



Incorporated

NEW ZEALAND PERMANENT FORCE OLD COMRADES ASSOCIATION INC

PO BOX 33 710, TAKAPUNA, AUCKLAND 1309

NEWSLETTER No 82

June 1994

A Registered Publication

LAST POST:

- 1747 VO (Vic) Loader, 13 Nov 93, at Dunedin.
Mrs VD (Val) Baker, 3 Mar 94. at Auckland (Associate Member).
1822 ELA (Les) Kitney, 23 Mar 94, at Auckland.
754253 LF (Les) Bennett, 6 Apr 94, at Auckland (Life Member ex-RA)
1627 NH (Noel) London, 24 May 94, at Auckland (Life Member).
1537 JA (Pat) Hall, 8 Jun 94, at Auckland (Life Member).
34460 JDE (Sham) Shaw, 16 Jun 94, at Auckland.

NEW MEMBERS:

- Major P (Paul) Kitney, 2 Vest Place, Weetangera, Canberra.
1066 (NZAOC) AL (Lloyd) Rowsell, Opito Bay RD1, Kerikeri (Associate).
32740 L (Leonard) Roberts, 5 Adkin Avenue, Levin.
Mrs K (Kathleen) Kitney, 3/23 Byron Ave, Takapuna, Auckland 9 (Assoc.)
Mrs J (Joye) London, 41A Braemar Rd, Rothesay Bay, Auck. 10 (Assoc.).

CHANGES OF ADDRESS:

- JJ Adams to 18 Yardley St, Avonhead, Christchurch 4.
HG Bigg-Wither to c/o Houhora Wharf Store, cnr Lamb and Far North Rds,
Pukenui 0550.
BW Culhane to 5B Havenwood Place, Birkenhead, Auckland 10.
Mrs M Cumming to 49 Ngaio Rd, Waikanae.
RJ Crawley to 2/159 16th Avenue, Tauranga.
RJ Gunn to 1/289 Richardson Rd, Mt Roskill, Auckland 4.
RJ Goldsworthy to 19 Tristram Avenue, Forrest Hill, Auckland 10.
Lt Col AN King to 2/53 Glamorgan Drive, Torbay, Auckland 10.
HJ Macown MBE to 68 Umuroa St, Mamaku, Rotorua.
NP Moros to 14 Oakland Place, West Harbour, Auckland.
RJ Munro to 42 Sefton St, Wadestown, Wellington.
JG Murray to c/o PDC, Houhora RD4, Kaitaia.
WO2 BL Rigden to School of Artillery, ATG, Waiouru.
SH Perrett to 15A Totara St, Wanganui 5001.
GJ Pickering to 1 Seaview Cresc, Picton.
J deJ Oswald JP to 289 Lake Rd, Takapuna, Auckland 9.
RC Walker to 9 Shingle Grove, Edgewater 6027, W.A.
W Weatherhead to 4/7 Dilworth St, Christchurch 1.
SD Wright to 24 Attlee Place, Gisborne.
Major EW Round to 94B Park Rd, Katikati.

LIFE MEMBERSHIP:

- 1743 D (Dave) Jones, 22 Ngatarua Rd, Wanganui, wef 15 Feb 94.
1817 FB (Fred) Schroder, 2/21 Clipper Court, Coffs Harbour, NSW 2450,
wef 26 Jan 94.

COMMITTEE MEETING:

The next meeting will be held in the main lounge, Birkenhead RSA, on
Saturday 20 Aug 94, commencing 1000 hrs. Non-committee members welcome.

REUNIONS: NZ Korea Veterans Association: Hawkes Bay: National reunion 28-30 Oct 94, Hastings. Enquiries to Secretary, Leo McLaughlin, Box 560, Hastings, Phone 06/835 7601.

4 Field Regiment - 12-14 Feb 95 at Christchurch. Accommodation available. Enquiries to Secretary MJ Robinson, Box 8304, Riccarton, ChCh.

