

the elimination of waste in feeding this year by the provision of nosebags for all Mounted units made the scale ample for all general requirements. Some loss of condition in certain horses is rather difficult to avoid, seeing that many are entirely grass-fed at ordinary times and do not take well to the dry feed at the beginning of camps.

67. FIELD COOKING.

During the year further Roberts field cooking-ovens (local make) were obtained, which, with one or two acquired by regiments, permitted the following distribution to be made to districts for the camps:—

	Field Cooking-ovens.	
	For 500 Men.	For 250 Men.
Auckland	9	4
Wellington	10	4
Canterbury	8	4
Otago	8	4
Totals	35	16

These field cooking-ovens again enabled regimental cooking to be carried out under more favourable conditions than previously, and ensured a considerable saving in labour and fuel. They also eliminated the provision of large numbers of camp-ovens, frying-pans, and boilers, the stock of which would have required considerable augmentation owing not only to many having become unserviceable from past usage, but also to the whole of the Dominion Forces being encamped at the same time. The 9th (Wellington East Coast) Mounted Rifles imported privately two Lune Valley travelling cookers. A Sykes travelling cooker from England, and a Roberts (local make) travelling cooker were also in use at Takapau camp. Conditions for a travelling trial were drawn up, but, unfortunately, the test was not applied, the very bad weather having a great deal to do with the failure to hold the competition.

In October last a further course of instruction in field cookery was held at Trentham, and attended by sixty-two candidates selected from units. Thirty-two candidates qualified as competent to supervise the cooking for a regiment, and were eligible for appointment as sergeant cooks where vacancies existed in their units; twenty-seven qualified as assistant or company cooks; three failed to qualify. The result from these classes is very satisfactory, as evidenced by the greatly increased number of Territorials cooking for their units at the late camps. Further efforts will be required to ensure a sufficient number of cooks being available in units to enable them to be self-contained in this respect, and to ensure that the cooking for the Territorial Force will be adequately carried out in the event of mobilization.

68. CAMP EQUIPMENT.

There are now 3,651 tents (circular) 181 marquees, 30 operating-tents, and 98 bivouac tents in store, sufficient to accommodate the whole Territorial Force even at full establishment.

A supply of tent-canvas is being imported to enable manufacturers to make up tents locally. Should this prove satisfactory, all tents required will in future be made up in the Dominion.

69. RAILWAY AND STEAMER TRANSPORT.

Owing to difficulties of transport to the Canterbury District camp at Kowai, it was decided to encamp the Marlborough and Nelson troops—10th (Nelson) Mounted Rifles, H Battery Field Artillery, 12th (Nelson) Regiment, and a section of No. 3 Field Ambulance—at Tapawera. This involved the transport by steamer of about 200 of all ranks from Picton to Nelson and return, instead of all the above-mentioned troops to Lyttelton. No Government steamer being available at the time, arrangements were made with the Union Steamship Company for this service. It was also necessary to convey the Gisborne troops (about 300 all ranks and 100 horses) to and from Napier, on their way to the district camp at Takapau. This service was also arranged through the Union Steamship Company. Special reductions on ordinary fares were secured in each case. The troops north of Auckland also required conveyance to and from Auckland, on their way to the district camp at Hautapu. This service was arranged by the Northern Steamship Company, which provided a special steamer for the purpose.

The demand on the Railway Department for the carriage of troops, horses, baggage, camp equipment, and supplies to the camps was greater than had ever been made before, and the thanks of this Department are due to all railway officers concerned, particularly the General Manager, Head Office staff, and District Traffic Managers and staffs, for the general excellence of the arrangements made and much help in many ways. Every endeavour was made by the Railway Department to obviate the running of trains on Sundays wherever practicable, but in some instances this was unavoidable in consequence of the distance to be travelled and other circumstances. Apart from the carriage stock utilized in the transport of troops, some 90 bogie wagons and 129 four-wheeled wagons were required in the North Island, and some 28 bogie wagons and 200 four-wheeled wagons in the South Island, irrespective of the number of trucks required for the conveyance of camp equipment, guns, vehicles, &c. The Railway Department also constructed sidings near the Hautapu, Takapau, Kowai, and Matarae camp sites, which greatly facilitated the detraining and entraining of the troops, and the loading and unloading of horses, guns, equipment, and supplies.