

Timaru Herald. 14 December 1915 (page 11) [29 Nov 2013]

CAPTAIN A. F. BOYS.

LETTERS TO HIS WIFE.

Captain A. F. Boys, of the clerical staff of the C.F.C.A., Timaru, has written to his wife, from Lemnos, and we have been permitted to make some extracts from two of his letters.

Under date October 11 he wrote: — “We are still here having a rest with the main body. There are 140 in my company, all South Canterbury boys. The rest are away on sick leave and I am the only officer left from South Canterbury. The Maoris have lately joined us. They behaved splendidly at the Front. We have two Maori officers in our tent, one a Maori minister, and the other, Dr. Buck, a Maori M.P. He is a fine speaker, having been educated at Home, and it is quite a treat to listen to him telling old Maori legends. I had a yarn to Sergeant-Major Osborne of the Camp Band, and late of the Timaru Garrison Band. He played some lovely cornet solos for me for old times’ sake. Yesterday, another man and I had arranged with an officer of the Royal Horse Artillery to get a pair of horses and ride to Castro, a town about twelve miles from here over the mountains but we could not get horses, and as we did not fancy donkeys we walked. We hired a pair of mules for 8s to go hack on, and it took us three hours to do the journey.”

On October 13, Captain Boys wrote –

“Since writing a few days ago our hoys have landed and we have joined the rest of the New Zealanders, who are camped on the side of a hill overlooking Lemnos harbour. We are to have about another fortnight’s rest and then we go back to the Front. I went over to the main camp this morning and met Fred Duncan, Frank Harold, Geo. Johnstone, C. McDougall, **Bobby Miller**, Billy Osborne. **M. Sullivan**, Jack Bond and **Rue Logan**. Most of the other Timaru boys are on sick leave or wounded. They all remarked how well I was looking, while they are all as brown as berries and looking very wiry. You remember Major Jack Hughes, who was fishing with the governor at the Cave with me; he is now Lieutenant- Colonel Hughes. D.S.O., and is in charge of the Canterbury Battalion. This place is like Wellington only the basin is larger and the hills not so steep, while instead of houses there are hundreds and hundreds of tents belonging to the Australian Mounteds, Artillery, British, French, Greeks, etc. Yesterday we saw an airship like a Zeppelin sailing over the harbour. I had a long yarn to Geo. Johnstone and Bob Miller to-day; they will soon be in my company. They tell me the wounded officers get a real good holiday so if you hear I’m wounded at any time, just remember what a good time I’ll be having. At present we are as happy as Larry.”

Timaru Herald. 16 March 1916 (page 5) [29 Nov 2013]

NOTE FROM THE CANAL.

Mr J. Logan, coal dealer, Barnard Street, has received a letter from his younger son, Reuben (Fourth Reinforcements), dated Ismailia Camp, 2nd February. The young soldier says he had had a fine time at Alexandria, where there is a beach that reminded him of Caroline Bay. He spent a good deal of time there with Sid Williams, son of a former Methodist minister at Timaru, who was in one of the Australian regiments. He had also met the Fraser boys (sons of Mr John Fraser, Maltby Avenue), who were both looking well. He had not got any of the parcels sent him yet, but some of them were sure to turn up. Reuben is the third of Mr J. Logan's sons who went to the front. One of the others has lost his life and the second is among the "missing."

Timaru Herald. 2 August 1916 (page 3) [29 Nov 2013]

DECEASED SOLDIER'S DIARY.

SOME EXTRACTS.

The following are extracts from a diary kept by Private H. G. Budd (4th Reinforcements), of Timaru, who was killed in action on August 7, 1915. Private Budd narrates his experiences from the time of leaving for camp till he reached the Dardanelles: -

June 7.—Arrived at the Dardanelles at 1 a.m., landed without a shot being fired at us; arrived at reserves at 4 a.m. .

June 8.—Joined the Main Body; they are down for a spell in Reserve Gully; was on fatigue at Quinn's Post, the most dangerous post in the firing line.