ANZAC DAY: The turn-out of local members of our Association with the Birkenhead RSA was disappointing. Bevan Culhane, Bert Dyson, Vic Meyle, Dick Mitchell, and Wally Ruffell paraded. Our permanent wreath, made some years ago by Henry Salt MBE, was laid by the last two named on parade.

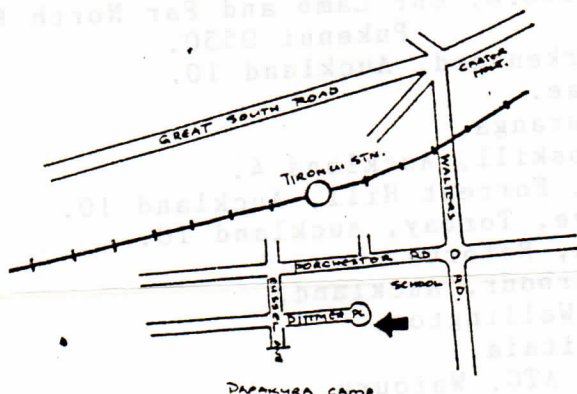
REINFORCEMENTS: Our intake of new members is barely keeping pace with casualties. Any member who knows a serving or retired RNZA(RF) person who is not a member should do his/her best to rope that person in. Serving soldiers must have had at least three years' service. Personnel of other corps who are or have been attached to RNZA, e.g. RNZEME, RNZSigs etc may join as Associate members. The latter receive all the privileges of full members but do not have the right to vote at AGMs. Rule books are free and may be obtained from Secretary.

DEFENCE QUARTERLY: This publication, introduced last year, is a must for members interested in the country's defence. A year's subscription costs \$18. Mail your cheque to Accounts Section, Ministry of Defence, PO Box 5347, Lambton Quay, Wellington.

in advance

SUBSCRIPTIONS for more than one year, not only escape increases which may be voted at an AGM, they cost you less, e.g. a \$5 sub. costs 45c for a stamp, 5c for the cheque, plus 2c for an envelope, i.e. 10.4%. On the other hand \$10 (for 2 years) sent the same way costs 5.2% of the amount involved, not to mention time saved in posting. Think about it.

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**CERTIFICATES SIGNS
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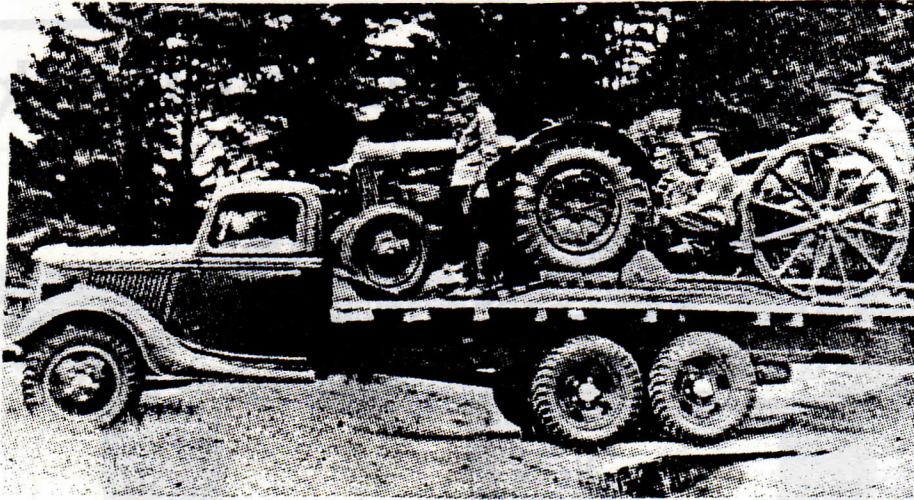
Family Trees

*Poems, Quotations, Special Messages
 on Parchment*

Jeffrey D Waters
 14A Dillmer Place, Papakura
 Telephone (09) 296-2457 (24 hours)

Jeffrey, who is a member of our Association, also keeps our IN MEMORIAM book up-to-date.

MEDAL MOUNTING is also done by our member, Ross Goldsworthy, 19 Tristram Avenue, Forrest Hill, Auckland 10, Phone: 09/410 3806.

