

Timaru Herald. 26 November 1897 (Papers Past) [10/05/2023]

THE SOUTH SCHOOL CONCERT.

The annual concert in aid of the prize funds of the South School took place last evening. The weather was oppressively warm, but proved to have no effect on the attendance which was as usual very large. The main room of the school was crowded and the audience who year after year gather there must strongly sympathise with the Committee in their efforts to get the school enlarged. The Committee had courteously asked Mr W. B. Howell, chairman of the Board of Education to preside at the concert, and he expressed his pleasure at being able to do so. The concert was not on the ordinary lines of school reunions, the infant pupils only taking a minor part in it, the bulk of the entertaining falling on friends and well-wishers of the school. Messrs Ellis and J. W. Wood, assisted by three ladies and a gentleman, played three very choice musical selections, their playing being listened to with the utmost pleasure. The infants contributed a couple of very pretty action songs, for which they were deservedly given the warmest congratulations. Two very pretty glees were capitally rendered by Misses Findlay and Strachan and Messrs Byers and McCullough, and solos were nicely sung by Mrs Applegarth, Dr Reid, Miss Strachan, Mr F. McCullough and Mr D. Byers. A duet (in character) "I don't want to play in your yard," by Misses N. Auld and F. Christmas was a great treat to the younger portion of the audience who were emphatic in a recall when a very amusing parody was sung. Mr **Foster** was also a great favourite with his comic songs, being unanimously encored each time, and acquitting himself most creditably. "The Charge of the Light Brigade" was splendidly recited by Mr James Fleming. At the interval the chairman took the opportunity to say a few words about the school, in the course of which he remarked on the success it had proved to be in every way. The Board were fully aware of the want of room in it, and hoped to meet the wishes of the Committee as soon as they possibly could. The demands on the Board were increasing yearly, and they were striving with the funds they were able to get to do what was just to all the schools. Mr John Storrier, chairman of the School Committee, in moving a hearty vote of thanks to all who had so ably assisted them that evening and to Mr Howell for presiding, referred to the special vote which the Government intended to make this year for school building purposes, and hoped that South Canterbury would get a fair share. There was no doubt about the South School going ahead, and that, considered from all points of view, the school needed enlarging. The vote was carried in the usual way, and a very pleasant evening brought to a close.

Timaru Herald. 31 May 1916 (page 9) [12/08/2015]

RECRUITS' FAREWELLS FATHER FOLLOWS SONS.

Mr William Foster, who is leaving with the Reinforcements to-day, was met in the Board Room by the Directors and staff of Guinness and LeCren Ltd., yesterday afternoon. Mr Guinness, Chairman of Directors, in making the presentation of a safety razor, shaving outfit, purse of sovereigns, and a small gift for Mrs Foster, stated that it was a pleasure to perform the duty, as Mr Foster not only had two sons at present in the fighting line, and one in camp, but not being satisfied with that, was going himself. He thought he had established one of few records that had been made in New Zealand, where father and sons had all volunteered. Mr Foster had been in the employment of the firm for 21 years, had been a faithful servant, well-liked by all with whom he had come in contact, and they were sorry to lose him. At the same time they felt proud that he was offering his services to his King and Country, and wished him good health and a safe return. Messrs Maling and Hutchinson on behalf of the firm and employees, assured him that he carried all good wishes for a safe and speedy return, and

hoped to see him back again soon at his old post. Mr Foster briefly thanked one and all for their kind remarks and the presents, and also for the kindness and consideration shown to him by the members of the staff.

Press. 1 June 1916 (page 8)

PERSONAL ITEMS.

Something of a New Zealand record has been established by Mr William Foster, of Timaru, who left with the Seventeenth Reinforcements yesterday (telegraphs our correspondent). Mr Foster has two sons in the fighting line and one in camp. His is a case in which father and sons have all volunteered and been accepted. Prior to leaving, Mr Foster was presented with a purse of sovereigns and a number of useful articles by the directors and staff of Guinness and Le Cren, with which firm he has been for the past 21 years.

Timaru Herald. 11 November 1916

Mrs W. Foster, accompanied by Mrs R. J. Foster has gone to Wellington to say farewell to Sergeant W. Foster, who sails with the Nineteenth Reinforcements. Mr and Mrs Foster have three sons already at the front, one having been wounded.

