

**NZAR ID No 131 Arm type: Rifle, draft dated 30 March 2011, Compiled by Phil Cregeen**

### **Pattern (Name) Indian Pattern Musket, In New Zealand September 1834**

Although in service with the East India Company from about 1777 manufacture for the Government spanned the period from 1797 to 1815, with total production estimated at 3 million muskets. Indian Pattern Muskets were first taken into Government service in 1793 as an emergency measure and finally adopted as an approved pattern in 1797.

The Indian Pattern Musket was the most common musket on issue to British line regiments until the 1840s and even as late as 1848 for some regiments. The first percussion muskets were not approved for issue until March 1838 and then only 2,000 were manufactured for Guards regiments.

Thus it is probable, (see notes on 50<sup>th</sup> Regt below), that the first British troops to serve in New Zealand were armed with this musket. This was a contingent of the 50<sup>th</sup> Regiment sent from Australia and landed in Taranaki in September 1834, to rescue Betty Guard and her children who had been taken hostage by Maori. Betty Guard was the wife of the captain of the Harriet, which had been wrecked on the Taranaki coast in April and many of the crew killed by local Maori.



Indian Pattern ring-neck cock lock used from 1810



Indian Pattern Musket & Bayonet. It has an overall length of 55 in., a barrel length of 39 in. with smooth bore and calibre of 0.75 in. with brass furniture, three ramrod pipes, barrel retained by 3 pins and upper sling swivel and stocked to within 4.5 in. of the muzzle.

In the hands of British redcoats this musket was a much respected weapon. From their first enlistment soldiers were taught to handle their weapon, load, present and fire at a mark so that they were reasonable shots, from here they drilled as platoons, companies and regiments to fire on command, by drum, voice or signal from their officers. A steady rhythm to the orders and constant drill both in peace and war helped troops to hold firm while under fire.

With a weight of 14 lbs firing a loose fitting ball of 1 ounce the musket had an extreme range of 300 yds., but little penetration at this distance. At 50 yds. it was reasonably accurate and at 20 to 40 yds. it was lethal. Well trained soldiers could reload in 12 seconds and fire a second volley in 15 seconds.

### Notes on 50<sup>th</sup> Regiment of Foot

Served in Australia, having been transported in detachments serving as guards on convict ships.

See [http://www.diggerhistory.info/pages-conflicts-periods/other/british\\_army-in-aust.htm](http://www.diggerhistory.info/pages-conflicts-periods/other/british_army-in-aust.htm)

50th	West Kent (Queen's Own) Stationed at Sydney, Norfolk Island & Tasmania .	1833	1841	Blue facings	pointed pairs
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Arrived in India (Bengal) 1841 from Australia equipped with Board of Ordnance flintlocks as follows: 40 Fusils for Sergeants, 740 Muskets for rank and File. Muskets all unserviceable, Fusils serviceable on survey at Fort William in June 1841, percussion replacements requested. EIC percussion arms issued Sept 1841 (probably Pattern A or B and Fusils of first type with old series locks). Served in Gwalior campaign 1843 and first Sikh War of 1845-46. Left India 1848

Sources: *British Military Long Arms 1715-1865, D W Bailey*

*The Harriet Affair, 1834* [www.nzhistory.net.nz](http://www.nzhistory.net.nz)

*Small Arms of the East India Company, DF Harding*

[http://www.diggerhistory.info/pages-conflicts-periods/other/british\\_army-in-aust.htm](http://www.diggerhistory.info/pages-conflicts-periods/other/british_army-in-aust.htm)

Photos: Michelle Cregeen

Musket loaned by: Darren Hill