

Timaru Herald. 18 September 1916 (Papers Past) [09 September 2020]

N.Z. NAVALS ON LEAVE

RETURNING TO DOMINION.

Per Press Association.

WELLINGTON, Sept, 17.

Following is the official list of naval ratings returning to New Zealand, who are due to arrive at Wellington on September 28, in the Wimmera. With the exception of Able-Seamen Foreman and Stoker Burroughs, both of whom have been invalided from H.M.S. Philomel, all the men mentioned are on leave from H.M.S. Pyramus, and if circumstances permit they will be dispersed to their homes on the day of arrival: -

From H.M.S. Pyramus—John Motion, James Fyfe, Henry C. Domney, Frederick J. Bowers, Leslie P. Lock, Charles H. Peterson, Frederick C. P. Kermode, Harold T. Bloomfield, Frederick J. Maisey, George A. Alexander, Robert H. Hucks, John Hay, Harry Hay, Ansley A. Moore, Robert M. Gibson, Ernest M. Smith, Ernest W. Petersen, Henry O. Stone, James R. Donovan, Eric O. Manel, Arthur W. Cross (all the above are able seamen); J. Taylor, Ronald T. Ings, Arthur G. Waller (ordinary seamen); Thomas H. G. Shellach (boy, 1st class). Harold T. M. Watson, Herbert R. Walker (signalmen); John M. Armstrong (leading stoker), James Kenny, Thomas A. Bond, Frederick G. O'Neil, Frederick M'Cullough, David Rigby, Sidney Murray, Sydney W. Fry, Dennis Clifford, Joseph Gray, John W. Taylor, Percy Palmer, Charles W. Vogel, Martinius Anderson, Arthur Avery, Leslie R. B. Chaney, William E. M'Gorman, Robert P. Lester, Gordon S. Doile, Frederick J. Darlow, William E. Harvey, Percival J. Morris, Wilfred R. Wildey, Archibald Swain, Alfred A. M. Pullen, Albert H. Frame, Henry J. Pilbrow (stokers); Frederick W. Evans (armourer's crew), Charles W. Peterson (carpenter's crew), Arthur B. Courtenay (plumber), Henry J. Hopkins (blacksmith's mate), Eric R; H Magnusson (3rd writer).

From H.M.S. Philomel —Francis R. Foreman (able seaman), Henry W. Burroughs (stoker), invalided.

H.M.S. PYRAMUS. NEW ZEALAND SAILORS ON LEAVE.

ARRIVAL IN CHRISTCHURCH.

Considerable interest was aroused in the city yesterday morning by the arrival home on leave of seventeen New Zealand men of the *Pyramus*, a ship that has long been a centre of attraction to the Dominion, owing to its associations in peace and war with New Zealand.

There was a large crowd of relatives, friends and sightseers on the Lyttelton wharf. It was an ideal day for homecoming. Lyttelton and the surrounding bays and hills were bathed in glorious sunshine, and every returning warrior must have realised that this is indeed a land worth fighting for. The ferry boat always seems to the impatient people on the wharf to slow up more than necessary, and this morning the keenness to greet the men of the *Pyramus* made the pace of the *Mararoa* seem worse than snail-like. But even the apparently drawn-out berthing preparations came to end at last, and as the ship edged her careful way alongside the wharf, the seventeen white capped passengers — there were other voyagers of course, but these did not count — were eagerly scrutinised, and soon recognised.

LANDING AT LYTTELTON.

As quickly as they could the *Pyramus* heroes disembarked, and family reunions were many. The men showed traces of the work they had left, as most of them were white-faced and thin-looking. Those men who belonged to South Canterbury or Otago, and had not been met by their relatives, were not treated as “orphans,” for a Christchurch shipmate soon introduced these to his family, and the family circle was temporarily enlarged for the occasion.

When the ordinary passengers had left the *Mararoa*, the Mayor of Lyttelton (Mr W. Radcliffo) accompanied by Mr M. J. Miller, mounted the gangway and in a happy speech bade the *Pyramus* men welcome home. He said that he was pleased to know that the men attached to ships belonging to the New Zealand station had done their duty nobly and well. The conditions of the Persian Gulf and elsewhere were, he knew, very trying, and he paid a tribute to the men for the manner in which they had carried out their work. They were, in every sense, a credit to their country, and on behalf of the citizens of Canterbury’s foremost port, he trusted that their sojourn would be a pleasant one. He then called for cheers, which were lustily given.

