

1939.
NEW ZEALAND.

MILITARY FORCES OF NEW ZEALAND.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CHIEF OF THE GENERAL STAFF.

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

REPORT.

Wellington, 15th June, 1939.

The Hon. the MINISTER OF DEFENCE.

SIR,

I have the honour to submit the following report on the New Zealand Military Forces for the period 1st June, 1938, to 31st May, 1939.

1. GENERAL REMARKS.

The past training year has now been completed under the improved conditions of service for the Territorial Force and utilizing the additional modern equipment provided.

I consider the results satisfactory both as regards the increased efficiency of the Territorial Force and the greater interest which is being taken in the Army by the people. A system of voluntary enlistment is dependent not only upon the spirit of service of those who enrol, but also upon the support of all sections of the community.

The recent appeal made by the Right Hon. the Prime Minister has had an excellent effect. His public appreciation of their efforts has encouraged Territorials to work with increased zest and has had a beneficial effect on recruiting.

On the 31st May, 1938, the Territorial Force had a strength of 7,112 all ranks; a year later this figure had increased to 10,364, and would have been even higher except for the limitations of peace establishments, which were not increased until the training year had nearly terminated.

A total of 4,808 recruits were enrolled, but all units have taken the opportunity to discharge men who could not carry out their obligations.

In the past the number of men who have completed three years' service in the Territorial Force has not been satisfactory, but improved conditions such as pay and allowances, together with the full co-operation of employers throughout the Dominion, should go a long way towards ensuring that the Territorial soldier carries out his contract to serve for the full period for which he enlisted. It is the number who complete their engagement, rather than the number who are serving at any one time, which is the criterion of efficiency.

As an innovation I have added to this year's report a series of photographs illustrating various activities of the Army during the past year.

2. REGULAR FORCES.

(a) COMMANDS.

On reaching the retiring age on 31st December, 1938, Colonel I. T. Standish, C.M.G., D.S.O., A.D.C. to the King, relinquished the command of the Central Military District, and, after completing his retiring leave, was transferred to the Reserve of Officers. He was succeeded by Colonel E. Puttick, D.S.O., A.D.C., who took over command on 1st January, 1939.

On 1st January, 1939, on the appointment of Colonel O. H. Mead, D.S.O. as Second Military Member of the Army Board, vice Colonel E. Puttick, D.S.O., A.D.C., Lieut.-Colonel N. W. McD. Weir assumed command of the Northern Military District, and was granted the temporary rank of Colonel.

Colonel R. Miles, D.S.O., M.C., on his return to the Dominion on 11th May, 1939, was appointed to the General Staff at Army Headquarters.