



Incorporated

NEW ZEALAND PERMANENT FORCE OLD COMRADES ASSOCIATION INC

PO BOX 33 710, TAKAPUNA, AUCKLAND 9

NEWSLETTER No 78

JUNE 1993

A Registered Publication

LAST POST:

- 1916 Captain TAN (Tan) Vine, 25 Mar 93, at Auckland.
34253 Major LF (Len) Partner, 2 May 93, at Palmerston North.
Reverend WN (Nevill) Drake, 23 May 93, at Taupo (Hon. Member).
34731 RJ (Jack) Keinzley, 8 Jun 93, at Auckland.
LS (Dinty) Day, 12 Jun 93, at Auckland.
30222 Lt Col PWF (Peter) Joplin MBE, 13 Jun 93, at Waikato Hospital.

CHANGES OF ADDRESS:

- Lt PM Gregg to PO Box 464, Matamata.
TJ Higginson to 40 Penzance Rd, Mairangi Bay, Auckland 10.
PB O'Connor MBE to 62 Sabys Rd, Halswell, Christchurch 3.
Capt LJ Skinner to 19 Sombrero View, Porirua.
Col RH Smith OBE to 4 Kallista Pl, Browns Bay, Auckland 1310.
AB Tustin to 49G Auckland St, Picton.
Lt Col AR Vail to 119A Ohauti Rd, Tauranga.

NEW MEMBERS:

- Q410449 Lt Col GR Williams RNZA, 16 Field Regiment RNZA, Waiouru.
331273 DM(Don) Potter, 1/19 Ingram St, Papakura.
Mrs Joyce Vine, 162/1381 Dominion Rd, Mt Roskill, Auckland 4 (Associate).

RESIGNATION:

Mrs JB (Jean) Lovell (Associate Member).

DISTRICT REP:

Captain TJ (Tom) Chapman, 19A Campbell St, Karori, Wellington, is our new District Rep. for Wellington/Hutt.

RR (Rex) Hudson has resigned as District Rep. for Canterbury/Westland for personal reasons. We are seeking someone to take his place.

REUNIONS:

J Force Jubilee Reunion, Palmerston North, 17-20 Mar 95. More later.

14 LAA Regt Assn, 25-26 Sep 93, Wellington College. Contact Secretary P. Turner, Box 528, Levin

2NZEF Japan Section reunion dine and dance 25 Sep 93, Papakura. Enquiries to Dave Holmes, Box 374, Papakura.

7 NZ A Tk Regt, 8-9-10 Mar 94, Alexandra Park Raceway, Greenlane, Epsom, Auckland. Contact R. Curry, Reunion Secretary, 566 Hillsborough Rd, Mt Roskill, Auckland 4, Phone 09/626 4435.

AMENDMENT TO NEWSLETTER 77: Add to apologies for non-attendance at AGM: HG Bigg-wither. Lofty thinks he may have been the one who forgot to sign his reply form!

CONDOLENCES:

Our deepest sympathy goes to Bill Round, 40B Kings Ave, Matua, Tauranga who lost his good lady, Muriel, on 5 May 93.

CONGRATULATIONS:

To SSgt Brett Rigden RNZA who at a WOs course at Waiouru recently was awarded the Management Trophy and the SM of the Army award for being top overall student.

THANKS:

To Kerry Lee for the article (Evening Post 24 Apr 93) on the Wrights Hill 9.2 guns..

REQUIRED:

Further information on Wrights Hill 9.2 guns by Matt Crawley, 48 Raumati Rd, Raumati Beach.

NEWS FROM AROUND AND ABOUT:

Spencer Morrison, our Southland/Otago Rep., reports the Southland Gunner Association held a parade on Sunday 23 May 93 (the nearest Sunday to Gunners Day), at the Invercargill Cenotaph. Those taking part were: Pipes and Drums of 4 Otago/South RNZIR, 30 members of the the Gunners Assn, including supporting corps and NZPFOCA, Cenotaph Guard (Air Training Corps) plus wreath-laying parties from Gunners Assn, ATC, and City of Invercargill Council.

