

Fern Ground Volunteer Company – Upper Hutt

The Fern Ground Volunteer Company was established around 03 September 1870. Captain James Cruickshank was the commanding officer. On the 05 April 1872 the early records of the Fern Ground Volunteer Company were destroyed in a fire at the Fern Ground saw mill owned and operated by Captain Cruickshank. The Fern Ground Volunteer Company was disbanded on 28th May 1873.

Fern Ground was the name given to an area north of Upper Hutt near Maori bank. James Cruickshank established his saw mill in the same area and named it Fern Ground. Captain Cruickshank may have had some influence on the naming of Fern Ground Volunteer Company.

1870

Evening Post Newspaper Wednesday 14 September 1870

For some time past the formation of a Volunteer Company has been in contemplation in the Upper Hutt, and it was generally understood that the last monthly drill-day of Militia - Tuesday, the 6th inst. - would have witnessed initiative measures, but the inclemency of the weather, postponed (according to understood usage) any meeting on the day in question. Since then, however, circulars, numerous posted, and bearing the signature of Jas. Cruickshank, Captain of Militia in this district, announced that members of that force were ordered to meet at the Highland Home Hotel at two o'clock on Tuesday last, to receive arrears of pay, after which those who intended to identify themselves with the volunteer movement would proceed to the stockade, and after delivering their arms and being sworn in, be enrolled, and receive new rides. This was done on Tuesday last. The following officers, in addition to four sergeants, were eventually elected: - Captain James Cruickshank, Lieut. Henry Burt, Ensign Frank Smedley Searancke. The company bears the name of "**The Fern Ground Volunteer Company.**"

(Reference National Library of NZ Papers past website Wednesday Evening Post Newspaper 14 September 1870 page 2)

Evening Post newspaper Tuesday 27 December 1870

District Order – Hutt Militia Office – 19th December 1870

Member of Militia and Volunteer Companies in the Hutt District intending to compete for the 1st series of District Prizes will meet at the ranges used by their respective companies at 9 am on the days specified below Viz.

Fern Ground Volunteers – Monday 09th January 1871 is wet Monday 16th January

(Reference Papers past website Tuesday Evening Post newspaper 27 December 1870 page 2)

1871

Date 21 July 1871 Applications for Capitation **Fernground Rifle Volunteers** [71/818]

Nominal Roll of Persons serving in the Fernground Volunteers who are entitled to Capitation

[Written in red Voucher to Accountant Defence Office 20/6/71 Ent & Fol 226]

<i>Rank and name</i>	<i>Date of enrolment</i>	<i>No of parades</i>	<i>Capitation Grant</i>
Captain James Cruickshank	03 Sep 1870	10	£2 10s
Lieutenant H Burt	03 Sep 1870	10	£2 10s
Ensign Serancke	03 Sep 1870	10	£2 10s
Sergeant Cruickshank	03 Sep 1870	10	£2 10s
Sergeant G Perkins	03 Sep 1870	10	£2 10s
Sergeant P Wilkie	03 Sep 1870	10	£2 10s
Sergeant H Aston	03 Sep 1870	09	£2 10s

Corporal P Atkin	03 Sep 1870	09	£2 10s
Corporal W Fulcher	03 Sep 1870	10	£2 10s
Corporal Butler	03 Sep 1870	09	£2 10s
Private G Brown	03 Sep 1870	10	£2 10s
Private Jas Brown	03 Sep 1870	10	£2 10s
Private E Butler	03 Sep 1870	09	£2 10s
Private W Burrell	03 Sep 1870	10	£2 10s
Private P Davis	03 Sep 1870	09	£2 10s
Private E Doreen	03 Sep 1870	10	£2 10s
Private A Keys	03 Sep 1870	10	£2 10s
Private E Morgan	03 Sep 1870	09	£2 10s
Private F Mabey	03 Sep 1870	10	£2 10s
Private M Mullar	03 Sep 1870	10	£2 10s
Private W O'Harre	03 Sep 1870	01	£2 10s
Private A Perry	03 Sep 1870	10	£2 10s
Private Chas Robinson	03 Sep 1870	10	£2 10s
Private E Robinson	03 Sep 1870	09	£2 10s
Private E Russell	01 Dec 1870	09	£2 10s Trs from Taita
Private W Speckman	03 Sep 1870	10	£2 10s
Private W Whiteman	03 Sep 1870	09	£2 10s
brought forward total			£65.0.0.
Private Thos Sunnex	03 Sep 1870	10	£2 10s
Private G Whiteman	03 Sep 1870	10	£2 10s
Private Francis Whiteman	03 Sep 1870	10	£2 10s
Private John Whiteman	03 Sep 1870	09	£2 10s
Total			£75.0.0.

