IN AID OF THE CIVIL POWER:

When the great Maritime Strike took place in Sydney, commencing on August 12th, 1890, and lasting until the 6th November of the same year, the strikers were so numerous and adopted such a threatening attitude that affairs began to look very serious; so much so, that numbers of civilians were enrolled as special constables in the City, and the Premier (Sir Henry Parkes) decided to call out the Military.

I received orders to leave at once for Sydney with the cavalry under my command, known as B troop, and a special train was sent to Albion Park Station the same night to convey the men and horses. The same orders were also sent to C troop at Moss Vale.

We were met at Redfern by a police trooper, who escorted us to Dawes Point, where tents had been erected and blankets and other necessities provided for the men, and picketing lines and rugs for the horses.

On arrival we were at once sworn in as mounted police, and tunics and caps issued to us; we retained our cord pants and leggings, so did not appear different to the ordinary mounted men, and our arrival had been so sudden and so quickly managed, that the strikers were not aware the Military had been called out.

I received instructions each night from the Inspector General of Police; my duty was to take the men out as far as Newtown; leaving sections or half sections at cross streets, which they patrolled for four hours, when they were relieved, during which time I visited each street to see that the men were on the alert.

We were often greeted with foul and abusive language from the strikers, and on several occasions stones were thrown. The other officers and I had some difficulty in restraining our men, but had received strict orders not to provoke a scrimmage on any account. We were at Dawes Point nearly two months before the strike was ended; after our return home I received the following letter from the Inspector General, to which was appended the names of all who had taken part.

POLICE DEPARTMENT,
INSPECTOR GENERAL'S OFFICE,
Sydney, 12th Nov., 1890.

To Captain Weston, Lieutenant Lee and the Officers,
and Non-Commissioned officers and men of B. & C. Troop Cavalry.

The undermentioned officers and men who have been performing duty as Police Constables in Sydney from the 2nd inst., have this day been discharged from the Police Force. I have again to express my approval at their good conduct, and the satisfactory manner in which they have performed their duties.

Edmund Fosbery,
Inspector General of Police.

—From “Reminiscences of an Australian Pioneer,” by Major E. H. Weston, printed by permission of his grandson Mr. B. E. Weston (Member).