June 15.—Woke up with a touch of rheumatics, went for a swim at the beach. There were more men swimming than you see on Caroline Bay.

June 16. —Raining, so stopped in our dug-outs. Man hit in bivouac above me about two yards away. **W. Houlihan** had hand blown off. .

June 18.—Had a day in the supports out of the trench. Jack Bond hit with bomb.

July 8.— **Charlie Groves** got hit, but not seriously.

July 10. — Captain Holdgate hit with a bomb on the shoulder.

July 14. —Jack Bond rejoined No. 13th. We got inoculated against cholera. Packed for Erebus Island for a few days' spell.

July 15. —Left Peninsula at 3 a.m. for our rest, arrived at 8 a.m.

July 19. —Rest of battalion went back to Peninsula. We were left on picket so did not get away for another day.

July 22.—Went back to the Peninsula, arrived in the trenches same morning and stopped in till next day. We expected an attack. Albert Head got hit on the back and head with a bomb not seriously.

July 29. —**Rue** and **Stan Logan** and all the boys we left at Zeitoun joined us.

August 1. —Met Wal. Horwell on the Peninsula.

August 2. —Went round to Wals bivouac after tea and saw Ben. Sparrow. Had a concert in the gully after 5 o'clock.

August 3. —Orders to move off at 10 30.

This was the last entry Private Budd made in his diary. He was killed four days later.

Timaru Herald. 9 September 1916 (page 3) [04 June 2014]

LIFE IN THE TRENCHES

LETTER FROM PRIVATE WILSON.

A letter has been received by Mrs J. Wilson, Morgan's Road, Timaru, from her son Private Colin E. Wilson, who left with the 8th Reinforcements, and is now "Somewhere in France." It describes how well men are cared for in the trenches, and goes on to say: -

On June 26 we were taken for a dip, and very fine it was. There are special hot baths supplied, and also clean clothing and socks; everything is washed clean, and the socks darned; this saves us a lot of trouble and work. I am not too fond of washing and darning even yet; it takes a lot of getting used to, but still when one has to do it one never thinks much of it. We are also supplied with steel helmets, which are a bit heavy at first, but we soon get used to them. I have just witnessed a great sight. The enemy have what are called observation balloons. These balloons are just the same as ordinary ones, only shaped like a big sausage, and are fastened to the ground by long ropes. In each basket tied to the bottom of the balloon is the observer, whose duty it is to find out all about our trenches, and where our big guns are stationed. Well in about half the time in which it has taken me to tell this, two of our aeroplanes darted over to the enemy's lines and dropped some kind of liquid fire on to three out of four of these balloons. It was a great sight to see them burst into flames and drop to the ground. I only saw one man get clear of his balloon. I don't know how he got on. The other day one of our balloons of the same kind broke from its moorings and floated away from us, but our two men came safely to the ground in their

parachutes'. The aeroplanes are playing a great part in this war; only the other night I counted as many as sixteen flying over our heads at the same time. The enemy fire a terrible lot shells at those planes, and the surprising part of it is that they never seem to get hit. I have seen a clear sky absolutely covered, the same as clouds, with the smoke from the bursting shells.

We receive the paper from London a day after it is printed. The Germans are terrors to knock churches about. There was a church not far from our trenches, and the other morning they fired at it until it was demolished. The second shot they fired rang the bell, and the next knocked the tower over. The shells whistle over our heads all day, but we soon got accustomed to them. This is our fourth week in the trenches, and we are not quite sure when we are going to get a rest. At any rate it does not matter as one is just as safe in the trenches as in town, and when we are out we have to work just as hard as when we are in. We get paid pretty often in the trenches, and we usually get somebody who is going into town to buy us chocolates, cakes and dainties, but our wages don't go very far. Ted Fairbrother, **Bill Annand**, **Reu Logan**, Charlie Munro, Walter Shaw, and many other Timaru boys are all quite well and enjoying the life, although they are not able to walk about and enjoy the lovely sun-shine.