

VETERANS' HOME

ANNIVERSARY OF OPENING RECORDS OF THE INMATES

Thirty-three years ago to-day the formal opening of the Veterans' Home at Mount Roskill was performed by the Governor, Lord Ranfurly. Since that time many of the old soldiers have passed away, but their places have been filled by veterans of the Great War, and four are now seeking admission to the home.

Within a few days of the declaration of peace following the South African War, Lord Ranfurly announced his scheme of providing a refuge for the aged heroes of the earlier wars of the Empire in the evening of their life and a memorial to the New Zealanders, numbering almost 300, who lost their lives in the war in South Africa. It speaks well for the energy displayed by Lord Ranfurly in this direction that after 18 months of hard work the building was ready for opening.

The veterans who are now spending the closing years of their lives in the home average 74 years of age. Private J. Atkinson, a veteran of the South African War, aged 87, is the oldest, and Privates J. Meehan and W. B. Morton, both of whom served in the Maori Wars, are each 85. Private Dolaney, who is now aged 80, was a bugler at the age of 11 and holds a Maori War medal. Among the others are two holders of the Distinguished Conduct Medal, won in the South African War, Sergeant W. Cassidy, who served with the New Zealand troops, and Sergeant-Major G. Head, formerly of the King's Royal Rifle. Sergeant Cassidy is the holder of a Royal Humane Society Medal. Sergeant-Major H. Patience fought at Majuba Hill in 1881 and Mr. J. Connnett served with the Royal Navy at the Panderelles in 1879 and with the Australian Navy in Chinese waters.

The home is in the charge of Major J. A. Wallingford, M.C., who takes an interest in every activity of the veterans. Reading and talking, tending the grounds and doing various little useful jobs, the men pass the time nicely and happily.

NEW ZEALAND CROSS.

MAORI WAR DECORATION.

LIST OF 23 AWARDS.

When discussing his memories of the Maori Wars, Mr. Walter Delaney, aged 77, youngest of the veterans who took part in those wars, said that in or about the year 1863 the New Zealand Cross was struck. It was awarded for bravery which would ordinarily have deserved the Victoria Cross, and carried with it the same annuity. "There were four New Zealand Crosses won in the siege of Ngatapa, 1863, in which I was a bugler boy," he said. "Amongst the winners were Benjamin Biddle, my old friend and comrade, who, until his death recently, was the last survivor, and Solomon Black." Mr. Delaney went on to recall 13 or 14 others. The complete official list, numbering 23, as supplied specially to the "Star" by the General Headquarters, New Zealand Military Forces, is as follows, dates of awards being also given:—

Henare Kapa Te Ahururu, No. 1 Div. A.C., November 7, 1863; Solomon Black, January, 1860; Benjamin Biddle, No. 1 Div. A.C., January, 1860; William Langard, Kai Iwi Cav., December 28, 1863; George Hill, No. 1 Div. A.C., April 10, 1860; Angus Smith, Bay of Plenty, June 7, 1863; Arthur Karheek, A.C., February 7, 1870; Doctor Isaac Featherston, Native Contg., John Mackintosh, A.C., November 7, 1868; Kapa Rangihirini, November 7, 1868; Kapa Vahawaha, Native Contg., Francis Mace, Taranaki Militia, October 20, 1865; George Preece, A.C., January, 1860; Samuel Walker (Asst. Surgeon), A.C., March 13, 1860; Christopher Malink, Guides, February 28, 1860; Richard Shepherd, A.C., March 13, 1860; Samuel Augustin, Wanganui Contg., January 7, 1865; Antonio Rodriguez, Taranaki Mt. Volunteers, October 2, 1863; Thomas Adamson, Guides, May 7, 1860; Thomas McDonnell, October, 1863-1866; Gilbert Mair, N.Z. Militia, February, 1870; Harry Wilson, Bay of Plenty Cavalry, June, 1867; Henry Northcroft, Patea Rangers, October 2,

Tragic Incident, Recalled.

The death of the late Mr. James Auckland, recalls to Mr. Walter Delaney, who himself well, his tragic experience at the Bay massacre in November, 1863. Mr. Delaney, who holds the distinction of being the youngest of the Maori War veterans, having been in as a bugler at the tender age of 11 years. "Star" representative how young Jimmy escaped by the back door when Te Kooti raided his father's house and captured his parents. The father was killed, and the boy terribly wounded, and the little boy (he was years old) lay hidden in the flax. After the Maoris departed, Mrs. Wilson was left but Jimmy kept her alive for several days, bringing her eggs for food. Finally he got from the township and his mother, but she died from her injuries. Mr. Delaney was awarded the New Zealand medal for his behaviour.

Michael Walter Delaney

OBITUARY.

MR. A. SUTHERLAND.

NEW ZEALAND VETERAN.

MEMORIES OF VON TEMPSKY.

After a life of adventure in those stirring days when the early history of New Zealand was in the making, Mr. Alexander Sutherland, soldier, miner and prospector, died recently at the age of 84 at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Best, of Norwich Street.

He was born at Onchunga in 1848, and answering the call of adventure he joined the volunteers at an early age. After seeing service in the Waikato in the early 'sixties, he was transferred to the Transport Corps, and went to Wanganui, where he met the famous soldier, Von Tempsky, and also the gallant Colonel Roberts, New Zealand Cross.

Mr. Sutherland used to speak of men who have gone down as famous in New Zealand history familiarly, as those whom he once knew and was associated with. He spoke of General Tuke and the famous track which he used through Taranaki, when he was rounding up Haubau. After Von Tempsky was killed at the

Gold Fever.

When gold was discovered at Thames he worked both at that place and at Waitekauri for some time. He was afterwards at Karangahake and Kuanunu, household names in the mining world, and he eventually made his way to Coromandel, when he built a home. By that time he had gained considerable knowledge of mining, and was able to prospect for gold on his own account. This he did with the usual varying fortune of the prospector; but once he, with his mate, made a fairly good strike on the Tokatea ranges. This was particularly fortunate, since his wife and he had only 5/ in the house. Perhaps that is why he remembered it so clearly, when other finds have been forgotten.

About 14 years ago his home was burned to the ground, and he went back to the Thames with his wife. They were there for a time, and then came on to Auckland. Mrs. Sutherland died about seven years ago, and afterwards Mr. Sutherland lived in the Veterans' Home. Since leaving there, he lived with his daughter, where he died.

The veteran was buried with becoming military honours, the casket being draped with the Union Jack. The King's Empire Veterans were represented by the honorary, Mr. J. A. Beale. The friend and old-time comrade of Mr. Sutherland, bugler Walter Delaney, was with him when he died.

REV. FATHER GOGGAN