



DESPATCHES

NEWSLETTER OF THE QUEEN'S REDOUBT TRUST

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SERIES ON BRITISH UNITS AT QUEEN'S REDOUBT

This is the seventh article on the different British Army units involved with Queen's Redoubt and continues with the examination of those Regiments which were either involved with building the Redoubt or the Great South Road, or who spent periods of time at Queen's Redoubt. This issue deals with the Royal Artillery who were in New Zealand from January 1860 until June 1865.

ROYAL ARTILLERY

Although Artillery was first used at the battle of Crecy 1346 it did not become a permanent section of the British Army until 1716 when two regular companies of field artillery, established by royal warrant and each 100 men strong, were raised at Woolwich. The first detachment of Artillery to come to New Zealand was 3 Battery (1), 12 Brigade under Captain H Strover and Lt E C Macnaghten. Then followed, on the 4th March 1861, 3 Battery (later renamed C Battery) / 4th Brigade) under the command of Captain Henry Mercer. They arrived in Auckland, on the Norwood, the officers being Lts A S Hunter, E C Magenis, A F Pickard and Asst. Surgeon W Temple. At this stage the total R. A. force in NZ comprised 9 officers, 30 NCO's and 286 other ranks.

They were almost immediately in action at Te Arei Pa in Taranaki but, following the truce there, they moved back to Auckland and were employed until 1863 mainly with training and assisting with the building of the Great South Road. While working on the latter, the hiring of civilian carts being expensive, the artillery gun limbers were modified as tip carts to move soil and metal for the road.

Early in 1863, because there were no British cavalry units in New Zealand, General Cameron ordered Captain Mercer to mount and train 100 artillery drivers under Lt Rait, as cavalry, arming them with swords and carbines or revolvers. They were then employed as orderlies by day and mounted patrols at night.

In March 1863 they returned to Taranaki where hostilities had again broken out, their first engagement being at the Katikara river, where three guns covered the successful attack of the 57th Regiment on the pa and in June at Kaitaki, where four guns were used. This action was not so successful since they could get no closer to the pa than 1800 metres and it was difficult to see how effective they were. In July they returned to Auckland.

In July 1863 the Waikato War began when British troops crossed the Mangatawhiri Stream and invaded the Waikato. At this time C battery under Captain Mercer were stationed at Queen's Redoubt, with the mounted section based at Drury and detachments of this at several of the redoubts along the Great South Road. The artillery were in action when three 12-pounder Armstrong guns were sent to Whangamarino, and placed in a small battery on platforms made of large trees sawn in half, with the convex surface sunk in the ground. From here they were instructed to annoy the Maori forces entrenched at Meremere, some 2400 metres away(2), by firing at the pa and canoes on the river.

The R.A.'s next action was at Rangiriri. Here two 12 pounders plus a 6 pounder naval gun which, with 20 bullocks, had been moved from Mangatawhiri to Meremere on some of the gunboats, were in action. From Meremere they had proceeded overland to Rangiriri to be mounted on a ridge north of the pa; which they commenced to bombard.

En-route from Meremere to Rangiriri the General ordered that 30 of the Gunners be issued with revolvers, with which they had become familiar during their previous stint as cavalry. The reason for this became obvious later in the day when Captain Mercer was ordered to storm the central redoubt, from which repeated attempts by the infantry had been unable to drive the Maori defenders. During this attack Mercer and several of his men had been shot, some fatally. It was because of their efforts to protect them and get water to them,

that Lt Pickard and Surgeon Temple were both awarded the Victoria Cross. (3) Also at Rangiriri Sgt Major Peter Hamilton was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal. Mentioned in Despatches for his actions in this engagement and by throwing hand grenades from the sap into the pa at Rangiawhia, was Sgt Angus McKay.

Following the death of Captain Mercer, Lt Col E A Williams arrived in New Zealand in January 1864, to take command of the Artillery; bringing with him a third Artillery battery with more 6 pounder Armstrong guns. He appointed Lt Pickard as his adjutant.

Rangiriri was the key battle of the Waikato War, which was concluded four months later at the battle of Orakau. The main activity of the RA in the latter engagement was that Lt Rait and his mounted drivers provided the cavalry which harried the defenders as they broke out of the pa.