Timaru Herald. 3 May 1917 (page 2)

LATE MAYORESS'S WORK

LETTERS OF THANKS.

Mrs Guinness has just received the following letters: -

France, 11th February, 1917. —Just a few lines to thank you for this writing tablet. When we came out of the trenches a few days ago we received a parcel to every three men, and my share was a tablet and a pair of socks, which were very acceptable. I am in the North Auckland Company, 2nd A 1.B. . . . There is very little news except that the weather is very cold although the winter is just about over now, and consequently things are livening up more every day in our lines. Thanking you again for your kindness. E. L. Thwaites, Private, 14-359."

The second letter is a longer one from Sergeant W. **Foster**, D. Company, 5th Reserve Battalion, N.Z.R.B., written from Sling Camp, Bulford, on March 3rd. The writer thanks Mrs Guinness and the ladies of the Timaru Patriotic Society on behalf of the men of G. Company for useful parcels and cake distributed among them on board the troopship at Christmas time. The men were fortunate in getting Timaru parcels as they were much better than some from other parts of New Zealand. He mentions that cigarettes are not allowed to be distributed on board, but tobacco is. They had a good passage, though a long one — 17 days — of which they were 1, 2, 4 and 17 days at different ports of call. Since arriving the weather had been cold and wet and he had forgotten what sunshine is like. He had had four days' leave in London and mentions what he saw there. He had been put on the staff at Sling Camp, and would not be going to France for some time. The general feeling was that we have got things well in hand, find the general hope that the victorious end will be seen before long.

The following is an extract from a private letter, written by Captain T. Temple, of the A.S.C. in France: "You were asking whether the gift parcels sent here from New Zealand reach our

men. They are distributed through the supply officers, and I can vouch for the fact that they arrive all right. Between 400 and 500 have passed through my hands since Christmas. The parcels are excellent, and highly appreciated.”

Feilding Star, 26 April 1919, Page 2

WITHOUT A SCRATCH.

The luck or chance in war is a very uncertain item. One soldier goes through Gallipoli to the finish without a scratch, another makes the supreme sacrifice at his first engagement. It is seldom, indeed, that all male members of one family came through without a scratch after several engagements (remarks the *Timaru Herald*) Such is the experience of Mr William Foster, recently returned, and his three sons. The youngest son first volunteered and fought at Gallipoli. The second enlisted later and fought chiefly in France, as also did the third son. The father then enlisted and fought side by side with a son at the Battle of the Somme, all four coming through the ordeal unscathed.

Timaru Herald, 29 May 1919 (Papers Past) [24/03/2023]

SOLDIERS' TRIBUTES

TO THE “TIMARU HERALD.”

At the annual meeting of the *Timaru Defence Rifle Club* last night, a letter was received, from Mr J. M. Toneycliffe offering his best thanks to the Club for having posted him copies of the “*Timaru Herald*” regularly all the time he was on active service.

“I can tell you all,” wrote Mr Toneycliffe, “that I always looked forward to receiving my “Heralds” every mail, and I can say that all the time I was away I never once missed my bundle of papers.”

The Club sent copies of the “*Timaru Herald*” to all their members who were on active service, postage costing them approximately £10 a year.

Mr W. Foster said that as one who had been to the war and received these papers, he would like to have a little to say on the matter. From the day that he left New Zealand till the day he left France on his return, there was not an issue of the “*Timaru Herald*” of which he had not received a copy. “And I can tell you,” he added, “they made very pleasant reading, not only for me but for every South Canterbury man who had the luck to get hold of them. They were read with avidity, and I appreciate very highly the way the ‘Herald’ Company despatched them, and the action of the Club in paying the postage. I cannot quite express my feelings in the matter, but I can tell you there were times when ‘this little bit of news from home’ was the very best thing we could have, and did us more good than anything else could have done.”

The President said the Club members were glad to know that the papers had been so much appreciated. The Club were certainly indebted very greatly to the “*Timaru Herald*” Company for what they had done in the matter. Year after year with unfailing regularity, they had posted a copy of each issue of the paper to every member of the Club who was at the war; and they had not only attended to the despatch of the papers, but had also given them, and all the Club had to do was to pay the postage. He had much pleasure in proposing a very hearty vote of thanks to the “*Timaru Herald*” Company. (Applause.)

The motion was carried unanimously, and the secretary was instructed to forward it on.

