

The Eighth Contingent

16 Dec 1901

(Per Press Association.)

WELLINGTON, this day.

There will be four camps for the Eighth Contingent, at Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, and Dunedin. The men will be put through medical and other tests, and subsequently will be drafted to two main camps, one in each island, probably at Wellington and Christchurch. Preference will be given to returned troopers physically fit next to volunteers, and next to volunteers in general, single men will be preferred to married. It is expected the contingent will be despatched in about a month.

Applications for enrolment in the Eighth Contingent began to reach the Defence Office yesterday, and are pouring in to-day.

18 Dec 1901

By to-day's mail Majors McCredie and Winter and Surgeon-Captain Craig received notice of their appointment as a Recruiting Board for Gisborne, with instructions to enrol candidates for the Eighth Contingent. The general orders with regard to enlistment are published in another column, and it is notified that intending candidates must send in their applications before Tuesday next, 24th inst.

We understand that amongst those who have signified their intention to volunteer for the front are a number of members of previous contingents, amongst them Sergeant Langford and Corporal Rees.

19 Dec 1901 -

The North Island battalion of the Eighth Contingent go into training camp at Trentham, near the Hutt, and the South Island battalion at Addington.

23 Dec 1901

Applications for a place in the local ranks of the Eighth Contingent close with the recruiting officers, Majors McCredie and Winter and Surgeon-Captain Craig, to-morrow. Major Winter informs us that he has so far received the names of 58 applicants, classified as follows: Former contingenters 7, East Coast Mounted Rifles 8, Gisborne Rifles 6, Civil-

ans 37. Major McCredie has also the names of 10 other applicants. Under the regulations, those who have been in former contingents are to be first chosen, and after them mounted infantry volunteers will be selected, so that it is apparent that Gisborne's quota will be made up almost entirely, if not altogether, without the acceptance of civilians' services. Major McCredie informs us that he has received advice that Gisborne's quota will be 20 men. This is in fulfilment of a promise made by the Defence Minister when he was last in Gisborne, that the district would be permitted to send a larger number of representatives with the next contingent.

28 Dec 1901 - TESTING THE LOCAL MEN.

There was a good crowd of people present this afternoon at Tucker's paddock to witness the aspirants for positions in the Eighth Contingent go through their riding tests. The returned troopers and members of the East Coast Mounted Rifles were passed without other examination than putting their horses through their paces—an easy task. The three returned troopers who presented themselves, Sergeant Langham, Corporal Rees, and Trooper Taylor, were absolved even from this preliminary. A sterner test was required of the members of the Gisborne Rifles, and the men hailing from other corps. They were required to jump a fairly stiff fence, and in all but two instances the steeds answered their riders' demands in a satisfactory manner. Troopers File and Russell could not get their horses over, but in obedience to the commands of the examining officers did not push their unwilling beasts. After the riding tests were completed Majors McCredie and Winter lined the men up, and addressing the returned contingenters informed them that they were accepted "without question." The other men were accepted conditionally on their passing the medical examination to be held in the drill-shed this evening. Addressing the civilians who had volunteered, Major McCredie stated that he had received instructions to forward their names down to Wellington, it being the intention of the Government to place on record the names of those who had so gallantly offered their services for South

Africa. That was all the satisfaction he could offer them. The following men have been selected, subject to medical examination : — Returned Troopers Sergt, Langham, Corporal Rees, Troopers W. Taylor, R. L. Stevens, W. J. Brown, and B. Reed. East Coast Mounted Rifles: Bugler Sherriff, Troopers W. Maxwell, A. Black, J. Kelly, W. Graham, F. Higgs, Hayden, J. G. Swarbrick, and S. Jones. Gisborne Rifles: Corporal E. File, Troopers F. Clarke, P. Taylor, A. Kirk, H. Lynch. Other corps: Troopers John and James Ross (Opotiki Mounted Rifles), and Russell (Canterbury). As will be seen, there are 22 selected for the 20 positions, but two or three are understood to be likely on the score of ill-health to drop out. It is possible that Trooper McBurney, who was absent from the test to-day, will be given consideration in the final selection.