NEWS FROM AROUND AND ABOUT:

Remember in Newsletter No 81 (Fig. 35) we requested further information regarding those members of the RNZA taking part in mechanisation experiments?

Dutch Holland writes the following letter:
"Members of the detachment were as follows:

Off side: Noel EDE, Sammy WILCE, Dutch HOLLAND
Near " : Vic LENNON, Emil JENNINGS, Tav TAVENDALE
In cab: Bill LANGEVAD.

Two long ramps were used to get the equipment off the ground on to the truck. The tractor could not tow the gun on to the truck as the tray was not long enough to take the full length of gun hooked in. The tractor was driven on and the gun manhandled on using dragropes and handspikes, a tedious job which took some time. Unloading was just as bad. Two props under the rear of the tray prevented the front wheels of the truck coming off the ground during loading. We had a competition with a horse-drawn gun coming into and out of action. It was no contest, the horses winning easily. They also did not get stuck! On one occasion the horses were too quick off the mark coming out of action and Bob McBride was thrown backward off the limber before he could get a grip and was run over by an 18-pr gun wheel. He survived - until NorthAfrica. Two years ago Dutch donated over 160 photos to the Army Memorial Museum including the originals of the above and others taken during the trials. Copies of these may be obtained from the Museum, PO Box 45, Waiouru.

Charlie Reid, 14 Mackay St Thames, reports that he will share refreshment with any member passing his way.

Phil Calvert, 7 Wandeen Place, St Ives Chase, NSW 2075, visited the writer on 20 April 94. Among other subjects discussed was a mutual interest in model engineering.

David Hughes, 56 McLeod St, Upper Hutt, is overseas until August. He and Irene will be touring in Europe and UK during which time David hopes to re-visit the Royal School of Artillery, Larkhill. He intends also to undergo a refresher in his native language - Welsh.

A couple of years ago Bill Hopkins and his wife toured Indonesia. Bill became so "utterly seduced" by the country that his wife reckoned the only way to get it out of his system was to do the trip again - which they did last year. However, Bill is still not "cured." Must be some place!

Anna McKinnon had aspell in hospital a couple of months ago but is now home and well.

Dutch Holland has recently undergone a major op. but has fully recovered.

Any member visiting Invercargill will be assured of a warm welcome from James and Aileen Horn, Montecillo Lodge, 240 Spey St. James offers our members 15% discount.

Housing landmark rising in Putiki

Sand, clay and a little cement and water combine to form the framework of Wanganui's most extraordinary housing project.

On a hilltop above Putiki the stabilised earth or rammed earth technique is being used in constructing the 2800 sq ft home of Terry Trotter and partner Sharon Ross.

It's a modified version of the rammed earth system so enthusiastically advocated for decades by Putiki identity Da vid Jones.

Messrs Trotter and Jones have joined forces and, though there have been snags, the pace of construction now is accelerating.

The stabilised earth walls of the three-bedroom home are 16 inches thick on a concrete floor and will carry an iron roof. Finer will be used in practically all of the internal walls.

Ask Mr Jones for proof of durability and he mentions the Great Wall of China, the structures erected by the conquering Romans and the Italian rammed earth buildings, which withstood onslaughts during World War II.

In all, the stabilised earth walls will occupy 326 square feet. They will be cool in summer and warm in winter and will be topped with concrete bond beams for added strength.

The soil, available a stone's throw away, is screened and mixed with other components before being fed into the wall formwork and pneumatically rammed.

Mr Jones' ramming machine, a simple but effective contrap-

By DAVE LAURENCE

tion, delivers 150 strokes a minute.

Mr Trotter intends to plaster the outside walls.

Maintenance, heating and insurance costs are said to be remarkably modest.

The correct moisture content is critical in ramming, so a deterioration in the weather would affect progress. If all goes well, the roof will be in place before winter descends.

Mr Jones is excited about the many advantages of stabilised earth construction. Mr Trotter won't compare it with conventional construction costs until final figures are in hand.

