

*Waimate Daily Advertiser*. 30 May 1918 (page 9) [30/03/2024]

### **ON ACTIVE SERVICE.**

#### **NOTES FROM AN ENGLISH MILITARY CAMP WAIMATE MAN'S IMPRESSIONS**

Writing from Brocton Military Camp, Staffordshire, England, on March 31st, Private Austin Sargent says:

In England at last; well in too; our camp being three miles from the centre stone of England. We landed at Liverpool on Good Friday and entrained at once, reaching here in a few hours, and passing Crewe and Stafford on the way. This is a new camp for New Zealanders; the first draft of whom, the 31st Reinforcements, reached here last October. We are in isolation for ten days; after that we are supposed to do several weeks' training. The probability is, however, that we shall go almost straightaway to France, as every available man is wanted there at present.

#### **THE FOOD ALLOWANCE.**

Some of our fellows grumble already at the amount of food we are given; but according to all accounts we fare better than the civilian population. The food is splendidly cooked, which could not be said for what we received at Trentham and Featherston, and which was usually good food spoilt in the cooking. Here food is properly cooked; and in a manner that permits of no waste. Every scrap of food left over must be kept, together with all bone. Posters on the hutment walls tell us "Five pounds of fat make one pound of nitro-glycerine" and "Bones make tooth-brushes for the Army". "Take all waste paper to company stores" is another.

Here is a list of rations for one man per day: Bread (wholemeal) 14oz; flour (in lieu of 2oz bread) 1oz; meat 10oz; bacon 2oz; sugar 1 1-7oz; tea 3-8oz; coffee (in lieu of tea) 3-8oz; mustard or curry 3 1-2oz; salt 1-4oz; pepper 1-3/2oz; butter or margarine 2oz; jam or cheese 2oz; fresh vegetables 1-3oz; dried ditto (in lieu of fresh) 4oz; onions 4oz; potatoes 8oz; rice or sago 1-4oz; oatmeal 1oz; milk 1-8 pint or 1-16 tin; dried fruits 2oz; fresh fruits (in lieu of 1-4oz dried) 13oz. This rationing scale is far better than the civilians'; for instance troops have (mainly) butter, whilst they have margarine and perhaps a little butter. In the restaurants one is not permitted to spend more than 1s 2d on a 'meal,' and a New Zealander who wanted a feed had to visit four restaurants to get it. It cost him 5s and he could have easily eaten more!

#### **HADN'T BEEN USED TO LUXURIES**

Did I mention that bread in England is wholemeal? I was just reminded of it by hearing a little anecdote about Brigadier-General Richardson who inspected the transport on the morning of our landing. He came on board very early, and found only one officer up. In consequence he stayed aboard until after breakfast, and it is related that at breakfast, to which he was naturally invited, he "hoed into" the white bread, eating nearly three times as much of it as anyone else did! Not that the brown bread is unpalatable — we all seem to like it - but probably the General was never able to get at enough of it to be satisfied. Our ration works out at about two slices of bread a meal per man, and I do not suppose the officers get much more, if they get any extra at all.

#### **BEER THAT WON'T BITE!**

The Reinforcement men went for the beer the first night the canteen opened. Many of them expected a treat after their seven weeks of enforced teetotalism; but they were sadly disappointed. "There's no 'bite' in it," said one fellow; "one glass is enough for me." It's very similar to non-alcoholic herbal beer. On the second night there were comparatively few in the canteen to what there would have been had the beer been full strength.

#### **ATHENIC'S ROUGH TRIP.**

The 33rd Reinforcement, who came over on the 'Athenic' had a bad trip. They struck bad weather, and one day they shipped a sea that soaked 360 men; in addition to spoiling most of the flour and sugar aboard.

*Waimate Daily Advertiser*. 1 June 1918 (page 9) [30/03/2024]

Apropos the article on the W.A.A.C. on our outside pages to-day, the following is an extract from a letter received this week from Private Austin Sargent, who at time of writing was at Brocton Military Camp, Staffordshire: - "An interesting feature of the camp are the 'Waxies' as our fellows call them - the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps. These girls, to the number of 500, it is said, are employed at tasks such as driving motor-vans. Their camp is under discipline similar to ours; for instance, they are obliged to be in their quarters by 8.30 p.m.; and there are women police to see that they are.

*Waimate Daily Advertiser*. 4 July 1919 (page 9) [30/03/2024]

**WITH THE ARMY OF OCCUPATION**  
WAIMATE MAN'S IMPRESSIONS.  
CHATS WITH GERMAN WOMEN.  
A VERY MUCH MISLED PEOPLE.

The following letter has just been received by Mrs Sargent from her son Pte Austin Sargent, and readers may find it not without interest:—

Sling Camp,  
Salisbury Plain,  
April 8, 1919.

I have just arrived over here from Germany a few days ago, with the last draft of the Division, and am now awaiting the Licensing polling-day; after which I shall be going out on leave and hope to have leave practically till my boat sails, which I expect will be probably in about two months' time.