30 Dec 1901 -

GISBORNE'S REPRESENTATIVES

Those candidates who passed the riding tests on Saturday afternoon were subjected to a medical examination by Dr Craig, of the Recruiting Board, in the evening at the Drillshed. Two of those provisionally selected were over the standard height, while one was thrown out as showing a tendency to pleurisy. One failed to pass the eyesight test, and another could not come up to the chest measurement. The men finally selected will be notified when they are to leave. Their names are as follows:—

Members of former contingents: Sergeant Langham, D.S.O. (Fourth Contingent), Troopers W. Taylor, W. J. Brown, R. L. Stevens, B. Reed (Fifth Contingent), Corporal E. Rees (Second Contingent).

East Coast Mounted Rifles: Troopers W. Maxwell, A. Black, J. Kelly, W. Graham, A. Hayden, J. G. Swarbrick, S. Jones, F. Higgs, McBurney.

Gisborne Rifles: Corporal E. File, Privates P. Taylor and F. Clark.

Opotiki Mounted Rifles: Trooper John Ross.

Canterbury Mounted Rifles: Trooper Robert Russell (Oxford).

Several applications have been received for the contingent that is being raised to fill up the vacancies in the Sixth and Seventh Contingents. As in terms of the Premier's offer 100 men will be required, it is intended to request the authorities that Gisborne should be allotted five men.

31 Dec 1901

APPOINTMENT OF OFFICERS.

(Per Press Association.)

WELLINGTON, this day.

Following are the officers so far appointed to the Eighth Contingent:— Major G. Crawshaw, Captains D. Polson, H. Jackson, E. Bartlett, J. Pringle (Otaki), J. Cameron (Wanganui), G. G. Saxby (Napier), acting captain Lieutenant J. H. Haselden (Wellington), Captain, L. H. Bourne, Timaru (late of the Third Contingent), acting captain Lieutenant A. Fooks, lieutenant and quartermaster T. J. Gardiner (Wellington), Lieutenants W. H. Thomson (Wellington), S. Joyce (Christchurch), D. Blair (Wanganui), J. McMillan (Dunedin), G. N. Ferguson (Halswell, Christchurch), V. A. Kelsall (Blenheim), acting lieutenants A. W. Roberts (Wellington), C. H. Street (Oamaru), L. O'Callaghan (Christchurch), Sergeant-Major S. Smith (now in South Africa), A. J. S. Thomson (Wellington), W. J. Parker (late sergeant-major Fifth Contingent), A. M. Wighton (Wellington), H. G. Collett (Waipawa), W. J. Mason (Ohingaiti), J. Martin (Ross), J. Hickson (Hokitika), A. Michal (lieutenant in the Maitara Mounted Rifles), W. A. Morgan (Palmerston North), A. M. Bourn (Blenheim), W. J. O'Dowd (Auckland), D. Taplin (Wellington), E. Langford (Gisborne, late of the Third Contingent), D. Simson (of Seddon Horse, Auckland), C. Newman (Dunedin), G. R. Cotterill (Napier), H. Orbell (of the First Contingent, Dunedin), lieutenant and paymaster G. C. Hay McKenzie (Westport), W. Pitt (Wellington), surgeons, Surgeon-Major Pearlless (Nelson) to be surgeon-major, surgeon-captain Dr G. P. Baldwin (Otaki), surgeon-captain J. E. Rodgers (Wynndham), surgeon-captain Forbes (Auckland), Captain Eccles (Mangonui).

4 Jan 1902

It has been decided to have a united church service in the Theatre Royal tomorrow afternoon at 3 o'clock in lieu of the church parade previously ordered for the morning. The local volunteers and departing members of the Eighth Contingent assemble at the drill-shed at 3 o'clock and proceed to the Theatre for the service, after which they embark for Wellington.