Timaru Herald, 12 August 1919 (Papers Past) [12/03/2023]

RETURNED SOLDIERS' PERFORMANCE.

To-night, under the direction of the S.C.R.S.A., a talented company will give a performance of the arousing 2-act Irish comedy, "Titus O'Toole." The cast contains all the best talent in the Returned Soldiers' Association, including Billy Foster and Tim O'Connor, who have had a lot of experience both locally and at Home. Billy Foster, while in England, produced several comedies, and several well known English professional artists were included in the casts. Tim O'Connor was with the first Kiwi Company performing for the troops in France, and has also had much experience with J. C. Williamson. Other well known amateurs are Charles Foster, Harry Naylor, Frank McGrath, Miss Myra Home, and Miss May Radcliffe. This is the first time a live Irish comedy has been produced in Timaru, and it is too good to miss. Mrs N. D. Mangos has arranged a first class musical programme, the singers including Mrs P. W. Rule, Miss Westmacott, Mr G. H. Andrews and the S.C. Quartette. The overture "Pique Dame" . . . will be played by the Associated Orchestra of the R.S.A. under the baton of Mr. T. O'Connor. The orchestra contains some of the most talented instrumentalists in South Canterbury, including Miss D. Annetts as leader, and Mr B. A. De Latour, and is well known for the excellent performances it has given. Under the baton of the deputy conductor Mr B. A. De Latour the orchestra will also provide the music for the entr'acts. A special souvenir programme has been prepared for the performance and includes amongst its illustrations an unique view of Anzac Beach, believed to be the only one in existence taken of the beach at that time the New Zealanders landed. Others are views taken on all the fronts where the New Zealand soldiers fought. The souvenir programme is well worth sixpence. During the evening, under the direction of Mrs Cooper and Mrs Bowe, ladies will sell sweets the proceeds going to the funds of the Violet Day for the St. Saviour's Orphanage and R.S.A. There are a few seats unmarked on the plan at the Bristol, and intending patrons would be well advised to reserve, and avoid disappointment. Holders of early door tickets will be admitted half an hour before the ticket boxes are opened. The overture commences at 7.45 p. m.

Timaru Herald, 14 November 1921 (Papers Past) [13/05/2023]

Passing of the War

DEPOSITING REGIMENTAL COLOURS.

SERVICE AT ST MARY'S.

One of the largest ceremonial parades, if not the largest, ever seen in Timaru took place yesterday morning, when the war colours of the 2nd (South Canterbury) Regiment were deposited in St Mary's Church for safe keeping. There were 19 officers and 521 of other ranks on parade, and they made an exceedingly fine showing. That interest in the military is still as keen as during the war period was seen in the way the people lined the streets along the route of march from the rendezvous the drill shed, and crowded into the church while seats were available. People commenced to take their seats in St Mary's at 10 o'clock, and by half-past ten the church was packed except for the space reserved for the military. And in reserving this room the authorities greatly underestimated the numerical strength of the parade. To such an extent was this done that after delaying the starting of the service for some time an endeavour to find room for at least all the men in uniform, 200 of the latter failed to gain admittance, and sat about on the lawns in the church grounds until the service was over. Such a state of affairs is unique in the history of Timaru.

While the parade was a bright ceremonial affair there was a note of sadness about it in that it marked the passing of the old second (South Canterbury) Regiment, which, under the new organisation has been merged in the First (Canterbury) Battalion with headquarters at

Christchurch. In addition to those formally on parade there were many onlookers who attended to see, as they said, “the last of the good old regiment.”

The parade was in charge of Lieutenant-Colonel Wilson, D.S.O., M.C., with Major L. M. Inglis, second in command, and Lieutenant **C. W. Foster** as adjutant, and Sergeant-Major G. G. Johnston (W.O.1.) as parade sergeant-major. The reserve of officers present included Colonel K. Mackenzie, Lieutenant **W. Foster** (“B” Company), Lieutenant J. P. C. Walshe (“C” Company), Lieutenant Cockroft (“A” Company), Major E. A. Holdgate, Captain A. N. Oakey, M.C., Major W. H. Foden, and Captain J. E. S. Jackson. The order of march was: — Troop “O” Squadron 1st C.M.R., (C.Y.G.), Band Second (S.C.) Regiment (under Lieutenant Tizard), officers of reserve and retired list, “C” Company, First Battalion Canterbury Regiment, Colours and Escort, “H” Company, First Battalion Canterbury Regiment, High School Band (under Sergeant-Major Brice), High School “A” Company Cadets, B Company Bugle Band (under Sergeant Leopold) and C. Company 8th Battalion Canterbury Regiment. There were also some M.R. men under Lieutenant Pennefather, and members of the R.S.A. in civilian dress.

