

written in 1949.

Biography of My Father

Duncan Menzies

Born in Kirkcaldy, Fifeshire, Scotland, the birthplace of Adam Smith, the famous economist, and author of the "Wealth of Nations" Duncan Menzies spent his early years in this town.

Kirkcaldy is possibly the largest linoleum manufacturing centre in the world.

^{Duncan} He was educated at one of the public schools leaving at 14, when he passed the sixth standard. When 11 years old he delivered milk seven days a week from 6 a.m. to 8 a.m. he continued this until he was 14.

His first full-time job was message boy to a green-grocer and fruiterer and later ^{he had} a similar job in a stationer's shop.

Before reaching the age of fifteen he left Scotland with his mother and younger brother, to join his father who had come to New Zealand twelve months previously. The boat they travelled on was called the "Arawa". During the trip the ship went very far south of the usual trade route between Cape Town, South Africa and Hobart, Tasmania, Australia in search of the ill fated "Waratah" - the disappearance of which, still remains one of the great mysteries of the sea.

This vessel went missing on its voyage between Cape Town and Australia, and

although many searches have been made no sign of its wreckage has ever been found.

It is thought that the boat must have turned right over during the rough weather.

His first job in New Zealand was in a large boot-factory in Christchurch, a permit having first to be obtained from the Labour Department as he was under sixteen years of age. He then became apprenticed to the plumbing trade, which was the calling of his father.

He attended Evening classes at the Christchurch Technical School, gaining every year, in all subjects, first-class passes.

For the benefit of his father, he attended a class for health-inspectors which was held on a night corresponding with the practical plumbing class of which his father was instructor. Taking home with him notes on the lecture, he discussed with his father the subject matter dealt with. During this period this necessitated ^{his} attending night school five nights a week, with an occasional Saturday afternoon lectures, and with homework one can see he had very little time for leisure or sports. He ^{however} must have enjoyed the work because during his three years at the Technical School, he never missed a night.

His father was by this time appointed a Health Inspector and transferred to Timaru, but, dad boarded with friends in Christchurch so that he might finish his three year course at school. He completed his apprenticeship in Timaru, becoming a registered plumber having gained certificates from London and City Guilds grades I, II and final.

He was prevented from sitting the

Royal Sanitary Institute Examination on account of his youth, despite the fact that his instructors cabled the Institute asking permission for him to have that opportunity, and for them to withhold the certificate in the event of him passing, until he reached the age of twenty-one. This, however, the Institute would not agree to.

For several years he was instructor of theoretical plumbing at the Timaru Technical College, at which he attended evening classes for the first few years of his residence in Timaru.

He volunteered for active service in World War I immediately he was twenty-one. He went overseas with the 19th reinforcement. His first "taste" of shell fire was at Messines, he kept on with the New Zealand division right through the rest of the war years, reaching Cologne in Germany. One of his leave periods was eight clear days spent in Paris. He was very fortunate in that he was never in hospital. The journey to England was made via Cape Town, while the return journey was through the Suez Canal.

Immediately on his return to New Zealand he started in Timaru a ^{plumbing} business on his own account. He has been continuously engaged ^{in this} as such ever since. A few months later his brother joined him in the venture, the partnership still remaining unbroken.

He had very little time for sporting activities prior to his going overseas and for some time after his return, but, since then has played football - association and rugby, cricket, golf, bowls, with varying success,
and Rowing.

He represented South Canterbury in Association football, cricket and bowls. In the latter sport he has won many titles during his interrupted participation of the game.

He has a unique record in that he was a member of the Hingari Cricket Club, Ashburny Bowling Club and Gleniti golf club the first time each of these clubs won the Bristol Cup.

He was president of the Gleniti Golf Club for several years and the president of the local Master Plumbers' Association for ten years continuously. His active participation in the latter and in the affairs of the New Zealand Federation resulted in him being elected as the New Zealand president.

His only sojourn from New Zealand, since returning in 1919, was a hurried trip to Sydney with the R. S. A. (Returned Services Association) to take part in the Anzac Day ceremonies about twelve years ago.

Material good. Spelling requires care