9 Jan 1902 Recruits for South Africa

Major McCredie, senior commanding defence officer for the district, has received the following instructions from headquarters:—"Further selections by Recruiting Boards at the following centres will be made to fill up vacancies in the Seventh Contingent now in South Africa. The same procedure as for the Eighth Contingent is to be followed. Recruits for the Seventh Contingent will be sent to Trentham camp, and will be made up as follows: Wanganui 10, Palmerston North 10, Gisborne 10, Napier 10, and New Plymouth 10. The men are to be selected from the existing lists."

It is the intention of the local Recruiting Board to select a number of suitable men from the remaining list of volunteers for the Eighth Contingent, and to put them through the usual tests about the end of the week. Thus, civilian volunteers will have an opportunity of serving for their King and country at the front.

13 Jan 1902

CHRISTCHURCH, this day.

The Premier, in reply to Mr G. W. Russell's telegram re horses for the Eighth Contingent, states that between one-fourth and one-fifth of the total number of horses purchased have been bought in the South Island. Fifty-five alone have been bought in Christchurch. Very few horses were offered in the South Island, and the quality of those offering did not do justice to the breeders. Some of the horses purchased he saw in camp at Christchurch and gave instructions to weed them out, as to send them would be a slur on the horse-breeders of New Zealand.

16 Jan 1902

(Per Press Association.)

WELLINGTON, this day.

The date of departure of the North Island battalion of the Eighth Contingent from Wellington has been fixed for 5 p.m. on Saturday, 25th, at which hour the troopship Surrey sails for Auckland.

Lieutenant Harris, of Auckland, who received a commission in the Eighth Contingent, has resigned, being reported medically unfit for service.

29 Jan 1902

The horses having been shipped yesterday, 100 members of the Eighth Contingent went aboard the troopship Surrey last night to look after them.

The balance of the contingent came to town this morning by special train, and the whole contingent will be entertained at luncheon by the citizens at 1 o'clock, when farewell speeches will be delivered by the Governor, Premier, Mayor, and Commandant. After lunch the men embark, being escorted by local volunteers to the vessel. The Surrey leaves at 4 o'clock for Auckland, where she ships about 160 horses. She is expected to take her final departure from there on Saturday. The weather to-day is very fine.

30 Jan 1902 - DEPARTURE OF THE NORTH ISLAND BATTALION - WELLINGTON GIVES A GOOD SEND OFF

WELLINGTON, last night.

Despite the fact that Wellington has had more to do with the despatch of the contingents to South Africa than any other portion of the colony, the send-off to the North Island battalion of the Eighth Contingent for Auckland en route to Durban was none the less demonstrative.

After a burst of most disagreeable weather, this morning showed in with a blue sky and a light southerly wind, just sufficient to temper the sun's rays. One-fifth of the battalion had slept on board the troopship Surrey last night in charge of the horses, and the remainder, who were in camp at Trentham, were early astir, and shortly after 11 o'clock were brought to town by special train, along with the baggage. The first hour was devoted to getting things shipshape on board the transport, and then the men were allowed their freedom.

All the morning trains to town were crowded with visitors, chiefly the friends and relatives of the departing soldiers, anxious to bid a last farewell. In town very little interest appeared to be taken in this historic event, and except here and there, where bunting was hoisted, there was very little to announce that anything unusual was taking place. However, as the day wore on and the shops closed, it being the statutory half-holiday, crowds began to collect in the street.

The first function in connection with the event took place at one o'clock, when the Citizens' Committee entertained the departing battalion at luncheon in the Drillshed. Among those present were His Excellency the Governor (who, it was mentioned, had travelled direct from the Bluff to be

present, and have time to meet the new Commandant), the Mayor, the Premier and other Ministers, General Babington, and a number of the local military men and leading citizens. The toasts honored were to the King, the Governor, the colonial forces, and the Eighth Contingent, and the speeches were short.

