

THE NINTH CONTINGENT.

8 Feb 1902 SELECTION OF LOCAL REPRESENTATIVES

The riding tests for applicants for positions in the Ninth Contingent were held in the grounds adjoining Captain Tucker's paddock. Majors McCredie and Winter conducted the examination of the candidates. The large number of 75 men were on the ground, which far exceeds any previous muster. The applicants were on the whole of smaller physique than the candidates for previous contingents, the lowering of the standard height no doubt being the cause. Before the test commenced the would-be contingenters amused the assembled crowd by giving a leaping exhibition over the fence. They were lined up soon after 2 p.m., and Major McCredie, addressing the applicants, said he had to express some little regret on the present occasion on the reduction of numbers which had taken place with regard to the men allowed to the Gisborne district. Especially was this to be regretted as from the announcement of the Defence Minister they were led to believe that the outlying districts were going to receive an increase for the Ninth. Instead of that the Recruiting Board had received instructions that they were reduced five men. Major McCredie said he had done all he could to induce the Defence Department to increase the number, even to sending a wire that morning. He had received no reply to the wire, and in the absence of an answer, all that the Board could do was to select 15, according to instructions. They would see that out of the number present, the task of selection would be very difficult. Major McCredie then gave the men information as to what points the selection would be made on, and in doing so said he was satisfied they could all ride. He did not know any man yet who had come forward for any of the contingents who could not ride. While the tests of riding and jumping would be given best consideration, regard would be paid to soldierly bearing. The tests then proceeded. Troopers D. Cameron and A. Green (Fifth Contingent) and Troopers J. W. Parker (East Coast Mounted Rifles) were selected without examination, thus leaving 12 places to be filled by the civilians.

The following nineteen men were provisionally selected: J. Johnson, Nelson, Scherman, P. McCabe, Parker, Longdill, Thom, Wood, Cook, Swarbrick, H. Ogden, Martin, B. Kirk, Cairns, Grace, McGough, Tardue, Davis, Cooper.

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SEND-OFF TO GISBORNE REPRESENTATIVES.

After the riding tests were completed on Saturday afternoon the 19 men provisionally selected for the Ninth Contingent adjourned to the Drillshed for examination by the medical officer of the Recruiting Board, Dr Craig. The following were finally selected:—Troopers D. Cameron and A. Green, of the Fifth Contingent, and J. W. Parker, of the East Coast Mounted Rifles. Civilians: John Hall Johnstone, Francis McCabe, Robert Thom, Richard Edward Cook, Albert Kirk, James Cairns, Martin William Grace, Thomas Mallroy Wood, Arthur Nelson, Robert Henry McGough, Ernest Albert Tardieu, and Jonathan Swarbrick.

A big crowd were present at the Drillshed at 9.30 on Saturday evening to farewell the men, who were to depart immediately for Auckland by the Tutaneikai. The City Band, under Bandmaster Morrison, rendered a number of fine selections while the men were engaged in the final preparations. The Band marched to the fire-bell in Gladstone road, where they were joined by the troopers under Majors McCredie and Winter. The united party then marched to the wharf, a procession being formed by hundreds of people. The City Band led the van, to the strains of that lively quick-step "Clear the Way." As the procession passed the Albion Hotel a number of Penguin bluejackets on the footpath heartily cheered the departing troopers. On arrival at the wharf the men were allowed a short time in which to bid good-bye to their friends, and then boarded the Tutaneikai's launch, which was in charge of Captain Post.

Major McCredie, in addressing the departing contingenters informed them that they would be in charge of Trooper D. Cameron, of the Fifth Contingent, and stated he wished to congratulate the district on the men who were being sent on this occasion. It appeared to the speaker that the men seemed to get better with each succeeding contingent that was sent. He hoped that when they got to South Africa they would be full of courage, and never fail to strike a blow when opportunity offered. He desired to see them go with good cheer, and looked to them to worthily uphold the flag which braved all nations, and do nothing that would drag it down from

its high position. The speaker said he was satisfied the members of the Ninth Contingent would sustain the great reputation which former New Zealand contingents had earned for themselves. (Applause.) Major McCredie in conclusion wished the men farewell and God-speed. A short address was then given by Major Winter, who in farewelling the men wished them a safe return to New Zealand. Three ringing cheers were given by the men on the launch for Majors McCredie and Winter as the little vessel left the wharf for the Tutanekai.

The precincts of the wharf was swarming with people, and there was much crushing and pushing to get places of advantage on which to witness the departure. The City Band, despite being uncomfortably pressed by the crowd, played several appropriate airs, the boys leaving the wharf to the tune of "Will ye no come back again?" and "Auld Lang Syne." The departing contingenters were cheered until the launch was well towards the entrance to the harbor.

AUCKLAND, this day.

There are now about 450 men of the Ninth Contingent in camp at Manukau. Nearly the whole of the North Island battalion are now in camp. Thirty-three recruits arrived this morning from Napier and Gisborne per Tutanekai and went into camp.

13 Aug 1902

The following Gisborne troopers were on board the s.s. Orient, and have been quarantined at Soames' Island, Wellington: Troopers A. Kirk, R. Barwick, J. D. Cameron, Gordon, F. McCabe, R. E. Cook, J. H. Johnstone, J. Swarbrick, A. Tardien, A. J. Cooper, T. M. Wood, and Farrier-Sergeant J. W. Parker. The following Wairoa men are also in quarantine: Sergeant P. J. Cosgrove, Sergeant-Major T. S. Hewitt, Trooper Grimsdale, J. Crombie, W. Gardner, and C. Middleton.

Aug 1902

Sergeant J. W. Parker and Trooper John Parker, of the Ninth and Tenth Contingent respectively, who arrived home yesterday, had a sad home-coming their sister Mary having passed away the previous evening. Much sympathy is expressed with the family in their bereavement.