

There was a distinct improvement in the stamp of horse brought to camp. The men are also beginning to learn more of the importance of horsemastership.

There is still a lack of cyclists for the purpose of communication and saving of horseflesh.

Squadron-leaders should take every advantage of the concentrations for troop and squadron training which will, it is hoped, precede the next annual camps to more thoroughly instruct their troop and section leaders in the control of fire.

I was glad to see at the field operations for the Inspector-General that the training of scouts has begun to bear fruit.

5. FIELD ARTILLERY.

(a.) *Royal New Zealand Artillery (Field Artillery Section).*

The nucleus cadres which serve the Territorial batteries are now well established in the various centres. When first started recruiting was rather hurriedly carried out in this branch; the conditions of pay and service were poor, and not many recruits were forthcoming. Men were enlisted who were not really up to the standard required, as a result many of these men have been unable to qualify in their proficiency and promotion examinations. Improvements in this respect is anticipated this year.

The cadres were assembled in August last at Palmerston North camp, where they were trained as a battery by the Instructor of Artillery. They took great interest in the work, and derived much benefit from the camp. Throughout the year the cadres have worked well, and Territorial officers give good reports of the assistance received by them from the Permanent non-commissioned officers and men.

In some cases the Adjutants have not yet realized their responsibility for the technical instruction of Territorial officers, for the adequate supervision of the stores, and for the efficient control of the cadres. These cadres should invariably attend the annual camp of the Territorial batteries of which they are the permanent nucleus.

(b.) *Territorial.*

All the batteries carried out practice during the year. Owing to the nature of the camps the time available for practice was limited (in no case exceeding two days), but a good deal of technical work was done. Most of the practice by the 18-pr. Q.F. batteries and practically all the practice by the howitzer batteries was carried out from concealed positions.

The practice was "instructional," and all brigade and battery commanders report that in the present state of the batteries officers and men learn a great deal more from "instructional" than from "service" practice. Instructional practice, which is conducted without regard to speed, give time to note mistakes in the service of the guns and in ranging, and the lessons learnt are more firmly embedded in the minds of all concerned than is the case with service practice. Each officer conducted at least one series.

Although the 4.5 in. howitzers have only recently arrived in the country, all officers showed an intelligent appreciation of the use of these weapons, and had evidently devoted a good deal of time before coming to camp in learning how to lay out lines of fire from covered positions and how to use the Mark III director, without which it would be impossible to get accurate shooting. The 4.5 in. howitzer proved a very accurate weapon, and established itself in the confidence of officers and men.

The full equipment of dial sights has not arrived from England, but in other respects all the batteries are now completely equipped. The care of this valuable equipment is a source of anxiety, but every effort is being made to make all concerned realize its value and the care necessary to keep it in good order.

There is no insuperable difficulty in making a Territorial battery, as it exists in New Zealand, efficient in other respects, but it is impossible that it can be of any real use without good and well-trained officers. A number of good young officers have come into the Field Artillery lately and joined the batteries, but more are wanted. The most hopeful thing about the Field Artillery is the general and increasing keenness of all ranks to make themselves efficient, and the additional time which officers and N.C.O.s seem always ready to give when asked to do so.

As I reported last year, all field batteries must go to camp for a longer period if we are to get real efficiency. Last year I recommended four extra days for them. This year the Inspector-General of the Oversea Forces has recommended *at least* three. I trust that his recommendation will be given effect to. In no other country does the Field Artillery undergo such a short training as in New Zealand.

Much useful tactical work was done at the camps this year in conjunction with the other field troops.

The personnel of the Brigade Ammunition columns is trained with the battery equipment.

D (Mountain) Battery has been unfortunate in having to wait such a long time for the arrival of its guns. In the meantime the men are being trained as usefully as circumstances will permit. All ranks are beginning to take a pride in the fact that this will be the first mountain battery to be raised in any Oversea Dominion, and when the guns arrive I feel sure that in a short time they will take the same interest in the work and become just as efficient as they were when a field battery.

(c.) *Cadet Field Artillery*

Christ's College, Nelson College, and Hamilton High School have been equipped with a section of 15-pr. B.L. field guns, and are instructed by the permanent N.C.O.s of the Field Artillery cadres in gun drill, fire discipline, and riding. These Cadets have all carried out practice with satisfactory results. The headmaster of the Auckland Grammar School has promised to detail a detachment of his boys for artillery work when the new school buildings are completed,