Mr S. Booth, superintendent of the King George Seamen’s Institute, also welcomed the men back to the Port.

ARRIVAL AT CHRISTCHURCH.

An informal reception had been arranged for at the railway station, and it had been intended that the Mayor (Mr H. Holland) and Mr J. J. Dougall, on behalf of the Navy League, should give brief welcome addresses. But the Pyramus men were perhaps eager to get home, and the arrangements for the reception fell through.

The Mayor, however, spoke privately to several of the men and on behalf of the citizens of Christchurch welcomed them home and congratulated them on the splendid work done. He said that each man would always have the satisfaction of knowing that he had done his bit for the Empire, and the people of the Dominion would always be grateful.

The men thanked the Mayor for his kind remarks, and expressed their pleasure at being home again.

The men are on three months' leave, but will only be able to spend about three to four weeks at home, as they have to rejoin their ship, and one month each way has to be allowed for the journey. One week was lost at Melbourne owing to the floods delaying the departure of the Wimmera.

THE RETURNED MEN.

The men who arrived yesterday were as follow: —S. C. P. Kermode, J. May, H. May, R. Hucks, M. Anderson, E. Smith, A. Frame, A. Swain, A. Harvey, L. Lock, W. E. M'Gorman, L. Chaney and A. Pullen (Christchurch), R. T. Ings (Dunedin), H. Hopkins (Temuka), H. Walker (Timaru) and T. Hullah (Geraldine). The last named four left by the second express. Three more of the crew are due to-day or tomorrow. About fifty of the Pyramus men came home on leave, about half the number belonging to the North Island. Some men of the Philomel also returned to New Zealand, but none arrived by the Mararoa yesterday.

The Christchurch branch of the Navy League will be glad if all men from the Pyramus, belonging to Christchurch, will send their names and addresses to the office, Worcester Street, as it is proposed to commemorate the return home in some way.

TWO YEARS OF WAR.

AN ADVENTUROUS COMMISSION.

VESSEL STEAMS 73,000 MILES.

A representative of the "Lyttelton Times" who met the Mararoa interviewed several of the returned men, but found that it is not for nothing that the Navy is called the "silent service." The men have been instructed not to relate for publication any details of the work done except those of a general character.

The reporter, however, succeeded in obtaining what might be termed an official account of the commission of H.M.S. Pyramus from July, 1914, to August, 1916.

It stated: —

The ship was commissioned at Wellington, New Zealand, on July 15, 1914, and carried out her ordinary duties as a training ship till July 29, when we were ordered to proceed to Akaron to calibrate and prepare for war. Preparations completed, we sailed for Auckland, arriving there a few hours before the message

came through that war was declared. At 2 a.m. next day we left Auckland, and, after a few days at sea, received orders to return. On August 16 the ship left Auckland in company with the New Zealand squadron and two transports carrying New Zealand troops, and on arrival at Noumea, New Caledonia, we were joined by the Australia, Melbourne and Montcalm. From there the whole squadron left for Samoa, calling at Suva on the way, arriving off Apia, Samoa, on August 30. At 1 p.m. the island surrendered, and at 9 a.m. next day was formally declared a British possession by the French admiral.

ESCORTING TRANSPORTS.

In the meantime troops and stores were landed, after which we returned to New Zealand, en route for Melbourne and Hobart. where we joined the New Zealand convoy on September 22, and escorted them to Albany to join up with the first contingent of Australian troops. From there we proceeded to Marmagoa, Portuguese West India, touching at Fremantle, Singapore, Penang, Colombo and Bombay, and stayed there for some time guarding six German and Austrian ships. From there we returned to Bombay, and on December 31, 1914, left for East Africa, arriving at Mombassa on January 10, 1915, from which time till the middle of April we patrolled the deltas of the Rufigi River and the German East African coast, searching and capturing three islands and entering harbours, destroying German shipping.

DESTROYING THE KOENIGSBERG.

