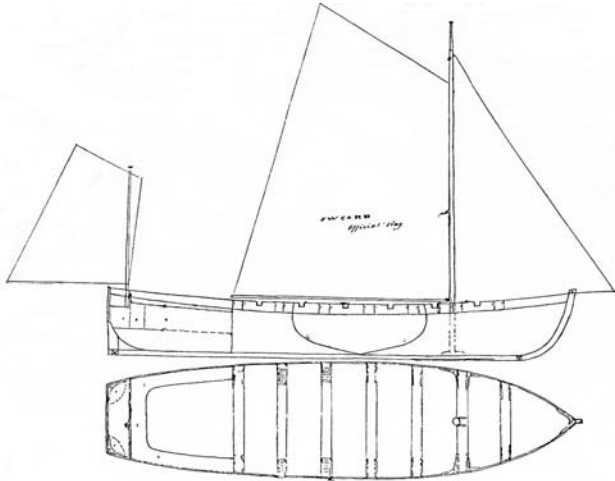


NZAR ID 281, ARM TYPE: Armed Vessel. Draft date (V1) 13 March 2012, Compiled by John Osborne DTT PhD FSG, Pattern: NZs First Coast Guard Gunboat Auckland Harbour. Introduced: 1860. Withdrawn: 1880s Auckland Volunteer Coast Guard New Zealand's first Naval Volunteer unit officially came into being on the 13 April 1860.

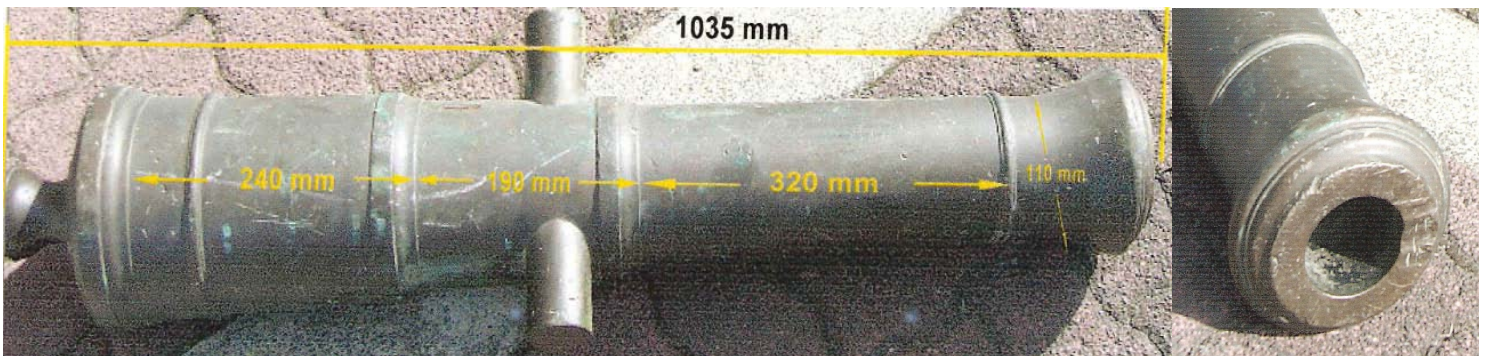
The first Naval Volunteer unit was formed in Auckland in 1858. A few months later a Naval Artillery Volunteer unit was established in Nelson. During the remainder of the 19th century, units of Naval Volunteers were formed in various ports around New Zealand. All were converted into Naval Artillery Volunteers in 1883 and in 1902 they were transformed into the Garrison Artillery Volunteers. The Auckland Volunteer Coast Guard was established under the provisions of the "The Militia Act, 1858," the details were published in the *New Zealand Gazette* of the unit's formation and detailing its composition, which was to be 2 Lieutenants, 5 Petty Officers & 55 Men. Each Naval volunteer to be armed with a rifle or pistol & a P1804/45 cutlass. Officers bought their own naval pattern pistols & or swords. A government owned row boat was used by the unit, and another new boat specially built at a cost of £134.14.6. This vessel (refer plans below) was the first in New Zealand to be built specifically as a Volunteer Coast Guard gunboat. It was modelled on a ship's pinnace, (long boat) of diagonal construction and copper sheathed. Both boats were each armed with a 3 pounder brass gun. To house the vessels and to provide a secure stowage for the guns, a government owned boatshed in Officials Bay was allocated for the use of the unit.



Plans of the Auckland Volunteer Coast Guard gunboat c1860.



Example of a small British 3 pdr brass gun



These 3 pounder smooth bored brass cannon were mounted on a pivoting sliding carriage when fitted to gun boats or armed Waka Taua. Solid 3 pound 2.75" cast iron round ball shot or bomb shells could be fired or about 48 lead musket balls effective range about 100m

There was considerable difficulty in obtaining sufficient small arms at this time, there was a large increase in the number of men under arms (a result of the "native troubles" in Taranaki). By the end of July 1860 an application to increase the size of the Auckland Volunteer Coast Guard to 100 men was approved. By the beginning of 1861 the fighting in Taranaki had reduced the strength of the British military at the Garrison in Auckland and the New Zealand Volunteers were required to be ready to undertake guard and other emergency duties. Plans were drawn up for the defence of Auckland. In the event of attack – the Coast Guard Volunteers were to proceed to the North Shore. In 1883 their name was changed to Auckland Naval Volunteers.



Left: Sea Service Rifle (P1852) 30" barrel .758" calibre, Minie pattern 3 groove 1 in 78" twist rifling, adjustable 200 - 1000 yard ladder rear sight. Centre: Coast Guard P1839 pistol (converted from flintlock) 6" smooth bore barrel .57" Calibre, captivated ramrod. Right: Coast Guard P1842 SB .57" cal pistol 6" barrel fitted with sights, belt hook fitted to left side. These types of pistols also used by NZ Provincial Armed Police especially Gold Fields Police in the early 1860s.

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W S (Bill) Curtis A.C.I.I., Assistant Curator, Museum of the National Rifle Association, UK.

Royal New Zealand Navy www.navy.mil.nz Royal New Zealand Navy Museum www.navy.museum.mil.nz

<http://www.navy.mil.nz/naval-reserve/naval-reserve-history/default.htm>

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<http://homepages.ihug.co.nz/~Sxmitch/Military.html> Osborne Arms Museum armsmuseum@xtra.co.nz