At the service the Queens Piper played a lament.

After the service all marched to the Army Hall and the local Garrison Club where the Hon. Colonel 4 Otago/South., Col Joe Anderson, toasted The Regiment. Members of NZPFOCA present included Spencer Morrison, Graeme Henderson, and James Horn BEM, who also got together 'for a few' afterwards. So the Gunner movement is still strong in the deep South!

Dave Hughey, 12A Crofton Rd, Christchurch 5, reports he is well but recovering from a quadruple bypass performed in February. He hopes to be in Auckland for 7 A Tk reunion 8-10 Mar 94.

Reg Walker, 20A Edgewater Grove, Orewa, Hibiscus Coast, has a bit of a problem with arthritis in the hands (you're not the only one, Reg), does not see many of his old mates from the war years but often thinks of them, and sends his best regards.

Harold Ward, 543 New Brighton Rd, Christchurch 9, sends regards to Eric Autridge, and a reminder of Fanning Island days.

Arthur Kilmore, who is spending the winter in Fiji, sends regards to all Old Comrades.

Paul Gregg sends regards to all Old Comrades. Paul is now a restaurateur he has purchased a restaurant and bar in Matamata called 'JJ's'. Under an appropriate sign within is a corner designated 'Cordite Corner' at which any visiting Gunner is more than welcome to share an Artillery Port. The restaurant is open Tues-Fri for lunches and otherwise from 1630 hrs seven days a week. Paul says the meaning of 'Cordite Corner' has created much discussion among the locals. Call in and educate them!

Darkie McWhinnie reports all well in Taranaki.

Dutch Holland reports that George McCulloch who lives with his son at Te Kauwhata is 91 not out, and although physically he is rather frail, his sense of humour is still 100%.

Del Delaney, 3/17 Barrie St, Christchurch 2, sends regards to all Old Comrades. Del has had a bad spin healthwise since retiring in 1978. We wish him well for the future.

Enid Standen, 5A Clifton Ave, Carterton, writes a newsy letter about doings in her home town, in particular about the last Anzac Day Parade.

Daphne and Fred Schroder, 2/21 Clipper Court, Coffs Harbour, NSW 2450, enjoy delivering meals on wheels - although Daphne says they are not too far off needing them themselves! We sincerely hope that situation does not arise for a few years yet. Temperatures at their address in May were 4-5° warmer than Auckland.

James Horn BEM, Montecillo Travel Lodge, 240 Spey St (Box 141) Invercargill, offers 10% discount to all NZPFOCA members passing through.

At a Gunners Day ceremony in Wellington our senior serving Gunner, Lt Col Tom O'Reilly, laid a wreath at the National War Memorial Hall of Memories. This was followed by a moment's silence and the Artillery Prayer, after which those participating were invited to the Civil Service Club for an hour's fellowship.

Our Waiouru/16 Field Rep., WO1 Ian Foster, has been prominent in organising a new outside play area for Waiouru's Weir Terrace Kindergarten.

Ex-members of 5 Field Regiment joined with 16 Field Regiment in celebrating Gunners Day. During the celebrations they were addressed by Lt General Sir Leonard Thornton KBE CB, a past-Patron of our Association, and Maj General Ron Hassett CB CBE, Colonel Commandant of the Regiment, and our present Patron. Both speakers reminded all present of our Gunner heritage. There followed an evening of comradeship between young and old which all greatly appreciated.

AN APPRECIATION

CAPTAIN ALFRED JOHN BAIGENT MBE

23 Mar 1910- 5 Mar 1993

Jack joined the Regiment in 1928. After recruit training at TRENTHAM CAMP he was posted to FORT DORSET. Further movement to DUNEDIN followed, then back to DORSET in 1933. Here Jack began a long association with the "Concrete Gunners". Under the watchful eye of Major Chris Gallagher he became acquainted with the many facets of Coast Artillery.

June 1944 saw Jack posted to 2NZEF, embarking with the 12th Reinforcements for service with the Gunners in ITALY. On the cessation of hostilities he joined 'J' Force as Battery Sergeant Major, 25 Battery.

