

Timaru Herald. Monday, 7 October 1916 (Papers Past) [13/01/2017]

WEDDING AT TEMUKA

A BLUEJACKET BRIDEGROOM.

On Thursday at the Te Rata Hospital (the home of the bride's mother) Miss Jean Mallett, daughter of Nurse Mallet of Temuka, was united in matrimony to Mr H. Hopkins, blacksmith on board H.M.S. Pyramus. The Rev. C. MacDonald performed the ceremony, and the bride was given away by her brother, Mr W. Mallett. Miss M. Murdoch of Timaru acted as bridesmaid, and Master James Mallett as best man. The bride was prettily dressed in white voile, wore a veil and orange blossom, and carried a shower bouquet. The bridesmaid was effectively dressed in grey silk, and wore a pink silk hat and carried a bouquet. After the ceremony the wedding party and guests adjourned to Nurse Mallett's home and enjoyed a sumptuous repast. The customary felicitous speeches and toasts were made and honoured. The happy couple left by the second express for the south. Several members of the Patriotic entertainment committee, with Mr A. Cooper playing the bagpipes, gave the sailor and his bride an enthusiastic farewell as the train steamed out.

Timaru Herald. 7 October 1916 (Papers Past) [06/02/2019]

A quiet wedding took place at the Te Rata Hospital, Temuka on Thursday, when seaman H. Hopkins, of St. Andrews, was married to Miss Mallett, youngest daughter of Mrs M. Mallett. The ceremony was performed by the Rev. C. MacDonald.

Temuka Leader. 13 February 1919 (Papers Past)

Mrs H. J. Hopkins, Temuka, has received word from the Naval authorities that her husband, Seaman H. J. Hopkins, was expected to arrive in Wellington yesterday. He may therefore be expected to reach home within the next day or two.

H.M.S. PYRAMUS.

TWO YEARS EMPLOYMENT.

UNDER WAR CONDITIONS.

Seaman H. Hopkins, of H.M.S. Pyramus, who is spending leave at Temuka, supplies some notes on the service and journeyings of the ship from July, 1914, to August, 1916.

The Pyramus was acting as a training ship in July, 1914, and on the 29, was ordered to Akaroa to prepare for war, and thence to Auckland, where they arrived a few hours before a message was received that war was declared. On August 16th the Pyramus left with others to escort the New Zealand force to Samoa, calling at Noumea and picking up additional escort there. Her next duty was to assist in escorting the first New Zealand Contingent for Egypt as far as Albany. Then via Fremantle, Singapore, Penang, Colombo, and Bombay, the Pyramus reached Marmagon, Portuguese West India, and stayed there some time guarding six German and Austrian ships. From there she returned to Bombay, and on 31st December, left for East Africa, and from January 10th to the middle of April the ship patrolled the deltas of the Rufigi river and the German coast, entering harbours and searching shipping. After a rest at Simonstown at the Cape to recuperate and refit they returned early in June and prepared to attack the Koenigsburg, the German raiding cruiser that had been bottled up some time before. By attacks on July 6th and 11th the Koenigsberg was totally destroyed. The attack was carried out by two monitors, and the Pyramus was the only big ship to enter the river. The ship was then ordered to the Persian Gulf calling at Aden on the way. They were soon at it again and on August 13 took part in a naval and military expedition against a Persian tribe which had been attacking telegraph stations and British Consuls. The tribe was well punished and their village and fort destroyed. The Captain of the Pyramus received the D.S.O., and two men the D.S.M., for their work in this expedition. Shortly after this they proceeded up the gulf and captured a Turkish fort, with four field guns and much other munitions, at Bida, on the Arabian coast. On September 9 they were at Bushire, where a landing party assisted in repelling an attack on the town. The party consisted of three machine guns and crews and a section of marines. The enemy was beaten off but at the cost of heavy casualties. The General Officer Commanding congratulated the men and thanked them for valuable assistance. From that time onward the ship was employed patrolling and guarding the telegraph line on the coast, the only communication with Mesopotamia. There were many alarms and attacks, but these were of only minor importance. The Pyramus was paid off on August 25,

after a successful and interesting commission, during which she steamed 70,560 sea miles since the outbreak of war.

