stationed on Fanning Island in Dec 41.

THE GUN.

By Wally Ruffell.

Continued from NL 106.

FIELD ARTILLERY:CARRIAGES: These were usually called 'travelling carriages.'

With RML ordnance came carriages of wrought iron and steel (later all-steel) of about the same weight as the wooden types they replaced. Wheels were still of wood but the old wooden naves had given way to 'metal,' i.e. bronze.

Instead of the old pole-type trails which restricted elevation to about 15° the new trails consisted of two side brackets connected together at the trail eye and by one or more transoms. Trunnion bearings were fitted at the front, there being no separate saddle. This construction allowed rather more elevation despite the position of the elevating gear.

One innovation with the new carriages was an elevating arc attached to the cascable and operated by a handwheel on the trail via a worm and pinion, as clearly shown in Fig. 108. This gear enabled the gun to be elevated or depressed more quickly and easily than with the old screw which had been in use since 1578!

On the limbers iron was used for the general framework and wood for the footboards, boxes etc. Wheels were interchangeable with gun wheels. Shaft draught continued to be used; pole draught was not officially introduced until 1895 although it was used in New Zealand and India with earlier equipments.

MOUNTAIN ARTILLERY (now called PACK ARTILLERY):

ORDNANCE: Up to 1864 the RBL 6-pr (2.5-inch) 3-cwt gun was intended to be used in the mountain role but was found to be too heavy so was issued to the colonies as a light field gun. Some were shortened and lightened to 294 lbs but were still too heavy as the maximum load a mule could be expected to carry was nearer 200.

In 1865 the first RML mountain gun was introduced. It was the 7-pr (3-inch) 2-cwt Mark 1, made by boring out and rifling old SBML bronze pieces on the Woolwich pattern with a twist of one turn in 20 calibres. As this gun was considered too heavy a Mark 2 of 200 lbs was produced by having the exterior turned plain, i.e. by removing the old decorative mouldings and by shortening the bore by two inches. About 50 were made but it was not introduced into the service because the preponderance was not considered satisfactory. Of those made some were taken by the RN (as boat guns), while six were sent to Canada in 1870 for the Red River expedition.

In 1865 five 7-pr (3-inch) Mark 1 steel guns of 190 lbs were made for India but no more of this pattern eventuated. In 1867 thirteen Mark 2 guns of 150 lbs were made but no pattern sealed. There followed a Mark 3 of 150 lbs, but not being considered sufficiently powerful, was superseded in 1873 by the Mark 4 of 200 lbs with a longer bore shown in Fig. 109 below.

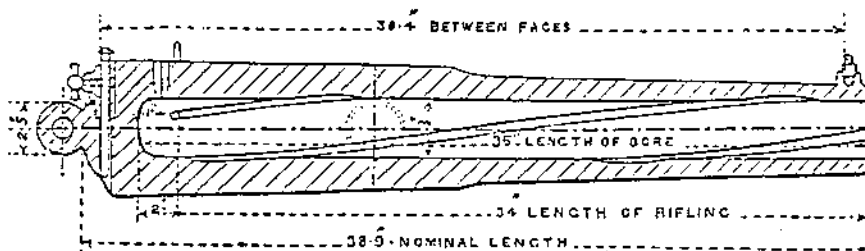


Fig. 109: RML 7-pr  
(3-inch)  
200 lbs Mk 4  
gun.

Sights were graduated to 12° elevation.

All the Marks 1 to 4 guns were made from solid steel ingots, being the first all-steel pieces introduced by Britain. They were rifled in the same way as the bronze guns described above.

**THE SCREW GUN:** It seems the idea of a gun in two parts had its origin in Russia, having been proposed in 1876 by a Captain Kolokolzor, Director of a factory at Obuchow.

In 1877 Colonel Le Mesurier RA proposed an RML 7-pr (2.5-inch) steel gun made in two parts which screwed together, hence 'screw gun,' the piece eulogised by Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936) in his poem on the subject. Twelve guns to Le Mesurier's design made by the Elswick Ordnance Company (Armstrong's firm), were sent to Afghanistan in 1879, and proved so satisfactory that a large number to a similar design were made at the Royal Gun Factory for the service. The RGF guns, designated Mark 2, differed from the EOC pattern mainly internally, e.g. in the shape of the sealing rings.

Rifling consisted of eight PPS grooves, 0.05-in deep, with a twist increasing from one turn in 80 calibres to one in 30 at 3.53 inches from the muzzle, the remainder being uniform at that pitch.

Gun and carriage dismantled were carried by five mules. The screw gun remained the armament of British mountain batteries until after the South African War (1899-1902). It was not popular among Gunners; although cordite had been introduced in 1892 'screw gun' cartridges were still filled gunpowder, the smoke from which 'advertised' a gun's position every time it fired.

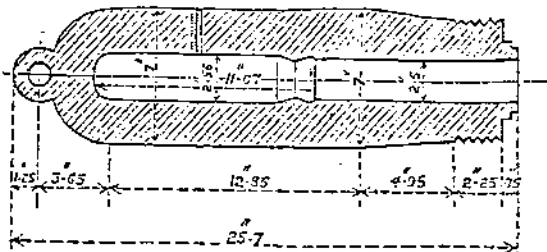


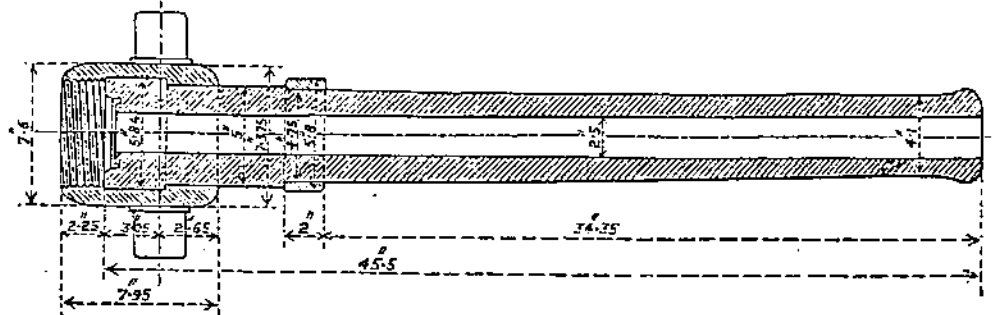
Fig. 110: The 'Screw Gun,' i.e. the RML 2.5-inch mountain gun Mark 1.

Breech portion.

201 lbs

Muzzle portion.

199 lbs



Two mules each carried a portion of the piece, a third the carriage, a fourth the wheels, and the fifth the rest, i.e. the axletree, elevating gear, rammer and other stores.

In its day the screw gun was considered the best mountain gun of its kind in the world.

(To be continued)

#### ADVICE FOR THE YOUNG GUNNER.

IN barracks or socially, with your supported arm, be normally taciturn, witty on occasion but usually grave. This will establish you as someone who does not 'play at soldiers', but is constantly solving weighty and technical problems. Boost your image by references to something they cannot understand (such as ballistics) to underline the narrowness of their non-Gunner world. (Adapted from The Journal of the RA)