On his return from JAPAN he was commissioned in the Regular Force. Shortly afterwards he was seconded to the Fiji Military Forces, serving with various coast artillery units.

Returning to New Zealand in 1952 he became District Officer and Quartermaster, 10 Coast Regiment and later Adjutant until his retirement in 1958.

So ended thirty years of dedicated service to the guns.

On retirement he became Secretary of the Wellington Returned Services Association, and in this position he devoted his experience and energy to the welfare of ex-servicemen.

In 1970 he retired for the second time, but immediately took a position with the National Bank as a records Officer.

Finally retiring in 1980 to his cottage at Raumati he continued to enjoy his garden and the friendship and company of Gunners.

He was a long-time member of our Association, serving two terms as President (1959-70 and 1975-76), and was Wellington/Hutt Valley Representative and Vice President at the time of his death on 5 March this year.

Jim Gilberd.

THE GUN

Continued from Newsletter No 77

By Wally Ruffell

CARRIAGES:

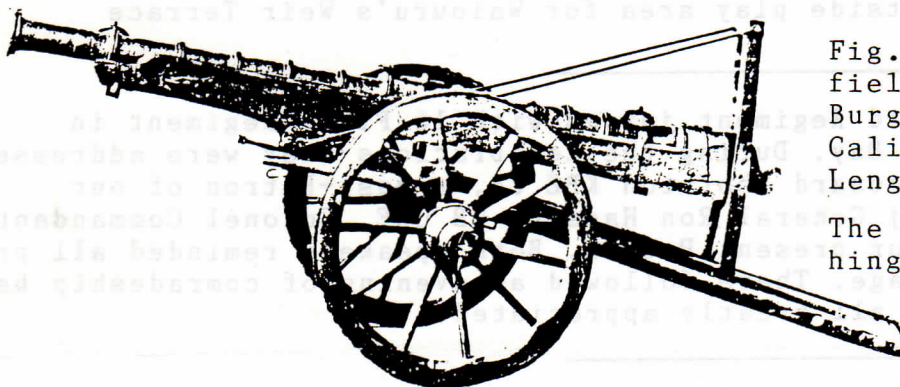


Fig. 11: Wrought iron BL field gun (Culverin) of Burgundian origin (1460-70). Calibre 2.6 ins (6.6mm). Length of barrel 9ft 6ins.

The trunk (or cradle) is hinged to the front of the trail.

The elevating gear shown on the carriage in Fig. 11 consisted of a wooden arc (or pair of arcs), with holes through which a pin could be inserted to adjust the trunk to somewhere near the required elevation. There appear to be no means of fine adjustment!

With the adoption of trunnions there appeared in Germany a type of carriage in which the trunk alone formed both trail and mounting. Still a solid baulk of timber, it was laboriously shaped and hollowed to take the piece as shown in Fig. 12. Elevating arrangements resembled those shown in Fig. 11. See also Fig. 17.

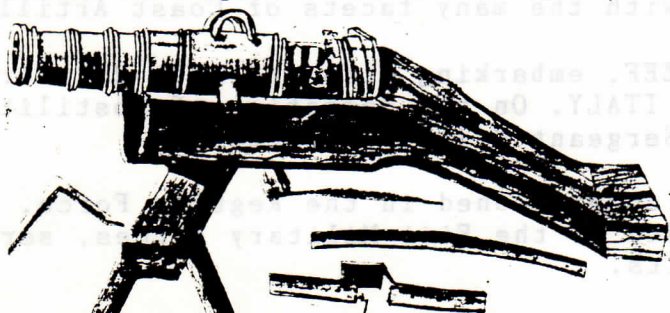


Fig. 12: A copy of a contemporary print showing a carriage designed by Maximillian (1459-1519) under construction.

Maximillian (or his technicians) also produced a light field gun on a carriage similar to that shown in Fig. 12 in which the shafts provided for draught purposes also acted as the trail in action. See Fig. 13.