His Excellency, who as usual spoke in a strong patriotic strain, dwelt on the recent outburst of Anglophobia in Germany, and denounced the calumnies and lies with which it was bolstered up, and expressed his delight at the loyal feeling in New Zealand, and said that as long ago as the Fashoda incident he had satisfied himself that there was a true spirit of patriotism in the people of New Zealand, and that they were as ready then as now to answer the bugle call. He alluded to the admission of the Dutch ambulance corps, who had carried despatches for the Boer leaders, and pronounced it as a most inhuman thing, as such conduct would endanger the sick and wounded in future wars. The severest penalty should fall on those who abused the Geneva Cross.

General Babington, who received a great welcome, said that wherever men from the colonies had had the chance they had done their duty thoroughly well. In Africa, especially, he could answer for the New Zealanders. Those who had served under him had fulfilled their duties in a way that could not be excelled.

The Mayor reminded the departing troops that very strong lenses would be focussed on them. He was particularly pleased to see so many who had been through the mill ready to go back again.

The Premier, who was also heartily received, was satisfied the Eighth would prove equal to their predecessors. He would say to them: "Be careful they had no surprises"; to the officers: "See your sentries are well posted, and that they do their duty." The more men they sent the sooner the war would be ended, and that was why the Ninth Contingent was being enrolled, and the Tenth would follow if wanted. He announced amid the applause of the men that Lieutenant-Colonel Davies had been promoted brevet-colonel, and Captain Bartlett major.

The latter briefly spoke, giving it as his opinion that the war was by no

means over, and that they were not going out for a holiday. Save that the men had not so much volunteer experience, they were equal to the majority of the previous contingents, and a little moulding would remove the deficiencies of training.

The men were then given leave for an hour to say "good-bye" to their friends.

By four o'clock, the hour at which the contingenters had the order to muster at the triangle in front of the General Post Office, there was a dense mass of people, all anxious to bid God-speed to the departing men. A large space was kept open for the men by a posse of police, while the local volunteers, who mustered very poorly, protected that portion of the route along which His Excellency the Governor went.

The Premier was the first to arrive, shortly afterwards followed by His Excellency, and by this time the crowd at the Post Office and in the vicinity must have numbered quite ten thousand. General Babington and several officers of the Defence and Volunteer forces were present, and the men drawn up in squadrons.

Before proceeding to bid them farewell, the Governor, who spoke from the vestibule of the Post Office, said he had a most pleasant duty to perform, and called up Captain Polson, intimating that he had been commanded by His Majesty the King to present Captain Polson with the Star of the Distinguished Service Order for his services in South Africa with the Fifth Contingent. Having pinned the Star on the captain's breast, amid cheering, His Excellency went on to say that the troopers were proceeding to-day to South Africa to stand side by side with the regiments who had traditions in war and had won laurels, and had names on their flags of a thousand battles won by British courage. He assured the men that their doings would be looked at by the people of New Zealand, who looked to them to bring credit to the name of the colony as their predecessors had done. He pointed out that, as soon as they got on board ship they came under the Army Act, and that bravery alone would not give them a good name. They must give implicit obedience to smaller duties which day by day arose, and remember that they were fighting with people who are supposed to be, and if not ought to be,

Christians. He concluded by wishing them God-speed and a safe return.