HANDING OVER THE FLAG.

Lieutenant Kirke, bearing the flag accompanied by a Colours guard, with bayonets fixed first entered the church, and the leading companies in the parade followed until the 400 seats allotted to the parade were filled, and many were unable to enter. Printed slips of the service were provided for all comers.

At the commencement of the service the ceremony of presentation of the flag took place, the commanding officer saying: —

“We desire that this flag, the Colours of the 2nd South Canterbury Regiment, be handed to the care of this Church for safe keeping, in memory of the fallen, until such time as it may be again required.”

The vicar, Rev J. A. Julius, as briefly, on behalf of the church authorities, accepted the flag for safe keeping, and placed it reverently beside the altar table until a permanent place is fixed for it.

The flag is similar in size and design to the Mounted Rifles flag which was fixed some nine years ago above the pulpit. The design of each flag is a Union Jack, in silk, with the St George’s Cross broader than usual to give room for a golden crown in the upper bar and the name of the regiment on the right hand arm. The old S.C.M.R. flag bears the name of the regiment and “South Africa 1900-1902.” The flag deposited yesterday has the crown, but does not bear a regimental name. It however is well marked with inscriptions of honour: — “South Africa 1900-2. Gallipoli 1914. Egypt 1914, 1915, 1916. France 1917, 1918. Germany 1918.”

SERMON ON LOYALTY.

The Vicar took for the subject of his sermon Loyalty and for his text a passage in II Samuel 23. The chapter had been read as the Second Lesson, and the passage describes how three mighty men that David with him had broke through Philistine host to get water from a well in Bethlehem which David, being in straits for water, had expressed a desire for. When the water was brought David would not drink thereof, but poured it out unto the Lord, because, he said, it was the blood of the men that went in jeopardy of their lives to fetch it. By this sacrifice David showed how highly he estimated the loyalty and courage of the men who had risked their lives to get it for him. So that day the soldiers of Timaru had brought their flag — the emblem of their loyalty and courage, of severe toil and hard endurements, of the cause of loyalty for which many gave their lives to be placed in religious safe-keeping, as too precious a thing to be kept in a drill shed or a town hall.

The preacher then went on to state and to answer various forms of denial that loyalty is a virtue. Some said loyalty to their country was rubbish. “Every man for himself and the devil

take the hindmost," was their motto. If that were the motto of every man in the country the devil would get it, for it would be the hindmost country. Others said loyalty was a sham, an unnatural thing. The story of evolution, with its cardinal doctrine survival of the fittest, showed that the practice of mutual aid, loyalty to each other, amongst animals was a necessary condition of life for many of them. This was the case amongst primitive men. As civilisation developed the forms of mutual aid became more and more complex, and more and more it was seen that no man liveth to himself.

Some people said that was true, but loyalty should be loyalty to the race, that local and national loyalties were sundering things, a curse to the world, and that because of them the world had been deluged with blood and tears. Wars between nations and societies are wars between local loyalties. That was no doubt true, but it was true because these local loyalties were neither founded on nor led up to the supreme loyalty, loyalty to the well being of mankind. An illustration of this defect was seen in the intense nationalism of Germany that caused the late great war. Germany's local loyalty was defeated by the wider loyalty of other nations. Some said that we cannot be loyal to both our own nation and to mankind. They were wrong. We must first have loyalty in the smaller field, a sentiment that we can easily understand. Without this loyalty to mankind would be a vague idea, unrealisable. We must begin with loyalty to those about us, extend it to the nation, and then, by help of God, become loyal to mankind. St Paul was a conspicuous instance of a man whose mission embraced the whole world; yet when occasion arose he made proud boast of being a Hebrew, an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham. He had also said that if he could only bring about the salvation of his own people he would be willing himself to be lost. Jesus himself, the Saviour of the whole world, also showed by His grief at the coming destruction of Jerusalem that local loyalty is not incompatible with loyalty to the whole human race. But this greater loyalty, the preacher urged, can be attained only through complete loyalty to God, Father of all men.