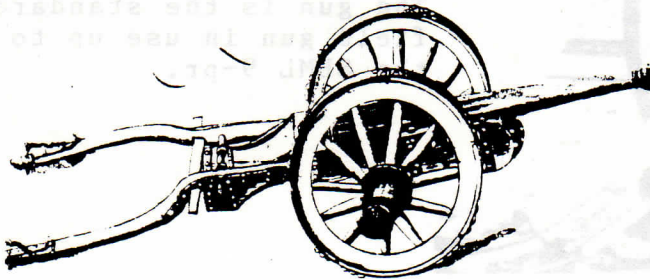


Fig. 13: Light field carriage in use in Germany c. 1494.

The excessive amount of work involved in building a carriage of the Fig. 12 type as well as the amount of timber used, led early in the 16th century to the introduction of the 'double-plate' carriage (Fig. 14) so-called because the trail and mounting together consisted of two heavy planks or 'plates' held together by the axletree and two or more transoms. It was simpler to construct but still rather heavy.

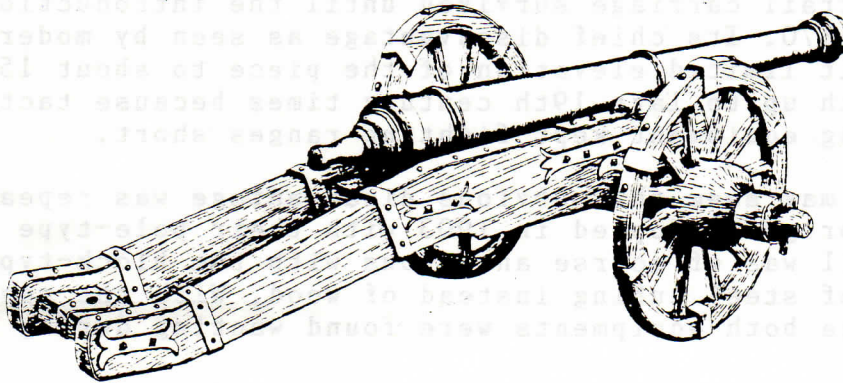


Fig. 14: Early 16th century double-plate carriage.

To elevate or depress the gun a simple wedge or 'quoin' supported on a bed formed by one of the transoms was suitably positioned under the breech, the latter being raised or lowered by a handspike. Although the idea of a screw to apply elevation was conceived at least a century earlier, the first practicable screw did not appear until 1578 (in England).

Difficulty of manufacture probably precluded its earlier use, as the screw-cutting lathe had not then been invented. To make a screw a wooden model had first to be carved, then a mould made in clay, and finally a casting produced. Old-time gunmakers often had the ideas but not the technology to put them into practice.

The elevating screw enabled elevation and/or depression to be applied much more accurately than with the quoin, and was in general use in field and siege artillery by 1650. However, the quoin survived until the 19th century, especially in the Navy where battles tended to be short-range affairs, and sailors considered the screw too slow.

The double-plate carriage continued in use for nearly 300 years in field artillery and longer in siege. In 1778 experiments began in England on the 'block trail' carriage. In this type the two heavy planks of the double-plate version were replaced by a trail made from a single 'block' or piece of timber with two 'cheeks' attached to the front as the mounting. These cheeks carried the trunnion bearings. See Fig. 15.

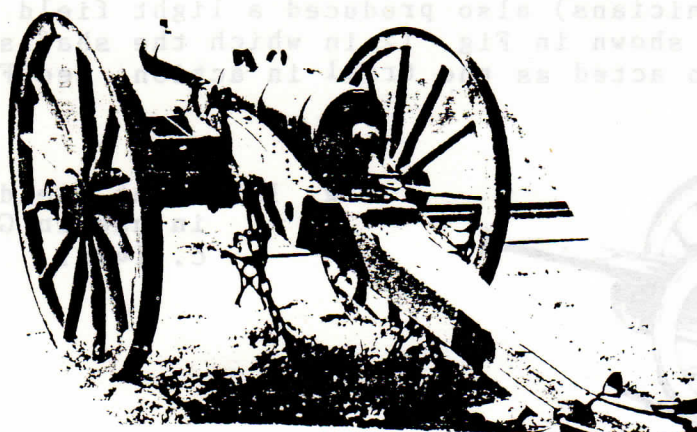


Fig. 15: Block trail carriage.

