

NB: Fig. 122B is of a smaller gun than 122A but as the systems are identical serves to illustrate the mechanism.

Early screws were comparatively long because of the amount of thread cut away which reduced their capacity to withstand firing stresses. Their length also made operation complicated, e.g. to close the breech of Fig. 122 involved four motions: swing the carrier so the screw could enter the breech, push the screw home, turn the screw through part of a turn until the threads meshed with those in the breech, lock the mechanism. Breech mechanisms of the BL 6-inch and 8-inch coast guns installed in New Zealand during the 1880s were of the type illustrated. The long screw was superseded during the 1890s by the stepped or Welin pattern shown in Fig. 123. Whereas in the former type the effective screwed surface was half the total surface, in the latter it was two thirds, or in some cases three quarters.

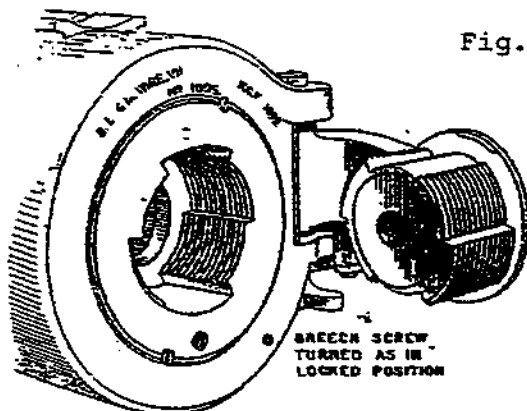


Fig. 123A: Welin or stepped single motion breech mechanism.

Being much shorter in length than the long screw the stepped version could be opened or closed by a single motion of the LBM instead of the four described under Fig. 122.

Fig. 123 shows a BL 6-in Mk 7 breech. BL 6-in Mk 7 guns were installed at Forts Cautley (North Head, Auckland), and Dorset (Wellington) in 1910.

**NOTES:**

1. You will note that this year we will not be using the Taupo Yacht Club, the hire cost of the club for the day was over the top. The Bowling Club is directly across the road from the Yacht Club in Lake Terrace Road just prior to the Boat Harbour. Although the Bowling Club does not have the great views of the lake etc seen from the Yacht Club it will be a good dinner venue.
2. Dinner will be available at the SPA HOTEL on Friday evening at 1930hrs (Bar open at 1830hrs) for those that are using the SPA accommodation. Breakfasts will not be available at the Spa this year. You will need to take your own Breakfast food or make other arrangements.
3. Accommodation Costs at the SPA HOTEL are as follows:

Studio Units:           Single \$30 per night  
                                  Double \$50 per night.

Chalets:                   Double \$80 per night and any extras \$10 each a night.

We normally fill the 10 Studio units, for these it will be a case of first in first served.

**REGISTRATION.**

**IF YOU ARE GOING TO ATTEND THE REUNION PLEASE FILL IN THE REGISTRATION FORM ON THE LAST PAGE OF THIS NEWS LETTER AND RETURN IT TO "THE SECRETARY, PO BOX 72 140., PAPA KURA" BY FRIDAY THE 28<sup>TH</sup> OF SEPTEMBER.**

**GOVERNMENT SUPERANNUITANTS ASSN' (GSA)**

The GSA is the Watch Dog for those of us who draw the Government Superannuation Benefit. (Not the over 65 pension). Col Bert Dyson attended a recent meeting of the Bay of Plenty Branch and has sent to me copies of the GSA April News Letter. A large concern is the membership. About half the potential membership join and the attrition rate, mainly because of the death of older members, is a problem.

To ensure the government is reminded of their obligation to honour the contract, signed by each member, the assn' needs to remain fully representative and this means maintaining membership numbers. If you are not a member I strongly recommend you join. For the small sum of 80cents, deducted from your benefit every 4 weeks, you can become a member and will receive the Assn' News Letters and gain access to your Branch Secretary. To join please contact the Assn at: PO Box 5255, Wellington. Ph 04 472 7006. Fax 04 473 7431 or E-mail [rodde@xtra.co.nz](mailto:rodde@xtra.co.nz)

**TREASURE IN NORTH HEAD TUNNELS** (Wally Ruffle reports on the Judgement of Her Honour C.J. Elias).

Much has been published in the media about lawsuits between The Ministry of Defence and Mallard Productions Ltd in association with one John Earnshaw covering the period 1987 to the present time.

The latter litigant believed historic as well as other valuable military artefacts were located in the tunnels of Fort Cautley. Mallard expected to profit from the sale of a film of the search of the tunnels and Earnshaw from 50% of the value of other material expected to be found.