Having built two rammed earth homes in Ngatarua Rd, Putiki, more than 40 years ago, Mr Jones takes great satisfaction from seeing a somewhat similar technique in practice.

"Proud? Too right I'm proud," he says.

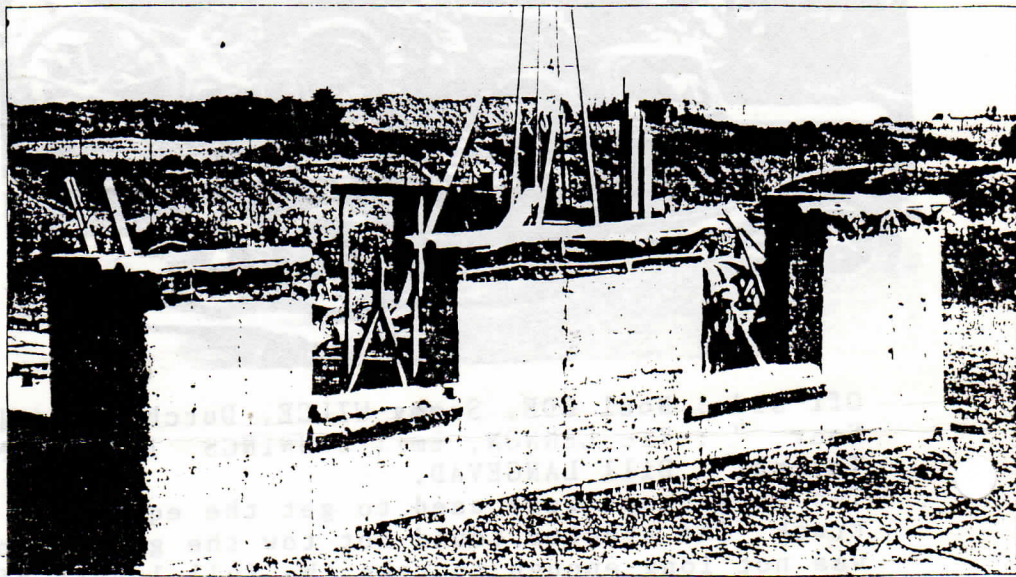
Mr Trotter's farm is called Kohono, which could be interpreted as a meeting with the sky.

Not surprisingly, the house site offers magnificent views in all directions on a clear day.

A couple of years ago he built a killing house nearby in stabilised earth as a trial and made his share of mistakes, he says.

"It's very flexible. If you do make a mistake you can possibly correct it. We've had a lot of teaching problems but we're not in any great hurry."

Just as well. It took the



Stabilised earth walls for the Trotter-Ross home take form on a hilltop above Putiki. David Jones, at window, and Terry Trotter, on rammer, have joined forces.

Wanganui District Council 10 construction. Unlike the homes built by Mr Jones half a lifetime ago, this one has extensive external masonry walls and floor. From an environmental point of view it's brilliant. It's a natural product, apart from a small amount of cement. So it's environmentally very friendly," Mr Trotter says. According to Mr Jones, the rammed earth system in one form or another is being used in about 12 homes under construction round the country.

Dave Jones, our Wanganui Rep. is 80 years young - and still going strong. If you haven't got a magnifying glass to read the small print buy one; it will be well worth the cost. If you want to know more about rammed earth buildings contact Dave at 22 Ngatarua Rd, Wanganui.

Paul Kitney, 2 Vest Place, Weetangera, Canberra, extends felicitations to all old comrades and would be delighted to see any of them who may visit Australia.

We all tender our condolences to Harold Nicholson, 34A Clarence St, Devonport, Auckland 9, who lost his good lady Kay recently.

J.D. (Doc) Bennett reports he is in good health (touch wood!), and keeps busy with gardening, woodwork, Bridge, and at the yacht club. Doc's address is 8 Cowling St, New Plymouth.

R.C. (Reg) Walker is now in Australia. The address in 'Changes' above is his daughter's - until he gets established in his own place.

Tony Tustin, 49G Auckland St, Picton, reported that a group from the Vietnam Vets Association were to visit Norfolk Island for the Anzac Day service at the invitation of the Island RSL. WE await the results.