The gun is the standard British field gun in use up to 1860, the SBML 9-pr.

Probably owing to war commitments the block trail carriage was not actually introduced until 1793. Not only was it lighter than the double plate but it was more easily manoeuvrable, and enabled the team with gun limbered up to make a much tighter turning circle. It was a first for the Royal Artillery and Britain, and was subsequently adopted by all European nations and the United States.

The wooden block-trail carriage survived until the introduction of iron carriages around 1870. Its chief disadvantage as seen by modern Gunners was that it limited elevation of the piece to about 15° . This did not matter much up to late 19th century times because tactics plus elementary sighting equipment kept fighting ranges short.

But strange as it may seem this obvious disadvantage was repeated with the QF 13 and 18-pr guns adopted in 1903 with their pole-type trails. The pole-type trail was of course analagous with the block-type, except that it was made of steel tubing instead of wood. With the resulting limitation in range both equipments were found wanting during World War 1.

THE LIMBER

Until the limber was invented mobile gun carriages as illustrated in Figs 11 and 12 were pulled muzzle-first - with their trails literally trailing on the ground - by a number of horses either in single file or in pairs. Then it was found they travelled better if pulled trail-first, and they did not require the use of 'sled feet' men. A contemporary writer described the change as 'progress.' See Fig. 16.

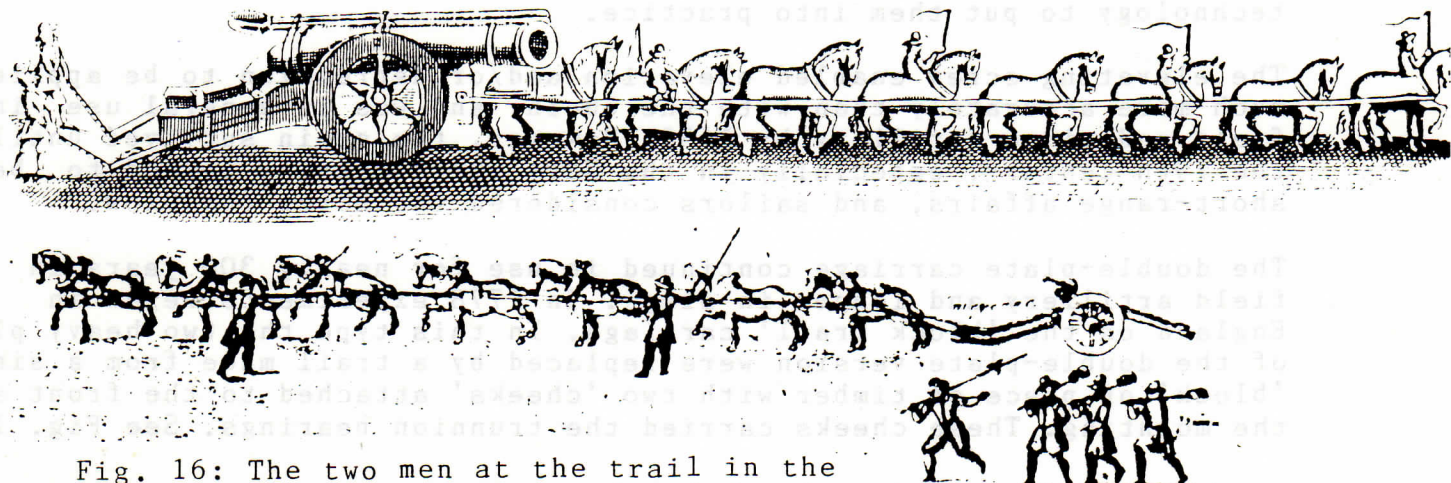


Fig. 16: The two men at the trail in the upper drawing were known as 'sled feet' men. Their job was to guide the carriage.

Even after the introduction of the limber the Fig. 16 methods of moving artillery equipments lived on in some countries, notably England, for many years. Limbers do not appear to have been used in that country before 1663. A single trail wheel came into use about 1650, but was used only on the gun position, not for travelling. It was known as the 'Hanoverian truck.'