The final major involvement of the RA in the NZ Wars was at Gate Pa in April 1864, where detachments of three RA batteries and the Royal Navy -with 8 mortars, 3 Armstrong guns and 2 howitzers- battered the pa with apparently little effect, prior to the disastrous attack by the 43rd Regiment and the Naval Brigade. Gate Pa was the only real defeat experienced by the British army in the New Zealand Wars.

Apart from seven men who took their discharge in New Zealand, the Royal Artillery departed for England on 27 June 1866.

Ian Barton

1. At this time a battery, the equivalent of an infantry Company, consisted of about 100-150 men and 6 to 12 guns. Batteries were grouped into Brigades -usually about 8 batteries each. (Wikipedia & Battery Records of the RA, 1959 - 77)
2. The maximum range of the gun was 3,100 metres (Wikipedia)
3. One officer and 3 RA men were killed or D.O.W and one officer and 2 men wounded at Rangiriri.

A F PICKARD VC ROYAL ARTILLERY

Arthur Frederick PICKARD, VC was born at Forest Hill, Northamptonshire, England on the 12th of April 1844 and entered the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich as a Gentleman Cadet in August 1855.

Pickard was Gazetted Lieutenant on 22 June 1858, aged 14 (1), and was 16 when arrived in Auckland on the Norwood on the 4th March 1861. The voyage was a relatively fast one, taking only 100 days. A fortnight later he was in Taranaki, besieging Te Arei Pa, just before a cease fire was put in place. When the battery returned to Auckland in May 1861 Pickard, with fellow officers Captain Watson, Lieutenant Magennis, Assistant Surgeon Temple and Veterinarian Surgeon Anderson, were involved in the erection of stables for the horses, which until then had been kept in a grass field, 150 by 50 yards, during very wet conditions, including some severe storms.

Pickard's opinion of the Maori people seemed to vary over time, no doubt due to the influence of his fellow officers and evolution of the war. When he arrived in March 1861 he described them as "a fine lot of fellows.. although apparently the .."women all smoked short block pipes from the age of 10". Six months later he was referring to them as "dreadful rogues who would make first rate lawyers".

The Whangamarino Redoubt, built in September 1863 to defend the southern end of the Koheroa Ridge, was originally named Pickard's Redoubt, since it was from here that the RA, under Lt Pickard, bombarded Meremere Pa, some 3 km to the south. Their objective was to annoy the natives as much as possible by firing at any large bodies of them which appeared, and at the canoes which brought their provisions down the river.

On 20 November 1863 Lt Pickard was with Capt Mercer when they left Meremere at 7.30 am, with a detachment of the 65th Regt and 43 Gunners, Bombardiers and 2 12lb Armstrong guns drawn by 8 bullocks, enroute for Rangiriri. They were unable to take ammunition waggons, due to lack of transport animals so Capt Mercer had wooden ammunition boxes fitted to the gun limbers, each capable of holding 24 rounds per gun. The limbers also carried eight scaling ladders each. By 3pm they had were in sight of the Rangiriri pa. The two RA guns and a 6lb pounder 550 metres from the pa and commenced firing on it as soon as the guns were in position.

It was at Rangiriri, on 20 November 1863, that Arthur Pickard and Assistant Surgeon Temple won their Victoria Crosses. The citation reads: -

"For gallant conduct during the assault of the Rangiriri Redoubt (Rangiriri Pa, Waikato), on 20th November 1863 in exposing their lives to imminent danger in crossing the entrance to the Maori Keep at a point upon which the enemy had concentrated their fire, with a view to render assistance to the wounded, and more especially to the late Captain Mercer of the Royal Artillery. Lieutenant Pickard crossed and recrossed the parapet to procure water for the wounded, when none of the men could be induced to perform this service, the space over which he traversed being exposed to a cross-fire, and testimony is borne to the coolness displayed by him and Assistant-Surgeon Temple under the trying circumstances to which they were exposed. [London Gazette, 22 September 1864].

Pickard was only 19 when he won the VC; - although he was not the youngest, that honour going to Andrew Fitzgibbon who won it during the Chinese Opium Wars, when he was 15 years and 3 months old.

Pickard kept a journal while in New Zealand, much of which appears to be in the form of letters home. Some extracts from this show that Auckland was quite an intriguing place in the early 1860's. Pickard seemed to enjoy himself and was quite well connected.