We then left for Simonstown to refit and recuperate, and early in June arrived back off the German East African coast and started preparations for the attack on the Koenigsberg, one of the German raiding cruisers which had been bottled up some time before. The first attack was made on July 6, but as she was not completely destroyed a second attack was made on July 11, when our object was achieved and the Koenigsberg totally destroyed. The bombardment was carried out by two monitors, and we had the honour of being the only big ship to enter the river, our duty being to cover the monitors and bombard the concealed batteries on both banks.

IN THE PERSIAN GULF.

After this we proceeded to the Persian Gulf, calling at Aden on the way. As soon as we arrived we were at it again, and on August 13 took part in a naval and military expedition against a Persian tribe called the Tangisfani, who had been attacking the telegraph station and British consuls at Ispahan and Korman. The landing was carried out with few casualties, although the odds against us were very heavy. The expedition was very successful, the Tangistani village and fort being destroyed and the tribe well punished. The captain of our ship was invested with the D.S.O. and two men were awarded the D.S.M. for work done in this expedition. Shortly after this we proceeded up the Gulf and captured a Turkish fort, four field guns and a great quantity of arms, ammunition and military stores at a place called Al Bida, on the Arabian coast.

FIGHTING AT BUSHIRE.

Then we returned to Bushire, and on September 9 a landing party was sent ashore to assist in repelling an attack on the town. The party consisted of three machine guns and crews and a section of marines, and, although we suffered heavy casualties, the enemy were beaten off and badly defeated. The general officer commanding congratulated the men and thanked them for their invaluable assistance. From this time onward the ship was employed patrolling and guarding telegraph on the coast, which were of vital importance, as they were the only communications with Mesopotamia. From time to time there were alarms and attacks, but they are not of sufficient importance to mention.

The ship paid off at - on August 25, 1916, after a very successful and interesting experience, having steamed 73,560 sea miles since the outbreak of war.

GENERAL DETAILS.

So far as the men's anecdotes are concerned these chiefly refer to the sinking of the Emdon, some of the Pyramus men believing that if the Sydney had not smashed the notorious German raider, the Pyramus would have done so. As it happened, the Pyramus was in time to help bury the German dead. Life around the Persian Gulf was at times very trying, and especially when operations were necessary on shore. The great heat and the plague of flies and mosquitoes were condemned in true nautical language. The flies were said to have feet like boot protectors, and the mosquitoes were guaranteed to bite through corduroy and even corrugated iron! The temperature was often as high as 130 degrees; "some" heat. The men expressed their gratitude for the gifts sent out to them, fruit being particularly acceptable. Most of the puddings, however, arrived in poor condition. But the thought uppermost in the men's minds was, "It is good to be home again."

TEMUKA.

Seaman H. Hopkins had an enthusiastic welcome at the Temuka railway station yesterday when he arrived on furlough. A procession, headed by Mr A. Cooper playing the bagpipes, marched to the post office, where addresses of welcome were delivered by the Mayor (Mr A. Frew) and Mr T. Gunnion. Three hearty cheers were given for the sailor.

Press. 4 October 1916 (Papers Past) [09/06/2022]

FROM THE EAST.

NAYAL RATINGS ON LEAVE.

RECEPTIONS AT LYTTTELTON AND CHRISTCHURCH.

Looking fit and well, yet glad of at least a month's respite after a cruise that has lasted over two years, seventeen members of the ship's company of H.M.S. Pyramus arrived at Lyttelton yesterday.

The ferry steamer with the returned sailors came alongside the wharf flying the naval paying-off pennant. There was a large crowd of relatives and friends present to welcome the men, whose cheery countenances showed the appreciation they felt to be home for a while, away from the unnerving and unpleasant atmosphere in which they had lived for so many dreary months. Among those who met the men were the Mayor of Lyttelton (Mr W. Radcliffe), Mr M. J. Miller (chairman of the Lyttelton Harbour Board), and Mr S. Booth (Superintendent of the King George V. Seamen's Institute).

The Mayor, in welcoming the men, said that they had done their duty in the manner expected of them, and were a credit to the station to which they belonged. Speaking on behalf of the people of Lyttelton, he could assure the men that their work was deeply appreciated.

Mr S. Booth also thanked the men and extended an invitation to them to visit the Institute during their leave. The Mayor then called for three cheers for the men which were lustily responded to.