The Premier, addressing the men, said the present moment was one of historic interest to the colony, and he trusted would be one to their glory, and to the Empire. For the first time in the history of New Zealand a brigade was about to leave its shores, and he was pleased to announce that he had communications from Colonel Porter, now at the front, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, and the Commander-in-Chief of the Imperial Army, that an endeavor would be made in South Africa to keep the New Zealand contingents together as a brigade. (Cheers.) Such being the case, greater responsibility would arise, and they must be careful not to dim the lustre shed on the colony by the bravery and conduct of the contingents sent before them. As a brigade commanded by Colonel Davies and his worthy officers, he felt they would exert themselves to merit the good words spoken of them by the people of New Zealand. As Minister of Defence he emphasised what the Governor had told them as to good behavior, and they must ever bear in mind that nothing could be said against any of our previous contingents. "We," said Mr Seddon, "defend you when absent; you must defend the honor of the colony and Empire." Again he impressed on them to do nothing discreditable, and he urged the officers if they saw the slightest tinge of disobedience or misbehavior to do their duty as officers and put the offenders out of the contingent. Continuing, Mr Seddon said they left behind them 18,000 trained men, in addition to which they had rifle clubs, which brought the total up to 25,000. Further, he could tell them he had received a communication from a number of chiefs who represented large numbers of Natives. The chiefs referred to Natives being debarred from taking part in the war owing to color, and urged the Government to keep faith and do nothing in conflict with an honorable act. At the same time they said if there was any place where soldiers were stationed who were required for war they ought to send them, and the Natives would take their station.

(Cheers.) It was a pleasing tribute to receive, and showed what power they had in the Native race. The Premier concluded with the Native cries, "Kia Ora," "Ake, ake."

received at the hands of the Premier since

At the Premier's request, General Babin-
gton addressed the men, prefacing his
remarks by acknowledging the kindness

received at the hands of the Premier since his arrival in the colony. He said he had heard a little advice given to them by the previous speakers, but was convinced that the men before him were going to South Africa to repeat what their brother colonists had done. If they succeeded in doing so they would deserve well of the people of New Zealand. He was sorry he was not going with them—(Premier: Hear, hear.) He said he had great affection for our Fourth Contingent, and he had no doubt, if connected with the present contingent, he would have the same affection. Had he not thought he would love the people of New Zealand he would not have accepted the offer to come. He wished them good luck and a safe return, and hoped that he would be present to welcome them on the home-coming.

All speeches were punctuated with cheers.

The Governor was then introduced to the officers of the contingent, at the conclusion of which the contingent, attended by the Garrison Band and local volunteers, marched to the steamer.

The whole water frontage for a distance of half a mile was densely crowded, and at the Glasgow wharf, from which the transport took her departure, there was an immense gathering, equal to any seen at the despatch of the previous troops.

For a time a posse of police, aided by a strong barrier, kept the wharf fairly clear of the crowd, but the anxiety of friends to say good-bye to the departing men was at last outrun, and with a sudden rush the barrier smashed up. The police were overpowered, and a huge bustling crowd gathered at the ship's side. All official arrangements for the embarking of the men were upset. Many of the troopers who had remained saying parting words had a hard tussle to gain their way on board.

However, by 6 o'clock, so far as could be seen, all were on board, and the Surrey drew out and sailed away for Auckland, the Premier and General Babin-
gton accompanying the vessel down the harbor. Hearty cheers and counter cheers were given as the steamer left, and many of the fair sex were weeping over the loss of a relative or lover.

The crowd throughout was most orderly, and no accidents of any nature were reported. It was generally admitted that this contingent is the most lively which has left here.

1 April 1902

WELLINGTON, last night

The Governor has received from Lord Kitchener the report of the remount officer on the horses of the Eighth Contingent. The North Island Regiment lost nine on the voyage, and the South Island eight. The Northern horses are described as a very good stamp of country horse, with substance and quality, and in excellent condition. The Southern horses are described as light of bone and very long; neither can their condition compare with that of the North Islanders.

9 April 1902

Messrs J. H. (Herbert) Ferris, of Gisborne, and Burch (late of Waihuka station), of the Fourth Contingent, leave for Sydney en route to South Africa shortly.

Of the 22 men sent down by the local Recruiting Board to Wellington last Sunday, 20 were for the Tenth and two were details for the Eighth Contingent. The Defence Department have asked for information as to which two of the men were selected for the Eighth, and the names have been supplied. Troopers Thomas Howell and Robert Nicol go to South Africa to join the Eighth.

17 March 1902

The troopship Surrey, with the North Island battalion of the Eighth Contingent, arrived at Durban on Saturday. The Cornwall, with the South Island section, was expected last night. The Surrey reports that the troopers are all well. Only nine horses died, or 1½ per cent. She last saw the Cornwall on the 7th.