The aircraft sought by the plaintiffs had been destroyed as unserviceable, they were burnt on the beach at Devonport in 1926. Confirmation of this was supplied by the late Major H.G. Salt MBE RNZA who witnessed the event, and by the late Mr G. Bolt OBE, one-time instructor, pilot, and engineer at the Walsh Brothers flying school, who identified metal parts which had survived the fire. An article showing Salt and Bolt appeared in the Auckland Star of 6 Nov 1961, the latter is shown holding part of one of the Boeing aircraft sought. Apparently Earnshaw and his colleagues chose to ignore the article.

Anticipated income from the documentary film Mallard proposed to make amounted to \$1,028,000, later amended to \$400,000. Earnshaw claimed to have lost 50% of \$9,100,000 expected to come from the sale of the aircraft and other material e.g. vehicles, small arms etc, that he claimed was stored in the tunnels. He also claimed \$44,000 loss of income caused by his participation in the fruitless searches for the equipment.

Statements from the late Major Reg Nutsford who had been closely associated with North Head since 1938, from Wally Ruffle who had been Accounting Officer 9 Coast Cadre 1962-64 when equipment was moved to Sylvia Park as well as from other defence personnel, that the tunnels were empty, the plaintiffs chose to ignore.

In her summing up the judge, while agreeing that the plaintiffs had slight justification that the Crown was in breach of its agreement to provide full assistance to the search, awarded each of them \$100 damages.

At the time of the judgement, 21 May 2001, costs were still to be determined.

**CAN YOU HELP**

**17 FIELD REGIMENT**

Jocelyn Addison is trying to contact members of 17 Field Regiment who served in the Pacific during WWII. Her father, Bombardier William Robert Ashton was a member of 35 Battery on Vella Lavella in the Solomons in 1943. He and others operated a captured Japanese landing barge for a period. If you can help Jocelyn's E-mail address is [addo@tassie.net.au](mailto:addo@tassie.net.au) or please get in touch with the secretary.

*Nº 111 - p1 missing*

**ESCAPE FROM GREECE**

In 1941 seven Kiwis and a 14 year old Greek boy, George Bizos, escaped from the port of Kalamata in an open boat. The boat was damaged in a storm. While drifting they managed to signal a passing convoy and were picked up by HMS Kimberley on her way to Crete. George Bizos is still alive and he has for many years tried to find the seven Kiwis. His daughter in law Mary Bizos has now taken up the problem. One of the Kiwis may have been called Fraser. If you can help Mary her E-mail address is [kmb@bizos.netkonect.co.uk](mailto:kmb@bizos.netkonect.co.uk) or please get in touch with the secretary.

**OLD COMRADES WEBSITE WEBMASTER'S REPORT**

The Association website continues to grow and prosper. Recently, we have had greetings sent from the NQ Sub-Branch of the Royal Australian Artillery Association (Queensland), and from an American Vietnam vet, LeRoy C. Dahms Jr (USMC). We have had several requests for assistance with school projects, and have been able to assist with supplementary material. There are new articles on the site each month, and the webmaster will always be delighted to receive more articles and requests for personal pages from members. Apparently, we're in the top ten personal websites in NZ. The website address is [riv.co.nz/rnza/](http://riv.co.nz/rnza/) or you can ring 06 327 8831 or mail to Catherine Rivers, RD3, MARTON

**FROM AND ABOUT MEMBERS**

**Bill McKenzie**, in the Queens Birthday Honours, was awarded the **QSM** for service to the community. On behalf of all members well done and congratulations Bill.

**Enid Standen**. As a result of the notice re the POW gathering in Bathurst, Australia, (NL 109) Enid contacted the Verger, Greg Standen, and discovered he was related to her late husband. Enid attended the gathering, met long lost cousins and on the Sunday she and the NZ High Commissioner, Mr Simon Murdock, laid a wreath at the Carillion. Well done Enid.

**Darkie Forrester** has been in touch from Christchurch and reports that on Gunners day he had a few drinks with Brian O'Connor, Gerald Cassidy, John Masters, Bill Weatherhead and others. Darkie will not have to pay his Assn sub next year.

**Iris Rowntree** had a couple of health problems in February and as a result has moved from Paeroa to a home in Hamilton. She is being very well looked after and sends her regards to all members. Unfortunately Iris will not be able to make it to this years reunion.

**Dan Foley** is still enjoying life across the ditch. He reports that because of locomotion and sight problems he has had resign from the Aust' Volunteer Coast Guard Assn'. He still has hopes of crossing back to see us one of these days.

**Daphne Schroder** has moved to Coombabah in Queensland to live next door to her daughter who is a nurse and wants to keep an eye on her. Daphne reports that life is just lovely but she is still having map reading problems when driving her car in her new surroundings.

**DEPLOYMENT AND PROCEDURE FOR A SURVEY TROOP RA (Continued from NL 110)**

Conclusion.