From 'Winchester's History' by Alan A. Patrick (South Canterbury Branch NZSG library)

WINCHESTER MAN'S PROUD RECORD

Timaru Herald - June 1965

Participation in an historic event, the annexation of Samoa on 31 August 1914, subsequent service in the Royal Navy in the Middle East and African waters until the end of the First World War and a recall to duty in the Second World War with the Canterbury Mounted Rifles is the proud record of Winchester resident, Mr H J (Harry) Hopkins, a retired Blacksmith and Wheelwright.

Mr Hopkins' story started with commissioning of the H M S Pyramus on 15 July 1914, in Wellington when she carried out her ordinary duties as a training ship until 29 July when she was ordered out proceed to Akaroa had been completed the ship sailed for Auckland arriving there a few hours before the message came through that war had been declared.

The Pyramus then left Auckland for a few days at sea and returned before leaving on 16 August in company with the New Zealand squadron and two transports carrying New Zealand troops. On arrival at Noumea (New Caledonia) the force was joined by the ships Australia, Melbourne and Mortmain. From there the whole squadron left for Samoa calling at Suva on the way and arriving off Apia on 30 August. At 1 pm the island surrendered, said Mr Hopkins and the next day was formally declared a British possession.

In the meantime troops and stores were landed after which the Pyramus returned to New Zealand en route for Melbourne and Hobart where she joined the New Zealand convoy on 22 September and escorted it to Albany to join up with the first contingent of Australian troops.



H.J. (Harry) Hopkins, Blacksmith & Wheelwright

Next line of duty took the Pyramus Marmagooa (Portuguese West Africa) touching at Fremantle, Singapore, Penang, Colombo and Bombay. There the ship stayed some time guarding German and Austrian ships.

On 31 December 1914, the ship left for East Africa arriving at Mombasa on 10 January 1915, from which time to the middle of April it was on patrol at the delta of the Rufugi River and the German East African Coast, searching and capturing three islands and entering harbours to destroy German shipping.

Although the force suffered heavy casualties the enemy was beaten off and badly defeated. The general officer commanding the action was appreciative of the assistance given by the naval force, said Mr Hopkins, and thanked the men for their part on the action.

Timaru Herald. Monday, May 15, 1967 [13/01/2017]

Obituary

Mr. H. J. Hopkins

A well-known personality of the Temuka district, Mr H. J. Hopkins, a First World War veteran, who for many years conducted a blacksmith business in Winchester, died in the Timaru hospital on Sunday. He was 78.

Mr Hopkins was born in Otaio and received his schooling at St Andrews. He began an apprenticeship but soon afterwards, in 1910, enlisted in the Royal Navy.

Aboard the H.M.S. Pyramus at the outbreak of the First World War, he participated in the capture of Samoa, then a German colony, before the vessel took up patrol duties on the East African coast.

From there the Pyramus steamed to Aden, where several of the ship's company took part in land skirmishes against the Turkish and Persian forces.

Returning to Temuka after the war, Mr Hopkins returned to the blacksmith trade, working for Haar Brothers for about 18 months before taking over the business. Later he added a motor garage to the premises.

At the outbreak of the Second World War he was recalled to service in the Army with the Canterbury Mounted Rifles as a farrier sergeant, but he returned to his civilian trade in 1942 when the regiment was mobilised. Mr Hopkins retired and sold his business in 1954.

A keen member of the Returned Services Association, Mr Hopkins was for many years the Winchester district representative on the Temuka association. He was also well-known as a prominent rifle shot in South Canterbury and won many cups at both .303 rifle and miniature rifle competitions. He was a member of the Timaru Defence Club which won the Teams Cup at the Dunedin championships.

Mr Hopkins retired from club shoots in 1961, and was made a life-member of the club in 1964.

He is survived by his wife and three children.