

On October 8, 1887, a retrenching Government came in, to intensify the effects of the still prevailing Long Depression. Unemployment grew.

Thames still had around 40 hotels. In the "palmy days" the number was as great as 90 or so, and with ~~some~~ changes now and then, 112 names have been traced.

Christmas was somewhat subdued, even with the hotels. But Waihi got finance.

Thames started the New Year of 1888 in somewhat low tempo,

There was a gleam in the south with a powerful English company of £100,000 beginning proper development of the vast low grade quartz reserves of Waihi, and by March 1, "The sound of the big drum of commercial revival is every day growing louder and coming near." The process would be slow.

In addition to band music at appropriate times, especially in the warmer months, the Thames Court had a crier who could awaken the echoes up and down Queen Street. Not far away was the balcony of the Academy of Music, able to have musical and dramatic performances inside for as many as 800, while many more could listen to bands ^{on} the outside balcony, built to be roomy, *standing below*,

But around March 11, with the passing of the proprietor of the Tararu Gardens, said Gardens were being auctioned by order of the mortgagees. "At a considerable expense the late proprietor made it suitable for public pleasure grounds, a place of beauty, and a source of income at the same time. We have no other such place in the district." He had even a band for "dancing on the green," etc. This was Frederick Bennett. In an 1880 list he modestly had "gardener, Tararu Gardens"

With little happening re Volunteers at this juncture, we can pause to take note of 1880 and 1885 Directory lists, as at 31st December 1880 and 1885.

1880. VOLUNTEER FORCE. Staff - Major T.L. Murray, Commanding. Drill Instructor, Lieutenant J. Grant. 6 Companies of Infantry. 1 Naval Volunteers, 2 Cadets etc. Scottish Battalion commanded by Major T.L. Murray, 250. (And had Band). Hauraki Engineers under Capt. J.S. Small, have for honorary Captain Major Atkinson (Late Premier of New Zealand), 140, including brass band. Thames Rifle Rangers, under Capt. R. Farrell, 120 including pipe and drum band. Native Corps 46 under Capt. Taipari. Naval Volunteers, commanded by Capt. E.T. Wildman, 165 including fine brass band, 2 24 pounder field pieces and smart little gunboat. Scottish Cadets commanded by Capt. Mennie. St. George's Naval Cadets by Lieut. White. In the next few years much faded out.

1885. VOLUNTEER FORCE: STAFF - Lieut-Col. Lyon, Commanding. Major Shepherd, Adjutant. Drill Instructor, Lieut. J. Grant. Thames Rifle Rangers, under Capt. W. Lucas, they number 55. The Naval Artillery are commanded by Captain E.T. Wildman, and muster about 80, and also possess a fine brass band; they have two field pieces (24 pounders), and a smart gunboat. *With retrenchments at the end of May 1888 the Thames Rifle Rangers considered disbanding unless more support, but Navals denied such intentions*
In those days roller skating, as mentioned in June at the Columbia Rink, required live music, and was very popular in Thames at this time.

By November, 1888, steamer excursions were starting up. They normally had band music. Also for Christmas.

Also for New Year 1889, which was felt to be somewhat brighter. The Waihi Company had just spent £50,000 in work and machinery, including that made at the two Thames foundries.

Thames lost the Waiotahi Flat as a recreation area, it being surveyed into blocks for sale on February 20, 1889.

In June there was a gold rush to Kuaotunu, from which Thames got some benefit. Christmas passed without special note. *In August there was mention of the use of the band of the Thames Navals by the Columbia Skating Rink.*

Likewise the New Year of 1890, except for an optimistic review of mining. Tenders were being called for the purchase of the still beautiful Tararu Gardens.

There was scope of bands on *January 29*, 1890, when all New Zealand celebrated "the Jubilee of New Zealand as a Colony 50 years before."

By April, Thames was showing the effects of some revival of mining investment,