The reasons for delay in adopting the limber in England - as well as other new ideas - were threefold: first, the army was generally neglected, as the efficiency of the navy precluded any chance of invasion of the country. Secondly, until 1716 a train of artillery formed at the start of a campaign was disbanded at the end of it, the Gunners discharged, and the equipment returned to store where it lay forgotten until the next war. Finally there existed an innate conservatism among the Officers, many of whom hated change in any form.

First called the 'fore-carriage' the earliest description of a limber occurs - strangely enough - in an English paper dated 1497, while the oldest illustration fitting the description is a German etching dated 1518, a copy of which is shown in Fig. 17. It consists simply of two wheels, an axletree with a pintle for attachment of the trail, plus a draught connector to which one or two singletrees might be attached

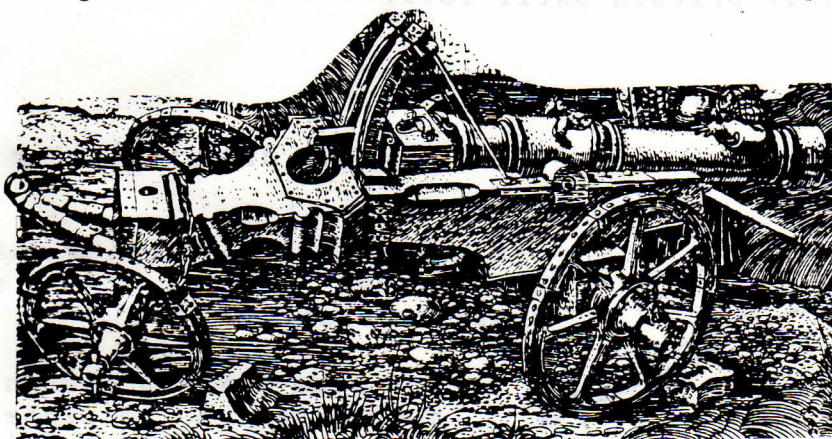


Fig. 17: Early limber with carriage of a type similar to that in Fig. 12.

Evidently the draught system shown in Fig 17 was not successful for it was soon superseded by 'shaft draught,' i.e. two shafts between which a horse was harnessed, connected directly to the front of the limber. Additional horses were hoked in ahead of the shaft horse. Fig. 18 shows an example of shaft draught.

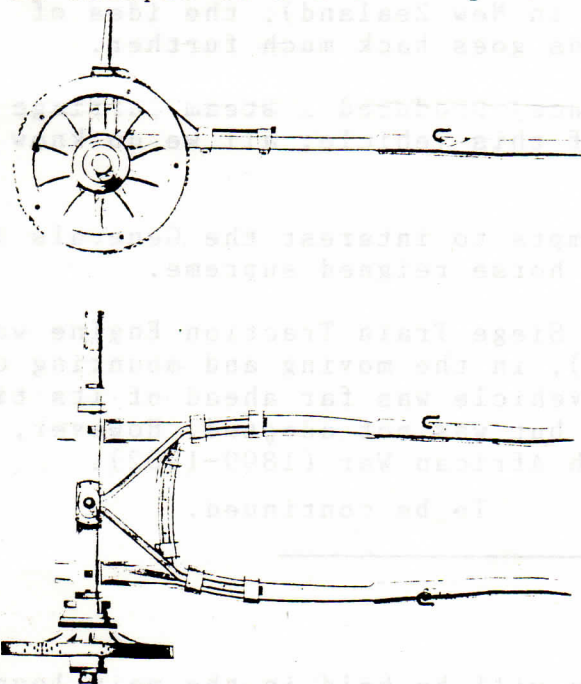


Fig. 18: Early shaft-draught limber.