Pete Dixon, 51 Golf Rd, Paraparaumu Beach, attended his 49th Dawn Parade on Anzac Day; he has not missed a dawn parade since World War 2 ended!

Murray Connor, 14 Luke Place, Rotorua, having had a series of heart operations ending with a triple by-pass now feels "on top of the world" and many years younger.

Fred and Daphne Schroder, 2/21 Clipper Court, Coffs Harbour, NSW 2450, are in good health. Fred, who is 80 years young has just started playing bowls and is much enjoying it. What with delivering meals on wheels and three days' bowls a week he is keeping quite busy!

BARRY Dreyer reports he circulates our newsletters among his "infantry cohorts" at work - and it takes some time to get them back!

Ashley King, 2/83 Glamorgan Drive, Torbay, Auckland 1310, has had 'a bit of a rough spin' as he puts it with some five months in hospital over the last year but is on the road to recovery. He is determined to back on the bowling green for the coming season.

Paul O'Connor reports the Royal Regiment celebrated Gunners Day in King Edward Barracks, Christchurch, maybe for the last time with an excellent turn-out. Sadly he had to report that his mother, Bryan's wife Joan, had a nasty car accident in May but is making a steady recovery. Paul's address is 69 Sabys Rd, Halswell, Christchurch, and Bryan's is 7/78 Lincoln Rd, Christchurch 2. We all wish Joan a speedy recovery.

John and Alison Masters, 3 Frith Place, Burnside, Christchurch 5, have just returned from a trip which included Singapore, England, Canada, and Switzerland. While in London, and courtesy of General Ron Hassett's introduction they met and dined with the Master Gunner at his club, and were also invited to join him at Sandown for the Royal Artillery Gold Cup meeting. The MG was a bit too busy to spend much time with them as he was escorting the Queen Mother. Alison and John both lost eight pounds on the races but had a great '...and rather liquid day.' Later they visited Larkhill and report that all the trees have grown on the ranges, that the gunpark looks unchanged, and that the Bustard survives and the service remains friendly to Kiwis!

Jack Hickson, Unit 2, 34 Campbell Rd, Royal Oak, Auckland 6, is kept housebound much of the time by severe arthritis, but can still enjoy a yarn. Don't forget that visit to Birkenhead RSA, Jack.

Last March the writer spent a very convivial three hours with his old comrade, Arthur Kilmore, with whom he marched in to Northern District School of Instruction, Narrow Neck, on 21 Sep 37, as members of the first Territorial Force Special Reserve (TFSR), and whom he had not seen for some thirty-five years. It was a memorable session! Arthur intends writing a book about his service in the New Zealand Regular Force - to include many home truths - and would appreciate any contributions members would like to make. His address is: 25 Allison Rd, Surfdale, Waiheke Island.

LONG RANGE DESERT GROUP: We have received a letter from a Mr Joachim Helm, c/o D. Meyer, Borselstr. 29, 22765, Hamburg, Germany, who wishes to contact veterans of the Group with a view to finding out details of the Group's navigational procedures, e.g. the use of the Bagnold sun compass, fixation of positions at night with sextant, theodolite, and ephemerides (star tables). Any member who can assist please contact Mr Helm direct.

ARMY LEAVE CENTRES: For the information of younger members these were built with funds earned by regular force who manned wharves throughout New Zealand during the nationwide strike of wharf labourers in 1951. See also note in Newsletter No 81.

AUCKLAND GUNNERS DAY SOCIAL: A most successful function held at the Birkenhead RSA on 25 May 94. The following attended: Harry Anderson, Bernard and Mavis Ayling, Allan and Elsie Boyd, Iris Boyter, Eric and Joyce Bickerton, Guy Blackwell, Bert Dyson, Dan and Dorothy Foley, Nevill Fisher, Joe Hanvey, Barney Harrop, Victor and Audrey Meyle, Bill and Estelle Morland, Reg Nutsford, Des and Bunty O'Connor, Redvers Potts, Ian and Iris Rowntree, Wally Ruffell, Henry and Thelma Salt, Margaret Stitt, Bill and Joyce Powrie, Allan Taylor, Terry and Joan Transom, Frank Whiting, Graeme Williams, Les and Joan Wilson, Yogi Young.