WELCOMED AT CHRISTCHURCH.

On arrival at the Christchurch station they were received by the Mayor (Mr H. Holland), Messrs H. J. Marriner (president of the Canterbury branch of the Navy League), J. J. Dougall, C. J. Treleaven (secretary of the branch), and H. R. Smith (Town Clerk). Friends and relatives of the returned men also met them.

The reception at the Christchurch railway station was more or less informal. On arrival most of the men were anxious about their baggage and it was found practically impossible to get them altogether in the same place at the same time. The Mayor and the representatives of the Navy League made themselves known to different groups, and extended hearty welcomes home to them. The Mayor told them how very pleased he was to welcome them home, and he hoped that they would find it a very haven of rest.

The men were thoroughly pleased with the welcome extended to them. They were soon claimed by their relatives and friends, and the function at the station ended. In all seventeen of all ratings arrived, the majority being A.B.'s. The following is a list of the names of those who arrived (with one exception, whose name could not be recalled by those of his colleagues who were questioned): —

L. Chaney 32 Falsgrave street.

A. Frame. 76 Shakespeare Road.

R. Gibson, Pleasant Point.

W. Harvey, St. Albans.
H. Hopkins (blacksmith's mate), Timaru.
R. H. Hucks, Gloucester street.
T. Hullah, Geraldine.
R. Ings, Dunedin.
F. Kermod 32 St. Asaph street.
L. Lock, Addington.
H. May, Howard street.
J. May, Howard street.
W. E. McGorman, 132 Lincoln road.
A. Pullen (stoker), 30 Philip street, Linwood.
Ernest M. Smith, 202 Peterborough street.
H. Walker (signalman), Gibson street, Timaru.
A.B.'s Hucks, Hullah, and Ings are old Amokura boys.

TALKS WITH THE MEN.

A representative of "The Press" had brief talks with several of the returned seamen, all of whom looked in the pink of condition, and showed signs that they were glad to be home again.

Since the Pyramus left Auckland a day or so after war was declared, she has covered 74,000 miles, and has been engaged, for the most part, in patrol work. Samoa was the first place visited, Noumea, Suva, and Fiji being called at en route. After the unconditional surrender of German Samoa, the Pyramus returned to Auckland, and from that port went to Melbourne. At Hobart the Pyramus and Philomel picked up the transports conveying the Main Body of the New Zealand Expeditionary Force, and formed part of the escort for a part of the passage. At Fremantle the Philomel and Pyramus left for Singapore, and the night before that port was reached wireless messages were received advising that the Emden was about. It so happened, however, that the German raider was 500 miles away from the Pyramus. Three weeks were spent at Singapore whilst the Pyramus underwent a small amount of refilling. Penang was then visited, and there was seen the remains of the Russian warship Jemchug, which was torpedoed by the Emden. Colombo was the next port, and then Nova Goa (Portuguese India). Mombassa and Zanzibar (where the remains of H.M.S. Pegasus were seen) were visited in turn, and then the Pyramus took up patrol work off the Rufiji river where, subsequently, it was found that the German warship, the Konigsberg, was in hiding. A visit to Durban followed, and then the Pyramus went to Simenstown to refit. Afterwards she went to Cape Town, and then back to the Rufiji river, where she took part in the engagement which resulted in the total destruction of the Konisberg. The Pyramus subsequently visited, in turn, Zanzibar, Muscat, (State of Oman, Arabia), the Persian Gulf, calling at Bushire and at Dilwa. At Dilwa a landing party took part in some fighting. Eight or nine months were spent in patrolling in the Persian Gulf and along the Persian coast outside the Gulf, and a call was made at Bombay to refit. Here the men were paid off on one month's

leave which, however, may be extended. The present leave expires on November 1st.

The trying climate of the Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf makes it necessary that the men should have a spell after two years' service. One effect of the heat is to weaken the blood, and slight cuts take a long time to heal. Boils are also troublesome. Some of the men had over one hundred boils on their bodies, and most of them suffered from prickly heat and rashes. A change to a milder climate and to a different dietary will soon put them all right physically.