In May 1861, he writes; *"The Governor, Uncle French's friend, has been very civil to me and asked to a ball given by him. I went but I cannot say much for the rank? beauty and fashion I met. Never-the-less officers get engaged in the most marvellous quick manner. Before 14th Regiment had been here a month three of the officers were engaged to be married."*

On 13 June he recorded that; *"went to a very pleasant party at Col Mould's RE" (2)*

And on the 17 June he - *"went to a party at Government House; Mrs Gore-Browne gives very good parties once or twice a fortnight."*

Pickard also had a keen ear for gossip, writing in Sept 1862: *"After being in the town two months you know everybody and everybody knows you. Scandal is brought up and stories are told how Captain Smith was seen to ride with Miss Jones one day, walk home after a dance and people say, really he ought to get married. So poor Captain Smith gets married almost without intending it!*

He also commented on how expensive things were:

"Beer varies from 1/6d to 2/- a bottle or 6d a glass... the Colonial beer is a poisonous compound made with a sort of heather shrub instead of hops and is very strong - more like salts & senna than beer. Meat is about 10d a pound and eggs 3d each." (76173)

Arthur Pickard was also much involved with amateur dramatics. On September 5th 1861 he recorded in his journal: -

"Our performance at the theatre came off last night. I did Lady Macbeth in a black wig and sparkled net but when I rushed into Mr Bett's arms for an embrace, wig net and sparkles all were jerked off to the

other side of the stage; which amused the audience excessively."

Arthur Frederick PICKARD, VC was promoted to the rank of Colonel and created a Companion of the Order of the Bath. He was appointed Equerry to the Duke of Connaught and later to Her Majesty Queen Victoria. He contracted tuberculosis and died in Cannes, France, on the 1st of March 1880, aged 35 and is buried in the Cimetière du Grand Jas de Cannes, Cannes, France.

Ian Barton

1. Initially cadets as young as 10 were accepted into the RMA but the age was raised to 15 after the Crimean war. As Pickard entered in August 1855 (age 11) he must have come in prior to the age limit being raised.

2. Assist Surgeon Temple later married one of Col Mould's daughters.

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Lt Arthur Frederick PICKARD
With the VC he won at Rangiriri

VISITOR CENTRE

Sunday 10 am until 2 pm.
OR by arrangement
-telephone Ian Barton
09 239 2049;
email : ibtrees@wc.net.nz

FRIENDS OF QUEEN'S REDOUBT

Early in 2013 the Trust resolved to formally set up a group to be known as the "Friends of Queen's Redoubt". A membership database has been established and anyone with an interest in the work of the Trust is invited to join.

Current membership fees are \$25 for individuals, \$35 for families, \$40 for Historical organizations and \$60 for Commercial organizations; all inclusive of GST.

Please post a completed application form with a cheque to **I Barton, 40 Isabella Drive, Pukekohe 2120** or deposit the amount in our bank account:- **12 3022 0397102** + Your Surname

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

Given Name:

Surname:

Address:

Telephone:

Email address

Membership Category:			
Individual \$25	Family \$35	Historic Organization \$40	Commercial Organization \$40
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

EXCERPTS FROM CHAIRMAN'S REPORT TO THE 2018 AGM

In his report to our last annual meeting on 22 August, the Chairman drew attention to several highlights of the last year.

An important one was that the connection of the Redoubt property to the new sewerage scheme, just before last years AGM, enabled us to get the toilet finished by the end of 2017.

As the house on the property had not had any serious maintenance done for many years, considerable indoor work has been done; including painting the interior and the installation of a heat pump. Two heat pumps were also installed in the Visitor Centre and we are greatly indebted to Hugh and Rae Ross who paid for these.

In November 2017 we received notice that our application to the Lottery Grants Board for funding to complete the displays had been successful, and they had approved the \$59,775 we had asked for. Snapper Graphics were asked to go ahead and prepare the displays. Funding for outdoor signs, also to be done by Snapper Graphics, was sought from Foundation North and in July this year we were told that this application had also been successful. We now have to work hard to ensure that all this work is completed by early 2019.

At the beginning of October it was decided to open the Visitor Centre on Sundays, between 10 am and 2 pm, to coincide with the popular Pokeno Market and we are grateful to those Trustees and others who have helped with this. Still early days yet, but there is a steady trickle of visitors who have come from all over New Zealand and abroad. Also increasing are the number of groups who have found out about us and make arrangements to visit.