14 April 1902

It is reported by a private cable that thirteen of the Eighth Contingent have been killed and others injured by a railway accident.

The following were killed in a railway accident at Machavie on the 12th inst:

- Private J. Harris, Athol, Southland.
- Private F. L. D. Lowe, Styx, Canterbury.
- Private A. H. McDonald, Oamaru.
- Private V. H. Brown, Sheffield, Canterbury.
- Private M. Canty, Longbush, Southland.
- Private P. Rogers, Woodhaugh, Dunedin.

Private A. F. Leirs (otherwise W. Foss), Waihi, Auckland.

Private R. Osborne, Middlemarch, Otago.

Private J. Bruce, Oamaru.

Private J. Maloney, Little River, Canterbury.

Private C. Bourne, Christchurch.

Private J. C. Simpson (relatives unknown).

Private J. H. Jones, Southland.

The following were dangerously injured:

Private H. Brown, Denniston, Westport.

Private Alfred E. Pearson, Oamaru.

Private Wm. C. Grant, Middlemarch, Otago.

Corporal D. L. Whitehead, Dunedin.

Private T. Lee, Woodlands, Southland.

Private W. Wheeler, Waikouaiti.

The following were severely injured in the accident:

Private Charles Jones, Dunedin.

Private Walter Devon, Gummerburn, Otago.

Private Nicholas L. Thomas, Waimate.

Private Wm. Turner, Outram.

Private Henry R. Plumridge, Spreydon, Canterbury.

The slightly injured are:

Private John Edgar, Queenstown.

Private Jas. C. Watt.

6 May 1902

A trooper of the Eighth Contingent writes that the authorities have changed the name from the Eighth Contingent to the First New Zealand Brigade. This is the first 1000 men that have left New Zealand at one time, so they made it a brigade.

16 May 1902

Trooper E. E. Ulrich, of the Eighth Contingent, writing to his father in Wellington, says:—"The blockhouse system seems to have done much to bring the war to a speedy end. Newcastle is a one-horse town, with about twenty shops, kept by Hindoos. The civilian population does not exceed one hundred, excepting, of course, troops. The Kaffirs are not amiss as a race. One I saw was not much more than a boy, and the fattest man in Wellington would have to take a back seat alongside of him. We had a very pleasant passage from Albany, only our poor horses got very weary, as they could not lie down. I often stood in front of mine, and he would lay his head on my shoulder and fall asleep that way from sheer weariness. Strange to say,

the horses were not so liable to accidents in moderate rough weather as when the steamer glided along in a smooth sea. Then the poor animals were very liable to collapse from leg weariness, fancying themselves safe." Private Ulrich speaks in the highest terms of the treatment of the officers of his regiment. This had an important bearing. The private wished to go off on his own, and enlist in the regulars or irregulars, as the case might be in South Africa, but his friends said, "Serve under the officers of your own people, and you will be better treated." He took the advice, and the above is the result.

26 June 1902

The Lyttelton Times' correspondent with the Eighth Contingent writes:—The sheep that I have seen have all been miserable specimens of merinos, my own troop of thirty men eating six in one day. They have generally been hard driven for some days or weeks with the columns, so it is no wonder that they do not look well. They make very good mutton, even under these unfavorable circumstances. At the rate that they are now being destroyed, the country will be cleared of sheep before long. My own opinion is that this will be one of the finest grazing countries in the world. Indian corn grows splendidly everywhere, giving two crops a year, and as a food for man or beast is hard to beat. Pumpkins grow very luxuriously, too, and I believe with such an abundance and regular rainfall as there is all through the summer, oats would grow well, and, with an almost rainless winter, stock would reap every benefit from them. The climate is simply perfect; fine, sunny, clear days, and sharp, crisp nights, make it both healthy and pleasant.

8 July 1902

WELLINGTON, last night.