At the close of the sermon the vicar announced that marble tablets to the memory of fallen soldiers would be dedicated in the church at an early date, and he hoped that as many as possible of those present would attend the dedication ceremony. The singing of the National Anthem closed the service.

After the service the parade was reformed and marched to Alexandra Square, where all were arranged on the grass, and Mr Havelock Williams took a swing-round photograph of the whole. The High School Cadets marched away in good order, and the remainder of the parade was dismissed. Mr Williams then took a group in twenty old Volunteers — fourteen in uniform and six in mufti. The oldest veterans of the group were Captain J. E. S. Jackson and Major W. H. Foden.

COLOURS FOURTEEN YEARS OLD.

The "Timaru Herald" of Friday, September 27, 1907 — fourteen years ago — contained a description of the ceremony of proclaiming "Dominion Day" in Timaru, and telegrams on the subject from other centres. In the presence of the Volunteers, officials of the Public Services, and a small number of others, the Mayor (Mr J. Craigie) read from the Borough Council steps the King's Proclamation that the title "The Dominion of New Zealand" was substituted for "The Colony of New Zealand." An ensign was unfurled, cheers given, and the National Anthem sung." This was at 11 a.m.

In the afternoon a Volunteer parade was held on the Bay not a good muster, and as a nor'-wester was blowing the onlookers were fewer than good weather would have brought out in the march from the Drillshed to the Bay. Colonel Mackenzie led the way, and the disciplined parties were S.C.M.R. (25), Major Bond and Captain Gresson; Garrison Band (25). Drum-major Elgin; the Mayor (Mr Craigie), the Chaplain (Ven. Archdeacon Harper), and Surgeon-Captain Dryden: S.C. Infantry (70), and High School Cadets (42), Mayor Beckingham: Staff-Captain and Adjutant Foden, and Captain Jackson: Timaru Marine Band; and Public School

Cadets (nearly 200) under Major Montgomery. In the midst of the Infantry Volunteers marched Colour-Sergeant Higgins, bearing two “King’s Colours,” one for the Mounted, the other for the Infantry Regiment. The King’s Proclamation was again read, the Mayor gave an address, and then came the ceremony of the presentation of the Colours. The flag for the Mounted Regiment had “South Africa” inscribed upon it. The Chaplain consecrated the flags as directed by the King’s Regulations, and the Mayor then handed them to the officers appointed to receive them — Lieutenant Smith, for the S.C.M.R., and Lieutenant Holdgate for the S.C.I.V. The Colours were unfurled, carried through the ranks and saluted, and then formed a new feature in a ceremonial march past.

A paragraph in the Local Column states that there was a good deal of comment on the fact that the returned South African Contingenters were not present at the presentation ceremony. Inquiries showed that they had not been asked to be present. The Mayor said they ought to have been prominent. It was not his fault. The arrangements for the parade were made by the local Defence officers, and the omission to ask the Contingenters to take part in the affair was doubtless due to an oversight.

Timaru Herald. Saturday, September 20, 1941 (page 10) [07/06/2017]

OBITUARY

Mr WILLIAM FOSTER

Mr William Foster, who died recently in his 73rd year, was born in Dunedin and came to Timaru at an early age. In his younger days he was actively associated with amateur and professional theatricals, being for many seasons a leading member of the company of the late Mr Barry Marschel. Later he was a prominent principal of the Timaru Operatic Society, playing such roles as Dick Deadeye in “H.M.S. Pinafore” and the Sergeant of Police in “Pirates of Penzance.” As a comedian of outstanding ability he was known throughout South Canterbury.

Mr Foster was an enthusiastic member of the Timaru Navals and Port Guards until their disbandment on the inception of compulsory training, when he joined the Defence Rifle Club. From 1916-18 he served overseas in the Great War as Sergeant-Major with three of his sons. He held the 12 years, 16 years and the Colonial Auxiliary Decoration. He received a commissioned rank in 1920 and for four years was in command of a company of the Senior Cadets.

Until his retirement six years ago, Mr Foster was on the staff of Pyne, Gould, Guinness, Ltd., which firm he served for 40 years. He is survived by one daughter, Mrs J. Densem, of Timaru, and four sons, Messrs C. W., A. G., and R. J. Foster, of Timaru, and Mr E. R. Foster of Wellington. His wife predeceased him in 1935.