The following men left Wellington last night for the South: — A.B.'s J. Armstrong (West Coast). G. Waller (Timaru), Ansley A. Moore (Christchurch), and Stokers Martinus Anderson, Arthur Avery, and Wilfred R. Wildey (Christchurch).

Press. 17 October 1916 (Papers Past) [09/09/2020]

NAVAL MEN ON LEAVE.

PICNIC TO OXFORD,

Representing the Navy League were several members, including Mr J. J. Dougall (vjce-president), Mrs T. G. R. Blunt, Mr H. J. Marriner, and the secretary (Mr C. J. Treleaven). The Automobile Association was represented by a large number of members, who provided cars, including Mr .A. S. Clarkson (president) and the secretary (Mr C. W. Hervey).

It was originally intended to take the men to Ashley Gorge, but subsequently it was decided to make Oxford the objective. The outward route was via Darfield and Waddington to Pearson Park, Oxford, which was reached at about 11.30. Here a large marquee had been erected and an excellent luncheon, arranged by a sub-committee of the Oxford Branch of the Navy League, consisting of Messrs R. F. Henderson, L. Watson, G. Smith, G. J. Leech, A. Stubbs, D. Hawke, T. J. Frame, F. Hopkins, R. Dalley, T. Home, F. Wotherspoon, E. Seed, and W. Weld, was dispensed by the Ladies' Committee of the Oxford Red Cross Branch.

A festive air pervaded the township, a number of shops being temporarily closed, while the school children were allowed some time off. In spite of the fact that it was ordinarily a work day, the Oxford Brass Band, conducted by Mr R. Johnson, was present, and provided suitable music. At the conclusion of the lunch, Mr Henderson, on behalf of the residents of Oxford, and the local Navy League Branch, welcomed the visitors.

Hearty cheers were given for the men of H.M.S. Pyramus and Philomel, and the returned soldier visitors. The sailors responded with cheers for the residents of Oxford.

Mr Hawke, on behalf of the Oxford Patriotic Committee, said that they were delighted to welcome the men of that Navy which had chased from off the seas that old fox the German Fleet.

Mr J. J. Dougall, vice-president of the Canterbury Branch of the Navy League, on behalf of his branch, thanked the Oxford people for the manner in which they had entertained the visitors, and expressed his appreciation of the way in which the ladies of the Red Cross Branch and the local band had come along to do their share.

Able-seaman Smith, on behalf of the men of H.M.S. Pyramus, expressed his thanks to the members of the Automobile Association and Navy League, also the Oxford residents, for the pleasant outing, and said that as for the last two years his ship had been in strange parts, among strange people, it was all the more delightful to be home again, and to spend such an enjoyable time. He called for cheers, which were heartily given, for all those who had assisted in arranging the outing.

Mr Clarkson, president of the Automobile Association, thought the Association was only doing its duty in helping to give an enjoyable outing to the men who for the past two years had worked so strenuously on their behalf.

Mr J. J. Dougall appealed to the people of Oxford to support their branch of the Navy League, and Mr Treleaven supplemented his remarks.

Cheers were again given all round, followed by the singing of "For he's a Jolly Good Fellow."

An appeal was made to the people of Oxford to support the Rangiora Queen Election patriotic appeal, and a number of books of tickets were sold on the spot at £1 each.

The party, after spending a very enjoyable time, started just after 2.30 on its homeward trip, and halted at Rangiora. Here school children lined part of the road and gave rousing cheers as the sailors passed. Tea was provided for the visitors in the pavilion of the Rangiora Bowling, Tennis, and Croquet Club, by the members of the local Patriotic Committee. The Mayor (Mr C. I. Jennings) and the Hon. D. Buddo extended to the visitors a hearty welcome.

Afternoon tea was next partaken of, and cigarettes provided for the men.

The party then proceeded to town, arriving somewhat dusty, it is true, but in the best of spirits, having thoroughly enjoyed the outing.

The following members of the Automobile Association provided cars: Mrs Cordy. Messrs A. S. Clarkson, W. Broadway, R. W. Lochhead, W. J. McMillan, C. G. McKellar, G. Wells, P. G. Climie, F. Hubbard, W. E. Mills, C. J. Jones. J. J. Dougall. G. Loudon, R. P. M. Manning, H. Taine, J. A. Boswell and Captain McLean.