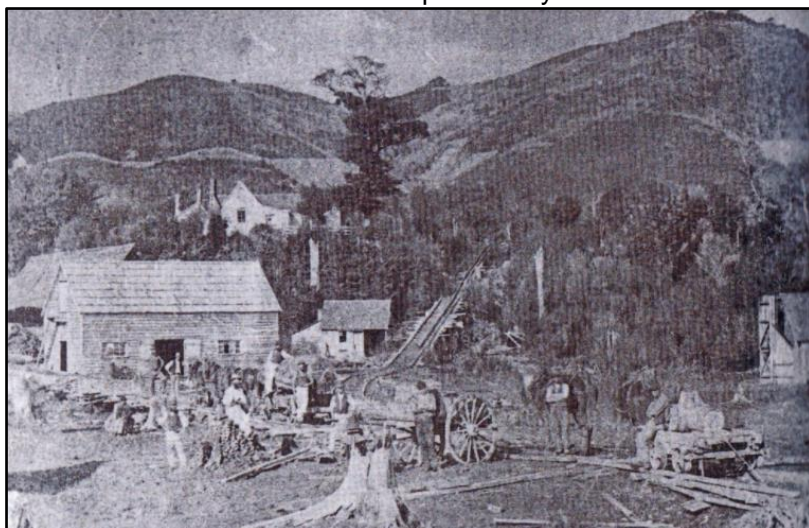
We certify that the above Return is correct

J Cruickshank Commanding Officer & Major A Ludlam Officer Commanding District

Date Hutt 31st March 1871

(Reference Archives NZ Wellington R11167578 AAYS 8790 ARM41 12/ 1874/1s Capitation Rolls – Fernground Hutt Rifle Volunteers 1871)

On the Friday 05 April 1872 the records of the Fern Ground Volunteer Company were destroyed in a fire at the Fern Ground saw mill owned and operated by James Cruickshank.



(Reference Upper Hutt City Library Recollect website James Cruickshank mill Upper Hutt circa 1870 Murray Maxwell collection)

Wellington Independent newspaper 18 April 1872

Social and General – A fire broke out at the Fern Ground Upper Hutt last week. The offices, blacksmith's shop and stables belonging to Mr Cruickshank were destroyed and it was only by great exertions that the saw mill was saved.

(Reference Papers past website Wellington Independent newspaper 18 April 1872 page 3)

Wellington Independent newspaper Monday 08 April 1872

Thanks – To the editor of the independent

Sir – I take this opportunity of thanking the inhabitants of the Upper Hutt for their exertion in saving the saw mills on Friday last. Without their able assistance it would have been impossible to have saved the mill, also my dwelling house. – I am &c

JAMES CRUICKSHANK
Fern Ground Saw Mills
Upper Hutt 05 April 1872

(Reference Papers past website Wellington Independent newspaper Monday 08 April 1872 page 2)

1872

Nominal Roll of Persons serving in the **Fern Ground Volunteer** who are entitled to Capitation
[Written in red top of page 72/839 Wellington Apps for Capt. Fern Ground Rifles 10/5/72]