THE GUN

Continued from Newsletter No 81

By Wally Ruffell

MECHANISATION (Cont.)

In Britain, as well as in most other countries, the changeover proceeded slowly during the 1920s and early 30s because little money was available for defence. Furthermore, the dragon was not proving an unqualified success.

Although its cross-country performance fulfilled expectations it was slow; the Mk 1 could manage only 12 mph (19kph). The Mk 2, first produced in 1933 was faster at 30 mph (48kph). However, dragons were expensive, and long-distance road travel - to be expected in Europe - proved hard on tracks, with unexpectedly steep repair bills. Consequently the RA continued to seek less expensive methods of moving its guns.

During the late 1920s the RA experimented with a number of wheeled tractors - including some 4 x 4s - and even tried the French portée system as shown in Fig. 34.

In 1935 the RA adopted the Model 1935 Morris Commercial 6 x 4 to replace Dragons Mks 1 and 2. Designed as a gun tractor, it was fitted with a winch, seats for the detachment, and lockers for their gear, tools etc. For a time the Morris was unofficially known as a 'dragon,' but its correct name was Field Artillery Tractor - or FA Tractor for short. An example is shown in Fig. 38.

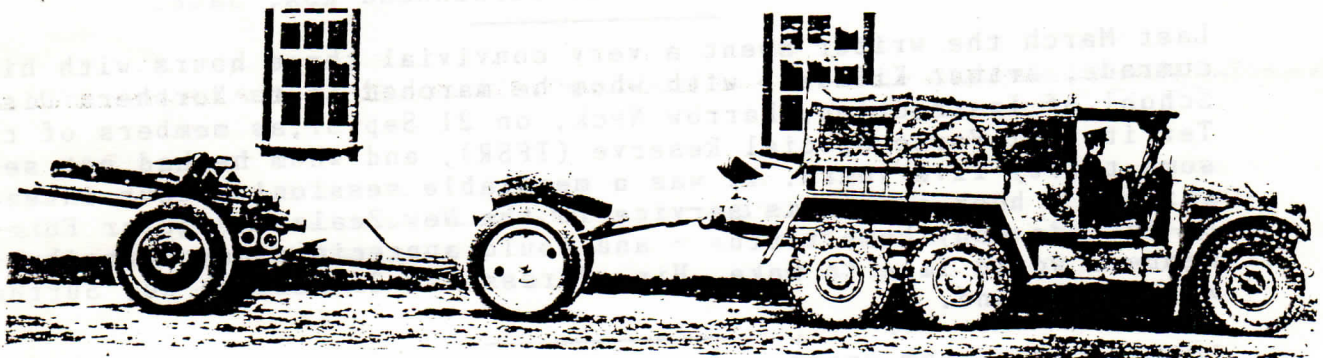


Fig. 38: Morris 6 x 4 FA Tractor hooked in to an 18-pr Mk2 P ('P' = pneumatic-tyred), together with trailer converted using the Martin Parry kit described below. Note how close the point of the spade is to the ground; it was found necessary to fit an adapter raising the position of the spade on the trailer hook to prevent it digging in during cross-country movement. The consequent reduction of weight on the trailer hook tended to reduce the stability of the carriage on the move. After all, the tractor was designed to tow the 18pr Mk 4, not the obsolete Mks 1 and 2 still in use in New Zealand.

The RNZA received six FA Tractors late in 1938.

As previously stated, experiments by the RA with other tractors had continued, and resulted in 1937 in their adoption of the 'Guy Quad Ant,' so-called because it was first made by Guy Motors Ltd, Wolverhampton, UK, it became universally known as the 'Quad.' The Quad was a 4 x 4 tractor, shorter and handier than the Morris, and with provision for carrying the 25-pr gun platform on its roof. With larger wheels than the Morris giving it greater ground clearance, and with 'trak-grip' tyres over which chains could be fitted, it was a better cross-country performer. The Quad was made chiefly by Morris and General Motors, Canada, as well as by Guy, and was still in service with Commonwealth artilleries until the early 1960s. A typical example is shown in Fig. 39.