**APPENDIX 3**

*Aspro-fix:*

A. *Sun Azi-Myth:* The instrument is set up and the sun shot with rapid bursts of horizontal and vertical fire. The results are recorded on the inside of a cigarette packet, and the following deductions from them are made:

- i. Paralysis in Altitude.
  - ii. Semi-diurnal arcs.
  - iii. Conveyance to and fro.
  - iv. Magnetic varieties (not ENSA. ENSA was an entertainment organisation).
- What is left is known as Azi-Myth.

B. *Polaris Azi-Myth*: A special set of tables - "Happy Jack's (Capt J. P. Arthurs) Almanac" - has been prepared by an eminent mathematician. The Sergeant instructs the gunner to look up the correct page, and there the answer is!!!

#### APPENDIX 4

##### *Theodolites:*

1. *The Crook Tough and Simple* (CTS) is provided to all Survey Troops for ARTY Survey. It has two verniers, three legs and one telescope. The verniers should be read with a rapid nodding motion of the head to avoid Paralysis.
2. *The What? or Builders Level* is an excellent instrument for hill country, weighing only 20ozs. It has two micrometers, three legs and one telescope. During a breeze it should be tied down to the station with the Chain and large boulders.
3. *The Wilde*. This is a very beautiful instrument, built on modern lines and painted a delicate Survey Green. It is studded with dainty chromium bowls containing the palest pink crystals imaginable, these, on pay days will turn a most exquisite deep rose. Also inserted like lakes amid the green country side are little crystal mirrors which are placed in positions in accordance with the Higher Designs of the creator. Of course it is an officer's instrument, but Sergeants are sometimes allowed to approach it if they have an order from the GOC.
4. *The Zeiss*: This is a similar instrument to the Wilde except its colour scheme is pearly grey. It has three telescopes looking in different directions which affords variety and scope to the surveyor.
5. *The C.T. and S. Crusader*. This is an armoured model mounted on a steel chassis and is for use in blitz warfare. IT weighs 1000lbs fully mounted and will withstand heavy A.P. shells and 250lb bombs. It has an optical scale marked in 20sec intervals but this is ignored and what is not marked is read. The M.K 2 model (Crusader-Tiger) has no marked scale, just a continuous space (Space-time Continuum) being provided.
6. *The Tavistock*: This is the latest word in comfort and has a revolving seat for the observer, air conditioning, E.L. and H. and C. It also carries a complete bicycle repair outfit and the lighting set has been known to work.

THE END

#### THE GUN

By Wally Ruffell

Continued from NL 110

##### RETURN TO BREECH LOADING:

BREECH MECHANISMS: Despite advances made in Europe during the early 1870s Britain did not seriously consider a return to breech-loading until near the end of the decade.

Demand for greater range coupled with slower-burning powders made longer barrels necessary, which in turn made the loading of RML guns more difficult, particularly in the Navy. Even the conservatives began to realise that a return to breech-loading was inevitable.

In his annual report for 1878-79 the Director of Artillery pointed out that owing to the increased length of guns breech-loading had become essential. Having studied the systems in use in Germany, France, and other countries, he recommended the interrupted screw, a modified version of that employed by the French.

Then on 2 January 1879 a RML 12.5-inch 38-ton gun on HMS Thunderer burst, killing nine sailors and injuring 35. During a practice shoot the gun had misfired, no one had noticed, and the gun had been 'double-shotted.' Naturally, advocates of breech-loading were quick to assert that such an accident could not happen with a BL gun.

In June 1879 a Committee on Ordnance was appointed to consider whether the services should have ML or BL guns - as had occurred in 1865! However, on this occasion common sense prevailed, the BL school won the day, and a programme of heavy ordnance construction was put in hand.

At the same time the possibility of converting existing RBL ordnance did not escape the Committee. Although the manufacture of Armstrong RBL guns had ceased in 1864, many were still in service; New Zealand did not see the last of them until the early 1900s.

As late as 1880 a proposal was made to convert the RBL 40-pr (4.75-in) and 7-inch into 'side-closing' guns by rotating the piece 90° within the trunnion ring, thus making the vent piece a horizontal sliding block. As well as making handling more convenient, the conversion saved much labour, as the vent piece no longer had to be completely removed for loading. Experimental guns were prepared, other systems of obturation tried, as well as projectiles with copper driving band. (invented by Vavasseur in 1874). The modified guns were said to have '....answered extremely well' but the expense involved, especially for new ammunition, ruled out further action.