<i>Rank and name</i>	<i>Date of enlistment</i>	<i>No of parades</i>	<i>Capitation Grant</i>
Captain Cruickshank	30 Sep 1870	11	£2
Lieutenant H Burt	30 Sep 1870	12	£2
Ensign Searancke	30 Sep 1870	12	£2
Sergeant Cruickshank	30 Sep 1870	11	£2
Sergeant J Perkins	30 Sep 1870	12	£2
Sergeant P Wilkie	30 Sep 1870	12	£2
Sergeant H Aston	30 Sep 1870	12	£2
Corporal P Atkin	30 Sep 1870	12	£2
Corporal W Fulcher	30 Sep 1870	11	£2
Corporal J Butler	30 Sep 1870	12	£2
Private G Brown	30 Sep 1870	12	£2
Private Jas Brown	30 Sep 1870	12	£2
Private W Burrell]	30 Sep 1870	11	£2
Private E Butler	30 Sep 1870	12	£2
Private T Cotter	03 Apr 1871	11	£2
Private J Eaton	03 Apr 1871	12	£2
Private J Hirst	03 Apr 1871	11	£2
Private W Jones	13 Nov 1870	12	£2
Private A Keys	03 Sep 1870	12	£2
Private R King	03 Apr 1870	11	£2
Private F Mabey	03 Sep 1870	12	£2
Private M Millar	03 Sep 1870	12	£2
Carried forward			£44
Private Morgan	03 Sep 1870	12	£2
Private A Perry	03 Sep 1870	12	£2
Private E Russell	05 Dec 1870	12	£2
Private C Robinson	03 Sep 1870	12	£2
Private Jas Russell	07 Jan 1872	12	£2 Trs from Taita Comp
Private T Sunnex	03 Sep 1870	11	£2
Private Speckman	03 Sep 1870	12	£2
Private J Whiteman	03 Sep 1870	12	£2
Private J Whiteman	03 Sep 1870	12	£2
Private J Whiteman	03 Sep 1870	12	£2
Private W Whiteman	03 Sep 1870	12	£2
Total			£66

Total Efficient 33 full rate at £2 Strength of Corp 33 total £56

I certify that the foregoing return is correct

Date April 08/1872 Chas Cruickshank Officer Commanding Corps

I certify that I have examined the foregoing Return and find it correct in every particular; and that I inspected the Government property of the Corps and that the several articles I have seen agree with those which have been issued to the Corps.*

Date April 09th 1872 Major A Ludlam Commanding District

[Written in red on front page]

Colonel Moule – You will observe by Colonel Readies memo that the record book of this Corps has been lost by fire. This should have been reported at the time and another would have been applied. I think the claim may pass as all are qualified except (7) seven men who want only one parade and the reference is that has been performed signed James Stevens 28-5-72 [28 May 1872]

Captain Lockett informs me that the books belonging to the Fern Ground Volunteers were destroyed by fire when the saw mill premises were burnt down consequently the records of Company Parades is lost. He affirms me however that the men have all attended - - of Company Parades signature?]

Will the Inspector of Stores be good enough to fix the amounts to be charged against the Corps referred to in annexed claims for deficiencies of property referred to at the end of the certificate in each case, Lieutenant Colonel Moule for Inspector Militia & Volunteers 22 May 1872.

Fern Ground Company Corps - Return of Charges against the above Corps for the under-mentioned replacement at annual inspection reported by Major Lublam Lower Hutt district on April 09 1872

Date 23 May 1872

Date 1872 number 2 articles Muzzle Stoppers rate 4d amount 8d

Date 1872 number 1 Rifle Stay rate 1/6 amount 1s 6d

For Inspector Military Volunteer to be charged against part of Corps

Total 2s 2d

Edward Gorton Quartermaster
Inspector of Stores
Inspector Militia Volunteers 23 May 1872

[Written in red -charged folio 225]

(Reference Archives NZ Wellington R11167579 AAYS 8790 ARM41 12/ 1874/1t Capitation Rolls – Fernground Hutt Rifle Volunteers 1872)

Wellington Independent newspaper 08 April 1872

Sir – I take this opportunity of thanking the inhabitants of the Upper Hutt for their exertion in saving the saw mills on Friday last. Without their able assistance it would have been impossible to have saved the mill, also my dwelling house – I am &c

James Cruickshank
Fern Ground Saw Mills
Upper Hutt 05 April 1872

(Reference Papers past website Wellington Independent newspaper 08 April 1872)

Evening Post 07-11 June & Wellington Independent newspaper 08-12 June 1872

District Order – Militia Office – Wellington 07th June 1872 – Lieutenant Colonel Harrington will make his Annual Inspection of the Hutt Volunteer Corps on the following dates

- Fern Ground Rifle Volunteers and Trentham Cadet Corps at 11 am on the 13th instant
- Taita Rifle Volunteers at 2 pm on the 13th instant
- Wainuiomata Rifle Volunteers at 1 pm on the 14th instant
- Sir George Grey Rifle Volunteers at 11 am on the 15th instant
- Hutt Rifle Volunteers and Cadets at 2 pm on the 15 instant

H E Reader Lieutenant Colonel Commanding Wellington district

(Reference Papers past website Evening Post 07-11 June & Wellington Independent newspaper 08-12 June 1872)