Fig.39: The Quad. This illustration is taken from a 16 Field Regiment RNZA photo taken during the campaign in Korea (1950-53)

By 1939 mechanisation of field artillery in Britain was virtually complete. However, the artillery of continental armies including those of Germany and Russia remained to a large extent horse-drawn until after World War 2 - despite propaganda to the contrary.

As usual New Zealand lagged badly behind Britain in the updating of armed forces' equipment. The last Regular Force equitation course was held late in 1937. In January 1938 recruits of 14 Wing RNZA were informed that '... as the artillery was now mechanised...' they would see no horses - but over four months later were still doing gun drill on horse-drawn equipment and had not seen a gun tractor!

When the same recruits were posted to Fort Dorset in June 1938 they were asked whether or not they had attended an equitation course! On replying in the negative they were told, "Well you're going to 'do' one now!" They then underwent sufficient training to enable them to handle and take care of the horses - which were still the station's sole means (officially at least), of moving field guns.

To be fair, some progress was being made in the mechanisation process; late in May 1938 the recruits already mentioned were permitted - as a great privilege - to witness the first conversion of field guns from horse to mechanical draught at the Armament and General (A & G) Workshops in Trentham.

Guns converted were 18-prs Mks 1 and 2, and 4.5-in howitzers. Conversion involved removing the old wooden wheels, brake gear, etc, and replacing them with parts from kits made up by the American firm of Martin Parry. Production of these kits came about because the U.S. Army also had numbers of obsolete equipments identical to our 18-prs, except that they had been made to take the French M1897 75-mm ammunition.

Each kit consisted basically of two pneumatic-tyred steel disc wheels on stub axles carries on a cranked adaptor which fitted over the end of the original axletree. Included were the necessary radius rods, brake gear, layers' seat brackets etc. Conversion enabled the guns to be safely towed at speeds up to 30 mph (48 kph) on good roads, but increased the preponderance of weight on the trails in action. This was particularly noticeable with the 18-pr, making it rather harder to handle.

The limber was also converted by the fitting of similar steel wheels. For some unknown reason it then became known as 'trailer.' For some idea of what a conversion involved compare Figs.40 and 41.

Shortly after the outbreak of World War 2 New Zealand received a number of tractors produced by the Marmon-Herrington Co Inc of Indianapolis, USA. These were really commercial-type Ford V8 1-ton trucks with FWD and fitted with seats in rear. Although their cross-country performance was reasonable they were not popular; little space was available, and the open rear was unsatisfactory in bad weather. See Fig. 42.

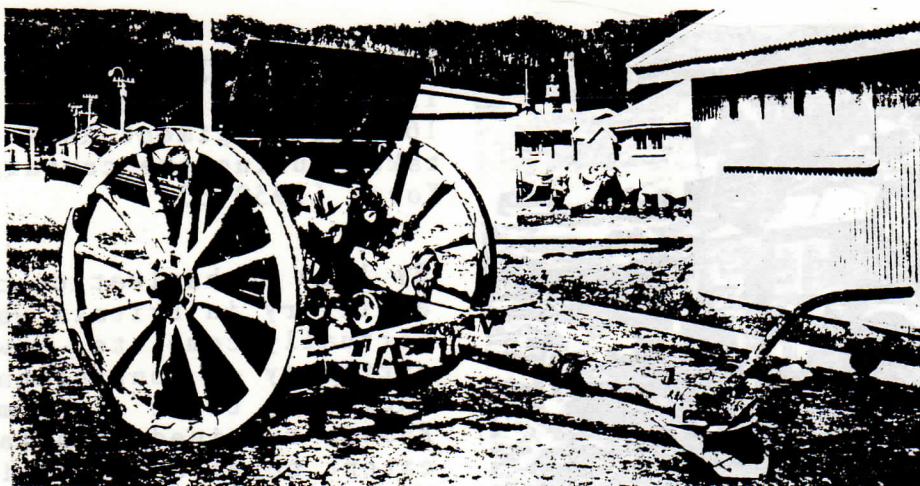


Fig. 40: QF 18-pr Mk before conversion. The Mk 1, first approved in 1903, was identical to the Mk 2 except it was fitted with a spring recuperator, while the Mk 2 recuperator was hydro-pneumatic.

