

NZAR ID No 155, ARM TYPE: BAYONET, Draft date (V1) 9 April 2012, Compiled by Phil Cregeen

Pattern (Name) 1903 Sword Bayonet, Introduced into New Zealand Service 1905, Withdrawn Post WWII

Length OA 17.0 in (432mm), Blade 12.0 in (305mm), MRD 16.5 mm, Scabbard 12.95 in (328mm)

Wooden grips secured by two screws, Leather scabbard with steel locket and internal chape



Pattern 1903 Sword Bayonets with top Pat 1888 scabbard and bottom Pat 1903 Mk I scabbard

Note integral frog and internal chape on the Mk I scabbard



Typical bayonet markings showing date of manufacture 10/04 and manufacturer Mole

With the introduction of the Short Magazine Lee Enfield Rifle a new bayonet was developed which used the same blade as the Pattern 1888 but required a modified hilt to accommodate the new fixing to a bayonet boss and bar on the nose cap of the rifle rather than to the barrel and bar as on the MLE.

The Pattern 1903 bayonet was approved in December 1902 and a conversion from the Pattern 1888 was approved in February 1903. RSAF Enfield manufactured 119,755 new bayonets between 1902 and 1907 and converted another 66,707 between 1903 and 1908. The bayonet was also manufactured by contractors: Wilkinson, Sanderson and Mole.

New Zealand Use

In 1905 New Zealand ordered a quantity of Short Magazine Lee Enfield Rifles Mk I with Pat 1903 Bayonets to replace the MLE issued to Mounted Rifles and by 1908 all South Island mounted troops had been reequipped and more SMLEs were on order for the North Island.

In 1912 the SMLE Mk I rifles with mounted troops were replaced with Mk III rifles and Pat 1907 bayonets and the Mk I rifles and Pat 1903 bayonets were issued to senior cadets. 1,924 Mk I Rifles were shown held in New Zealand in the 1913 Arms Return.

Also used by Home Guard in WW II

Acknowledgements: Photos Phil Cregeen

References: British & Commonwealth Bayonets by ID Skennerton & R Robertson.

Appendices to the Journal of the House of Representatives <http://atojs.natlib.govt.nz>