1873

1973 Hutt Fern Ground Volunteers

Nominal Roll of Persons serving in the Fern Ground Volunteer who are entitled to Capitation
[Written in red top of page No D93/2311 & 92/1239] Government Inspections

<i>Rank and name</i>	<i>Date of enlistment</i>	<i>/ Company parades</i>	<i>Capitation Grant</i>
Captain Cruickshank	30 Sep 1870	10 / 2	£2
Lieutenant Searancke	30 Sep 1870	10 / 2	£2
Sergeant G Perkins	30 Sep 1870	10 / 2	£2
Sergeant P Wilkie	30 Sep 1870	10 / 2	£2
Sergeant A Cruickshank	30 Sep 1870	10 / 2	£2
Corporal P Atkin	30 Sep 1870	10 / 2	£2
Corporal R Butler	30 Sep 1870	10 / 2	£2
Private G Brown	30 Sep 1870	10 / 2	£2
Private J Brown	30 Sep 1870	10 / 2	£2
Private T Cotter	03 Apr 1871	10 / 2	£2
Private W Johns	13 Oct 1871	10 / 2	£2
Private F Mabey	03 Sep 1870	10 / 2	£2
Private M Millar	03 Sep 1870	10 / 2	£2
Private E Morgan	03 Sep 1870	10 / 2	£2
Private A Perry	03 Sep 1870	10 / 2	£2
Private C Robinson	03 Sep 1870	10 / 2	£2
Private E Russell	03 Sep 1870	10 / 2	£2
Private J Russell	03 Sep 1870	10 / 2	£2
Private T Sunnex	03 Sep 1870	10 / 2	£2
Private F Whiteman	03 Sep 1870	10 / 2	£2
Private J Whiteman	03 Sep 1870	10 / 2	£2
Private W Whiteman	03 Sep 1870	10 / 2	£2
Private G Whiteman	02 Apr 1872	10 / 2	£2 trs frm cadets
Carried forward			£46
Total Efficient 23 full rate at £2 – Strength of Corps 23 - Total			£46

I certify that the foregoing return is correct date 24 March 1873

J Cruickshank Officer Commanding Corps

I certify that I have examined the foregoing Return and find it correct in every particular; that I have inspected the Government property in possession of the Corps and that the several articles I have seen agree with those which have been issued to the Corps*

Major A Ludlam Commanding District date April 04th 1873

(Reference Archives NZ Wellington R11167580 AAYS 8790 ARM41 12/ 1874/1u Capitation Rolls Fern Ground Hutt Rifle Volunteers 1873)

The Fern Ground Volunteer Company was disbanded on 28th May 1873.

1874

I believe this record was named incorrectly as the Fern Ground Volunteers Company was disbanded in 1873.

ORDER (Reference Archives NZ Wellington R11167580 AAYS 8790 ARM41 12/ 1874/1v Capitation Rolls Fern Ground Hutt Rifle Volunteers 1874)

Volunteers

To locate the full names of the volunteers I will have research the early New Zealand 1870-1871 & 1875-1876 & 1880-1881 Hutt Electoral Rolls and/or early New Zealand Directories. NOTE this section will be completed when I have time.