The troopship Britannic left Durban for Albany, Melbourne, and Wellington on July 6, and is due at Albany on the 21st; and Melbourne on the 28th. She has a large number of New Zealand troops on board, including the following:—Tenth Contingent: Captain H. F. H. Heskler, Lieutenant J. E. L. Duigan, other officers, and 82 men. Ninth Contingent: Surgeon-Captain Bakewell and the discharged irregulars. Eighth Contingent, 1st Regiment: Colonel Davies, Captains Matthews, Polson, Todd, Cameron, Collett, Shera, O'Dowd, Mason, Somerville, Taplin, Lieutenants Pitt, Ro-

berts, Cunningham, Bullock, Parker, A. A. Wynyard, Goss, Surgeon-Major Pearsless, Surgeon-Captain Eccles, Vice-Captain Clayton, 450 non-commissioned officers and men. 2nd Regiment: Lieutenant-Colonel C. W. C. Chaytor, Captains F. Colebrook, K. C. M. Lewin, A. A. Fooks, J. L. Haselden, Lieutenants R. C. McKenzie, J. W. Ferguson, H. J. C. Harper, T. Joyce, V. A. Kelsall, J. De P. Monson, J. Martin, McNab, H. S. Orbell, L. G. O'Callaghan, H. S. Palmer, E. B. Peacock, C. H. Street, C. J. Smith, J. B. Vallance, Surgeon-Captain M. F. Beauchop and J. E. Rogers, Veterinary-Captain A. Y. Young, and 445 non-commissioned officers and men.

5 Aug 1902

By the s.s. Te Anau this morning a squad of returned troopers including Serg. Maydon, Lance-Corporal Denny, and troopers Walker, W. Graham, R. Russell, W. Little, Ashdown, G. W. Bougen, Clarke, and Baker, who arrived in Wellington by the s.s. Britannic, reached home. Amongst the number is Trooper Bougen who has served in the 4th, 6th, and also joined the 10th Contingent at the Cape.

The roll call aboard the troopship totaled 1200 officers and men, and including 26 officers and 28 men of Australian Contingents, who were landed at Melbourne. Speaking of the trip across from the Cape, the men complain of the bad commissariat department and the over-crowded state of the ship. Of the food, they state there was just enough to eat, and the rest was so bad that it had to be thrown overboard. In fact numbers of the Auckland section refused to proceed to their destination in the troopship, but petitioned officials and members at Government Buildings for passes by train up the West Coast.

The Eighth Contingent, to which the majority belonged, were sent out to guard the Drakensburg passes. The men were in General Hamilton's column and were commanded by Colonel Thorneycroft, the superior officer to their own head, Colonel Davis. The column were engaged in the last drive of the war from Klerksdrop to Drieburg. The Eighth had the honor of being mentioned in General Ian Hamilton's despatches to Lord Kitchener. The weather experienced was the tail end of the rainy season, but it was quite sufficient to give them some exceptionally heavy downpours. The Contingent, however were remarkably free from enteric. The only casualty in the field was a case of accidental shooting—one of the troop-

ers knocking his bandolier, caused a cartridge to explode with fatal results to himself. The declaration of peace was read out in the evening orders and was received with great cheering through the column. For a few succeeding days it was not known whether the troops would be kept for police duty, and the time was enjoyably spent in sports of all descriptions. The skill of the New Zealanders brought forth Colonel Thorneycroft's declaration that in horsemanship they were not to be equalled.

With regard to the question of remaining in the country, the troopers state that the mines offered many inducements to the men—guaranteeing 5s. per day and food for a start. For expert drillers the daily wage paid is £1 per day and food. The mines are being pumped and put in readiness for full working operations. Of the Gisborne sections of the Eighth Contingent the following troopers remained in South Africa: A. Black, E. File, W. McBurney, P. and W. Taylor, and were consequently paid off. A feature of the colonising scheme, the boys state, is that Boers are practically given preference in all applications.