I had quite a good time over on the Rhine; travelled about a bit — up the river to Coblenz, which is the chief town of the American occupied area, and another time to Mainz (chief French town), and to the beautiful and fashionable little city of Wiesbaden, which is not far from there. Wiesbaden, as you are probably aware, is the city where in pre-war days, rich and fashionable people from all parts of the world "took the cure"; and so, as the town is built apparently only for accommodation and entertainment of such folk, it is one of the most beautiful little places I have yet seen. (I call it "little" only in comparison with other European towns; as a matter of fact, I suppose it is about the size of Dunedin City). If you have received the views, which I sent you of Wiesbaden, and the other Rhine towns, together with those of the quaint little villages and picturesque old ruins upon the banks of the river, you will know that I have been to all the most interesting and beautiful places on the "Romantic Rhine." Besides the post-cards and books of views, I have also a fair number of photographs taken with my little V.P.K in Germany, and which I shall bring with me when I return. The educational scheme which was put into action shortly after we arrived in Germany, was, although a few were benefited with it, of no use to me, as I was on signal duty for the whole period of the Division's occupation. You see, I might for example, be on duty from 3 to 5 in the morning, and perhaps again from 11 to 1 the same day, just according to how many men were in the section. To attend a class would have meant hopping out of bed again about 7.30 and leaving the class at 11 to go on duty. The early rising was too great a hardship as a regular thing, as after being on shift during the night one required to make up the broken sleep. Besides that, during the very cold weather we usually remained in bed until after midday, or until going on shift again; two different men each day bringing the remainder's breakfast to them. But this duty did not interfere with "sight-seeing," as one

could say to a “cobber,” “you do my shift as well as your own to-day, as I want to go out; I’ll do both to-morrow.”

The New Zealand troops, during their stay in Germany, were probably more hospitably treated there than in either France or Belgium; and, as far as we could judge, the German women and children received better treatment at our hands than they had ever received in their lives before. One had only to watch, when one would see that as a German woman told me, “the man comes first in Germany.” I have even seen a woman—a poor woman rise from her seat in a tram, to let a prosperous old Hun rest his fat carcass! That is probably an isolated case; but it was quite the usual thing to see in a tram car all the women standing and all the men sitting. And it is not a case of no manners, or politeness; the height to which the Hun raises his hat when he passes a fellow Hun on the other side of the street is truly astonishing. Well, no doubt many of the “narrow . . . . . [defective print from here]

*Press.* 29 May 1948 (Papers Past) [30/03/2024]

### **Newspaper’s Fiftieth Anniversary**

The “Waimate Advertiser” celebrated its fiftieth anniversary yesterday. It was founded by Mr Charles A. Wilson, a young printer, on the completion of his apprenticeship with the “Waimate Times” during a period of extensive land settlement, when the well-known Waikakahi estate was subdivided. First published as a weekly, the “Waimate Advertiser” became a daily evening paper in 1914, the proprietors. Messrs Harold Wilson and R. J. Logan making a change from a tri-weekly and joining the Press Association in order to publish the war news. Mrs A. K. Sargent in 1916 purchased Mr Wilson’s interest, becoming the proprietor in 1920, when she formed a private company. Her son, Mr A. F. Sargent, of the “Lyttelton Times” literary staff, was the editor. After a newspaper “war” a company purchased and incorporated the old-established “Waimate Times,” which for 18 months had also been an evening daily. The founder, Mr C. A. Wilson, now has a business post.in London.

*Otago Daily Times.* 29 May 1948 (Papers Past) [30/03/2024]

### **FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY WAIMATE ADVERTISER**

P.A.

WAIMATE, May 28.

The Waimate Advertiser celebrated its fiftieth anniversary to-day. It was founded by Mr Charles A. Wilson, a young printer, on completion of his apprenticeship with the Waimate Times during a period of extensive land settlement, including the subdivision of the well-known Waikakahi Estate. First published as a weekly, it became a daily evening paper in 1914, the proprietors, Mr Harold Wilson and Mr R. J. Logan, making the change from a tri-weekly and joining the Press Association in order to publish the war news. Mrs A. K. Sargent purchased Mr Wilson’s interest in 1916, becoming proprietor in 1920, when she formed a private company with her son, Mr A. F. Sargent, of the Lyttelton Times journalistic staff, as editor. After a newspaper war, the company purchased and incorporated the old-established Waimate Times, which for 18 months had also been an evening daily.

## **OBITUARY**

### **Mr A. F. Sargent**

### **Waimate**

The editor of the Waimate Daily Advertiser for about 40 years and also the managing director for some of that period until his retirement in the late 1960s, Mr Austin Frederick Sargent, died in a Christchurch hospital on Saturday. He was 77.

Born at Dunedin, Mr Sargent had early journalistic experience on the Lyttelton Times and the Christchurch Press.

He had army service in the First World War, and afterwards joined his mother, brother, and sister on the staff of the Waimate Daily Advertiser which in 1921 took over its competitor in the town, the Waimate Times.

The Sargent family together with Mr R. J. Logan had the financial control of the Advertiser for some years. Mr Sargent's brother died at a comparatively young age but his sister later became a publishing executive in Wellington. The Waimate Daily Advertiser had in 1914 become a daily newspaper after being a weekly and then a bi-weekly.

Mr Sargent was editor and managing director until about the late 1930s when a change in the financial structure of the Advertiser company resulted in Mr R. P. Harris taking over. It coincided with a breakdown in health suffered by Mr Sargent, but he returned as editor after temporary retirement and following a further period also resumed the post of managing director.

Of unruffled temperament, Mr Sargent was a dedicated journalist who was versatile enough to turn his hand when needed to other aspects of the newspaper industry. It was his practice for many years when reporting Waimate Borough Council meetings to return to the office the same night and work until the early hours at a linotype machine on his report.

He was predeceased by his wife several years ago. The couple had no children.