Fortunately, with the regular opening of the Visitor Centre, has come an increase in those interested in helping. Two of these have already been appointed as Trustees and others will follow in due course. This is fortunate because the Chairman, who retires from the Department of Conservation in December 2018, will be absent from the country for several months. The other long term trustees are also aging which has an impact on their ability to do the sometimes heavy work of wall building and similar jobs. This year, after trying to get volunteers through Volunteering Auckland, we have employed student labour quite successfully. Fortuitously August also brought into our ranks of volunteers a hard working couple, John and Karen Lam, who are happy to come down from Auckland for the monthly working bees.

Neville Ritchie

THE ARMSTRONG GUN

Queen's Redoubt Trustees have a wide range of skills. Not least of these is the modelling ability of Peter Moy who has just completed a model of the 12 pounder Armstrong gun. (see photographs next page)

Built by W.G. Armstrong Co in the United Kingdom the 12-pounder was a further development of the 3 and 6 pounder field guns which they had been producing for the Royal Artillery.

The Colony of Victoria (today the State of Victoria in Australia), sold 6 Armstrong 12-pounders to New Zealand for use in the New Zealand Wars, for a sum of £3592 1s 8d, with equipment and ammunition. They travelled from Melbourne on 7 November 1863 on the troopship Himalaya and arrived in Auckland on 11 November 1863. Three were known to have been based for a time at Queens Redoubt Pokeno. At the end of the Land Wars these guns remained in New Zealand where they were used to equip the militia.

The gun incorporated some advanced features of its day. It was one of the first breech-loaders: shell and gunpowder propellant were loaded through the gunner's end of the barrel, rather than through the muzzle as in previous guns, allowing a faster rate of fire. The shells were coated with lead, which engaged spiral grooves cut inside the barrel ("rifling") and caused the shell to spin rapidly in flight and hence imparted far greater accuracy and range than previous guns.

The barrel was wrought iron, "built up" of a tube with additional layers,

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PURPOSE OF THE TRUST

The Queen's Redoubt Trust was established in February 1999 with the intention of acquiring this nationally significant historic place and ensuring its protection; with the long term vision to restore and develop the site into a nationally recognised visitor attraction and education centre. In February 2001 the Trust completed the first major phase of the project, raising the funds to acquire the property in Pokeno which contains much of the site of the Queen's Redoubt.

OBJECTIVES of the TRUST

1. To acquire the Queen's Redoubt site at Pokeno to preserve it for future generations.
2. To make Queen's Redoubt accessible to the public by development and interpretation of the site as appropriate.
3. To restore the massive earthwork 'ditch and bank' walls of the fort (they were leveled after the war) as a key interpretive feature.
4. To promote education about the Queen's Redoubt and all the New Zealand Wars between Maori and European.
5. To establish a premier visitor and educational facility on the Queen's Redoubt site. This will be carried out in conjunction with an archaeological excavation programme to maximize knowledge of the site for future exhibition and interpretation purposes, and to promote public participation in the project. At the same time, historical research will continue into Queen's Redoubt itself, the Pokeno District, the Waikato Campaign of 1863-64 and the New Zealand Wars as a whole.

MODEL ARMSTRONG GUN CRAFTED BY PETER MOY

This is a scale model of an early modern 3 inch breech loading field gun manufactured around 1860.

Scale is 1:11 inches made by Peter Moy in his Pokeno Workshop. Barrel - steel. Fittings - brass. Wheels and main carriage - Quila hard wood. Other fittings - stainless steel and copper.

Plans from copy of original plan ca. 1860. This model has a part solid barrel and cannot be fired. All other parts are working as per full size gun.

Refs:
Armstrong and Coehorn Affair
Alexander J E 1873 Bush Fighting p66.



(Cont from prev pg)

heated and then shrunk over it as they cooled. The result was "prestressed" barrel: the interior of the barrel being under compression from the layers shrunk over it, so that the heat and pressure of firing did not stretch it. Hence the barrel was smaller and lighter than previous guns.

The field gun's barrel at 84" was shortened to 72" for the gunships on the Waikato River.

Peter Moy

Surviving Examples

Australian War Memorial, Canberra
National Army Museum Waiouru
Royal Artillery Museum, Woolwich, London
Fort Henry National Historic Site, Kingston
Ontario, Canada

