

*Timaru Herald.* 6 May 1919 (Papers Past) [04/12/2022]

### FAIRLIE NOTES.

(From Our Own Correspondent).

#### WELCOMED HOME.

On Thursday evening a party of five returned men were met at the railway station on the arrival of the evening train and were accorded a very hearty welcome. The Fairlie Band was in attendance and played a number of patriotic airs as the train drew into the station and the men stepped on to the platform. The party, consisting of Trooper C. McKinnon and Privates C. Willetts, Sullivan, Staples and W. Willetts, were conducted to the centre of the platform where they were briefly but heartily welcomed by Mr C. J. Talbot. The men were invited to a social to be held in their honour next Thursday evening, and were cheered, as they left for their homes. The notice received of their arrival had been very short, but a considerable number of people met them on the station, and the Band is to be commended for the prompt way in which they turned out with little more than an hour's warning before the arrival of the train.

*Timaru Herald.* 14 May 1919 (Papers Past) [20/12/2022]

### FAIRLIE NOTES.

#### RETURNING SOLDIERS.

Last week was a very busy one among the soldiers. A big social was held in the Public Hall on Thursday evening in honour of Privates Andrew Grant, W. Moir, C. Willetts, W. Willetts (M.M.), Jas. McAlister, Sullivan, Staples, R. O'Brien, J. Allen, (M.M.), Troopers Felix Siegert, H. Caswell, and A. McKinnon. Several of the men could not be present owing to hospital duty, but it is hoped that they will attend at some future occasion. As usual the hall was bright with patriotic colours, and the floor was in good condition. Mr Boulter again acted as M.C. to the satisfaction of all, and Mrs Wright presided at the piano in her customary able manner. She was assisted at intervals by the following volunteers: Miss Bray, Miss Hutchins, Mr T. Skinner and Mr P. Waters. Miss Collie contributed a vocal item very acceptably. A bountiful supper was provided by Mrs Clarke and dispensed by the Ladies' Committee with their accustomed expedition. During an interval the soldiers were paraded on the stage, and they received a vociferous volley of cheering. Mr C. J. Talbot, M.P., on behalf of the Reception Committee and the people of the district, gave them a very hearty welcome, and wished them prosperity in the future. Mention was made of the fact that Mr R. A. Grant, one of Fairlie's flying men, had returned to the district. At the conclusion of the address the men were accorded musical honours and more cheers were given

them. Dancing was continued till after midnight, and the men took the opportunity of renewing old friendships and making new acquaintances.

*Colonist.* 15 October 1919 (Papers Past) [21/12/022]

#### RETURNED SOLDIER FATALLY INJURED.

October 2nd.

A young man named Charles William Willetts, a returned soldier, aged 23, a son of Mr J. M. Willetts, of Owen Junction who was admitted to the Hospital yesterday suffering from internal injuries caused by a tree falling on him, died at 6.30 last evening. The accident occurred at about 2 p.m. on Tuesday afternoon, and the injured man was not discovered until some time later. A tree that he was felling struck a sapling, which came down across his stomach, inflicting serious internal injuries. The young man, who was well and favourably known in the Murchison district, had only recently returned from France, where he served for two and a half years.

*Colonist.* 15 October 1919 (Papers Past) [21/12/022]

#### INQUEST ON THE VICTIM.

October 4th.

An inquest was held yesterday by the Coroner (Mr. J. S. Evans) concerning the death of Charles Arthur Willetts, of Owen Junction, who died in the Hospital on Wednesday from injuries received in a bushfelling accident on Tuesday.

Plainclothes Constable H. Russell represented the police.

Dr. Jamieson, Resident Surgeon at the Hospital, stated that he examined deceased on admission to the Hospital and found that he was suffering from internal haemorrhage and shock. The injuries were so severe that his recovery was hopeless. Death was due to the injuries received.

Morris William Willetts, brother of deceased, stated that on Tuesday last he was engaged with his brothers in felling bush on his father's land at Owen Junction. Deceased was working about sixty yards away from witness, sending a "drive out." They heard the drive, and at the same time heard deceased call out. They ran towards the place, calling out, but got no answer. His brother James found deceased under a tree, lying on another tree. The tree on top of him was not part of the drive. It was a tree he had felled in the morning, and it had partly caught on a stump. Deceased said he had run under a tree to get out of the way of the drive, and that part of the drive had fallen so as to bring this tree off the stump and down on top of him. When found deceased was securely pinned to the ground,

and they had to cut the bottom log to release him. He was unconscious. About ten minutes later deceased recovered consciousness. Dr. Warneford was summoned, and he attended to deceased, who was subsequently removed to the Nelson Hospital. Deceased was used to bushfelling, having done it before he went to and after he returned from the war.

John Morris Willetts, father of deceased, stated that he brought his son into the Hospital on Wednesday morning. Deceased was a single man, 23 years of age. His son had been engaged in bushfelling for the past three or four months. On the journey to the Hospital deceased was conscious, but he did not trouble him with any questions about the accident. Dr. Pearless saw deceased at Wakefield.

The Coroner returned a verdict that death was the result of an accident caused by a tree falling on deceased, no blame being attached to anyone.

One who served with Charles Willetts in France recalls that two years ago today, at 4 o'clock in the morning, they faced together the fearful ordeal of Passchendaele, where so many New Zealanders fell. Willetts, whom he describes as a most estimable comrade and a grand fighter, received two wounds on that occasion, and afterwards spent seven months in hospital in England.