Both 18-prs, Mk 1 and Mk 2, were superseded by the Mk 4 of 1920 but New Zealand carried on with obsolete equipments until 1941 when 25-prs were received.

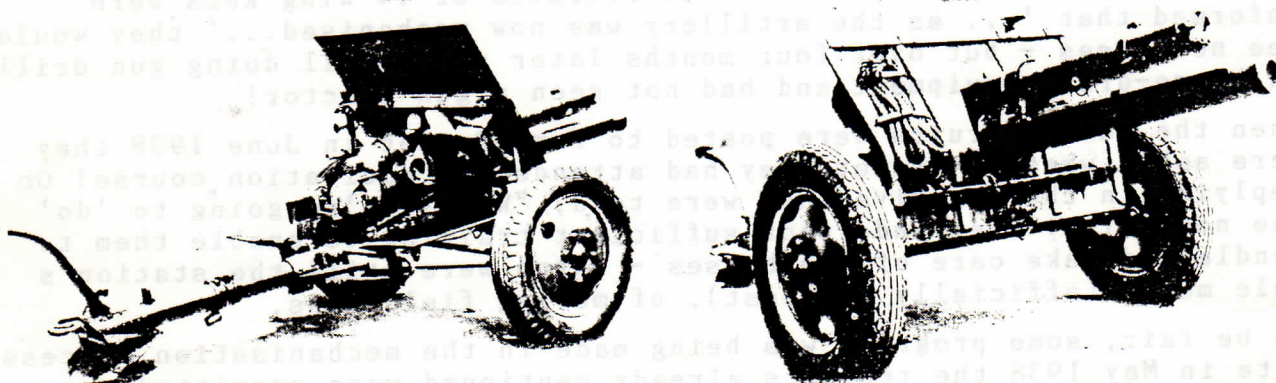


Fig. 41: 18-pr Mk 2 after conversion with Martin Parry kit.

As World War 2 progressed the Quad replaced other tractors in the British Commonwealth artilleries. With the end of the 25-pr era the use of the trailer was discontinued.

Today towing vehicles vary in power and capacity from the 1-tonne Landrover up to 6 x 6 tractors, depending on the equipments to be handled and the ammunition etc to be carried. The term 'limber' has been 'resurrected' in the British service but it refers to a vehicle identical to its accompanying gun-towing vehicle except that it is designed solely to carry ammunition and other equipment but no detachment.

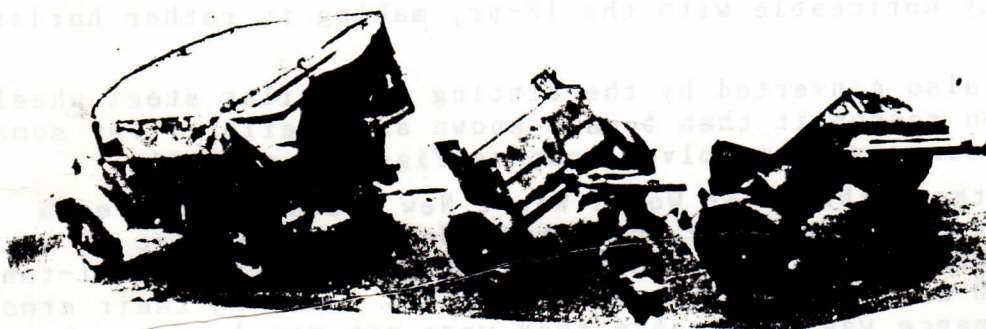


Fig. 42: Marmon Herrington tractor hooked in to 18-pr and trailer.