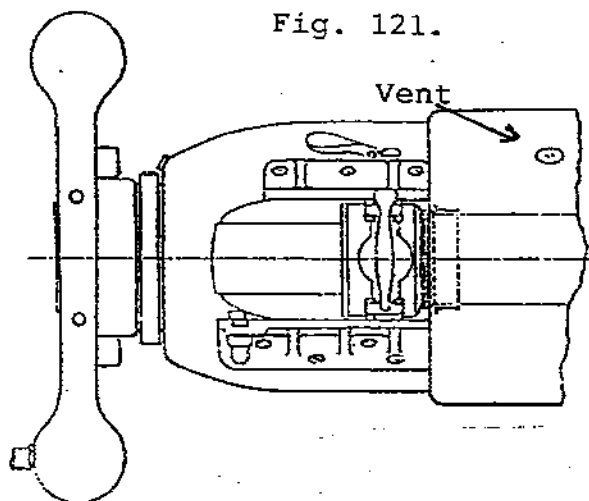


Fig. 121.

Modified breech for medium and heavy RBL guns. The vent piece has been converted to a horizontal sliding block. It no longer includes the vent; the gun has been radially vented as shown.

The idea possibly came from Germany where all breeches featured a horizontal sliding block or 'wedge.'

Fig. 122 shows an early BL mechanism copied from the French de Bange system of 1877 (named after Captain de Bange of the French Army), who invented it in 1872.

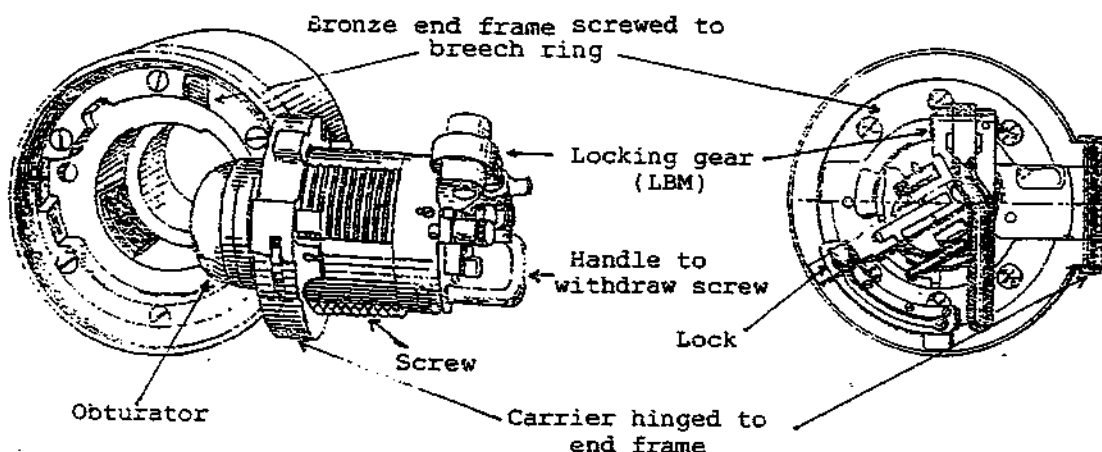


Fig. 122A.

Fig. 122B.

pay to be financial till the end of this year. If you haven't paid up please do so soon. reminder notices will be sent out with News Letter 112.

**LAST POST:**

Capt T.J. Tom Chapman	Life Member, at Waikanae on 1 July 2001
Barney Harrop	at Auckland on 9 August 2001
Maj Gen Geoff Carter	Major General Carter, Royal Australian Artillery, was Chief Instructor at the School of Artillery Waiouru, in 1975-76.

**CHANGE OF ADDRESS:**

Capt J.J. Hanvey	to: Greenvalley Lodge, 4/10 Greenvalley Rise, Glenfield AUCKLAND.
Maj F.H. Gibbison	to: 3 Coult Place, Mapua, TASMAN BAY 7155
Iris Rowntree	to: c/- Trevellyn Home, 1340 Victoria St, HAMILTON
John H. Smith	to: Managers Residence, 2 Ford Court, Carmidale, Qld 4152, AUSTRALIA
Bill Morland	to: 6/8 Rugby Road, Birkenhead, AUCKLAND 1310
Major Shay Bassett	to: 43 Bells Road, Linton, PALMERSTON NORTH
Jeff Waters	to: 4/8 Wood Street, PAPA KURA
Eric Bickerton	to: Unit 135 Longford Park Village, TAKANINI 1703
Daphne Schroder	to: 2/9 Ashlee Court, Coombaba, North Gold Coast, Queensland 4216, AUSTRALIA.

**NEW MEMBERS**

John Gatley	of: 30 Ewing Grove, Acacia Bay TAUPO 2736
David Bahler	of: P.O. Box 33 055, Petone, LOWER HUTT

**LIFE MEMBERS**

On reaching the age of 80:  
Maj Jack Kearney w.e.f. Dec 2000