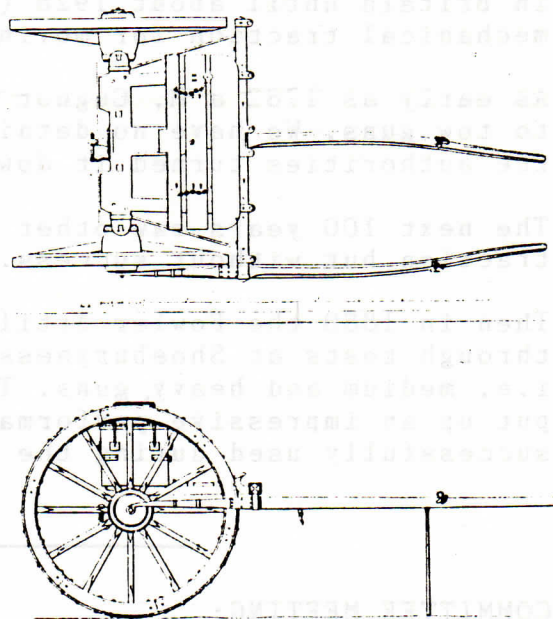


Fig. 19: British limber with off-set shafts.

However, the Fig. 18 method was suitable only for the lighter guns, e.g. 3 and 6-prs. In order to facilitate the use of horses in pairs for the heavier equipments Britain adopted a system in which the shafts were offset, i.e. the off shaft was connected to the axle at the off limber wheel, while the near shaft was connected to the centre of the limber as shown in Fig. 19.

Whatever the system, shaft draught proved less than satisfactory, because firstly the shaft horse had to have a different set of harness from the others. Secondly, because early limber wheels were smaller than the gun wheels, the angle formed by the shafts and the traces of the leading horses caused the shafts to be pulled downward, thus making life difficult for the shaft horse. The fitting of limber wheels the same size as gun wheels eased the strain on the shaft horse to some extent but only partially solved the problem.

Consequently, by about the middle of the 17th century nations on the Continent had adopted pole draught (Fig. 20). In this system the harness of all horses was virtually the same, and no additional load was placed on the wheel horses (formerly the shaft horse). Although used in India and New Zealand with bullocks during the 1860s, pole draught was not universally adopted by Britain until 1895.

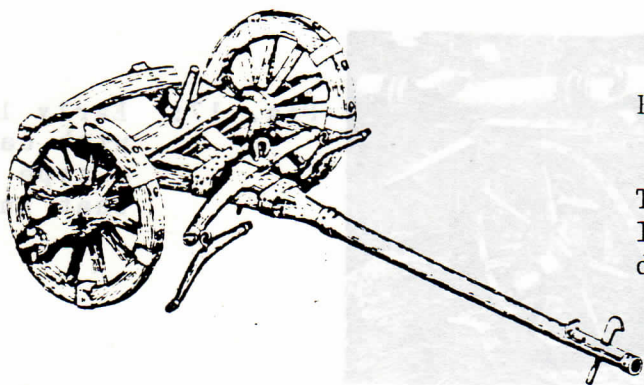


Fig. 20: Pole draught limber c.1650.

The pole was used until mechanisation. It was then replaced by the engine draught connector.

For some unknown reason, after mechanisation the limber became known as the 'trailer.'

MECHANISATION:

Although mechanisation of horse and field artillery did not commence in Britain until about 1928 (1938 in New Zealand), the idea of mechanical traction for moving guns goes back much further.

As early as 1782 a M. Cugnot (France) produced a steam carriage designed to tow guns. We have no details of this vehicle; all we do know is that the authorities turned it down.

The next 100 years saw other attempts to interest the Generals in steam traction but without success. The horse reigned supreme.

Then in 1880 the Fowler Artillery Siege Train Traction Engine was put through tests at Shoeburyness (UK), in the moving and mounting of siege, i.e. medium and heavy, guns. This vehicle was far ahead of its time, and put up an impressive performance, but was not adopted. However, it was successfully used during the South African War (1899-1902).

To be continued.

COMMITTEE MEETING:

The next NZPFOCA committee meeting will be held in the main lounge, Birkenhead RSA, Recreation Drive, Birkenhead, Auckland 10, on Saturday, 14 Aug 93, commencing at 1000 hrs. Non-committee members are welcome to attend.