Volunteers

- #H Aston (perhaps Henry Ashton Lower Hutt Household Lower Hutt 1875-76 Hutt ER)
 - #P Atkin
 - George Brown Upper Hutt Leasehold Upper Hutt road, house and land (1870-71 Hutt ER)
 - James Brown junior Upper Hutt Leasehold Upper Hutt road, house and land (1870-71 Hutt ER James father James Brown is also recorded on the ER)
 - William Burrell freehold Mungaroa farmer section 227 Mungaroa (1880-1881 Hutt ER)
 - Henry Burt Upper Hutt leasehold Upper Hutt Store (1875-1876 Hutt ER)
 - Edwin Butler Fern Ground Leasehold Fern Ground Upper Hutt (1875-1876 Hutt ER)
 - #Jas Butler (perhaps related to Charles or Thomas Charles Butler Upper Hutt 1870-71 Hutt ER)
 - Robert Butler Upper Hutt leasehold Upper Hutt part of section 90, 26 acres (1875-1876 Hutt ER)
 - Thomas Cotter Silverstream Freehold Silverstream section 83 (1875-1876 Hutt ER)
 - Alexander Cruickshank residential Upper Hutt farmer (1880-1881 Hutt ER)
 - James Cruickshank Upper Hutt Freehold Upper Hutt house on section 136 (1870-71 Hutt ER)
 - Phillip Davis residential Upper Hutt store keeper (1880-1881 Hutt ER)
 - #E Doreen (perhaps related to Peter Doreen Lower Hutt leasehold Lower Hutt house and land 1880-1881 Hutt ER)
 - #J Eaton (perhaps related to James Eaton Ghuznee street plasterer household Ghuznee street 1853-1864 Wellington ER)
 - William Fulcher Kuripuni freehold Kuripuni acre No 6 1875-1876 Wairarapa ER
 - #J Hirst (perhaps related to Kaiwarrawarra Household Kaiwarrawarra house and land section 3 1870-1871 Wellington Country ER)
 - William Jones Upper Hutt Leasehold Upper Hutt house and land (1870-71 Hutt ER)
 - William Johns Carterton freehold Carterton 20 acres sections Nos 68 and 83 1870-1871 Wairarapa ER)
 - Alfred Keys Hutt Freehold Hutt district house and land on section 24 (1870-71 Hutt ER)
 - Reuben King Taita Leasehold Taita part of section 52 11 acres (1870-71 Hutt ER)
 - Francis Mabey residential Upper Hutt farmer (1880-1871 Hutt ER)
 - Martin Miller [not M Millar or M Mullar] Upper Hutt Leasehold Upper Hutt part section 93 house and land (1875-876 Hutt ER)
 - Edward Morgan junior Upper Hutt Leasehold Upper Hutt section 91, 50 acres (1875-1876 Hutt ER) = (also father Edward Morgan Upper Hutt leasehold Upper Hutt road house and land 1875-1876 Hutt ER)
 - ~~W O'Hare~~ (The name is crossed out and hard to read on the original document - perhaps William O'Hara)
 - George Perkins Upper Hutt Freehold Whakatiki Valley Upper Hutt 200 acres house and land 1870-71 Hutt ER)
 - #J Perkins (perhaps related to George Perkins above)
 - Alfred Perry Upper Hutt Leasehold Upper Hutt house and land (1870-71 Hutt ER)
 - Charles James Robinson residential Hutt settler (1880-1881 Hutt ER)
 - Edward Robinson residential Upper Hutt coppersmith (1880-1881 Hutt ER)
 - Edward Russell junior Fern Ground Leasehold Upper Hutt Fern Ground (1875-1876 Hutt ER)
 - James Russell freehold Stokes Valley farmer part section 72, 73 Stokes Valley (1880-881 Hutt ER)
 - Frank Searancke Upper Hutt Household Upper Hutt house and land (1875-1876 Hutt ER)
 - William John Spackman/Speckman Upper Hutt household UH house (1870-71 Hutt ER)
 - Thomas Sunnex residential Taratahi bushman (1880-1881 Wairarapa ER)
 - Francis Whiteman Taita River Hutt Leasehold Taita house and land (1870-71 Hutt ER)
 - George Whiteman Taita Leasehold Taita River Hutt house and land (1870-71 Hutt ER)
 - John Whiteman freehold Whiteman's Valley sawyer part sections 83, 84 and 85 Whiteman's Valley (1880-1881 Hutt ER)
 - William Whiteman junior & senior freehold Whiteman's Valley sawyer & farmer part sections 145, 146 Mungaroa Valley & part sections 4, 5, 6, 81 and 82 Whiteman's Valley
 - Peter Wilkie Upper Hutt Leasehold Upper Hutt house and land (1875-1876 Hutt ER)
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Fern Ground

Fern Ground was the name given to an area north of Upper Hutt near Maori bank. James Cruickshank established his saw mill in the same area and named it Fern Ground. Captain Cruickshank may have had some influence on the naming of the early Fern Ground Volunteer Company.



(Reference Upper Hutt River at the Fern Ground – Wellington and Masterton Road NZ from the album "Photographs of New Zealand Scenery Wellington to the Wairarapa" Te Papa Tongarewa Museum of New Zealand)

Fern Ground



(Reference Upper Hutt River at the Fern Ground – Wellington and Masterton Road NZ from the album "Photographs of New Zealand Scenery Wellington to the Wairarapa" Te Papa Tongarewa Museum of New Zealand)