

*Waimate Daily Advertiser.* 11 January 1916 (Papers Past) [03/02/2020]

Mr Jack Nicol, son of Mr and Mrs R. Nicol, Waimate has lately had an interesting series of voyages about the Globe's surface. He is a marine engineer, and some two years ago left the New Zealand shipping firm he was with to gain experience at Home. When war broke out he came under the Admiralty's sway, and one trip took him to a port of Mexico to load oil, and another to Rangoon, where a cargo of petrol was run aboard and conveyed back to London. Then Mr Nicol was instructed to proceed to Leith, whence he on a smaller steamer in November to Archangel. Five weeks ago his parents received a cable from London from him conveying the one word: "Safe". They are anxiously awaiting a letter to learn what experiences their son has been through in the Arctic trip of 1000 miles from Scotland to the North Russian port and back.

*Waimate Daily Advertiser.* 18 January 1916 (Papers Past) [03/02/2020]

Mr Jack Nicol, who is a marine engineer, writes from London to his father, Mr R. Nicol, Waimate, giving a brief account of his trip to Archangel (North Russia) and back. His steamer got into Archangel in November, with the assistance of the ice-breakers, and while they lay in harbour it was possible to walk across the frozen surface of the sea from one ship to another. Leaving the Arctic port, he travelled 10 days and nights by rail to Petrograd, then traversed the Gulf of Bothnia to Sweden and Norway, coming through Bergen, which he described as a fine city (and which has since been destroyed by fire). Thence he travelled by boat back to England.

**ROUND THE NORTH CAP TO ARCHANGEL  
ON A 60-TON ADMIRALTY STEAMER.  
“ROUGHEST TRIP I’VE EVER HAD.”  
WAIMATE BOY’S INTERESTING LETTER.**

Writing to his parents from Edinburgh under date 25th November, Mr Jack Nicol describes the trip referred to in yesterday’s issue. He says: -

14 Spittal Street,  
Edinburgh,

November 25th, 1915

I am pleased to be able to say I am back from that trip to Archangel! We had very bad weather all the way round the North Cape and it was cold. The ship, the steamship *Sproit*, was about 100 feet long and small in beam, and 68 tons registered. We did get a shaking up and all hands were sick. I was never so sick in all my life. Huge seas were breaking right over the ship and one of our boats was carried away. Water began to rise, through coming in from the top; and we were afraid she would founder. Everything was soaking, even the very mattresses. We stopped to get the water out, when the other two boats kept on into it. That was the last we saw of them. In the cabin we had a small “bogy,” a kind of stove, but owing to the ship labouring so heavily it was impossible to keep the fire on. So everything got damp and very cold. Then we sighted some islands (the Lofoden Inlands) off the coast of Norway. They were completely covered with snow, being within the Arctic Circle; the weather became bad again round the North Cape, and I really became uneasy and afraid we would not see the business through, when a great sea struck us and completely knocked in the only remaining life boat we had. All hands, including the cook, were called out to help lash it and save what then was left of it. I was on watch, and the chief came down below. It was an anxious time.

The same Sunday night we were surprised about 6 p.m., to see a huge ship ahead towering over us—a great black mass. It was

**AN AUXILIARY CRUISER**

and an officer came on board to examine our papers. They had not been in port for weeks, and were eager to hear the news and get old papers. Along the coast we could see nothing but pure white hills and it was cold. We had to report to “Examination steamers” at a “certain part” of the coast. On reaching this place there was nothing to be seen, so we waited all day, tossing about, up and down the coast. Next morning a tramp steamer came in sight, and she made straight for the land, and we thought she had perhaps been there before, and followed. You could imagine our surprise to see inside about a dozen ships, one a huge liner with her bows severely damaged. In that place we were very pleased indeed to rest for about four days before we were sent on.

Archangel is a few miles up a river, and we had an unusual experience getting up. The ice was very thick —about eight inches —and the weather was very cold indeed. All the shore was white. People were walking across the river immediately in front of the ship; in fact, running across before we broke the ice. Then that night we reached our destination and were pleased to see the other boat up and safely tied. The third one, we were told, had returned to Scotland in distress, having been nearly lost. We had a few days there and had a bit of a look round. Ice and snow was everywhere, and everybody used sleighs and great furs. I was very glad to use that woollen helmet which V— sent me and the other boys wanted to use it.

On the 12th we left the ships (2) —all hands, on sleighs, two in each, and all the baggage in larger sleighs—for the railway station. We made a fair procession— 24 men, two in each sleigh - four baggage sledges, making sixteen sleighs. Right through Archangel, across a river, and over to the station - about two hours' drive. Then began the long

#### OVERLAND JOURNEY HOME,

through North Russia to Petrograd, into Finland, up into Sweden by rail still, across the frontier and down through Sweden into Norway to Christiania, and then across the famous scenery of Norway to Bergen, where we got a boat for Newcastle.

*Waimate Daily Advertiser.* 17 April 1916 (Papers Past) [03/02/2020]

Mr R. Nicol, of Waimate, has received from Sir Thomas Mackenzie, the High Commissioner, advice that the former's son John has succeeded in obtaining a commission as Engineer-Lieutenant in the Royal Naval Reserve, The letter mentions that Engineer-Lieut. Nicol left London on 26th February to join the H.M.S. Hardinge This vessel is understood to be in Indian waters.

*Otago Daily Times.* 19 April 1916 (Papers Past) [03/02/2020]

Mr J. Nicol, son of Mr R. Nicol, Waimate, has been appointed a lieutenant engineer. Mr Nicol, who has been in London for some time, will proceed to his duties somewhere in the locality of Suez.

*Waimate Daily Advertiser.* 8 May 1916 (Papers Past) [03/02/2020]

Mr R. Nicol, senr., has received letters showing that his son, Engineer-Lieut. Jack Nicol, has joined H.M.S, Hardinge at Bombay, and that the warship is on transport guard. When travelling to the East on an Anglo-Indian liner, Eng.-Lieut, Nicol spent two days ashore at Ishmaelia, where he met his brother, Private Harold Nicol.

*Evening Star.* 6 November 1918 (Papers Past) [03/02/2020]

Engineer-lieutenant Jack Nicol, R.N., formerly in the Union Company's service, who has been on leave in New Zealand, after three years' service with the Royal Navy, has left Wellington for England.